



# THE THEMBISA TRUST

**Grassroots support  
in South Africa**

Newsletter no 27

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**Thembisa has  
no political affiliation**

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**about us**



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**projects**



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## 2012 Focus: Khazimula (see p.3)



## Chishawasha (see p.6)



### Walk and Barbecue

Thembisa Trust annual event,  
Sunday 8th July (see p.7)

# Flying in V-formation

Tonia Cope Bowley, Thembisa Trust Co-founder

Did you know that when a flock of geese flies in V-formation they can travel up to 71 percent further than a goose flying alone? Also, when flying in a flock, a goose uses up to 70 percent less energy than it does on its own. Why? As the lead bird pushes down with its wings the displaced air creates an upward draft for the trailing bird to ride on. Eventually the lead bird needs to take a break. At that point as it drops back into the pack another goose moves into the lead. That is how geese support and energise each other.



Thembisa works along similar lines. The chairperson of the Trustees, first amongst equals, drops back after some years, and someone else takes the lead. And so, for 24 years, Thembisa has kept flying and achieving its goal – supporting the disadvantaged in Southern Africa. Like a flock of geese new younger 'birds' are added from time to time. We are delighted this last year to have a long-term Thembisa supporter, Helen Whiter, join the ranks of the Trustees. We are greatly benefitting from Helen's energy, fresh thinking and practical contributions.

Because of Thembisa many lives have been positively changed. For example, women have gained skills that enable them to provide for their children. Several traumatised orphans, and vulnerable kids, now have somewhere to live and are cared for; funded pre-school places provide a start in life for some of these; leadership training opportunities equip people in many walks of life; Thembisa also provides encouragement

to those working at the sharp end to uplift the needy. This is all made possible by you. Thank you sincerely.

Is Thembisa's support still relevant, you may ask? YES! I saw this for myself in South Africa last year. I visited four of Thembisa's projects and talked to many people. In the last 2 decades unemployment and poverty have increased, access to health facilities is poor, educational opportunities are inadequate, and so on. Our support is needed now more than ever.

Is there more we can do? YES! You can do something that costs you not a thing – shop online through [easyfundraising.co.uk](http://easyfundraising.co.uk). Once signed up, with Thembisa chosen as the charity you wish to support, a percentage of every purchase you make online, from around 2000 outlets, is automatically donated to Thembisa – at no extra cost to you. PLEASE TRY IT (full details on p.7).

Finally, how can Thembisa celebrate turning 25 in 2013? Do you have ideas?

# Focus project for 2012 Khazimula



► The housing block and in the foreground a vegetable patch which the children tend.

In 2011 you were introduced to our newest project – Khazimula Children's Shelter. Lying deep in rural KwaZulu Natal, this well run shelter for vulnerable children is managed by a dedicated and able team of staff and volunteers. The Principal, Mr Mvuyo Ndenze, lives on the property. He is a former nurse and has a huge heart for the children.

Currently Khazimula operates a re-integration program: children are accommodated for a short period until, where possible, they can be returned to their family. Khazimula has great potential in providing long-term care for abandoned and traumatised children, but does not have the funds to meet these needs.

Now Khazimula is looking to enable children who are too vulnerable to be returned to their communities, to remain at Khazimula in a stable and permanent home until they reach the age of 18 or have completed their schooling. The buildings and infrastructures are sound but need upgrading if this dream of providing a



► Mr Mvuyo Ndenze



► A computer room has been created in an old container housing donated, old computers.

better quality of life and longer term support for the children is to become a reality. Khazimula is our 2012 focus project.

## Will you support this worthwhile project in any way?

You could come to our annual walk and/or barbecue on Sunday 8 July (see p.7), or sign up for easyfundraising, or perhaps follow Helen Whiter's example and hold a fundraising tea or meal. Anything you can do to swell Thembisa's funds will go a long way in giving a disadvantaged person or two a chance in life.

# Project update

## Our correspondent visits South Africa

Tonia Cope Bowley

Lucky me! Last May I spent a few weeks in South Africa and was able to visit five projects supported by Thembisa – both old and new. Oban Guest Farm, original home of my maternal grandparents, is where the project **Ingelosi Eyetu** was started (see Thembisa Today 2006, available on website). Local women were trained to make bead crafts to provide work and income. Although the training has come to an end I was delighted to hear that the skills learnt continue to provide employment.

My next stop was Pietermaritzburg, where I met with the originators of the **Sweetwaters blanket making** scheme. Elderly widows with no source of income and whose daughters had died from HIV/AIDS were left responsible for their grandchildren. How have they managed to provide for them? By learning to crochet and make beautiful and practical blankets! (see Thembisa Today 2008 and 2011). That

scheme has broadened to include the provision of affordable nutrition, vegetable growing and school bursaries.

It was also my delight to meet with various staff at **African Enterprise**, responsible for Leadership training and the Diploma Programme in Social Empowerment and Development (DSE). This trains people in a range of skills, and encourages them to multiply those skills throughout their own communities.



