



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

Dear Supporter,

First, some really sad news!!

May I apologise for the lateness of this Newsletter. The reason in brief, is that one Trustee, Paul Davies, retired for health reasons and another, our PR Trustee, Phil Chesters, passed away in late summer last year, after a brave fight against Prostate Cancer. Finally Forbes Watson, our Honorary President and Founding Trustee, passed away in the New Year. During this difficult period, our priority has been to continue sending Literacy Boxes to the Zambian children, which, with your ongoing donations we have managed to do, so to all our supporters, **a huge thank you.**

So, an urgent plea!!

Our ability to support the Zambian children with Literacy Boxes relies on continuing to create an awareness of our work and the subsequent flow of financial support that we hope this brings.

But, this needs volunteers!

- Ambassadors to represent us within the 'Family of Rotary' to schools and the public within their communities.
- An Editor for our newsletter
- Someone with Social Media skills to manage our news on Facebook and to keep our website up to date.

Geographic location is important for Ambassadors, but not for the PR roles, so if you are interested in helping, please get in touch through our 'info' email on our website. I look forward to hearing from you.

March is Rotary International's Literacy Month, when we focus on Literacy as our Avenue of Service. Maybe the Literacy Box could be your focus?

In this issue I review 2016 and its projects, but first let me preface the newsletter with a few words about Phil and Forbes.

I hope you enjoy the read and thank you for your continuing support.

Ian Parker
Chairman

Contents

- PHIL CHESTERS
- FORBES WATSON
- 600th Literacy Box arrives in Zambia
- Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust and Literacy Boxes.
- Enniskillen Philippines project
- Dedicated Boxes
- Useful links

PHIL CHESTERS



Phil, seen here, was big in every way. He was very tall, he was big-hearted, had a huge mind and large capacity for red wine!! A humanist, he felt a very strong urge to help those in real need and readily accepted the invitation to support Literacy in a Box by becoming a Trustee. An actuary by profession, he used his immense mind to manage all aspects of our digital PR and although the Literacy Box website was already created when he came on board, what is now viewed on-line is very much a collaboration between Phil and our webmaster, Geoff Vines. The Gallery and the Newsletters were fuelled by Phil's own inputs and tell the Literacy Box story to those who visit our website. Phil had an inquisitive side and our Literacy Box Facebook page was a product not only of his reporting of our work, but from postings from his interrogation of Google to find out who was supporting Literacy Boxes and how. Phil's efforts kept us in the public eye and replacing him will be a huge challenge for us.

FORBES WATSON



Forbes, seen in the photo with Penny his wife, touched so many people's lives. As an 'eager legal beagle' he not only ran our City,

Plymouth, but also oversaw elections in South Africa, which I believe was the start of his wish to help the children in this part of the world. First, Forbes and Penny sponsored a young South African lady through school and university education and then, many years later whilst on holiday in Zambia, a vision he had to help the children in the Luangwa Valley of Zambia, became a plan!

And, with the birth of Literacy in a Box, his plan became a reality, ensuring that thousands of children have since been given hope of a better life through education.

Forbes was a paradox - a feisty independent leader but a great team player. He was always keen to support or help wherever he could and although he could argue his case as any good solicitor would, he readily worked with the consensus view that would be of most benefit to his plans. If he felt he needed help to achieve his plans, he would ask those who he felt could best help and both Geoff Lucock, The Trust Treasurer and I, feel honoured to have been asked at the outset to help Forbes vision become the reality it now is - the successful Literacy in a Box Trust.

May our continuing work be a fit memorial for these two great men.

Ian Parker
Chairman

600th Literacy Box

In March 2016 the 600th Literacy Box, donated by the Beacon Infant and Nursery School, Bodmin, Cornwall was received by Peter Phiri who runs the Divine Care Foundation.



Here is Peter, with the 600th Literacy Box, along with the two other boxes from Bodmin Rotary Club. They arrived at the same time as Amanda Penk, a teacher from the Beacon Infant and Nursery School in Bodmin, Cornwall. She had arranged with

Peter to help with the support of his teachers. Amanda also passed on letters and messages from her pupils and was able to return with replies from Peter's children.



This linking of UK schools with Literacy Boxes helps our pupils have a better understanding of the life of the African pupil, an important aspect of their curriculum. Also, it enables the school and its pupils to support the education of children overseas, who have as much right to an education as they do.

Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust

It was way back in 2004 that Forbes Watson met Anna Tolan, Director of the Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust in the South Luangwa Valley of Zambia. Entranced by the beauty of the Valley, but also aware of the challenges of living there, Forbes became absorbed by what Anna was trying to do. The Valley's industry is Game Reserves, but you need game in plenty to be able have a business and a livelihood in this remote area.



People and animals need to be in harmony - not easy when the elephants are regularly stealing all the stored maize reserves or snakes bite and kill people - but Anna's mission is educate the children of the Valley in the way of these animals and give them and their families strategies for living alongside them. To educate a child in Africa needs a school, teachers and resources. In

varying degrees there are schools and teachers, but severely lacking were the resources needed to teach and Forbes pledged to do something about this. We all know that two years later the first two Literacy Boxes were sent to the South Luangwa Valley. Since then Anna, along with Karen Beattie, Director of the charity, Project Luangwa, the prime focus of which is to develop local school buildings and the sponsoring of pupils, has received many Literacy Boxes for the schools in the Valley. In the autumn of 2016, 40 Literacy Boxes were sent, not only to existing recipients, Kakumbi and Mfwue Basic, but also to support Anna as she spread her mission into 12 new schools in the Valley.



