

MALAWI ASSOCIATION  
FOR CHRISTIAN SUPPORT  
[www.malawimacs.org](http://www.malawimacs.org)  
Charity No: 1025616

NEWSLETTER  
Summer 2009

## CHILEMA ECUMENICAL LAY TRAINING AND CONFERENCE CENTRE

Chilema ETCC has had a busy year. MACS is pleased to have been able to support the good work being done. Amongst other programmes, eighty ladies benefited from Chilema's comprehensive Women's Training Programme.

The courses run for six months and include theoretical and practical skills covering clothing and textiles, agriculture, food security, tailoring and fashion design, nutrition, health and sanitation, housing and home management, community development, human behaviour, spiritual development, business communication and management, and professional English.



**Learning a valuable skill**

The cost per student is £200. MACS paid for ten. The Centre's Newsletter for 2008-2009 says these courses are very beneficial to women as they provide them with opportunities for employment, either by different organisations or by self-employment. Staff from Chilema also provide valuable outreach programmes by going out and running courses for a group of villages.

A total of twenty different organisations and groups used the Centre during the year, including the MACS group visiting from the UK. The Executive Director, Revd A. Maulana completed a six-month Leadership Development Course in Canada and other staff attended courses and conferences in Zambia and Ghana. As a member of the Association of Christian Lay Centres in Africa, Chilema keeps in touch with common issues such as HIV/AIDS, human rights, gender issues and conflicts.

MACS has helped fund improvements to five small houses by adding en-suite facilities, improving the water heating system and a kitchen, thus making self-catering chalets, which Chilema says will minimise the problem of accommodation. Further houses are being upgraded. MACS has also contributed to the building of a brick wall to protect the Community Homecraft area and garden.



**A refurbished chalet**

**RIDERS RETURN** On 6<sup>th</sup> of June, nine enthusiastic cyclists returned from the MACS sponsored Cycle Ride, having spent two weeks travelling 582 miles, seeing various aspects of MACS supported work and enjoying the odd 'Green' beer on the way too! The trip organiser, Dave Friswell, takes up the story:



**On the road near Ntakataka**

*“We re-assembled our bikes at the Airport in Lilongwe and set off with the support of Grafiud Tione, MACS Representative in Malawi, and the Very Revd Auster Kalilombe. On our first full day of cycling from Lilongwe to Dedza we had our first and only little set back when one of the cyclists came off her bike. This resulted not only in a few bumps and bruises but she needed twelve stitches for a bad cut in her arm. Thankfully our fully equipped team of riders, which included a paramedic and a nurse, were able to stitch her up and with much bravery (and quite a lot of pain) after a couple of days she was back on her bike and managed to complete 250 miles of the ride.*

*It was an insight to us all to see the work that MACS has been supporting - we saw teachers' and clergy houses, the School for the Blind at Nkope, the new water tank at St Michael's in Malindi and the nutrition garden at St Luke's, Malosa.*

*It was good to get a chance to talk with those whose lives had been affected by the work that was being done, but as always there seemed so much else that could happen in these places.*

*The group has some interesting questions to ask about how more could be done to support regular maintenance of buildings / projects to save the large capital cost of new buildings. Hopefully this is an area where our thoughts can help feed into the strategic thinking and planning of MACS.*

*Malawi itself is a beautiful place and for most on the trip this was their first experience. I came away feeling hopeful for the part of the country we saw which was finally using irrigation schemes to grow a second round of crops, many more accessible bore holes with hand pumps than in years gone by, and it even looked like there were more trees around in places.*

*The road system has improved beyond all measure, which means you can even travel at 46mph down the Golomoti pass on a push bike - if you have the nerve!!!! All in all it was a great couple of weeks with a wonderful team of riders. The sponsor money continues to come in now we are back home - my hope is we should have raised over £15,000 for MACS supported work in Malawi. Feedback from cyclists has been very enthusiastic.*

