

NEWSletter



18.5 MILES THERE & BACK



WHEN CHILDREN go on school trips in England it is very exciting – something different to remember forever. It is the same in Nkuringo.

The older children at the Nkuringo Foundation and Primary School were taken on a school trip on 19th May 2016 to visit the Buhoma Bwindi Park. They were visiting the Munyanga waterfall – which is a tourist attraction for visitors to the region. The children had also gone

Above: The children happy to reach the Park. Asgario, the school Director, is second left. These children have just walked 15km through the jungle.

Left: Lovely to see the children smiling after their long walk! And also lovely to see them in their new school uniforms!

to study the weather station and national parks in general. It was decided it was easier to show the children rather than just tell them.

They were accompanied by Asgario Turyagyenda, the School Director and the teacher Demas Nshimiyimana who is Director of Studies – and is our feature staff member in this newsletter.

A school trip in Uganda is however slightly different to one in England. The park is 15km from Nkuringo through the forest and jungle and there are no coaches to whisk you to your destination so the only way to get there is on foot!

The children left Nkuringo at 8:30am and got home at 8:00pm. 30km – 18.6 miles round trip on foot. 15km is a long way but it is through the most amazing scenery – scenery Steve and I will never forget. Uganda is called the garden or fruit bowl of Africa – forget deserts – this is lush green vegetation and hills/valleys that stretch above and below you in all directions. The children are used to walking – if they ever want to visit anywhere outside their village they need to walk – and they do so without complaint – it is their way of life.

For the children of Nkuringo Foundation and Primary School this was a real adventure – many of them would not be in school if it was not for the kindness of our sponsors – and now many were visiting areas they would never ever normally have the chance to see – and certainly not just for education!

When they reached the park they were all given a wonderful meal of rice and beans before visiting the waterfall.

The children had a wonderful day – one they will not forget – and the smiling faces say it all!

They got back to the school at 8:00pm in the evening – having walked further than many of us would ever do – but their happy faces show how much this type of adventure means to children who are enjoying – many thanks to you – a real childhood!



Main picture: The valley the children are in is called the Nteko Valley. They were on their way back from Buhoma and were heading to the Kikobero road before travelling on to Nkuringo. The plant growing in the photo is tea. Tea is grown in the buffer zones around the forest to stop wild animals from crossing into community land (gorillas hate tea). There is also a hedge of Mauritius thorns that is planted around the tea plantation to work as another buffer.

Top: The children are looking at Bushaho hill, across the Kashasha river Valley. The children were on their way down the hill ready to enter the forest.

Above: The children are cooling down in the Ivi river, that originates from the Bwindi forest and pours into lake Edward in the DR Congo. A much needed refreshment break!!

Below: Demas with some of his pupils – have you ever seen such smiling faces!

Bottom: Demas decorating the school with his wonderful educative drawings.

We thought it would be nice for you to get a better understanding of the people who make the Nkuringo Foundation and Primary School tick. Each month we will focus on one member of staff. All are important and have a different role to play.

School Teacher: Demas.

Foundation Nursery & Primary School Staff

DEMAS NSHIMIYIMANA

This month we are going to focus on Demas Nshimiymana. Demas is a teacher and Director of Studies for the school.

Every time Steve and I saw Demas at the school he had a pen or crayon in hand. He is an extremely good artist and is currently painting the school inside and out with educational drawings – here you can see him painting an ear and a fish. In a place where it is not easy to get hold of the posters and charts you see in English schools – Demas has to compromise – and we think he is doing a very good job of it!

Demas is also responsible for painting the big banners with names of all school sponsors that we have seen in previous newsletters.

Demas is 24 years old. He comes from the village of Kafuga in the Kirundo Subcounty of the Kisoro District.

