

# Don McMath Foundation

## Newsletter

[www.donmcmath.org](http://www.donmcmath.org)

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### The Don McMath Foundation Newsletter – 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2003

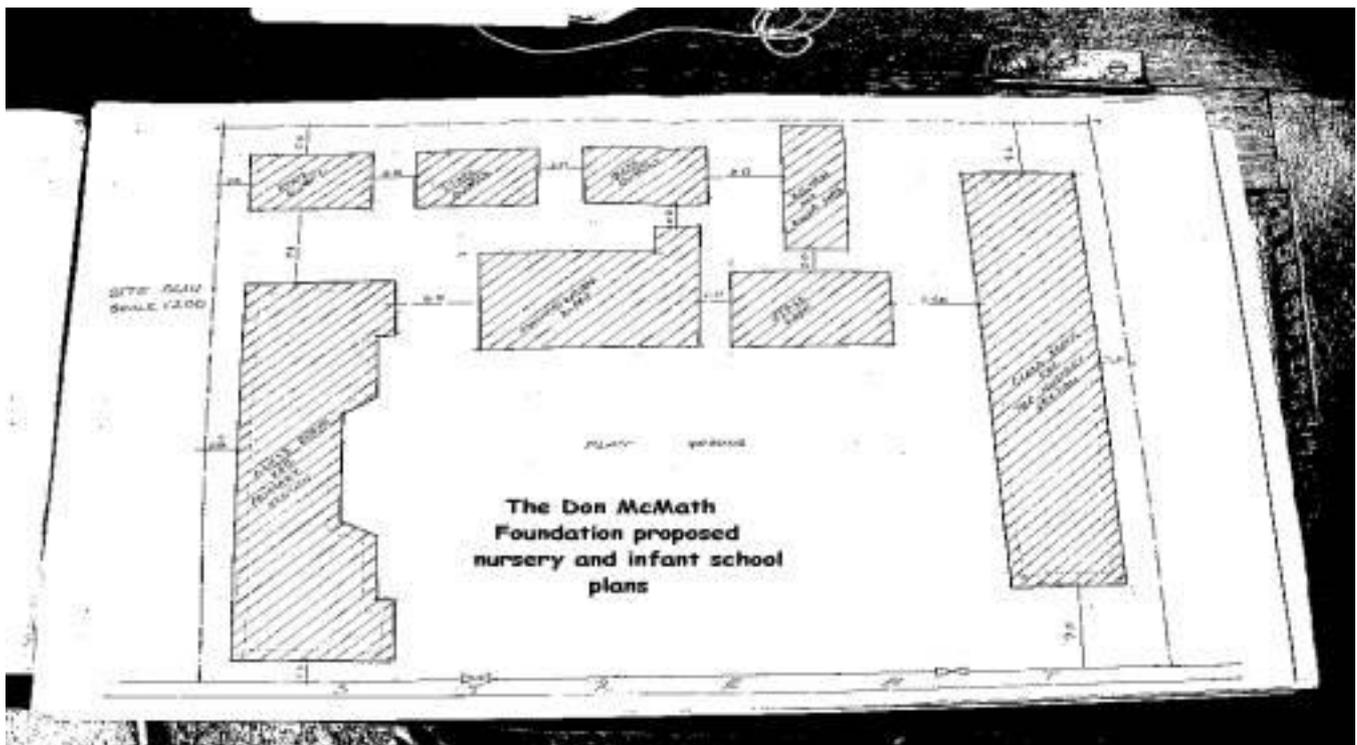
Dear All,

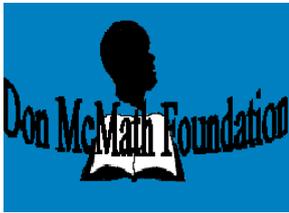
I have finally got round to doing a newsletter, a month after returning from The Gambia. Please accept my apologies for the delay. The school is going from strength to strength. The new class have settled in well with their new teacher, Terese. She is quite artistic and wrote a song for the children to sing to me when I arrived. I am so impressed with Marlin the senior teacher, she is determined to make this the best school in Gambia. She is very disciplined about her work, I think she was an excellent choice.

Most of my visit was taken up with getting the land for our own school. At present we rent the building we use, and next year sometime we will have reached its full capacity. The parents approached me and told me that some land near by was government land and I could have it for building a school on. The land is given free, but I have pay all the legal fees, planning fees etc.

Sheikh Lewis the Chairman of the school, who some of you have met, had a weeks leave after being in Iraq for a month on U.N. business, and he gave it up to work on getting the land. I think we must have seen every civic leader in the area, two M.P.s, the deputy mayor, the local priest & 3 Imans. (muslim priest)

The local parents have also formed a committee with members of the community. We have meetings at my house, to tell them the progress of getting the land. They also collected 61 names of parents who will provide labour for the building of the school. The labour will be free in return for feeding the workers each day, which the women will cook. The project is certainly bringing the community together, one of my neighbours said he is talking to people he has never talked to before, though he had seen them in the area.





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We now have the plans drawn (see above picture), and the bottom line is that everyone from the Minister down agrees to us having the land. So now I am into fund raising. Any of you in the Hastings area will find me manning a stall in the Hasting Old Town High Street, on Thursday 7th August. It is Carnival week and they have a street market. Many thanks to those who have provided me with bric a brac.

Mick and Judy will be running a stall at the car boot sale at the Verwood Rustic Fair on 25<sup>th</sup> August with all money raised going to the Foundation. If any of you in the Verwood area have anything you would like to get rid of then get in touch with Mick and Judy who will even collect it from you if it's not too bulky.

Also in September, Sheikh Lewis is coming to England. He is staying with me and also going to have a week with Mick and Judy. Both of us are having a meet and greet occasion. I am having a garden party on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September and Mick and Judy are having one on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup>, you are all welcome. We will let you know the details later. While Sheik Lewis is here, he is hoping to raise funds for us and has asked both Mick & me to arrange talks to various groups, and also to visit local schools etc. If anyone can help or has some suggestions, please let us know.

Mick with the help of another of our Trustees, Graham Cook, has been busy preparing all the paperwork necessary for our application to become a UK registered charity. All the forms have now been sent to the Charity Commission and we are awaiting their response, we should hear by 18<sup>th</sup> August if we have been successful or if we need to fill in a few more forms! When we are registered as a charity we will be asking all our sponsors to sign a Gift Aid declaration which will enable us to claim about 28% of all donations and sponsorship monies back from the Inland Revenue.

I am so thankful to you all, for helping with educating these children. I don't think you realize how important your sponsorship and donations have been. By the beginning of next year we will be providing education for about 80 children who would never have gone to school, if it were not for all of you.

Many thanks

Anne