



Chipembele News

March 2009

Dear All,

In our last newsletter I mentioned how at Chipembele we try to teach pupils about the local environment, and the value of conserving it and the wildlife it supports in the context of their lives. However we also try and teach them about the wider natural world at every given opportunity... penguins, tigers, the rain forest, polar bears, orang utans, sharks, whales, jelly fish, anacondas, the Antarctic, dinosaurs, fossils, meteorites and satellites at night are just a small selection of the topics we have introduced that they previously knew very little, if anything, about.

I came across a quotation the other day that I thought summed up our belief in education:

A mind, once stretched with a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

The wildlife education programme

The wildlife education programme continues to be extremely well received by pupils and teachers alike. Sometimes, things are better said by those on the receiving end:

It was a tremendous adventure! We had a lesson on insects. As if that was not adequate enough, the quiz was quite appealing and very competitive for our pupils. Moreover the reception was quite lovely and tender beyond the realm of expectation.

Bravo Steve and Anny!

Philimon Simuchimba, Teacher, Yosefe Basic School, November 2008



This rainy season has been our most challenging yet, as the bush road to Chipembele from Mfuwe deteriorates more and more. The pictures show one group of children from Mfuwe Day Secondary School Conservation Club who attended the Centre by boat. None of them had ever been on a motorised boat before. The journeys both up and downstream became an exciting game watching experience too with hippos, crocs and water birds in the river and a range of wildlife on the banks. It was a great adventure for them!

Pupils arriving at Chipembele by boat

The same pupils (without life jackets!) comparing their heights with a Thornicroft's giraffe exhibit

To keep the wildlife education programme going when rain, high water and mud made access to the Centre at Chipembele impossible by road some of the conservation clubs in the schools have been supported with educational materials, teacher resource packs and ideas for club activities.

Pupils in the Conservation Club at Yosefe Basic School are piloting a Chipembele Ranger Project. Club members have all been given folders to record their club activities in and after fulfilling a number of conditions can apply to become a Chipembele Ranger. They must then sign a conservation pledge before being awarded badges.



“I, Hettie Sakala, of the Yosefe Conservation Club, promise to do all I can to protect and conserve the wildlife and natural resources of South Luangwa and to encourage my family and friends to do the same. I will respect all animals and plants. I agree never to use a catapult to kill or injure small animals or birds and never to cut down trees without a licence to do so. I promise to read and learn as much about wildlife as I can and to share my knowledge with others.”

Signed ~~Hettie Sakala~~ Hettie Sakala

Date 30th March 2009



It is hoped this initiative will encourage further interest in conservation and provide an excellent opportunity for the Chipembele programme and ethos to be circulated more widely amongst the community.

Volunteer's House and Office

With the schools and pupil sponsorship projects taking more and more time to administrate, it was well overdue for Chipembele to have a base in Mfuwe. However, suitable land for building is like gold dust and after 2 years of looking for a suitable plot without success, we were fortunate enough to have been allowed to build a small house and office in the grounds of the local secondary school.



The building is now near to completion and will accommodate volunteers. Before you all rush to apply for the position... it has already been taken by a British woman who is intending to work for a year completely unpaid. We are waiting for her volunteer visa application to be approved and she will then fly out to Mfuwe to assist Anna with all the schools projects. The office will provide a much needed administrative centre for Chipembele in the heart of the local community. With a volunteer in place it should also free Anna up to concentrate more on developing the wildlife education centre programmes.

Many thanks to all those who donated towards the construction of the building; it is greatly appreciated.

Kelvin Zulu, Chipembele Bursary winner

In 2008 Kelvin Zulu was awarded a *Chipembele Safari Guide Training Bursary for School Leavers*. Kelvin is an orphan from a poor and difficult background. However he always tried hard at school and was Head Boy at Yosefe Basic School. He had been a Chipembele sponsored pupil for 6 years and passed his Grade 12 exams, achieving a full school certificate. He was a regular visitor to Chipembele with his Conservation Club and had a long held dream of one day becoming a safari guide. After a tough selection procedure and fierce competition Kelvin was chosen for the Bursary and was employed by Mfuwe Lodge as a spotter/trainee guide.



Kelvin, (front, far right) with Anna and staff from Mfuwe Lodge being presented with books and binoculars

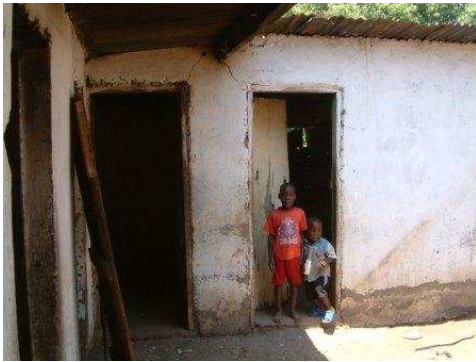
After 6 months, the management approved his continued employment and in February 2009 he was sent by Chipembele to the town of Chipata, 100 miles away, for a driving course. He passed the course and now has a full driving licence, a requirement of becoming a guide.

