

August 2006 Newsletter



Enabling communities
to help themselves

Eye Project gets under way

The development of a Comprehensive Eye Care Service for the people of Nekemte and environs is now underway. The three-year grant from The Four-Acre Trust will produce a medical and surgical service for people with cataract etc or who need prescriptions for spectacles, and an accompanying health promotion and case finding service.

Today.....



Alemu, Alex and Rohit talking at the site for the new Eye Clinic in Nekemte.

At the end of the pilot the Clinic will transfer to the Zonal Ministry of Health. There should be a level of income generation. However due to the priority given to malaria, HIV/Aids and TB the government may need financial assistance to maintain a comprehensive service.

Efforts will be made during the pilot to find local philanthropists and NGOs who can continue the funding.

Tomorrow.....



This is in Addis, but it could be Nekemte in the very near future!

Oes (Rev) Alemu Nega has been working ceaselessly in the background to bring the project to fruition. He is owed a great debt of thanks. In February Alemu was joined briefly in these tasks by Dr Rohit Khanna (ophthalmologist from India) and Dr Alex Taylor (Project Lead for the Link). We met key people in the network (Government Ministries; medical and nursing practitioners; and staff in the Development wing of the Mekane Yesus Church) to gain their co-operation/ continue discussions - on various aspects of the project.

Dr Khanna visited Ethiopia for the first time and advised on Clinic design and the types of training that could be available for Ethiopian staff. Dr Khanna represented the L V Prasad Eye Institute in Hyderabad, India which has considerable experience in building rural community eye services.

Dr Mohammed Suraga has taken the post of Ophthalmologist for the Clinic. He has wide experience and has been practising in Nazret. His wife is taking up a Lectureship at the New Generation University in Nekemte.

The first phase of the project includes the construction of the Clinic; training for members of the Clinic team; and the purchase of equipment some of which will be shipped from India. By the end of Year 1 cataract surgery will be underway.

Currently under negotiation with other donors is funding for (1) the creation of a Spectacle Making Centre and Optical Shop (the employee(s) for this service provision will have some physical disability). (2) The building of living quarters for clinical staff. The Link has agreed to raise \$10,000 (£5,800) for each of the next 3 years. Link members and friends have been energetic and generous in raising funds for this project. Already over £4,000 has been collected. Some money has already been transferred to Ethiopia to top up Dr Mohammed's salary and support Alemu's work. With the project underway the Core Group (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Health sub-group rep and project lead) are confident that enthusiasm for fundraising for this project will grow apace.

"Shared Skill is Saved Sight" says Alemu.

Alexis A Taylor

- *75% of blindness is preventable or treatable*
- *2,500 people in Nekemte are blind*
- *30,000 people in the Wollega region are blind*

News in brief.....

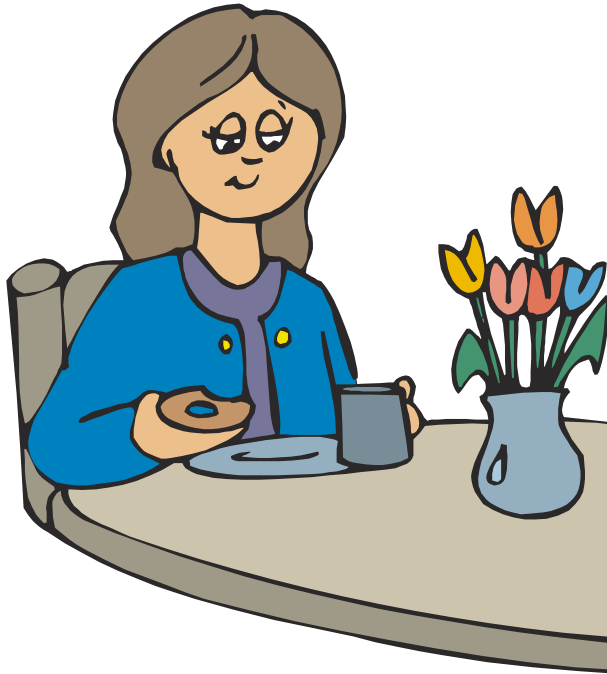
- ▶ Books sent months ago to the New Generation University in Nekemte have finally arrived after a long customs hold up in the port of Djibouti on the Red Sea.
- ▶ A second water project was successfully completed in May thanks to a £4,000 grant from the German Embassy. The clinic in Hareto now have their spring capped, a working hand pump and a water storage tank.
- ▶ Cathy Kiddle is running a stall to raise funds for children in Ethiopia at the Global Childrens Day on Sunday 3rd September at the Civic Hall in Totnes. Do support this event if you can.
- ▶ Peter Grainger and Penny Pullen are going to Ethiopia in the first 3 weeks of November. Anyone interested in accompanying them should contact Peter (see page 4)

