

Church circuits are generous with supplies of maize and nuts and their members come from time to time to cook meals and organise games for all the children.

However the Home, with its 145 children, is always in need of funds and there is no doubt that this places severe restriction on maintaining the facilities and further development.

Revds Ed & Audrey Standhaft

Our secretary is retiring at the end of the year so we are looking for a volunteer to join our team. We shall greatly miss John and we thank him for all his work and dedication.

The role of secretary involves:

- 1 preparing and distributing agendas and minutes for 4 annual meetings.
- 2 Maintaining the contact list of members and supporters.
- 3 Supporting the chair and treasurer in all matters linked to MRCH.
- 4 Be one of the charity's trustees.

Changes to our website

1 There are more new photos and a bird's eye view of the home on the MRCH page.

2 You can now donate online with the Virgin Money Giving link.

3 There are links for downloadable official forms for standing orders, gift aid and sponsored fundraising events.

www.friendsofmatthewrusike.org

Please can you help save postage?

We've had to return to Royal Mail to send your paper newsletters so it will cost more. Please send the Chair your email address if you would like to receive it by email.

Christmas cards

No new designs this year and once again we shall send out mixed packs of 10 cards unless you order single designs. Please read the enclosed flyer for full details and order as early as possible.

Triathlon fundraising

Debbie and 13 year old Anna raised £600 to take to Zimbabwe in August. Their church raised money too and as the home was feeling a need to replace the children's beds a few at a time this has given them the opportunity to replace them more quickly. We shall have more news in the next issue and hopefully some photos of the two visits.

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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

September 2015

News from the Home

We were happy to host Ed and Audrey for 3 weeks recently and I hope they enjoyed their stay as much as we enjoyed having them. They were of great help to the college where they spent most of their time helping with teaching and in the library. They even had a group of residential children going to their house each evening for extra lessons. Now we are looking forward to Debbie and her family's visit in August.

I hope these visits will inspire other friends in the UK to visit us.

From 6th of August, children will travel to different locations for around 2 weeks of school holiday placements with their foster families. These visits give our residential children experience of living in a family situation. Some locations are about 2 hours away and the new minibus is invaluable at these times. Some of FoMRCH funds are directed towards fuel costs to make these journeys possible, as this programme is an integral part of MRCH operations.

Rev Margaret Mawire

Where do your donations go?

Your donations go towards the regular monthly remittance of £5,000 but what is this money used for? The bulk of it "meets the basic

costs" for the 145 children resident at the home in Epworth "such as health needs, school fees, including vocational skills training, uniforms, shoes, school supplies and food provisions we do not have in stock." "I would like to assure you that the funds we receive from the Friends are directed towards residential care. I can never emphasize enough how grateful we are for this monthly remittance as it is the only money we are SURE we will get every month."

The reliability of this money gives the MRCH management the chance to plan ahead or pay for emergencies which may arise.

"Health expenses – each month we purchase drugs for 2 children who are epileptic and require medication that cannot be provided at the hospitals. (anti-retroviral drugs are free for the 11 HIV positive children at MRCH) We must pay for hospital admissions. In the past 3 months 3 children were admitted for different ailments. One girl got burnt and was in hospital for 2 weeks, another girl broke her arm and had to have a plaster and a toddler (newcomer) was hospitalised for kwashiorkor – a severe protein deficiency. We pay for procedures such as x rays and age estimation fees as most children are admitted to the Home without

birth certificates and must have their ages estimated before birth certificates can be processed.” Some time ago a child needed an emergency operation for a brain tumour. Recently another child needed hearing aids.

Fees -sometimes the school term starts before the monthly remittance arrives. The schools know the money will come so the children are allowed to start the term and pay the fees later.

Children's travel and subsistence - this includes travel to foster homes, hospitals, trips and family tracing and reunification processes for the children in residential care.

Food and toiletry supplies - there are certain provisions that we receive in very small quantities and we have to supplement them. These include baby formulae, toiletries, foods to provide much needed variety such as spaghetti or macaroni, jam, fruits, eggs etc. Recently we have been purchasing two tonnes of maize for mealie meal each month as there has been a significant decrease in maize donations.”

From it's beginning the FoMRCH executive committee agreed that when all the basic needs of the residential children had been met, the MRCH management team should make the decisions on what they considered to be the priorities for the use of any surplus money

each month. This has worked well for almost 20 years and we know from first hand reports of visitors that the high standard of childcare at MRCH continues.

Surplus money may be spent on such things as salaries and allowances for relief mothers, repairs and maintenance of different facilities, heat, energy and water charges - “In 2014 we had prepaid electricity meters installed. (not with FoMRCH funds) Last month we were able to “borrow” money from the college (fees) to pay for electricity and we managed to return the funds after the FoMRCH remit arrived.”

“I hope this gives a picture of the vast work that the monthly support covers for the children in our care. The need is ever great and we are grateful that we can look forward to receiving the support every month to take care of some of the costs.”

Who pays for the various projects?

During 2013 and 2014, FoMRCH received some very generous legacies enabling the committee to decide to pay salary arrears, purchase a new minibus, and donate money to a couple of projects which individuals were raising money for – specifically the generator and extended irrigation system, both of which have transformed the lives and diets of children and staff alike.

Other projects have been paid for by individuals or groups who have decided they want to raise funds to support something specific, such as the new college classrooms and furniture, sports team uniforms, the Early Learning Centre, pig and poultry production but “largely due to the end of funding from Action for Children for the Community Based Care Programme, we have had to scale down our outreach operations to fit our income.”

At this point it is important to say that we, the committee, are all volunteers and costs for printing and postage are kept to an absolute minimum. Ed

FoMRCH newsletter

Our newsletter informs friends about life and progress at MRCH and tells of further needs. It encourages people to volunteer and gives ideas about what they can do to help.

Not only is it distributed to around 300 friends in the UK but it is also sent to supporters in Australia and many churches, businesses and individuals in Zimbabwe who not only have fundraising events and donate cash but also give goods in kind such as food and clothing. Also “several volunteers come in and out frequently. Recently a group of guys have been coming to teach children rugby; we have a Wits University PhD student doing some volunteer counselling with the children. The dentist has stopped coming to the

Home but the children receive free treatment at his surgery. Life is dynamic at MRCH!”

“I have no idea how many people actually receive the newsletter here. When it comes we forward it to the Board members, circuit leaders and superintendents as well as some individuals who hopefully share it with other people. Recently Zvirinane has been making copies for the reception and our visitors are able to read it.”

I apologise for the lack of photos this time. Ed

Visit in June 2015

We wish to thank Revd Margaret Mawire and her staff for their help during our visit. Everyone made us feel at home and truly blessed. The children are loved and cared for and the atmosphere is very friendly with older children helping the youngest. There is a real sense of a Christian community and Christian values form the core of this work. In spite of the Home being in a poor part of the city, the children at the home are well clothed and educated and the irrigation systems have improved the vegetable gardens so improving the children's diets. Some house mothers have improved the environment by planting flowers around their houses. There are various agricultural projects which now include mushrooms.