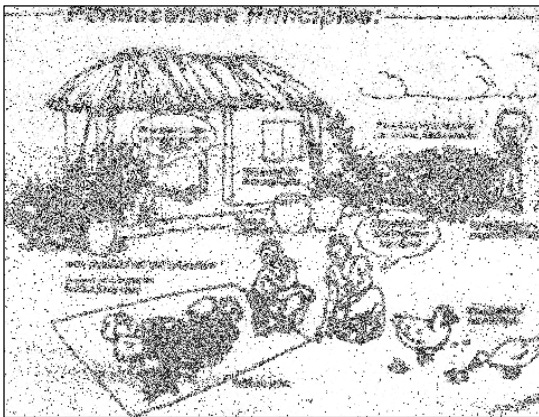
**Many congratulations to Dave and all who pedalled and fell.**

**ANOTHER VISIT** A slightly less energetic MACS' group of 19 people will be in Malawi from 28 June to 12 July. They will be visiting projects supported by MACS in the Central and Southern Regions. While at Nkope they will be working on projects connected with the School for the Blind, including clearing a colony of bats from the roof of the Resource Centre. The group is led by Richard Barton, Chair of MACS, and Eileen Eggington, the new Projects Officer. These travellers have so far raised £6,211 for the work they will be doing and for other MACS projects. A DVD of their visit will be shown during the Annual Meeting on 19 September.

**PROJECT OFFICERS** Margaret Parr, who was Headmistress of St Michael's Girls Secondary School in the 1980s, founded MACS in 1994. For many years she has worked tirelessly as Project Officer, processing applications and visiting Malawi annually. In April this year she passed the Project Officer baton to Eileen Eggington.

Eileen served in the Metropolitan Police for 36 years, reaching the rank of Detective Chief Superintendent and Deputy Head of Special Branch. She has visited Malawi three times, twice leading groups, and has a nephew living there. Eileen is looking after all projects except medical. Bridget Le Huray, who worked as a nurse in Malawi for 10 years, first as a VSO in Namwera and then at St Luke's Hospital, is now looking after medical projects.

## **NUTRITION AND PERMACULTURE** *(permanent agriculture)*



People are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of good nutrition, especially for those taking anti-retroviral drugs for AIDS. St Luke's Hospital encourages out-patients to visit its demonstration garden and is also establishing community demonstration gardens in a number of villages. MACS funded this initiative.

Many countries in Africa are encouraging people to understand permaculture, making best use of areas around the house and limited supplies of water. In June the Africa Forum is holding a permaculture conference on the lakeshore south of Monkey Bay, which will be attended by 200 people from 16 countries.

**POSTERS PROVIDED BY MACS** During the conference a set of 15 posters developed in Malawi over a number of years and funded by MACS, will be on display and given to participants. The organisers will also provide the posters on memory-sticks. June Walker wrote the text for the posters. She has lived in Malawi for 53 years and has been developing permaculture and training people in its use for much of that time. Drawings are by Sarah Beare, who now lives in England but was born and brought up in Malawi. The posters will be available in English and Chichewa editions.

In November Malawi will be hosting another large international permaculture conference, when the posters will again be displayed and made available.

## NKOPE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

MACS has been supporting Nkope School for the Blind for a number of years and has been pleased to see the local Committee becoming more effective. The Unit is attached to a large primary school. Numbers of pupils have risen to 22 and it has been particularly encouraging to know there are now 10 girls.

For the first time there are six girls with albinism, who will need special care. Direct sun can cause pain, blisters and skin cancer. There is a need for protective clothing and sunglasses.

Timothy Somanje, the General Secretary of the Albino Association of Malawi, has been working with a Netherlands based charity that is producing a special suncream to help albinos. But he says no medication can treat the social stigma, discrimination and prejudice.



**Girls at Nkope Unit for blind and partially sighted children**

He adds that, unlike Tanzania, there have been no reports of albino abuse in Malawi. Heartfelt thanks have come for the four Braille machines and Braille paper sent out by MACS at the end of last year. They are being well used.

## GENEROUS LEGACY

The executors of a generous legacy looked at a number of charities to which to donate and decided that MACS should be the main recipient because of its low overheads and local monitoring of projects. As a result MACS is funding a second hostel for girls at Malosa Secondary School; a new laboratory for St Luke's Hospital; and a significant project to upgrade the water supply to over 4,000



**Likwenu River water supply**

people at the six institutions at Chilema, Likwenu, Malosa and adjoining villages; also 3 semi-detached houses for nurses at Malindi. We will keep you updated. A fourth semi-detached house for the nurses at Malindi is being provided by the parish of Kingston Bagpuize, near Abingdon.

