

ROBIN'S NEST CHILDREN'S HOMES

JAN SUFFOLK IN WEBUYE, KENYA JULY 2007

For the month of July I visited with RNCH in Webuye, Kenya. I resided with Reverend Jackson Onger, his wife Grace, two daughters Joy & Faith, Jackie who has been orphaned and a robin, Denis.



During most afternoons and Saturdays I spent time at "The Nest" with the house parents Leah & Jotham, their two daughters Patience and Peace along with four robins; Melody, Susan, Sharon and Haggai. We did



homework and made fun with balloons, cards, bubbles, painting, drawing & colouring, frisbee throwing and home entertainment by the children. I delivered gifts that had come from Australia: Activity books, beanies that had been hand knitted, quilts, some birthday present packages and large knitted blanket. The children were very grateful and happy to receive all these gifts. I have brought back thank-you cards and notes which the children were keen to make. The beanies were well worn from the minute they received them.

One Saturday we walked to the local Water Falls and had a picnic and games. Beanies worn all the way! It wasn't even so cold.

A draft outline of what the house parents need to be doing was created whilst I was in Kenya. This needs to be improved and agreed upon. Within the guidelines included the need for quarterly information to be sent about and from the children. This is to be in the form of school reports, a letter, a piece of work from the children and recent photographs. The first lot is hopefully on its way as the term 2 school reports should have been done in the last couple of weeks.

We visited the hospital whilst I was there, with all of the children. Their health is generally ok. At the time two of the girls had tonsillitis and a typhoid fever which was medicated. Several of them had ring worm on their heads. They were shaved and given cream. One had some anaemia which was treated with some medication. The HIV test results had not come back whilst I was there.



During the course of the month I had opportunities to meet with the committee as a group (6 out of 9) and several of them individually. They are a great group of people who



are

trustworthy, enthusiastic and loving. Each one is supporting the vision as they are able. They are involved in searching for land, planning the homes, visiting other orphanages for information, investigating govt. requirements, helping with distribution of funds and keeping financial records, etc. It is a big project!

Roselyne is a lawyer on the committee who has worked in the Community Children's

Worker role and is currently in contact with the current workers. She understands and is up to date with the Children's Act and laws around this. Her advice and knowledge are invaluable. She is keen to help where she can. She however is now residing in Nairobi, returning home only for the weekend each fortnight when able. This makes communication a little tricky but not impossible.

Arcadius has taken on the record keeping for the finances. He is a Pastor of a sister church just down the road. He visits 'The Nest' each Wednesday and generally organises the weekly money spend and pays the bills. Whilst I was in Webuye I chatted with Arcadius and we worked out a simple way to record the money expenditure with a little more detail. Hopefully the new computer will allow for better communication and record keeping.

We looked at a couple of pieces of land in and not far from town that were for sale. The blocks were relatively small in size and quite a lot of money. The bigger block was difficult to sort as the owner was often unavailable to discuss it. It also reduced in size as some persons claimed part of the land as being theirs. I think it would be better to head a little out of town and try to purchase a bigger plot of land and organise transport. Webuye town has been upgraded to a District which means more government offices and workers looking for good land & rentals. Hence costs have gone up.

I also had the opportunity to participate in the Agape A School program from time to time, teaching each of the a small portion of time each. I demonstrated some lang collected plastic bottles and turning them into a bowling. The children loved it. The only school resources were some chalk, poor quality exercise books and some shared texted books.



No library, no colouring pencils, no sporting equipment. Something to consider for the next visit. The children made their own fun with turning wood off cuts into cars in the dirt and a piece of old rope for skipping.

As a white visitor to the area and church family I was invited to speak at several Bible studies & church services. A humbling experience! It is difficult to consider that we have any words of wisdom to offer to people living in the third world country but God is the God of us all and He chooses to use all of us if we are willing. It's God's Word not ours so hopefully the people were blessed with what they heard.

Two weeks into my visit after seeing no other white persons in the area I met up with a team of Americans whilst on a visit to town with the children. They are establishing an orphanage not too far down the road. This became a meeting to begin some friendships and contacts with others who also have the vision to rescue orphans from destitute situations. I trust this to be a divine appointment in which we can support and learn from each other.

I'm excited to be a part of this project in its initial stages. I look forward to the time when we receive some great land and begin building and then to bring in more children. It is my hope to remain apart of this project as it gets to its feet. This is of course up to God and the RNCH committee as to how much involvement I am to have. I am willing to give what I can. I now have a greater understanding of the persons involved in Kenya, their dreams and

visions and some of the possibilities. It took the month to discover some of this. More time and interaction in Zenya is required.

From here the most important thing is to have the RNCH – Kenya organise a group of trustees. This will allow the Land Title to be in the name of RNCH. We need to then find land, develop a contract of exchange, purchase the land then fence the land for security. If we can then quickly design buildings to suit the land, build and then begin to bring more children in. Once we have at least 20 orphans in our care we need to apply for registration. A great deal more to do.....but not too difficult for God!

In His Service for the least of them,

Jan Suffolk