



Kenya Update 3

Happy New Year! We hope you all had a great Christmas, although it seems like a long time ago. Thank you very much to everyone that sent us an e-card over the Christmas and New Year time, we loved getting them, even though most contained snow which is hard to imagine right now.

We arrived at New Hope Children's Home the week before Christmas and our Christmas there was very quiet, we went to the Sunday school session that the kids go to and then spent the afternoon with the children and sitting in the sunshine, very different to home. The Children all received new clothes for Christmas and enjoyed meat for lunch - goat not turkey! After lunch they were also given a bag of sweets and crisps. Father Christmas visited us and gave us a loo roll which had been absent from the toilet in the weeks before - luckily we had brought our own up to that point!



January is Kenya's very hot month and it has been 30-35 degrees everyday without a cloud in sight- we certainly don't have the same energy as the kids in this heat and it is hard to imagine the possible snow that keeps being threatened at home. We hope you enjoy reading about what we have been getting up to over the last month or so.

Most people look forward to their retirement as a chance to relax and have time to perhaps read a book or take that trip that they've always wanted to take, but not Anne and Tirus Chege! Anne and Tirus left their jobs working for banks in Nairobi and have set up **New Hope Children's Home** which in 11 years has grown from helping 20 girls in a small home, to supporting 120 boys and girls in a new home, and a further 100+ children in the local community. Anne has always had a big heart for the children in Kenya and with the support of Tirus, they had brought up orphans in their home as well as their four children. When they left work they decided to go in to full time ministry and Barclays in Kenya wrote an article about Anne and her plans for retirement. Somebody saw this article and was about to move to Europe, so decided to give Anne his four bedroom house in Limuru for 'God's work'. Anne and Tirus moved in to the house with 20 orphaned girls and the children's home was started on the 16th April 2000.



Twenty girls quickly grew to forty and there was a need for more space so that New Hope could reach more children. In 2007 a large home that could accommodate 200 children was completed on a three acre plot about 1.5km up the road (dirt track!) and Anne, Tirus and the girls moved in. Since then the home has grown to provide food, shelter, education and clothing to 120 girls and boys who live onsite and they help with school fees and other needs for 100+ children in the community.





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New Hope's aim is to one day be self sufficient and they are using their grounds to grow vegetables for the children: they have 2 cows which they get milk from, and chickens and pigs which they sell or eat. With help from the UK, a bakery and training centre has been set up on their grounds. These projects employ single mothers from the community to give them a wage and help them to be able to pay for the needs of their children. When these ladies are not baking bread or making school uniforms and other items to sell like soap or placemats (Margaret made Mike and I a fab set of red placemats - maybe we couldn't agree on a set for our John Lewis wedding gift list for a reason!) the women work in the grounds seeing to the vegetables. New Hope sells the bread rolls and other items from the training centre with a view that one day these will significantly support the orphanage. These are part of numerous community projects that New Hope have set up to help the local community. They are also currently building two classrooms so that they can have a nursery and class one (year one equivalent) onsite. In the future they hope to grow the school so that they will save on the school fees that are currently paid for the children in the orphanage, and to raise funds from external families paying to send their children to the school.



Playing in the classroom foundations

Here are some of the highlights from the last 6 weeks:

- We used our new found talents as painters and decorators and painted 3 rooms at New Hope. Kenyans painting technique is to water down the paint significantly to make it go further. We had seen this happening at Daylove but at New Hope the guy was using more water than paint and we could see that it wouldn't last 5 minutes with 120 children rubbing up against it. We identified the large hall that they use for studying and church, and also two rooms that they are currently using for the nursery, that we would like to paint. We politely suggested that we would pay for the paint with some of our fundraising money but we would paint it our way! The Kenyan's thought we were a little mad for not watering it down because paint straight from the tin is too thick to put straight on the wall apparently but they left us to it and were happy with the end result! Hopefully the rooms will last a little longer before needing to be done again!
- Having a computer came in handy and once they realised we could create leaflets, posters, certificates etc they put us to work on a few tasks. We were able to create a few documents from Soap labels to re-creating their headed paper and then put it on their laptop and memory stick for them to print when necessary. We also recreated the New Hope leaflet so it now quotes the bible as saying 'look after orphans and widows in their distress' rather than 'orphans and windows' which did make us laugh!
- Charlotte also helped Cecilia, one of the full time workers, to type up a few case studies for some of the children that had come to New Hope recently. One of the boys at New Hope had lost his parents and lived near Kisumu. A friend started looking after him but one day she moved house while he was out. He knew he had an uncle 2-300kms away in Nairobi and started walking to try and find him. It took him approximately a year of walking and eating scraps he could find in rubbish bins. When he got to a small village near New Hope a woman asked him where he was going. He told her and she brought him to New Hope knowing that he wouldn't have a chance of be able to find his uncle in Nairobi. New Hope agreed to support him and when Anne told him she would be sending him to school, he was so excited he hugged her and said 'I will work hard and get a good job so that I can buy you a truck and a car!' As with Daylove most of the stories are heartbreaking but it is great to see what a difference New Hope are making to these children's lives.
- Cecilia also invited us to watch a Mexican soap called 'Triumph of Love' that was on every evening. It was a pretty awful soap and Mike decided to skip this nightly ritual after the second night, but Charlotte found it a little substitute for Eastenders and enjoyed sharing something and building a relationship with a few of the staff members.
- The children's home has a balcony on the 3rd floor overlooking the Rift Valley. We never got bored of taking a 10 minute break to stare at the stunning view and sunsets - the photos don't do it justice.

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We returned to Daylove at the end of January and realised just how much we had missed the children here - it's a lot easier to build a relationship with 25 kids than 120! They came running over to us as we walked up to the flat and it was great to see them looking so well. A few of them had definitely grown! Since we have been back, they are back in to the school routine and we have enjoyed chatting to them about their day and helping with homework when they get home - although if it's Maths homework Mike is the one doing the helping!! We are trying to come up with ways to teach them the times tables so any suggestions are welcome!

We have booked on to a trip for 10 days leaving on the 6th February to see some of the national parks in Kenya and Tanzania. We are both looking forward to having a break and hopefully seeing a few big cats!



Before



During



After



Finished

Prayer Requests:

1. Safety on the trip and that there are no Visa problems at the border coming back to Kenya.
2. Some of the children are struggling with schoolwork and falling behind their peers. Pray that we will be able to help and encourage during homework sessions and the schools will provide the appropriate support.
3. Lucy, the centre manager is implementing a new structure to the evenings and weekends at Daylove to try and help with schoolwork and discipline. This will include regular homework slots and appropriate bedtimes! Pray that the house mothers will support this and that the new structure will be implemented smoothly.



Wheel races



View from the balcony



Making the placemats and coasters



The Pied Piper!



More hair braiding



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