

Focus on Africa

A Haverhill based charity seeking to make life a little better for those in need of support in Kisumu, Western Kenya

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This year's team, pictured above

Local helpers Sam and Boniface, Chris Hearn, Mike Monks, Gill Martin, Mick and Brian Boltwood, Jade Woodland and John Martin. Pictured at Mama NGina's after painting the kitchen.

We knew that this year's trip would be very different to previous visits, as we wanted to finalise the purchase of land on which we plan to build a clinic. Consequently there were many meetings with lawyers and officials to finalise all the documents and take title.

The money we took over with us this year was used to finish off Mama NGina's kitchen by tiling the remaining walls to about the 5ft level and to paint the walls above the tiles and ceiling and with an additional donation we arranged for the floor to be tiled as well.

We also arranged for The Jack and Gill nursery classroom floor to be finished

from a simple mud floor to a smart coloured concrete floor which should make it much better for the children and cleaning a lot easier.

We also were able to purchase some more medical drugs for the clinic, enabling Jackson to use on patients with Malaria and Typhoid ailments.

With an additional donation we were able to arrange for a solar panel to be purchased to enable Jack, Juliana and family to have electric light, and to be able to charge their mobile phones and their donated laptop computer.

Finally, we used money to fence in the new site that has now been purchased making it secure and safe.



Fence at new site.

All costs for the trip for the team including airfares and accommodation are borne by the individuals



Mama NGinas Orphanage

Above you can see Ashley and Samuel (twins) sleeping peacefully. Sadly, their mother died in childbirth. The twins are now one year old. Breakfast for the young children is a busy time. Then the babies with a few coloured plastic balls bought at the market. Joseph a little disabled boy in his red trousers. Another Samuel who was found abandoned last year and a little chap in pink happily enjoying his lollipop!

Did you know? Mothers who give birth to twins in Kenya are expected to either take one of the children and abandon it or actively starve the weakest of the twins so that it will die.

The Elders of the village believe if one of the twins does not die then an Elder of the village will die.

Jackson & Juliana's Story

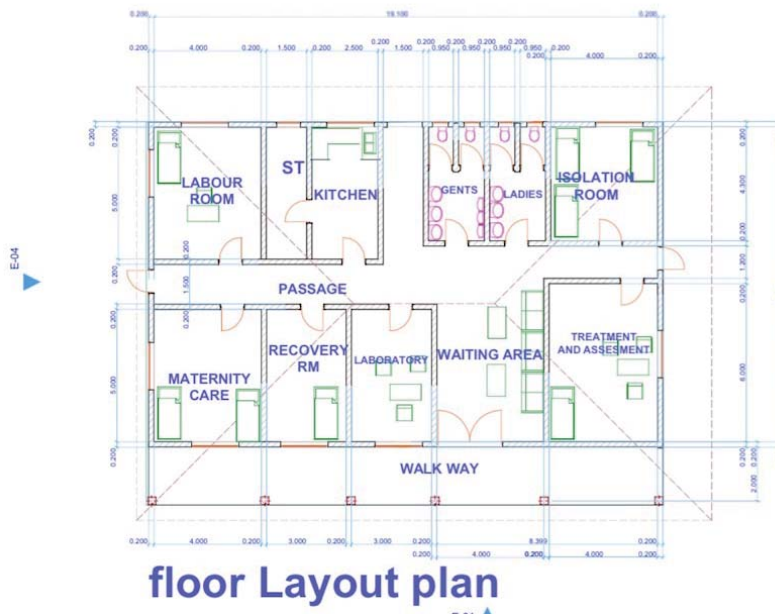


Jackson and Juliana delighted with the suitcase of medical equipment brought over from England



A young child being treated for Malaria

This is Jackson and Juliana. Juliana is a midwife and Jackson is a Registered Nurse. When we first met them they ran their clinic from their former house. Unfortunately, it proved uninhabitable and so we asked them to find a rental house which Focus on Africa now rents and in which they have turned three rooms into a clinic: one as a consultation room and two rooms used as wards. One is a maternity ward with two beds and the other, also with two beds for patients being treated [usually for malaria]. Jackson and Juliana have a family of four children, three sons and a baby daughter. They have been running their clinic for several years but in the past they sometimes had to close the clinic when their medical supplies run out. To supplement their income Jack rents a plot of land and grows vegetable both for his family and also to sell to help fund drugs for the clinic. For the past three years however, Focus on Africa has been able to restock the medical supplies cupboard and purchase drugs to treat illnesses like Malaria, Dysentery, and Typhoid etc. When patients come to the clinic for treatment, they are charged a small fee, but for those who are unable to pay, treatment is provided for free. The clinic is situated in a rural area well outside the town. If the local people were not able to use the clinic they would have to travel many miles into town to visit the local hospitals. Even in state run hospitals treatment is not free; and has to be paid for prior to any treatment. Focus on Africa could see a real need and, after many discussions, decided that Harmony Clinic would be our major project for the coming years. We decided we should raise the money to purchase suitable land close to where Jack and Juliana live to stay close to their patient list and in due course we would raise the money to build a clinic. The land has now been purchased and fenced and it is our aim now to raise the money to build the clinic.