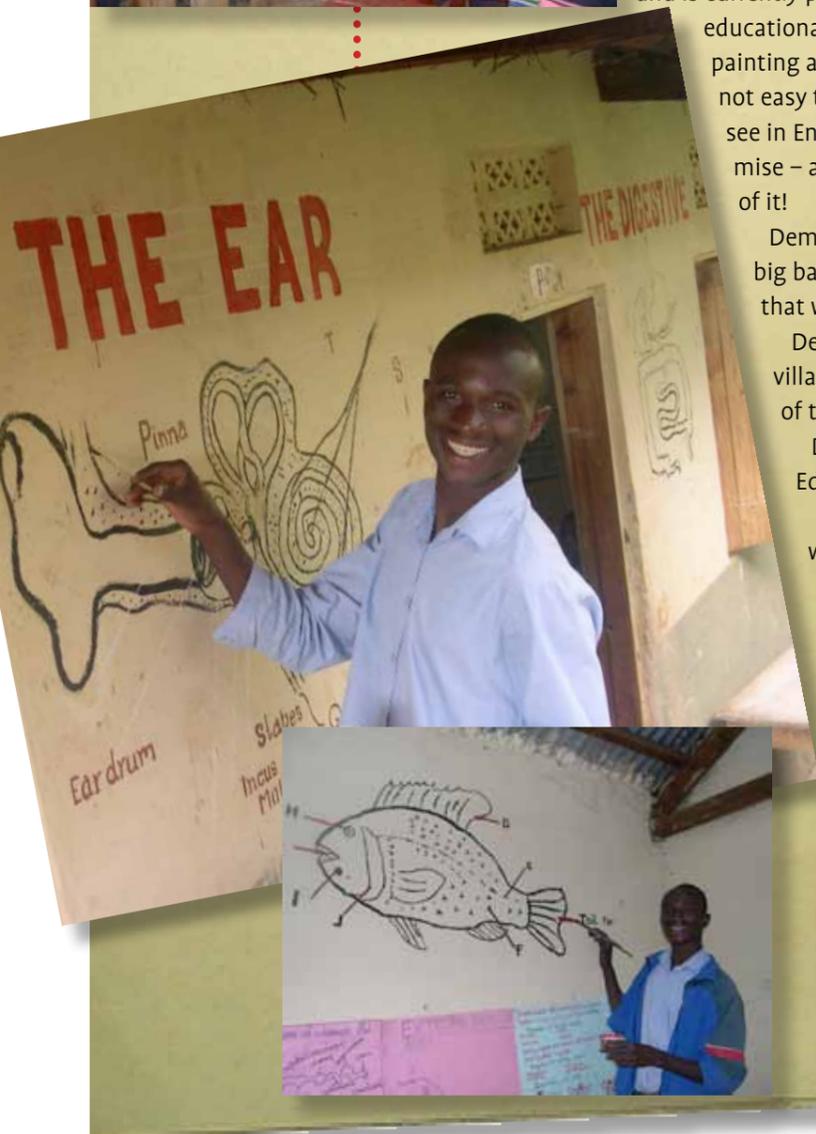
Demas teaches Social Studies, Religious Education and – of course - Fine art.

He teaches Primary Five and has been working at the Nkuringo Foundation and Primary school since May 2014.

He is also an athlete and loves getting involved in sports with the school.

We have never seen Demas without a smile on his face and he is indeed a very good asset to the community.

NKURINGO



BRAS & SPONSOR DONATIONS AWAITING DEPARTURE

AS YOU ARE aware Chris Reed has promised us space in a container he is shipping out to Nkuringo with medical aids, water filters and other donations for the region. You can read more about the amazing work Chris is doing in this newsletter. We are very pleased to be able to help Chris where we can – as indeed he helps us by transporting sponsor letters back and forth – and of course taking out our donations to the school. Above you can see we are nearly there! All our sports bags are packed with your gifts, letters, shoes and clothes for the school. It was Chris who gave me the idea of buying big cheap sports bags to transport donations – a very

useful item to the community once it has done its job! We are still looking to fill the container and Chris would love to hear from anyone who can help with anything from a medical examination bench to walking sticks etc. to furnish the new (and first) health centre in the region.

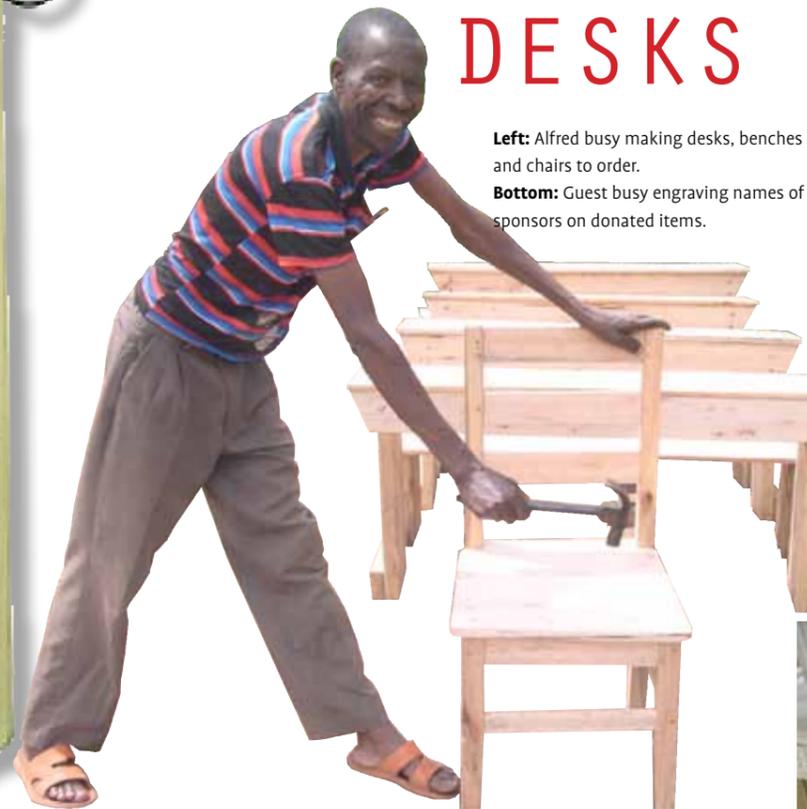
If you look at the back page you can see I am also appealing for used spectacles. The boxes above contain every bra that was donated to the community – it would be nice to add another box full of spectacles!

