



2001 was a very exciting year for the project and this seemed a good opportunity to update you on everything that has been happening, as well as to thank you for all your support!

News from the chalk face



moving in...

The first primary school class for deaf children was opened in February 2001, as a result of funding raised by the Kisoro Trust. Sixteen children initially benefited from this education, and a further four children attend on a self-fund basis.

The deaf children are being taught in a discrete unit within Seseme Primary School, the local mainstream primary. There are a total of 185 children in Primary One at present and the deaf

children are performing well compared to their mainstream peers. In recent test results, one deaf child came top of the whole Primary One school year, one came second and two shared fourth position. The Ugandan Government's Education Office is fully supportive of the project and identified a qualified teacher for the deaf and provided a subvention grant towards food, medical care and educational resources. Good news so far!

Stop Press! A letter from Kisoro . . .

Greetings to you from the Diocese of Muhabura in Uganda.

The Diocese and the project holders are very grateful to you for the good work you are doing to support education of the Deaf children in Kisoro.

The project has attracted many visitors from various organisations and institutions involved in special needs education. Education Department has advised us to employ a specialised volunteer to help the Unit gain more strength to serve the Deaf. Through Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Uganda, there is one American who is willing to work for us as a volunteer for a period of two years. He needs housing accommodation and a monthly allowance of Uganda shillings one hundred thousand only. From looking at his breadth of experience and language skills we are very keen for this to happen!

The Diocese is ready to provide the required accommodation, while monthly allowance would need to come from the Kisoro Trust.

Rt. Rev. Ernst M. Shalita
Diocesan Bishop

News from the Signing Choir!

Thelma Petty enjoys signing songs, so she got a few friends together in her home every week to practice. At Christmas they made use of their skills. Thelma writes, "We presented a mixture of Christmas carols and popular tunes in Braehead Shopping Centre, Queen Street Station, and Regent Way Shopping Centre in Hamilton and were delighted to raise a total of £916! Not only did we have great

fun but those who watched told us the same and showed their enjoyment by being so generous. I had heard of the Kisoro Trust through the chairperson Rosie Addis and the group decided the money should go to it. As a deaf person I feel it vital that every deaf child is able to go to school, and with their peers, to receive an education no matter where they are in the world." Well done Thelma and friends!

Donaldson's School reunion helps deaf children in Uganda



170 former pupils of Donaldson's School attended a reunion event held in the Claremont Hotel in Edinburgh last year. People came from Inverness, Glasgow, Fife, Dumfries, Edinburgh and even as far as Birmingham to meet up with old school friends. The evening was organised by Charles Thomson of Edinburgh, who said, "Although it was a lot of work, it was a great night. A total of £592 was raised, and it has been agreed to give it to the Kisoro School for Deaf Children in Uganda."

The Kisoro Trust chairperson Rosie Addis remembers back to an earlier visit to the school. "Some time ago I visited Donaldsons to talk to the children about the project. As a result of this, the children decided to have a coffee morning and sell jewellery they had made. They raised a total of £85, and also wrote letters for the children in Kisoro to ask them what life is like in Uganda. Everyone is looking forward to the replies - and the day when there is an Internet connection in Kisoro, for the children to communicate more quickly!"

Fundraising

Over the last two years, over £18,000 has been raised for the Kisoro School for Deaf Children. This is thanks to many individual donors, a number of charitable trusts, St Paul's & St George's Church, and all those who have got together to organise fundraising events on our behalf. As you can see, this has made a huge difference in the lives of the deaf children in and around Kisoro, as well as bringing benefits to parents, siblings and the wider community. We hope we can continue to count on your support as we move into the second year of the project.

As we plan for the future, we are particularly grateful to those who have agreed to support the project on an ongoing basis. Having a regular, committed income helps us to secure the long-term sustainability of the school. If you would like to make a regular contribution, of whatever size, please complete the standing order form enclosed with this newsletter. And remember that all gifts, regular or one-off, now qualify for tax relief. So if you are a UK taxpayer, please complete and return the enclosed Gift Aid Declaration form, to enable us to reclaim the tax on any gifts you have made since 6 April 2000, or may plan to make in the future.

Thank you very much.



New targets for 2002

The Kisoro School for Deaf Children currently only provides education for 10% of the total number of primary age deaf children in the Diocese. In order to try to meet the educational needs of a greater number of these children, we hope to run two classes in parallel from the beginning of January 2003. To make this happen, we need to be able to raise £ 1,700 for the renovation of a dormitory in a building which has been provided by the Diocese of Muhabura.

We will also need to find £ 900 for the provision of furniture for the dormitory, including beds, mattresses, bedding and washing bowls. The construction of a rainwater collection and storage tank will cost £ 600, while training another teacher in sign language is £ 850. Finally, providing parents, guardians and siblings of deaf children with communication skills in sign language to ensure continued integration into the family unit will cost £700. This will include running workshops, visits from UNAD and deaf mentors.

These add up £ 4,750 and are in addition to the ongoing need to finance the day to day running costs of the deaf school. However they will be the project priorities for the forthcoming year.

The Kisoro Ceilidh & Auction



It seems incredible that the Kisoro Ceilidh was almost a year ago already but in case you didn't make it along, we were delighted to raise around £600 on the night and over £2,500 when you include donations and money raised by the auction. Dancers and ceilidh fans were attracted along by a superb band, and in fact some travelled specially to dance to Sandy Brechin's unique style of playing. Hopefully it won't be too long before we do it all again!

The auction attracted bids from as far afield as Japan and Switzerland but in the end it was UK winners who took the prizes. Details of the music, painting and dance commissioned through the auction will be of interest to many and so we will try to include some information in our next newsletter and on our website, www.kisoro.org