

Golden Celebration

John and Shirley Richer recently much enjoyed celebrating their Golden Wedding Anniversary at a luncheon attended by family and friends. Being very conscious of the many blessings received throughout their marriage, they felt it was appropriate to say "No presents please, but donations to FoMRCH would always be welcome." As a result, over £800 will be going to our treasurer and over £350 of this will be sent under Gift Aid so that he can reclaim the tax paid.

Mr Marsden Sibanda, Chairman of the MRCH National Board, at a recent meeting, reported that the children are receiving 3 meals a day and the home now has 300 laying hens and poultry food. The Government has decided to use MRCH as an example of excellence for Childcare Practice.

If you would like to receive the newsletter by email in future (saving us postage and paper) please send your request, including your name and email address to
carol2021@banham.net

Prayers for Zimbabwe

Please remember Zimbabwe in your prayers in the time leading up to the elections on March 29th. The people will vote for a councillor, a member of parliament, a senator and the President on the same day.

AGM 12th April

Please read the enclosed letter We'd really like to see you there.

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

www.friendsofmatthewrusike.org



Friends of Matthew Rusike Children's Home

We give support, mainly by cash, but also by advice and assistance to the Home for the benefit of the Children

Newsletter March 2008

News from the Home

To lighten the darkness!

Just before Christmas a box containing over 30 wind-up battery-free torches and 20kgs of rice (to make up the weight limit) was sent to the Home. A special fundraising event was held to pay for the shipping cost at a member's home, and here is the response:

'Indeed we managed to collect the parcel and all the contents were intact. Thank you very much for the torches which all the children and their home mothers are making use of during the very difficult time of persistent darkness.

We are going for long hours without electricity and the mothers and children have passed on their sincere words of gratitude for such a great invention. The big question is for how long they will last when the electricity here is a perennial problem. My family and on my own behalf would like to thank you again for the good work that you have always shown to us. May God bless you all and we all

wish a good and a blessed year to those who contributed to the box and made it possible for us to receive it.'

Lloyd Feb 3rd 2008

We explained to them that the torches would last indefinitely, no batteries ever needed.

We wish to thank **Uni-Com (Global) Ltd** of Edenbrige Kent for their very kind donation of the torches which as you can see was appreciated.

MRCH Month

In the Zimbabwe Methodist Church, May has been chosen as MRCH month. During May, Methodist churches across the country have fundraising events for the Home and for the childcare projects in their own districts which come under the MRCH umbrella. Can you support them by having an extra coffee morning or other event during May?

Run for Rusike goes Worldwide

Over 12,000 miles away in Taranaki, New Zealand the children of MRCH were in the thoughts of Jane Moffitt (nee Robinson), as she competed in the gruelling Women's Triathlon in February 2008. Jane raised almost £300 in sponsorship for completing the course, and even managed to beat her previous time by 12 minutes! Jane visited MRCH in 1998 when her sister Katie was working there as a volunteer.



Jane Moffitt at the end of her triathlon. Well done Jane!

Jane, 33, was very impressed by both children and staff and their enthusiasm for life. This seems ironic in a country which is now reported to have the lowest life expectancy in the world, 34 years is the level now reported.

Jane has tried to raise awareness of the children at MRCH through articles in the local press and several Zimbabweans now living in the Taranaki area have contacted her. She is hoping they will also take up the challenge to support the Home.

Can you contribute?

Many of you have visited the home or worked there as volunteers. Please would you consider writing a short piece for our newsletter, a couple of sentences would do, telling us about your experiences in Zimbabwe? It doesn't matter how long ago, just tell us when. Some of you knew Rev Matthew Rusike in the 50's. Hearing about your time in Zimbabwe would be wonderful. You may even hear from old friends or colleagues who have also become Friends of MRCH. Maybe you have done something to raise money for MRCH, we'd love to hear from you.

Do you have a design or photograph that you could donate for consideration for the next Christmas card. Please contact Carol Banham at carol2021@banham.net

The Crèche

As FoMRCH has committed to sending £10,000 towards the new crèche we ask people to consider having an extra event to help us replace this amount.

Report from National Director

Our September newsletter carried information from the National Director's report about the children's education.... Here is a further extract from the National Director's report about some of the projects your donations support...

Vocational skills training including registration, examination and placement fees

Transport for the children to various college sites, to foster parents or relatives and in tracing the children's parents or relatives

Children in tertiary training for uniforms, stationery and training materials.

The salary of a member of staff who traces the children's families.

Pocket money is given to the children to help them with some of their day to day needs.

MRCH National Project
MRCH has developed into a national project. The construction of the Bulawayo orphan care project was completed in August

2007 and the Gweru project began in June 2007. We are moving into the Chinoyi District to establish another community-based orphan care project in line with local needs and statutory provisions.

The National Project is mainly through the structures of the Methodist Church Zimbabwe, with the help of staff funded by NCH-UK. NCH provides valuable professional support and makes funds available for MRCH to hire professionals who assist in the strategic childcare development. With the support from the British Council, MRCH was able to hire a Childcare planning officer who is helping our children with community integration programmes. All the children in the care of MRCH will now have individual care plans.

Possible Visit from MRCH

There is a good possibility that Astonishment and Bridgetty Mapurisa will be able to visit the UK again. We would like them to visit areas they haven't visited before as well as seeing old friends. If you would like to be a host and are able to arrange events around the visit, please contact carol2021@banham.net

We can't guarantee they will be able to visit every area who asks for them.