► (Above) Sandra Pillay, African Enterprise fundraiser with the resident caretaker.

### THEN



► Bonginkosi School then – a hazardous collapsing building with minimal facilities.

### NOW



► Bonginkosi School now.

The exuberance and happiness of the children at **Bonginkosi School** in Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg was quite something (see Thembisa Today 2005).

Through Thembisa's application to Kennington Overseas Aid, funds were raised towards a new school, purpose built, secure, with a caretaker, attractive premises, dedicated staff, a vegetable garden on site, and many happy children.



## Preschool places – giving kids a start in life

Our special focus project in 2011 was the Preschool Bursary Scheme for deprived children in the Grahamstown area. Thank you to all who helped us meet our target of raising £2500 and especially to The Bernwode News for their grant of £1000.

Chris Mann, one of Thembisa's advisers in SA, managed to obtain additional funding from another Trust in South Africa based on the size of our donation. The total sum funded places for about 15 children aged 2–5 years. These are typically children who are cared for by an unemployed single parent or grandmother with no income other than pitifully small government grants. Sadly, the 15 places represent a drop in the ocean of need.

The Centre for Social Development (CSD), a self-funded institute of Rhodes University, makes sure that workers in the preschools receive training, and monitors



► *These two boys from the Boy-Boy preschool are both recipients of preschool bursaries.*

and supports them. Chris visited us recently and reiterated the key importance of helping children of this age, whose development may otherwise be stunted. He also assured us that the project is well managed and run.

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## GADRA – Grahamstown Area Distress Relief Association

We've mentioned before the high rates of unemployment and poverty in the Eastern Cape. In this situation, partially sighted and blind people are particularly disadvantaged. As part of its wide mission to combat poverty, GADRA has a specific skills development programme for this group.

For example, GADRA currently has 13 blind/partially sighted learners enrolled for computer training. They also have a programme of food gardens for the blind. This enables the families to sell produce from their gardens, and supplement their meals with healthy vegetables.

Egg production has also been underway since October 2011. Beneficiaries help with feeding the hens, cleaning the henhouse, and washing and packaging the eggs.

GADRA's visually impaired bee-keepers

successfully harvested and sold honey for the second time in December 2011. GADRA has purchased their own extractor and plan to increase the number of hives in the near future.

In December 2011, Rotary funded a Christmas party for GADRA's beneficiaries, where they each received a gift and cooked lunch. For many this is the only gift they receive all year round – many had never received a wrapped gift before.

As we went to press, GADRA was due to host a 'Dinner in the Dark' fundraiser to market the organisation. Guests would enjoy a 3-course meal at a local restaurant while blindfolded. If the event goes well, GADRA hopes to repeat it annually. What a creative fundraising idea. Can we come up with anything as novel?



# Project update

## Alexandria Haven – progress report

Things have been moving, albeit slowly, for the new accommodation for the Alexandria Haven. This started life as an informal orphanage at Alexandria in the Eastern Cape, with Neels and Molly Bam caring for 80+ children in their bungalow. The Bams provided a safe haven for children in need of care and did not turn anyone away.

Once further buildings were planned, many government requirements had to be met in order to secure funding in the future. (The government gives foster care grants, although these do not cover actual costs.)

A committee of volunteers has now registered the project as a non-profit organization (NPO). The first two cluster homes could not be built until the land, owned by the Bams, had been transferred to the NPO. The proper formalities of transfer, including subdivision and municipal infrastructural requirements, are taking a very long time to work out. But the good news is that builders have been appointed for the first two homes! A part-time social worker (another requirement) has been appointed.

## Helping orphans in Zimbabwe

Imagine – you are a teenage boy in Zimbabwe, orphaned because of Aids. A family takes you in but they make you work as a slave and do not feed you. In desperation, you catch rats to eat.

Sadly, this really happened. The boy concerned was rescued by the Chishawasha Orphans' project and now lives, with several other orphans, with a lady named Vanessa. The Orphans' Project, which is run by a church in Harare, helped her to build a simple house for this purpose.

Whenever possible, the orphans live with relatives. Some 70–80 of them come to a club on Friday afternoons where they learn life skills and receive basic provisions for the week and clothing when needed.

In addition to paying for food and the roof of Vanessa's house, the project has used the funds from Thembisa to cover the cost of bus fares, school fees, and

essential medical care for the orphans or their families. Funds have also helped one young woman to train as a nursing assistant. Without help, these young people have no hope of paying the fees for vocational training.

When visiting the local school to donate some books from the school where she teaches, Maggie Norton (our contact) noticed that the only place to keep the books was a dirty store room. So funds were used to apply a coat of paint and install some shelves. The room has been transformed and the headmaster and pupils are thrilled.

