

Don McMath Foundation

Newsletter

www.donmcmath.org

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The Don McMath Foundation Newsletter – 7th September 2006

Hello All

It's been a very busy summer so far, since the last newsletter in May we have managed to raise a massive £8,000, which will be going towards the new school building. We have also claimed another £2,000 from the Inland Revenue in Gift Aid. We are nearly there with the new building and only need another thousand or two to finish it.

The school starts their autumn term on about the 18th September (providing the rainy season has finished) and Anne intends to go out to The Gambia at the beginning of November (she wants to celebrate a fairly major birthday in the UK before she goes). We have a new class of about 30 children starting which will bring the total number of pupils up to 180 and fill up the school.

Verwood Garden Party 23rd July:



Everyone had an excellent afternoon, Judy excelled herself with the food, and nearly everything was eaten! The weather was perfect, we were slightly worried on the day before when we had a torrential downpour in Verwood that lasted nearly 2 hours, but on the day the sun shone.

The song title quiz proved to be very successful and we raised over £40 after buying the prizes. No one got all 25 answers correctly but 5 people managed 24. Their names were all put in a hat and the prizes went to the first 3 drawn. They were: Lorna Hutchinson (£15 Boots voucher), Dave and Anita Johnston (£10 Boots voucher) and Andrew Borman (£5 Boots voucher). If anyone wants a copy of the answers then please let me know.

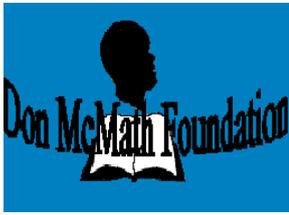
Victor, our entertainer for the afternoon was fantastic and was appreciated by all, he even donated 35% of his fee to the school. If anyone wants to hear more of him he has a web site at: www.geocities.com/victorsalbum



The raffle raised about £250, thanks to everyone who donated prizes.

Many thanks to the Rotary Club of Verwood who presented us with a cheque for £1,000 this was totally unexpected and has made a great difference to the Building Fund.

In total we raised over £1,000 (not counting the cheque from Verwood Rotary).



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Judy would like to thank everyone who helped with the food, especially Trudi Edgar, Graham Cook, Di Pomeroy, Jane Hall, Rosemary Jones and Chris Harris.

Bexhill Garden Party 27th August:



Anne's garden party in Bexhill was an equal success and again raised over £1,000. We were also fortunate with the weather as it was the only day over the bank holiday it did not rain. The food was excellent and plentiful, especially the desserts, everyone had worked really hard to provide a wonderful spread. Anne would like to thank everyone for the wonderful raffle

prizes, we received 75 and it took a long time to do the draw!! She would also like to thank her many friends who helped, special thanks to Paula & Derek Lee for all the running about they did collecting tables, chairs etc. Thanks also to David Gould for doing an excellent job auctioning a bottle of champagne and making another £28 for the school. Thanks to Cliff Bishop for bidding that amount.



Mick and Judy once again ran a bric-a-brac stall at the Verwood Rustic Fayre on Bank Holiday Monday and had their most successful Fayre to date, managing to raise over £250. This is largely due to Rosemary Jones selling her ceramic figures for the school, many thanks go out to Rosemary and Frank for helping us on the day, it's hard work manning a stall on your own!

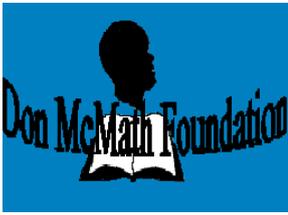
Kirsten and Heather Heatly spent several weeks at the school this summer. This is their account of their trip:

It seemed like we had had this trip organised for ages, so when the time finally came for us to pack our bags (full of everything we possibly could) and head off to Gambia, we were raring to go. We had both visited Gambia previously for a holiday, but knew this would be a whole different experience, and we certainly weren't wrong.....



Our aim was to run a summer project for the children, where they could learn arts and crafts, sports, games and most important of all, have fun in their school holidays. As most people, we were slightly apprehensive as to how it would go. For example, we didn't even know if the children would be able to understand our Scottish accents, let alone want to participate in the activities we had planned. What we certainly had not counted on was the level of enthusiasm that the children in fact have.

We arrived in Gambia while the term time was still running, which was ideal as it not only allowed us to get to know the children, but for the



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children to get to know us. It was amazing to experience their enthusiasm and willingness to learn. From this, we knew the summer project was going to be just fine.



When school broke up for the holidays, our project began. We did many art projects with the children, allowing them to be introduced to so many new things including, paint, glue and glitter.....we still can't decide if it was a good idea! I think they ended up with more glitter on their faces and bodies than they did on the paper, but they seemed to have fun all the same. Games and sports were also vast throughout the summer.

And yes at times, having 60 children at once between 2 of you seemed to prove slightly challenging, but the time we spent at the Don McMath Foundation School was one neither of us would change. We had a summer of fun and games which would not have been possible without the children and their eagerness to learn. One of the most enjoyable days was when we held a British-like children's party for everyone as a finale to our project. The children absolutely loved musical bumps, and their goodie bags also went down a treat.

The children are fantastic and it is now so clear the value of a good education. It has also been highlighted just how important the charity and its donors are to the lives of these children. It was an amazing experience, which would not have been possible without the children and those working with or contributing to the Don McMath Foundation school. We cannot thank everyone enough.



Kirsten and Heather Heatly

If anyone who currently receives this newsletter through the post is now on email could you please email us at the above email address so we can email you future newsletters as this will cut down considerably on our costs.

Anne, Judy and Mick McMath

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