

6 Membership renewal

We ask for £10 per person annually to become a member of FoMRCH. Members and supporters all receive our 4 annual newsletters but only members can vote at the AGM. Please remember to tell our treasurer it is your membership you are sending and also if you wish to gift aid a donation.

AGM

You are invited to the AGM on Saturday April 18th at Droitwich Methodist Church. Business is kept very short and we then have our usual discussion about progress at the Home. Everyone is very welcome to join us for the Bring and Share lunch after the meeting. Details in the included letter.

Newsletters

Our newsletters are received in all 4 UK countries, Australia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. We post out 186 paper copies and email 127. 11 paper copies are sent to the Presiding Bishop in Zimbabwe and he distributes them round the Methodist Districts. 14 are emailed to Zimbabwe and South Africa. We know many people send them on or print off more copies to distribute round friends. **Could you help save costs by also receiving the newsletter by email?**

Christmas cards

This year over £3,500 profit was made on the sales. A good amount only reached because we didn't have new designs printed. We still have some previous designs left which will be available this year. Thank you to everybody who bought cards and sent extra donations.

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www.friendsofmatthewrusike.org

This newsletter is distributed by
**The Friends of Matthew Rusike
Children's Home.**

Friends of Matthew Rusike Children's Home

Registered charity 1120944

We give mainly financial support and advice to the Home



March 2015

NEWS FROM THE HOME

Greetings from Zimbabwe to all our Friends in the UK.

The classroom block has made tremendous progress. The roof was complicated, the building has been electrified and all door frames and window panes have been put in. There has been a pledge of paint from the bank which donated the cement and if that comes through it means the building will be complete soon. We are looking for furnishings for all the classrooms so that as soon as the building is complete the pupils can begin to use it.

The expansion of the secondary school is in line with expanding the vision of MRCH. The funds used were donated by 4 clear sources, Liverpool Women in Britain, CBZ Bank, (building materials) The First Lady, Mrs Grace Mugabe and £10,000 for the roof from FoMRCH. Zvirinane



Here pioneer A level students are working in the unfinished classrooms which still need glass in the windows

It has been raining a lot and at times we have had to send children home earlier for fear of the heavy downpours. Some of the children cross the river and walk a long way so each time we saw the sky heavy with rain clouds we sent them home earlier than usual. Three of our avocado trees which were full of fruit, big big ones, were struck by lightning and it was surely a loss. We thank God it happened during the weekend and no one was hurt.



The examination centre has been used for O levels and can you imagine how we felt when we saw our students sitting in the

hall ready to write their first national examinations and being the first students at MRCH college to do so? We as a team feel satisfied with a sense of achievement against all odds and guess what, 2 of our students on the **Community Based Care programme (CBC)** were among the highest – J gained 4 As and 3Bs and R gained 4 Bs, 2Cs and a D. I had to share it with someone so I called Margaret. We were so excited - introducing something new has its hiccups and fears you know. But Margaret will always remind you that "naJesu zvinoita Chete". (All things are possible with God)

2 Unfortunately, J is not able to come to school anymore due to financial challenges. R, our head boy who never sat for any exams before in his life, is also unable to pay his fees. When a child enrolls into form one, the requirements are such that he should have taken his grade 7 exams. So because he did not do that we taught him outside normal hours for a whole year in 2010. In 2011 he then joined the rest of the students as a form one pupil. He is a dedicated student, mature and responsible, we are proud to have made a difference in his life. Both these boys will be our pioneer students not only at A level but also as the first of our students we have taught from 2010 to date. .



Mr Mutichawa with his A level maths class in the unfinished classroom

As a team we embrace the coming of the A level students and we are proud to be associated with this asset. It would be wonderful to see them through to University. Education is a project that can never die. Instead it will continue to grow. We started with commercial studies, Arts and humanities. We very much want sciences because they open many doors in life for our students but we do need a science lab to be

able to do that. However if we get adequate apparatus we can start by introducing biology which needs less practical work, unlike physics and chemistry.



Medal winners with Rev Mawire and sports teacher, Mr Sigauke

Recently we went for our usual athletics competitions held at Moleli high school 35 km from Harare. Some of our students got gold medals and some got bronze and silver. We were competing with other Methodist boarding schools and it was evident that given the right environment our pupils can be excellent. Our head boy also won the marathon 1200km race.