Buying the Land for the Clinic

Our decision to buy a suitable plot of land for the clinic seemed, at the time, to be fairly straightforward: identify the piece of land, establish the cost, raise the money, appoint a lawyer in Kisumu and step back to await the title deeds – ideally in a few months. Unfortunately, this was not to be. In January 2014, during our time in Kisumu, we found a piece of land that fitted the bill to a tee. It was about an acre, close to where Jack and Juliana had their clinic so that they would continue to serve the same rural community and was available to buy. As is normally the case in such rural areas it had neither mains water nor power on site but both utilities were available and we saw this as something to be resolved in the future. We met the three brothers who owned the land, agreed a price, found an agent, did a title search and survey and set in train the purchase. At this point we had little understanding of the time this was all going to take. The saying “patience is a virtue” became our watchword over many many months. Communication with Kenya can be tortuous. Responses to emails can take time and telephone contact from the UK is expensive. Skype played a small role but many of the people we needed to contact had neither electric power nor computers. Sadly, there is also a significant problem with corruption in most matters concerning land. This is of great concern to the Kenyan Government who, during 2014, froze all land transactions for many weeks. But *Focus on Africa* thrives on adversity and we ploughed on as the months went by. Not the least of our problems was that the vendors chose to sell a part of the land we had agreed to buy, disconcerting when you are more than 4000 miles away and cannot talk to the people involved. We sorted out the problem and ploughed on! Sending notarised documents to Kenya had to be by courier and a simple A4 envelope cost at least £70, something not in our budget. Time moved on. Relevant title documents could not be found or were lost and then found, people went missing for weeks on end and money transfers suffered the inevitable delays caused by money laundering regulations. Time moved on. Then in early November 2014 our lawyer advised us that title should be with us within 15 days. Excellent we thought – everything settled before we travel to Kisumu in January 2015. Not to be! Time moved on. And so in January 2015 we arrived in Kisumu for our annual working visit. Title to the land was still not resolved but we were in Kisumu and problems that took weeks to resolve from the UK could be sorted out face to face in just a few days and there



Jack, Juliana & Mary with Jade making Mary smile.

certainly were problems still to be resolved. Purchase funds were not in client accounts and meetings that had been agreed failed to take place BUT after 10 days in Kisumu and more than a few disappointments we laid our hands on the title to Plot 4115, being $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre in Kadero Got Nyabondo just outside Kisumu. We had achieved success AND it only took 12 months.

As an aside, the parent's modest mud house on the land had to be taken down under tribal traditions and we have to take particular care in the future, as the grandparents are both buried centrally on the site. The small house that remains, which was used by the younger brother, is unsuitable for Jack and Juliana's family so we will continue to rent the house they live in nearby which also serves as the current clinic.



Jack and Juliana's three sons. Tony Derrick and Steve

Last years May Ball was a stunning success



Please join us for this year's Summer Ball at
Sturmer Hall on 16 May 2015

<http://www.sturmerhall.com/events/focus-on-africa-summer-ball/>



We were lucky enough to get the time to have lunch at the Impala Park in Kisumu. This is a conservation wildlife parkland which both breeds native species and homes orphaned animals from the wild. Many of them have been there since babies so some are quite tame [not the Lions I hasten to add] some of the team were brave enough to pet the Leopard.



The Team working hard at Mama NGina's

Unfortunately, the charcoal oven we supplied in 2014 proved to have an inadequate chimney resulting in a great deal of smoke and a very sooty kitchen. We had the chimney replaced with a larger flue and smoke tested, then work was clearly needed by the team to clean everything up and not only paint the black walls but, we decided to enhance the kitchen with tiles. Hope you can see the difference between our before and after pictures at Mama NGina's kitchen. You can imagine how dirty we were after all the soot cleaning!



Jack and Gill Nursery School

Above you can see the new floor that we arranged this trip after having the classrooms built last year. The floor had to be left for several days before it could be walked on, and water had to be sprayed on twice a day so the cement didn't dry out too quickly. The children used the admin office for their daily sleep, and lessons were taken outdoors. On the evening that these pictures were taken, Ben, the trainee teacher (bottom right) and a handsome young man was a victim of a hit and run driver and was left unconscious with severe damage to his mouth losing many teeth. Phoebe, who runs Jack and Gill School, contacted the team soon after and we immediately had a whip-round to raise the money for Ben to be admitted into hospital and to have an X-ray, he had to wait for 5 hours before being treated due to the lack of funds, something which we resolved. Ben remained unconscious for several days causing us a great deal of worry. The day after the accident we set up a

8 Just Giving page and raised £325, which covered Ben's hospital fees, and, to be used, hopefully, to be able to get some false teeth. Ben is now out of hospital but still waiting for treatment on his mouth. We are keeping a close eye on his progress and will help in any way we can

For further information visit our website at www.focusafricacharity.com or email info@focusaviationcharity.com