Please contact Steve or I if you can help. We will keep you posted!

DESKS & CHAIRS

Left: Alfred busy making desks, benches and chairs to order.

Bottom: Guest busy engraving names of sponsors on donated items.



In our last newsletter we put out an appeal for anyone who could help us fund desks and chairs for the new classrooms nearing completion. These desk and chairs are all built by local people so by sponsoring an item you are not only giving work to the community but the items you sponsor are engraved with your name or a name of your choice. A double desk and bench cost £20 for the set and a chair costs £10. You can have your name in a classroom in Uganda for children to see, hopefully, for generations to come.

We have already had some kind sponsors come forward and Alfred the carpenter has been kept busy making the furniture. Guest has also been busy engraving the names of the sponsors.

If anyone else would like to sponsor a desk/bench set or a chair please contact me – we still have another classroom to fill! And let's face it – it would be hard to find a more unusual birthday present or gift for a loved one!!!





PROJECTS

SINGING GORILLA

Singing Gorilla Projects facilitate and fund community based projects in a remote part of Uganda that improve the welfare of communities and enriches the lives of individuals.

The Singing Gorilla Projects are:

- 1. Creative Projects** - The village, Nkuringo, has its own thriving music school with now over 60 students performing music and drama with the "Lets PlayMusic" project.
- 2. Community Projects** - "Water Wealth Driving Health" project installs water tanks to capture rain water for drinking and washing, in a part of the world where there is no running water. Water filters are also installed to provide fresh, clean drinking water without having to boil it first.
- 3. Education Projects** - supporting school development and infrastructure through child sponsorship. The "Light to Read" project, is a solar energy distribution project to help children study more effectively that also includes a computer laptop distribution programme.
- 4. Health Projects** - our "Step Up to Health" project has built a community health clinic and funds the training of medics and nurses.

Easter visit by Evarist

Evarist, our projects coordinator visited us in the UK over Easter in March. As guest of honour, we held a successful fund raising event at the Ferry in Bursledon on the River Hamble, where previous trekkers with Evarist attended. A fun time was had by all. A big thank you to all who came to raise over £6,000.



The May 2016 trip - Water tanks and water filters

In May Chris Read from Singing Gorilla Projects visited Nkuringo and the surrounding areas to check up on the ongoing project works. The headline picture shows men from the Batwa Pygmy community at Sanuriro receiving a three thousand litre water tank that will harvest rain water and provide water for a community. This water tank was donated with kind generosity of Carol and Colin Easton, who are great supporters of Singing Gorilla Projects and visited the Nkuringo area in February of this year



Water filters

More community water filters were distributed on this trip to the Hope School in Rubuguri as well as family sized filters to members of the HIV community.



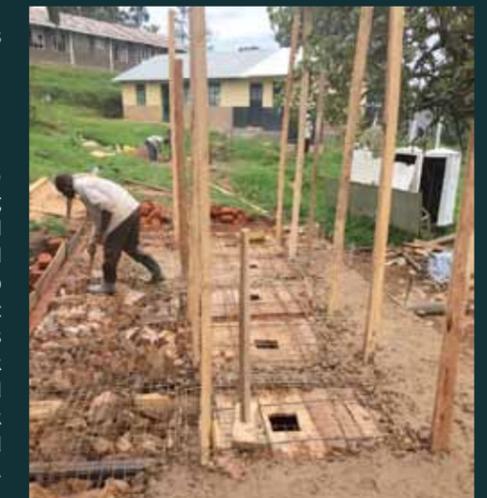
Supporting schools with water filters in Kampala

Singing Gorilla Projects not only supports the community in Nkuringo and the Kisoro District, but also supports schools elsewhere in Uganda. Kiyaaya School on the outskirts of Kampala is twinned with Portsmouth Grammar School and Singing Gorilla Projects as a Portsmouth based charity has created links between the schools.

Left: Chris Read presenting the Community Water Filter to Charles Mubiro, headmaster of Kikaaya School, not far from Kampala.

