

## The Don McMath Foundation Newsletter – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009

# The Don McMath Foundation



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**NOTE NEW WEBSITE AND EMAIL ADDRESS**

Hello All

First of all a big thank you to all our supporters. Thanks to you we have managed to raise over £7,000 between May and September. This means that we should have enough money to finish the new upper basic school classroom block. Having said that we will still need to raise about £7,000 By April 2010 to kit out the classrooms.

Thanks to everyone who helped out on the charity shoot on 30<sup>th</sup> August. We managed to raise £722. The good news is that as Mick is now a Barclays Pensioner, Barclays will be matching that amount with another £722, a fantastic result from a very enjoyable day. Congratulations to all the prize winners and thanks to Luke for making the trophies and Maggie, Cat and Judy for cooking the food.



Judy and Mick raised £143 from their children's games stall at the Verwood rustic Fayre. Thanks to Gary and Claire at the Monmouth Ash in Verwood for their donation of a meal for two.



The Bexhill Garden Party was once again a great success and raised another £1,100. Special thanks to Graham for his work on the bar and Belinda, Judy and Di for serving the food and washing up! Thanks also go to Paula and Derek Lee for supplying chairs, tables and equipment and Dave Hanley for helping to arrange the garden. Also thanks to all that contributed food and raffle prizes.



Thanks to St Michael's Young families group who raised over £120 for us on their "Africa" morning on 30<sup>th</sup> September.



Banna is our cleaner at the primary school and the mother of the first child sponsored at the school. Through an interpreter she told Anne the following - "My life used to be darkness, but then the school came & now I have light in my life"

We have got a fantastic example of recycling in The Gambia by Banna's daughter, Monase Sanneh who is 15 and in Grade 6. Monase recently gave Anne a handbag that she had made (see picture) Anne asked what it was made from and was amazed to find that Monase had crocheted it from discarded video tapes that she had rescued from the local rubbish dump.

We have mentioned before about the girl who needed an eye operation, well it has finally happened. Thanks to the sponsors who contributed towards it. 6 year old Jainaba Sonko was admitted to hospital four times for the operation and each time they sent her home for one reason or the other. Once was because they didn't have any stitches available, and once was because the doctor did not turn up for the operation! However, it seems to be successful as she is back to school and can now see the board and her books.

#### Status of building

The building work has come to a halt until Anne returns in November. The shell is completed and we now need to finish the interior. Once the ceilings are up we will finish putting in lights, fans and toilets. The windows and doors are in, but need to be glazed. When the tiling is done we will then paint the whole building. The building will then be finished and we will just need to equip the classrooms.



#### School

School started back on 23<sup>rd</sup> September a little later than planned due to the end of Ramadan. We now have 9 classes. 6 in Primary and 3 in Nursery with a total of 257 children. Next September we will start using the new building for the Upper Basic School which will give the children another three years of education and take them up to the Gambian National exams which are roughly the equivalent to UK GCSE level. At the end of these three years they will either go into further education or look for jobs.

The school had employed a new teacher to start this term, but he didn't turn up (he had taken another job but didn't tell us!) so the Headmaster has been covering his classes. He has since employed a new woman teacher who will start on the 1st October.

Anne has heard that Mr Gaye (Grade 2) has recently got married, so we wish him all the best.

#### Jolly Phonics

Does anyone have any Jolly Phonics books etc. that they no longer need. We have now had training for the teachers in phonics and they are very enthusiastic about teaching the children, but we could do with some books, we do have the DVD.

#### Travel

If anyone is travelling to Gambia and would like to take something for the school, we could do with good geometry sets. The ones you buy in Gambia are rubbish and Anne can only carry so much with her when she goes. Also toys for the Nursery school are always useful.

#### School Reports

Hopefully if you are sponsoring a specific child at the school you should have received their school report by now, either with this newsletter or by email, if you have not received one then please let Mick know.

Thank you to all the new sponsors who have joined us since the last newsletter, unfortunately although we have gained new sponsors we have also lost some of the existing ones so we still need to find more!

If you can spread the word among your family and friends we would be very grateful. They can pay £5 monthly or £60 annually by cash, cheque or standing order direct from their bank.

The new website is now up and running. Graham Cook will be maintaining it. Please note the new website address: [www.donmcmath.org](http://www.donmcmath.org) and the new email address: [info@donmcmath.org](mailto:info@donmcmath.org). You can also reach Anne and Mick via: [anne@donmcmath.org](mailto:anne@donmcmath.org) and [mick@donmcmath.org](mailto:mick@donmcmath.org).

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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