Here are some of the medal winners with their awards

5 Finances

Once again we have received the MRCH fully audited accounts. These show us that MRCH income is about 50% donations from within Zimbabwe and 50% from overseas. Both large and small donations come from a wide variety of individual donors and companies within Zimbabwe as well as UK and Australia. Obviously these can fluctuate and we are pleased to say that the regular monthly remittance of almost £5,000 received from the Friends is 49% of the overseas money and enables them to plan ahead and feel secure knowing it will arrive straight into their account.

This is a big change from the 80% - 90% of their income we used to send them and shows that they have greatly increased their support base.

Ed

The internal income from the garden, pigs, poultry and school all show modest profits.

“The Early Childhood Development Centre is running at a deficit.

The biggest challenge is enrolment. There has been a mushrooming of crèches around the community and because of our location (at the end of the road in Epworth) most parents are sending their children to crèches near them, its a considerable

walking distance to reach us. The other point is half the children attending the crèche are resident MRCH children and they do not



pay. As of today, we only have 20 paying children. We are stepping up our advertising efforts and hopefully enrolment will improve soon. Margaret

It is important that the young residential children mix with local children for more social experience.

Ed

According to the auditors in 2013 the MRCH accounts showed uncertainty about the sustainability of the Home continuing as a going concern unless they could increase their income and support base. The Homes staff and supporters were positive that they could turn things around and had posted a surplus by the end of the year.

From mid 2014 up to date information presented to us, income and expenditure appear to be much more under control however there are still issues of high on going debt to statutory bodies which need to be addressed by the Home as a matter of urgency.

3



New prefects attended an exchange programme at Waddilove school

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to the donation that we received. The laptop came at the right time because since last year registration of candidates must now be done electronically. So last year we had to borrow one. The examination board requires that we have separate laptops for examination administration.

The scanner and printer are just what the teachers needed and we hope that one of these days all the teachers will each have a computer of their own. At one time we received computers but no sooner had we given them to the teachers than we took them back again to put into our computer lab. The college administration was also elated about the arrival of a printer! The photos I am sending you are from one of the cameras you sent.

We hope one day our offices will be real offices too, just like in other schools. Kuda



Mr Measure and the school choir singing in assembly

What an extremely smart looking group of young men and women they are... **Zimbabwe's future**, they look so proud. Please give FoMRCH congratulations to them all and wish them luck in their studies, I'm sure they will make you and MRCH very proud of their achievements in the future.

Wish list



Preparing the garden for planting

Can anyone in Zimbabwe help with school equipment please?

Agriculture class - hoes, shovels, watering cans, hosepipes about 30 to 40 metres long. It's a big garden to water with cans, Furniture for the new buildings; more textbooks as well as shelves to store them; laboratory equipment; cheerleaders' uniforms, volleyball, tennis, table tennis equipment, computers, a projector and whiteboard.

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4 The CBC Programme

supports several thousand children in various communities providing medication, education, clothing, food, and in some cases even shelter. EM is from this programme and so far his education has been partially sponsored by a UK Friend. Now, because he has worked very hard and gained 2 A, 3 B, 3 C and 1 D passes at O level he has won a place at Waddilove High School to do A levels. He has dreams of going to university to study law so he will need further support after 2 years of A level studies. Each term at Waddilove costs £365. His first term cost £535.35 to cover his uniform and other equipment. Lloyd

The MRCH diet

Production of food at MRCH is expanding well since the generator makes sure full use can be made of the freezers. The irrigation system will be further extended this April by Australian supporters to guarantee the crops will grow in another part of the grounds. In 7 months last year over 2,500 chickens were sold locally and over 8,000kgs of tomatoes. Pork and vegetables were also sold to the local people and a supermarket, raising much needed revenue. Some is consumed by the children and staff but their diet also includes regular and unpredictable

monthly donations of beef, kapenta (fresh small fish) different types of vegetables, soya, milk and eggs. In the absence of such donations we have a policy in place which says that a third of the produce should be consumed by the children and 2 thirds ploughed back into the project. Margaret

The minibus



The minibus arrived just before Christmas. The children had already left Epworth for their foster homes, many going a few hours drive away. The children are delighted to have a brand new vehicle to travel in.

If you'd like to donate specifically to any project please tell our treasurer that is what your donation is for so it can be targeted in that direction.

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