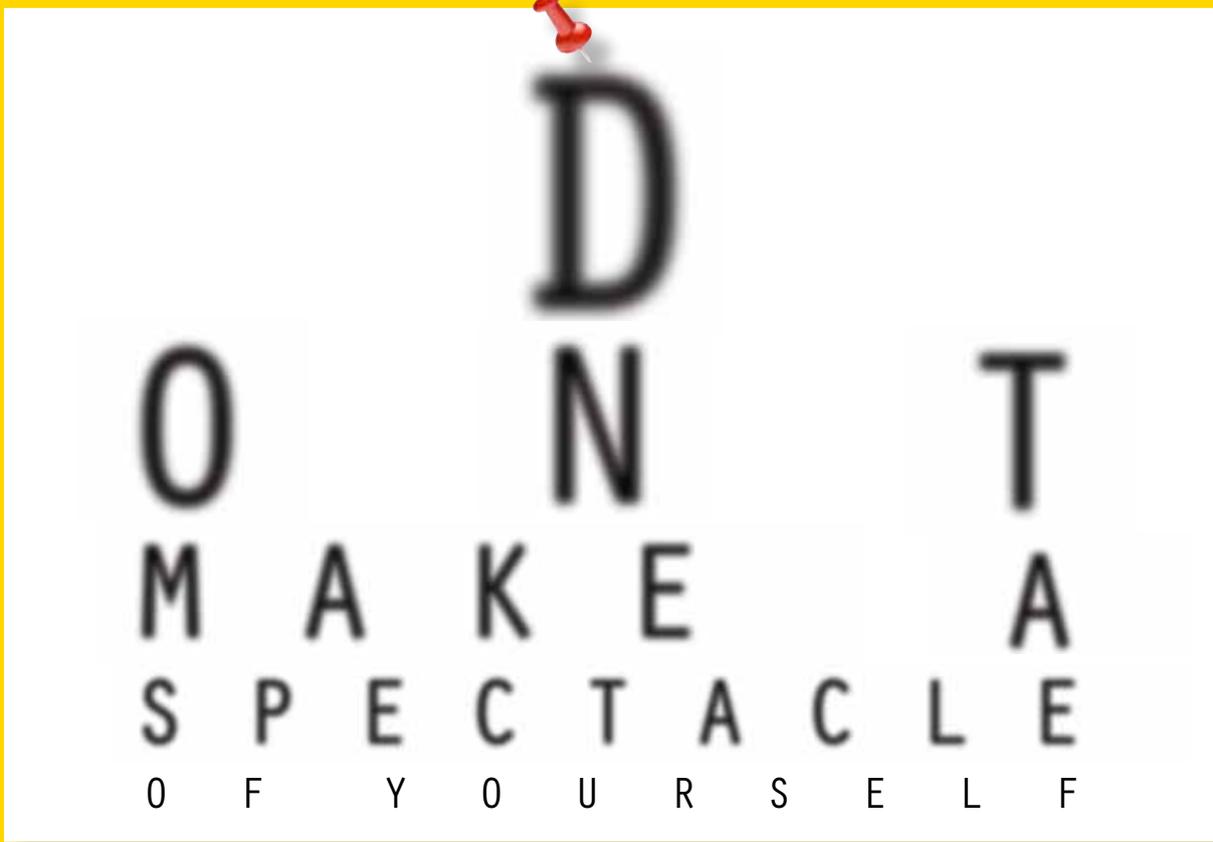
Education Projects

The Ntungamo School - Singing Gorilla Projects are supporting all the schools in Nkuringo. Special attention has been turned to Ntungamo School, the government school. Singing Gorilla Projects has funded the accommodation block for the teachers, a kitchen and dining facility, the latrines block (below) and the newly established baby class.



Health Projects - The Nkuringo Green Hill Hospital is nearly ready to start providing services. June and July will see the installation of the solar power facility to power lighting, computing and a fridge. August will see the installation of plumbing to support sink facilities. A separate latrine and shower block shall be built in 2017. The centre has a reception area, a dispensing area, a laboratory, two treatment rooms and an office.

Maternity - Singing Gorilla Projects are now supporting the vocational training of Evelyn (who was supported by Singing Gorilla Projects at St. Gertrude's school) to become a mid-wife. at the medical centre in Kisoro. Once she has completed her training she will return to Nkuringo to provide maternity services at the centre.



Send your old glasses to us to send out to Nkuringo, Uganda

There are many people in Nkuringo who suffer from poor eyesight – both children and adults.

All could benefit from your old glasses. Don't leave them gathering dust in a drawer –
send them to:

The Computer Studio, Croft Road, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1DL (Marked Glasses for Nkuringo)

or email me to organise alternative pick up

janet.duchesne@speechcentre.co.uk