► *Fun at the Orphans' club. (Below) The transformed library.*





# 2012 Walk and Barbecue

## Sunday 08 July 2012

Bookings for **Barbecue**: contact Tonia on 01844 338661

**Both walks** start from Tiddington Village Hall, opposite The Fox pub, OX9 2LH (on A418 between Wheatley and Thame).

**Long walk** Route through scenic Chilterns. 10:00am depart from Tiddington car park. Share car travel to Cowleaze Wood. (For details see enclosed letter.) Set off from Cowleaze Wood by 10:30am. Pub lunch stop or bring a packed lunch.

**For information contact Stephen on mobile 07710 032722**

**Short walk** Start 3:00pm, ends Ferndale 4:30pm

**Barbecue** Ferndale, Tiddington, OX9 2LQ 4:30pm to 8:00pm, Tickets £10, Children under 10 half price. Food and soft drinks included; beer and wine for sale.



Get sponsorship for the walks via Virgin Money giving or give a donation.

Please visit [www.virginmoneygiving.com](http://www.virginmoneygiving.com) to donate to Thembisa online or to set up a sponsorship page for the Thembisa walk. Sponsors can donate online and VMG sends the money to Thembisa.

## Fundraising – easy and free

Four Thembisa fans have raised £27.46 for the Trust through **Easyfundraising**. You too can help Thembisa to raise money whenever you shop online. It's very simple – just visit <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/thembisatrust/> to register. Then go via the Easyfundraising site whenever you shop with over 2000 well known retailers like Amazon, Argos, M&S, and eBay. Whenever you buy something, the retailer makes a donation to the Trust of up to 15% from each purchase.

WOW! Just think of the difference you and your friends could make. If 40 join up, the £27.46 could soon become £274.60.



All the profits will go to Khazimula Children's shelter (see p.3).

## Barbara Burbridge

The fact that several of Thembisa's original and longstanding supporters are no longer with us is evidence of Thembisa Trust's age! Next year, the Trust turns 25.

Brans and Barbara Burbridge have been integral to Thembisa from day one. They helped in the set up in 1988, and have remained loyal, helpful supporters and consultants ever since. So it is with great sadness that we heard of Barbara's passing on, earlier this year, at the great age of 93. Barbara was full of fun, and wise, with a passion for the poor and disadvantaged. She was one of life's wholehearted encouragers, and a great listener, and friend to many.

Thembisa sends sincere condolences to Brans, and the family.



# Thembisa fund-raising lunches

**funding** Helen Whiter

For many years my mother (now aged 90) has been holding charity lunches. She provides a simple lunch and guests make a donation to a specific charity. I decided to do my own version for Thembisa, to try to raise £250 to pay for a pre-school place for a year. I sent out invitations to friends and neighbours, with a choice of dates and giving them some information about the Trust.

I provided the food (soup with bread, ice cream with hot raspberry sauce and a small glass of wine) and suggested

a donation of £10. Twenty-three people came to lunch and all contributed at least £10. Before lunch I told them briefly about Thembisa and gave them a copy of the latest newsletter and a bookmark. Including gift-aid, the total donations came to about £420.

They were very enjoyable events, for me as well, and friends are asking me to do it again! I chose to 'contribute' the cost of the lunches, but you could deduct this. It would still make a worthwhile donation.

## Project funding 2011<sup>a</sup> **Reminder:** Donations are passed on in their entirety to projects. Admin funds come from membership dues.

Project / Organisation	Location	Total
<b>AELTC</b> (African Enterprise Leadership Training Centre) Leadership training throughout South Africa and Africa	Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal	£1,000
<b>Bethesda Arts Centre</b> Skills training, employment	Nieu Bethesda, Eastern Cape	£300
<b>Masikhulisane Trust</b> Alleviation of poverty through job creation	Grahamstown, Eastern Cape	£1,000
<b>Warmth</b> (War against Malnutrition, TB and Hunger) Community based nutrition project in the underprivileged areas	Cape Town, Western Cape	£500
<b>Sweetwaters Blanket Project</b> Blanket making skills support HIV Orphans	Sweetwaters, KwaZulu-Natal	£500
<b>Pre School Places</b> For needy children	Grahamstown area, Eastern Cape	£2,500
<b>Chishawasha Orphans</b> Includes provision of care and teaching life skills. First project supported in Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	£500
<b>Khazimula Children's Project</b> Shelter and schooling for vulnerable children. Focus of Thembisa fundraising for the financial year 2012/2013.	Lidgetton, KwaZulu-Natal	£1,000
<b>GADRA</b> (Grahamstown Area Distress Relief Association) Combatting poverty and promoting dignity and independence for blind and partially sighted people	Grahamstown, Eastern Cape	£500
<b>Alexandria Haven Orphanage</b>	Kenton, Eastern cape	£700
<b>Total</b>		<b>£8,500</b>

<sup>a</sup> As we went to press, some funding for early 2012 was still due to be allocated and will be considered as part of the 2012-2013 grants.