..... and our thanks go to:

- ▶ Vern Lester for organising a summer party on Saturday 8th July which raised over £700 for the Eye Project thanks to his skill as an auctioneer and to the generosity of all those who donated items to the auction.
- ▶ Anthea Duquemin for raising £120 at her Bradninch dinner.
- ▶ Joe Hill and team at Exeter Specsavers for donating used spectacles.
- ▶ Andrew Laird (optometrist in St.Thomas) who donated a 'slit lamp' to the Link which has been taken out to Addis. Rob Barrow had kindly renovated this for us.

Support the Coffee Morning at St. Stephen's Church in Exeter

Chris Burns is organising a coffee morning at:



- St Stephen's Church in Exeter High Street (next to Dingles)
- on Saturday 26th August, from 10am to 12pm
- Fairtrade tea and coffee available
- good quality books/CDs or bric-a-brac are needed and can be brought on the day by 9.30am please (use the side door under the archway)
- cakes and plants on the day would also be welcome
- items can be left with Jill Grainger (01392-435648) or Chris Burns (01392-256261) before the day if necessary
- if you can help on the day please contact Jill or Chris as soon as possible.

Fancy a sponsored walk along the River Exe ?

Peter Grainger is organising a sponsored walk from Exeter down the Exe Estuary on 24th September with different options for the length to be walked. You can choose between:

- Double Locks return (5 miles)
- Turf Lock return (10 miles)
- Teignmouth (15 miles) and come back on the train!

If you would like a sponsor form and more information please contact Peter on 01392-435648 or download a form from our website www.exeterethiopianlink.org



This event is to raise money for our Eye Project in Nekemte which needs £6,000 a year to complement the grant we are receiving from the Four-Acre Trust (see lead story).

Can you find another member?

Membership will soon top 100 and this year we are aiming to double that. Another hundred members is £1000 towards the projects in Ethiopia.

With Gift Aid that is enough to:

- equip 2 classrooms with seats and desks for 50 students, and a teacher's table each*
- provide a capped spring*
- buy 250 Macmillan books for school libraries.*

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 Wollega, Ethiopia. In 1994 the Link included Nekemte, the principal town in Wollega.

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:

Peter Grainger tel: 01392-435648
e-mail: petergrainger@eclipse.co.uk

or (for membership)

Penny Pullen: 01392-274603
e-mail: penpul@tiscali.co.uk

or view our website:

www.exeterethiopiaLink.org

Exeter - Ethiopia Link *Current Officers*

Chair Peter Grainger

Vice-Chairs Alex Taylor
Adrian Thomas

Treasurer Mark Howells

Secretaries:

Minutes Jill Grainger

Membership Penny Pullen

General Richard King

Newsletter editor Bruce Hebbard

Co-ordinators:

Health Alex Taylor

Education

Water Peter Grainger

Women (JGMF) Fran Hamilton

(more group members welcomed - especially for Health at the moment)

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

Exeter-Ethiopia Link
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