As part of the Bursary he was awarded a pair of binoculars and a number of guide books. He will continue his training with Mfuwe Lodge and in February 2010 will be sent by Chipembele on a month's training course. His examination fees for the guiding exam in May 2010 will also be paid for. So a long road ahead... but a long road already well travelled. We wish you every success Kelvin!

Special thanks to Lyn and Graham Shaw for sponsoring Kelvin all these years and for their continued support and interest in his new career.

Teacher house renovated

Thanks to donations from a number of generous donors the Head Teacher's house was renovated at Kakumbi Middle Basic School. It was in fact uninhabitable. Appropriate teacher accommodation was (and still is) in much needed supply at the remote rural school with several teachers living in simple huts rented out in the nearby villages.



Before...



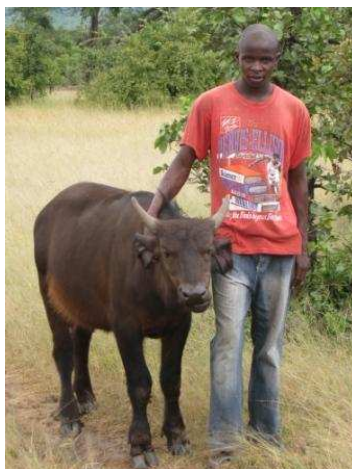
...and after

The Head Teacher, Mrs Mwale and her husband (also at teacher at the same school) were living in squalor in a dilapidated and cramped house with 3 young children and only 1 bedroom. As they celebrated the birth of a baby boy, their third, in August, they were desperate to move to more spacious, clean and safe accommodation. This house has 3 bedrooms.

Some major renovation work was carried out and the whole family are now exceedingly happy.

Many thanks to Markus Wenger, Sarah Lindsay, Ken May, Garry Mackender and Michelle Breslin, and everyone who purchased the 2008 schools calendar. You made a dream come true for the Mwale family!

Elton and Sipho



Elton the orphan buffalo will be a year old in May. He has grown enormously since he was brought to us as a 3-day old calf. His keeper Sipho is an orphan who was sponsored by us personally for 5 years until he completed Grade 12 in 2007. Steve then paid for him to go on a driving course in Lusaka and he is now waiting to find permanent employment as a driver. In the meantime he is doing a wonderful job of taking care of Elton, making sure lions don't find him, cleaning the cage where he sleeps at night and in the day has been his constant companion for the last 6 months. (Elton looks small but Sipho is 6'2").

It is now time for Elton to move to a permanent home with other buffaloes. The necessary veterinary tests are being completed and negotiations with ZAWA and the Veterinary Department are taking place. It's a long and complicated procedure but he's more than worth it.

Sincere thanks to Mary Davies and Kevin Watson for sponsoring Elton from day 1 (...all that milk!)



Elton in ecstasy with red billed oxpeckers removing his ticks

Boys' Dormitory improvement project



Sleeping arrangements before....

The boys' dormitory at Mfuwe Secondary School greatly shocked every new visitor that entered the door... 80 boys crammed into a shell of an old building, no glass in the windows, no furniture for their clothes or belongings, even no beds. They have no toilets and no washing facilities apart from drawing water from a nearby communal well and then 'bathing' behind some bushes. They sleep 2 to a single mattress and put up with these cramped and unhygienic conditions, just for a chance to be in school.

In an attempt to improve the living conditions Chipembele raised money from a number of donors and arranged for 26 strong metal bunk beds to be made by a local welder. Since this picture was taken the funds have also allowed for the dormitory walls to be painted and it all looks so much fresher and brighter. The boys are exceedingly happy and morale has soared.



... and after

Heartfelt thanks from all the boys in the dormitory extend to Alison and Malcolm Percy, Rosalind Waddams, Winnie Schortman, the UK Freemason Society, Pamela Rogers, Karen Beattie and Schulprojekte Sambia (Switzerland).

The dormitory fund is still open as we are still trying to raise money for new mattresses. The old ones are now worn, thin, torn or broken and desperately need replacing. A 6" deep single foam mattress costs K250,000 (£32 or \$46 at current exchange rates).

If you would like to make a donation please contact Anna at info@chipembele.org

100% of your donation will go towards the purchase of mattresses to help these boys, at least while in school, to live in more decent, hygienic and comfortable conditions. Thank you.



Ruby + 5



Many of you may remember how Roxy the mother warthog was tragically shot on Christmas Day last year, while with her 3 babies. Her daughter Ruby, who also had 2 babies of her own, immediately took Roxy's 3 into her care.

We are thrilled to report that she has done an amazing job of rearing them, despite all the extra pressure on her that it must have had through lactating them all and safeguarding them from the dangers of the bush. Ruby and the 5 babes live a totally wild life but visit the house every morning for some game pellets which we provide as a nutritional extra to assist them all in their development. She's truly a wonderful mother.

With all best wishes, until next time

Anna and Steve

Chipembele Wildlife Education Trust is a Zambian registered charitable trust, reg. no. 41317.
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Chipembele... teaching Zambian children the value of wildlife

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