



# THE ROTARY CLUB of PINETOWN

SERVICES COMMITTEE

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RECIPIENT OF THE ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENTS' 'SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT' AWARD', 2012/13, FOR DISTRICT 9270

## PINETOWN SOUTH PROJECT – UPDATE – AUGUST 2015

Much has been happening in KwaNdengezi since our last update. Herewith a review of the more significant ones.



Last year we started a program of training Community Members to take over most of Rotarys' work in the Township. Here are the key staff of our main Social Development agent, the Ethembeni Community Crisis Centre. On the left is the Manager, Abegail Mbongwa, behind her, (looks as if he had had a few 'Red Bulls') is her husband, Phineas. On the extreme right is the Projects Manager, Sithembiso Duma &, in front of him, in the white shirt, is the Admin clerk, Vuyo. They are now doing over half the work previously done by Rotarians.



Getting around in a Township is very difficult. Very few have cars & they use Taxis (expensive & irregular) or walk (huge distances). One of our 'Rotary Trusts' recently donated half the cost of a car in order to alleviate the situation. The Department of Social Development is funding the other half of this car. Here Phineas & Vuyo admire it. This car increases Ethembenis' effectiveness & saves money. A major use is collecting tons a month of surplus foodstuffs from PicknPay, a local, large, supermarket. This food is distributed to our huge network of the needy.



About 10 years ago, the Rotary Club of Wellingborough-Hatton, England, funded a Matching Grant to extend the Zamani Creche & Pre-school. To mark the occasion they planted some trees. Here they are, flourishing. Zamani is one of our leading Pre-schools. This illustrates the power of Rotary & the permanence of our work. Over the past 15 years we have upgraded over 50 such Pre-schools at a cost of over R3 Million (US\$300 000). Most of our expenditure is on staff training & Educational Toys. In 2013, realizing that, in spite of our efforts, 51% of local children were entering Grades R & 1 without any Preschool experience, we started a Pre-school 'Out-reach' program to bring free Pre-schooling TO the children. It was highly successful, reducing the 51% to 11,6% in 6 months & reaching over 350 children. The Government is now introducing their version, the Thuthuzla Program & we are supporting its success.



One of the delights of living in South Africa is that we can enjoy the wild-life. At least one week-end a month we go to our 50 acre (23 ha) smallholding just over an hour from our Westville home. At 1350 metres high it has a lovely climate. There are over 10 Buck living on the property. Here a tiny Duiker nibbles the grass in the lawn outside our bedroom.



We started a School reference Library quite a few years ago. It was so successful that the Department of Education joined us in partnership & it became the KwaNdengezi Learning Centre. It has gone from strength to strength & has dozens of programs running. Rotary funds the new ones until the Department takes them over (because they are always so effective)! One such program is the importation of School text books from USA via Rotarian Charlie Clemmons' 'Second Wind Foundation'. This is the third such container. The Rotarian with me is Cheryl Marx who is selecting books for a deeply deprived school in the Transkei (about 350 km distant – deeply rural, deeply deprived but scenically amazing!). She has sent the books there as a private project.



One of the Learning Centres many projects is to try & instill a culture of reading in the Community (where very few households own even one book!). We have a 'Kiddies Room' (a pet project of the centres' founder – Erin Raab). We have recently purchased some 'IT Educational Tablets' & creative play equipment. We open it to one Pre-school a day in the morning & are evaluating the options as to how to best use the equipment & methods in the afternoons – the Grades R & 1 finish school at 12 while their older siblings finish at 2.30 & then escort them home. Do we loan the equipment to one classroom a week (about 20 classrooms!) & pay a teacher to stay behind until 2,30 or do we arrange transport for 20 kids at a time to come to the Centre then take them home? Simple solutions are easily available in our first-world communities but they are difficult in a township – particularly when 'child rape' is all too common.

The use of the IT tablets is supervised by our Volunteer IT Trainer (who, also, conducts IT Courses for the Teachers, Volunteers & Learners). We have 15 computers at the centre & we expect that, by starting them young, we will develop many Bill Gates etc.