This is one of them, Uyoba Community School with their boxes, included in which were Art Activity Cases from Southampton Football Club, passed on to us by another charity working in Africa, Tools for Self Reliance. Thank you both!!

Enniskillen Rotary Club's Philippines Project

This was reported fully in the last newsletter but here is a brief resume as the project is now complete.

In the summer of 2015 Andrew Rainey, a Primary teacher and son of the President of Enniskillen Rotary Club, Ken Rainey, visited a Children's Mission and two Rotary Clubs in Antipolo City, in the Philippines. Ken Rainey had visited the Literacy in a Box stand at the RIBI National Conference in Belfast earlier in 2015, so Andrew was aware of Literacy Boxes and felt that they could help in the schools he saw in Antipolo. He presented on his trip to Enniskillen Rotary Club and in the autumn, my₃ wife Andrea and I attended D1160 Rotary Conference in Cork where we also met with Enniskillen Club members.



Ken had already visited local schools to seek support for the funding of Literacy Boxes, so a plan was hatched, which essentially meant that Andrew would look for the same in his school in Antrim, while Past President Ivan Kee, would approach local commerce for sponsorship.

Over the course of the autumn, school after school raised funds for Literacy Boxes, some, along with personal and commercial support, favoured Literacy Boxes to be sent to Zambia, while the rest were fully behind the Philippines project and by the turn of the year a fund of over £7000 had accrued.

Then disaster struck as we found out that the route used to transport Literacy Boxes to the Philippines previously was not available. What now?

The answer was a Rotary Club partnership between Enniskillen and Antipolo Centro, with Joy Sidro of the Child Evangelism Fellowship, Philippines, a wonderful co-ordinator.



Joy Sidro ascertained the needs of the schools so that the content of 'Literacy Boxes' was what they needed and with Antipolo Centro RC managed the budget to source suitable boxes and the purchase of school materials. The Trust sent the Literacy Box logo labels and destination labels for the recipient schools. Antipolo Centro club members then packed the Literacy boxes for the six schools, some in remote forested areas outside Antipolo.



Distribution of the Literacy Boxes and other school resources occurred in late June /early July 2016, with Andrew Rainey visiting the country again in August that year. He was able to visit three of the schools that received the Literacy Boxes and school supplies and later he was guest speaker at a special Rotary Club meeting in Antipolo Centro.



Andrew was presented with commemorative packs for Enniskillen Rotary Club and Literacy in a Box, including photo documentation of all aspects of the project and certificates of thanks. The whole project was a resounding success and a real example of a synergistic partnership being a 'Gift to the World' or in this case, the needy Philippine children.

Please view the [Enniskillen Antipolo CEF Literacy Box 2016](#) feedback video as it really puts the whole project into perspective and shows the lengths people go to, to give children their right of an education.

Dedicated Literacy Boxes

Literacy Boxes are often funded by donors who request that the box is labelled 'in memory of' or 'donated by' and that the wording recognises this. In 2016 there were 11 such Literacy Boxes and while we do try our best to obtain feedback photos, sometimes circumstances make it impossible - for which I apologise. The following gallery contains the 4 photos we have been able to obtain and show the children along with the donors' boxes.



The Inner Wheel Club of Dursley's Literacy Box along with posters from Manadon Vale Primary School in Plymouth.



Cleethorpes Rotary Club's commemorative Literacy Box, in memory of John Barrett.



A Literacy Box from the Howarth family in Crawley, Sussex, sent at the request of their sons, Harry and William.



Faversham Rotary Club's Literacy Box.....



The RotaKids of Wallacestone Primary School, Falkirk, Scotland.



....and the Literacy Box sent in partnership with Ospringe Church of England Primary School in Faversham, Kent.

We are often asked to send a Literacy Box 'in memorium' and this next photo is of such a box. It commemorates a Rotarian, John Barrett who was a Headteacher and passionate about the education of children.

As I write this newsletter, I have received photos from Grace showing the arrival and distribution of the three Literacy Boxes sent as a result of the very generous donations, by the family and friends of Phil Chesters, our late Trustee. The boxes were sent appropriately, to a school dear to Phil's heart, the George Compound Community School, a school in the slum area of Lusaka and which contains a high number of

orphans.



This is the image that captured all our hearts from George Compound, especially Phil's.



Finally now unpacked and ready for use!!!

In memory of Phil - may you rest in peace

May I, on behalf of the Zambian children, say a huge thank you for the help of:

- All donors, ambassadors and supporters. Education is a long term commitment and I hope we can rely on you for continued financial and volunteer support.
- To Operation Sunshine and the National Police Aid Convoy, who safely transport our Literacy Boxes to Zambia. We could not exist without your co-operation.
- Finally, to Grace and her Good Shepherd Ministry in Lusaka. We have utmost admiration for our Ambassador and are indebted for all the incredible work she does, ensuring the Literacy Boxes are unpacked and distributed safely.

Useful links for further information :

www.facebook.com/literacyinabox

Our Facebook page for news, photos and current stories.

<http://www.literacyboxtrust.org.uk/>

We are updating our website, but on it you will still find Contact details, the School Video, General Information Video, Newsletters, our Photo Gallery, Brochure (electronic version) and other useful links and information on it. Please continue to visit the website, but do come back to us if you have any queries.



and two of Phil's three Literacy Boxes.