

EXETER - ETHIOPIA LINK

October 2005 Newsletter

in association with Devon Aid

Linking Exeter in England with Wellega in Ethiopia

Success for the Eye Project !!

With seven days notice in April members of the Link, the Evangelical Church of Mekane Yesus in Nekemte (EECMY), and the International Centre for Advancement of Rural Eye Care (ICARE) in Hyderabad, India, combined energy and expertise in order to write an application for funding, and submit it in due time. The Link is also extremely grateful for all the advice and guidance provided by the International Centre for Eye Health (ICEH) in London during a very hectic period of about 2 months.

We are all extremely delighted with the outcome. We were awarded a total grant of \$300,000 to be spread over 3 years.

ICARE in India will hold the grant, and provide specialist expertise throughout the project. ICARE will disperse the grant through the EECMY into the project on the ground or use it to provide specialist training, purchase ophthalmic equipment and disposables, and work in Nekemte. The grant also funds an annual project management visit to Nekemte by the Link. Dr Alexis Taylor (Vice Chair) has been appointed to take the lead on this work, and will be supported by members of the Health Sub-Committee.

The £170,000 grant will be used to strengthen service delivery and the quality of eye care available to around 2 million people in East Wellega. Around 26,000

people are blind so the task is formidable. At the end of the project this eye health service will be transferred to the government's zonal health department.

There is an International Global initiative to eliminate blindness - VISION 2020. The main activities funded by the project will be repairing cataracts and prescribing spectacles, because these services help most blind or visually impaired people.



Alex with Herut, a nurse at Nekemte Hospital who will be trained to work in the eye clinic.

In the first year of the project efforts will concentrate on three areas:

- Building the clinic in the Regional Hospital grounds.
- Training clinic team members, initially in India (Ophthalmologist, Nurse, Vision Technician and possibly a Clinic Manager/ administrator).
- Equipping the clinic.

It's a pleasure to report that Qes Alemu Nega will be the Project Development Manager.

What's happening now?

Jill Grainger and Alexis Taylor went to Ethiopia at the beginning of September.

Before arriving in Nekemte they visited two Eye Clinics. The Link's partner - EECMY, kindly hosted them throughout their visit. They undertook a situational analysis. They met the various key parties, clarified the roles and responsibilities of the agencies and personnel involved and negotiated to ensure good governance. The enthusiasm of everyone they met was unbounded. A partnership agreement between the Link and EECMY has been prepared for signature when the grant is finalised. This will commit the Link to 4 years engagement on this project. This groundwork underpins the formal initiation of the project in November when the first years grant and the technical advice and training will come on stream. (Dr Shamanna (ICARE India) and Dr Alexis will work with Qes Alemu Nega on this phase.)

The site for the Eye Clinic is being cleared. It is in an ideal position and easily accessible to the public in the hospital grounds.

Following an encouraging meeting with Ato Amanuel Abraham who manages the British Ambassador's Small Grant Scheme an application for a grant to build a spectacle workshop will be made next year.

SpecSavers (Opticians) will collect spectacles in their shops across Southwest England. They will advertise the Eye Health Care Project, the work of the Exeter-Ethiopia Link and campaign for donations.

How you can help?

The Link is committed to raising \$10,000 each year (£5700) for the Eye Health Care Project. This money, as always, will go directly to aspects of the service that will have a direct impact on people. So, please raise money and, if you need a speaker or publicity material, contact:

Jill Grainger (01392 435 648) or
Alex Taylor (01392 874 285).

Some thanks and updates about the Eye Project in Nekemte

We would like to say a big thank you to:

- The Ethiopia Mekane Jesus Church for the salary of the ophthalmic nurse for one year, Qes Alemu's expertise and for providing accommodation for visitors.
- The LV Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad, India for their expertise and advice, networking to expand the donor base and equipment supplies and consumables at a good price.
- the Zonal health ministry for 2000 sq metres of land for the project valued at \$35,000.
- the anonymous donor who has donated £100 to initiate the fund for the Eye Clinic Project.

And some other bits of news....

- Thanks to all those who signed the tax declaration on their donation forms. This has enabled us to recover over £700 from the 2003/2004 tax year and over £800 for 2004/2005.
- Richard King will be going to Ethiopia in October with his daughter Martha for 2/3 weeks.
- We're proud to announce that our friend Garadew Derara has been awarded his degree (see November 2004 newsletter about Hareto).