**SOME OTHERS** The Deputy Head of St Michael's Girls Secondary School has written to thank MACS for the new water tank, saying, "*Since the water tank has been in operation, life here at St Michael's Girls has changed. Both students and members of staff have been relieved of drawing water from the lake and borehole.*" (see photograph in the Winter Newsletter).

Dr Susannah Wood says of the generator provided by MACS: *The new generator is working brilliantly. Mr Nangantani has managed to connect it to lab, theatre, dental, pharmacy and I think paediatrics now. It is a great deal cheaper which means we will be spending less but probably benefiting more!*"

In addition to projects already mentioned MACS has also supported the following:

- A two-classroom block for the new Day Secondary School attached to the Lay Training Centre at Nkhotakota.
- The church at Chankhungu, in the Diocese of Lake Malawi, which is one of a number where walls have been built by self-help provided by the congregation, following which MACS has assisted by funding the roof and cement for the floor. Most churches in Malawi are used seven days a week for a variety of community activities.



Chankhungu church

- Funding staff from rural health centres to attend in-service training courses.
- Renewed funding for a mobile clinic in the Diocese of Northern Malawi.
- The refurbishment of the Diocesan lakeshore cottage at Kaphiridzinja. It is hoped this will increase its income generating capacity for the diocese. The diocese also uses it for small conferences and MACS groups stay there while working at Nkope.
- The reprinting of *A Handbook of Mental Health for Malawi*, by Mo Wilkinson.

## FUNDRAISING WALK

Every Sunday before Charles Mackenzie became the first Bishop of Nyasaland in 1861, he walked five miles from Cambridge to All Saints Church, Haslingfield, to take services. The congregation of All Saints invites you to join them in retracing the Bishop's footsteps on Saturday 26 September at 10.30. A remarkable stained glass window in the church commemorates the Bishop and people of Malawi.

Funds raised will be given to MACS for classrooms at the Bishop Mackenzie School at Magomero. Details from Harold and José Hopkins 01223 872 190

[bios@drawstop.plus.com](mailto:bios@drawstop.plus.com)

## BOOK *The Life of George Ndomondo*

***Shepherd Boy, Clerk, Politician, Guerrilla General, Detainee, Priest***

The title of a fascinating book written by George Ndomondo, with Colin Baker describing the important political events from 1964-1975.

This unique book is available at £7.50 post free (cheques payable to MACS) from MACS Trustee: Rachel Eaton, Moorcopse, 21 Church Rd, Tadley, Hants, RG26 3AX. Proceeds of sale go to support projects in Malawi.

## INFORMATION LEAFLET

The leaflet summarising the work of MACS has been reprinted. Order as many free copies as you can usefully distribute from Sally Huband, 2 Ashurst Cottages, Plumpton, Lewes, BN7 3AP tel: 01273 890 155 email:

[sally.huband@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:sally.huband@tinyworld.co.uk)

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

**19 September 2009 10.30-3.30**

St Saviour's Hall, St George's Sq, Pimlico, SW1V 3QW

5 minutes walk from Pimlico station

**All welcome - come with a friend**

***Bring your own food - drinks provided***

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Donations** sent to the Treasurer are placed in the General Fund, which provides flexibility, but, if you wish, you can give to one of the following categories: education, health, HIV/AIDS, orphans and community projects, food security, churches, clergy housing, women's projects or emergencies. Thank you.
- **Shopping on the web** – can provide 2-12% to MACS at no cost to you if you go through our website at <http://buy.at/malawimacs>
- **Website** – donations can be made securely via [www.malawimacs.org](http://www.malawimacs.org)
- **Ebay** buying and selling can raise funds for MACS – details on the website or email us on [malawimacs@gmail.com](mailto:malawimacs@gmail.com)
- **Recycle** – Ask Recycle4Charity.co.uk to send you an envelope in which to return your old inkjet cartridges and mobile phones, from which a % of proceeds go to MACS. During the past year we have raised over £327 in this way.



## WHO'S WHO

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