



From Andy Groome in the Eastern Cape South Africa

Dear Friends

For many years I knew in my heart that one day I would in some way be helping people in other lands that are disadvantaged by their situation. I had no idea how, when or where.

In February 2004 I came out here to the Eastern Cape for three weeks with five friends to assist with the building project funded by South Hill Church, Hemel Hempstead.

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path” Psalm ch 119 vs 105.

It hadn't even crossed my mind that I would end up living here for a year, until one day on that first visit; I was standing in the bank in the nearest town with Pastor Monde. It suddenly dawned on me like a jolt inside my body that this could be the place. I prayed silently in my mind while standing there, “Lord is this where you want me to be.” Within a few seconds of this prayer Monde turned to me and said, “I want you to think of getting your visa and coming to be with us.” It was an answer to my prayer.

I returned to the UK and prayed more and it became obvious that this was what God wanted. So I returned and now I am writing to you nearly one year on, due to return to the UK in mid June. I will soon be back into a completely different world.

Mission schools and hospitals.

During my time here I have become very aware of the respect many people have for the British; despite some of our bad conquests. Over the last few hundred years there had been many mission schools and hospitals set up. These Christian missions continued into the very dark days of apartheid and the segregation of black people in the homelands of South Africa, like here in the former Transkei. Many people, mainly older folk, were not slow in telling me of their gratitude towards British men and women working in quite remote areas and difficult conditions on these mission stations. They saw me as a continuation of this constant flow of compassion from the shores of the UK.

A new world.

So one year on I am sitting here in the Eastern Cape, in a place that has not changed my point of view, but I feel has made me a different person. My world is now a very different place and my future path will most definitely be affected by this new world that I have come to know. I will write again in some month's time, once I have had some time to reflect on the past year and to tell you of my future plans.

Thank You.

Many of you have entrusted me with a continual amount of funds, trusting me to oversee its use. I am very grateful for this and feel humbled to have represented you all in helping people who have found themselves in sometimes desperate situations. Without you it would have been impossible.

An important change.

Before I came out here a year ago I was very shy to talk about funding. I felt as if it was rude of me to even mention it. But as you may have noticed in the February edition of my newsletter, the appearance of our bank details. This was as a result of a discussion made by my support group and myself. We made this decision in the light of the obvious need of people here. This was a serious move for me. But after being here for so long and seeing the desperate situation of peoples lives I now have no embarrassment at all with giving you a more open invitation to continue giving.



I can say from my heart that if you are interested in helping people in very deprived situations, that I can work your money to completely change whole families lives for a relatively small cost. But it is also important for you to know that I am happy for you just to read, as my friend, with no giving. So I want to thank all of you who have prayed, given, and for just being involved in what we have all achieved in this last year.

A new project.

At the time of writing this letter we were mid way through building a small two-room house (8 metres by 3 metres) for a very needy family, whose situation is very bad. This house will completely transform the standard

of their lives. They are very grateful to you all for this. In the next newsletter I will give a full report on this project. So in this transitional period of me being back in the UK, if any of you require more details of the last year, or of my future intentions, I will be only too pleased to come and talk to you personally concerning this. So until next time,

Goodbye and God Bless

Andy Groome