Sponsor Rob for the Eye Project in the world's largest cycle race *The Cape Town Argus*

Rob Barrow is a local dispensing optician and spectacle maker who works for Spec-Care Ltd in Whipton. Rob heard about our project through Alex Taylor and feels very committed to helping in any way he can. As an optician he knows only too well how poor sight can affect people's lives. It's Rob that's behind the local involvement of Spec-Care in our project and he's attended a number of recent committee meetings. He's even keen to visit Ethiopia sometime and see if he can make a contribution to the success of the project 'on the ground'.

Rob writes about his trip to Cape Town:
'On Sunday 12 March 2006 I shall be talking part in the world's largest cycle race, the *Cape Town Argus*. An estimated 35,000 entrants from over 50 countries will cycle roughly 70 miles around Cape Town and the Cape Peninsula in an event that brings the whole city to a stop. I shall be using this as a good opportunity to raise funds for the Eye Project. Also by contacting the optical press I shall be able to draw attention to all the good work that is being done. Please support me'.

Sponsor forms can be downloaded from our website (see back page) and Rob can be contacted at work on 01392-460 806. Please do all you can to support his ride for our eye care project in Ethiopia.

Update on our water projects

When Mark and Peter visited Ethiopia in April 2004 they visited various water projects in Hareto and Nekemte.

In the village of Hareto the mains water supply is not reliable, especially in the dry season. The answer is to have water tanks for storage purposes. The Link had already helped the elementary school with a new

water tank, which we saw in operation.



The new water tank for the elementary school.

Peter and Mark found it in good working order when they visited Hareto at Easter.

The high school had an old rusty tank that leaked and we left £320 to be spent on a new plastic tank and taps for drinking water and this has now been completed. We had helped the clinic to be connected to the water mains but a visit by Garedew last year showed that they also needed to have a tank so money was earmarked from our account in Ethiopia and the work is being done now.

In Nekemte we were shown one of the many unprotected natural springs where people have to get their drinking, cooking and washing water. There are plans to make these springs hygienic by concreting around them and our partners have asked for and been sent £1000 to begin this work.



One of many unprotected natural springs in Nekemte where lots of people have to get their water from.

Another such spring capping is planned at Bekumsa Biya village just outside Nekemte.

At one of the high schools in Nekemte, called Derge, the school was digging a well in 2004 to supplement the poor mains supply. We were asked to help with the cost of the hand pump to go in the well and allocated £500. We hear that this has also been completed successfully and provides drinking water for the 2000 pupils.

Peter Grainger

Coffee Morning:

- *Saturday 3rd December from 10.am to 12.30.pm at Jane Asten's 33 Prospect Park, Exeter.*
- *Traidcraft products (jewelry, food and snacks, crafts and paper etc) will be on sale.*
- *Books for a book sale would also be appreciated.*

Exeter-Ethiopia Link

The Exeter-Ethiopia Link was set up in 1987 to promote a Community Link between Exeter in Devon, England and Hareto in Wellega, Ethiopia. In 1994 the Link included Nekemte, the principal town in Wellega.

The Link supports: Health, Agricultural and Educational projects in Hareto and Nekemte and encourages links between schools in Exeter and the communities in Ethiopia.

For further information contact:

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or view our website:
www.exeter-ethiopia-devon-aid.eclipse.co.uk

The Boston Tea Party

Better known for its coffee, the Boston Tea Party café in Queen Street has kindly agreed to have the Exeter-Ethiopia Link as it's chosen charity from 1st October until early January. It's usually well patronised by a broad mix of people and this timing includes their busiest period in the run-up to Christmas/New Year. We will have a small display on a board in the upstairs area, with leaflets, and collection tins at each till. The staff are willing to dress up for a special day at some point, too. Can we think of some other coffee/Ethiopia information or events to include? (if you can, please contact Peter Grainger on Exeter 435648).

"Speaking for Ourselves" exhibition

We have arranged for Peter and Cathy Kiddle to display the "Speaking for Ourselves" exhibition that was so successfully launched at the Global Centre event earlier in the year, at Exeter Central Library from Monday 14th November until Saturday 19th November.

The Lord Mayor of Exeter will open this exhibition of text and photograph panels depicting the lives of Ethiopians in their own words, at 11am on 14th. It would be good if local members could attend the opening. The exhibition will be then be moved to the upstairs display area at the Boston Tea Party to run concurrently with the fundraising until early January. A copy of the exhibition catalogue will be available to look at and people can order one if you wish.

Any copy for future newsletters can be sent to the editor, Bruce Hebbard, at Cedar House, Pincus Road, Exeter EX2 9EN (Tel: 01392-437479) or by e-mail to b.hebbard@talk21.com

Devon Aid / Exeter-Ethiopia Link
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