This is a new project & is part of our student advisory section – the Careers Information Centre'. The staff of IZ Radio, a Zulu language Community radio station are working, through the Learning Centre, with the local schools to evaluate the Learners aptitude for a career in Radio. They will then train the selected candidates for careers in radio & TV. The initial evaluation was conducted via 'Cel phone, here the 'short list' are recording, on IZ Radios' equipment, in the Centre (the rest of us had to be very quiet!). The man on the right is an IZ Radio announcer.



It is remarkable that the African Nation, as a generality, is exceptionally proficient in Spoken Languages. Most South African Blacks are fluent in at least two languages & can converse in several others. Unfortunately the opposite applies to reading & writing. Our Club has spent much of its' income on improving Literacy, especially in the Foundation Phases (Grades R - 3). We 'employ' 10 trained volunteers to teach the Teachers how to read WITH the children. We purchased over R300 000 (\$30 000) of 'reading books' in both English & isiZulu. This teaching was done in the 'word recognition' method. We are now spending about R400 000 (\$40 000) to impart the 'Phonics' method (which gives deeper understanding of the structure of the English language.

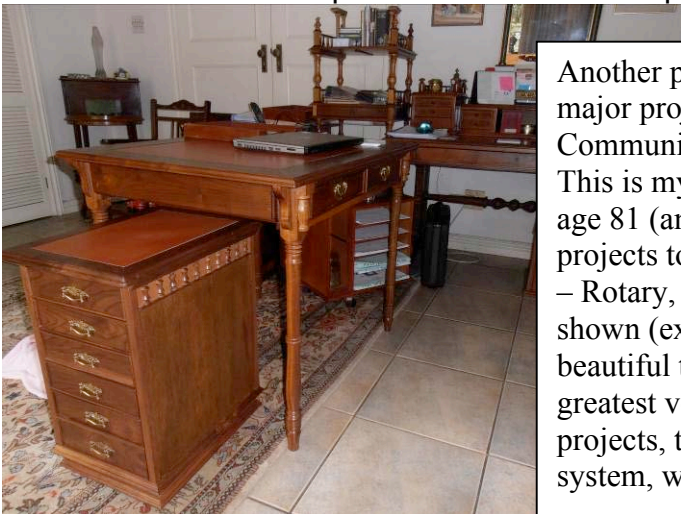


During the June 2015 school holidays we ran an 'Inter-school Winter Games'. 6 schools participated in soccer & netball. This is the second we have run but the first 'Inter-school' one. The response was enthusiastic & all the local schools (about 15) have signed up for the next 'Interschool Sports Day'. They played Soccer (boys) & Netball (Girls). A KwaNdengezi sports committee has been formed & training in Girls' soccer & Boys' Rugby has commenced.

Our 'Schools Soccer league' is affiliated to the local 'Brazil Soccer Academy' (strongly supported by Rotary) who provided the training & the referees on the day. Brazil is associated with the new 'Liverpool (UK) Soccer Academy', whose new R300 Million (\$30 million) training centre will soon be built in Durban.

The LH pic shows the children being addressed on 'Life skills' – avoid drugs, drink, abuse, crime etc. These talks form part of every one of our youth events. On the right, Miss N Dube (Under 20 KZN Netball player) presents the netball winner with her medal. 28 of Brazils' graduates now make a good living from sport!

We are confident that sport will reduce township tensions & produce better citizens.



Another personal pic (to fill space, our soon-to-be completed major projects – the Thuthuzela Preschool & the KwaNdengezi Community Trade School will be reported later).

This is my home office. I am retired from Business & now, at age 81 (and with more free time due to the 'handing over' of our projects to the Community) can spend more time on my hobbies – Rotary, Gardening & Wood-work. I made all the furniture shown (except the desk on the right). I used American walnut, a beautiful timber in appearance & to work with. By far the greatest volume of my Office-work is caused by our Rotary projects, the reporting requirements of our Global Grants system, while absolutely necessary, are very onerous!

I would like to thank the International Rotary Movement, the Pinetown Rotary Trusts, other donors & my Club (especially) for giving me so much support. We are making a real difference to the lives of 100 000 people. On behalf of the Community (who do all the work) our thanks. Please ask me for further details on our projects.

Bill, for the Club & Community.

