



THE BEAT

Gumboots

www.gumboots.org.za

JUNE 2021

As the world suffers from the Covid pandemic, Alexandra Township continues to be affected with resultant loss of lives and jobs, and increase in hunger and crime. Gumboots and its partners are providing leadership and the community is continuing to do its best under the difficult circumstances ... but we are now in the grip of the 'third wave' with fear for what havoc this might wreak during our cold winter months ahead.

Thank you for continued support and generous donations without which we would not be able to make a difference to the community we support. For any information, call Jenny Prangley on 082 928 8806 or visit our website www.gumboots.org.za.

Leratong Pre-school

THE IMPACT OF COVID

As with all the Gumboots projects, it is difficult to visit Leratong at the moment, but talking to Dimakatso, the senior teacher, she speaks positively about the learners and the school in general ... *"The children seem to be coping emotionally, although a few are struggling physically as their clothes are very inadequate for these cold winter mornings."*

She said that she isn't able to interact with the parents these days as they just drop and collect their children at the gate. But she senses that families are not suffering too much with Covid illness per se, but it's the crippling financial impact that's affecting them through loss of jobs and family income.



Teacher Kedi with the 5-6 year olds

PEGGY'S HEALTH

Peggy Chauke, Letatong's principal, has sadly been very ill in the Sandton Clinic High Care Unit over the last month with a combination of mixed medical issues. She is now back in her Kadey Home recovering for a few weeks before having an operation on her hand. All at Gumboots wish her a very speedy and safe recovery. Peggy, may you be very soon back to good health.



Get better soon Peggy!





Sigiya Sonke Dance Group

THE DANCE GOES ON ...

In spite of the Covid restrictions, the group continues to meet in Jack and Beauty's yard to rehearse 5-6 times a week. They have even been able to participate in a few competitions where Covid protocols are observed as much as possible.

They are all incredibly excited to be moving across to the new Sakhimfundo site in Marlboro after being very patient and long-suffering over the years coping in the limited yard space. Roll on the official opening soon!

Performing pantsula dancers



ALUMNI NEWS

Three of the ex-dancers are all progressing well at tertiary level and are very grateful for the support they receive from Gumboots.



Fifi Moyo is now in 3rd year BSc Electrical Engineering at Wits and will hopefully complete his degree next year. Thanks to crowd funding, we managed to raise R24K towards his outstanding fees, but he is battling to get the remainder funds. He is currently living rent-free in a cottage in the suburbs.



Thato celebrating her 21st with Matebogo

Thato Makgotlo is studying administration and human resources at UNISA and is hoping to get a job that will help her to find independent living. Matebogo Nxumalo continues with her internship at Sacred Heart School while she studies for her 2nd year BA degree at UNISA. Thanks to her stipend from Gumboots, she is able to support her 5-member family.



Ratang Bana Orphan Support

INGRID'S HEALTH

Ingrid Moloji, the Ratang Bana founder and driving force, has also had a really difficult time of late health wise – she has been in and out of health facilities over the last few weeks. One of her big struggles is to manage the special diet she has been put on by the hospital dietician. Amazingly she remains buoyant and positive, but she has come to the realisation that a succession plan needs to be put in place. She is grooming a capable and experienced woman called Thami to ultimately take over, and has already begun to offload some of her responsibilities.



In spite of all her stress, Ingrid organised a big function recently at Ratang Bana for her bread/food project. It created a great awareness with food stalls, music and community support.



HOW ARE THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COPING?

In Ingrid's words ... *"The community is living in VERY HARD times. I never thought I would live to see such suffering. Every day there are people at the gate crying for food with anger and confusion. But we can't help them all as our resources are limited and we receive half the number of food parcels we used to."*

The situation is dire. Ingrid is hearing of big increases in the number of Covid cases, and it seems that people are dying more quickly than in previous waves. She is trying to remain safe by staying in the office and not visiting the sick or attending funerals.

The children still have time to have fun in the playground





Sakhimfundo Youth Programme



PHASE 1 - THE DANCE AREA

In spite of the Covid issues, we have managed to continue working on the new dance facility. Looking at the photos will give you an idea of the progress to date ... the refurbished containers surround the central community and dance area, with lawns and landscaping beyond.

It only remains for the plumbing and electrics to complete Phase 1 and then the official opening can be planned. As is inevitable, the costs have been greater than budgeted ... and Gumboots would be very grateful for any further funding. What we have achieved to date has largely been possible thanks to the Kadey Family, Gumboots UK and Kidlinks World.



Great progress ... nearly there!

PHASE 2 – THE LEARNING CENTRE

We are busy negotiating to buy the adjacent property. Once this has happened, we will begin Phase 2.

In the meantime the 30-35 learners from Sigija Sonke continue to be tutored in Jack and Beauty's yard by Deli and Tebo. Time and space are restricting factors as they can only take a few learners at a time due to Covid's social distancing policies. With the support of the Kadey Family, they are managing the payment of tutors and have purchased desks, tables, laptops and computer programmes. They all look forward to moving into the new purpose-built facility.



Eager young learners



Newslinks Abroad

US Kidlinks



Evidence that KSFI's hard work is paying off!

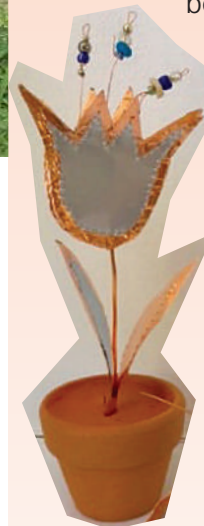
Kidlinks is proud to announce its new project in South Africa – The

Kidlinks Small Farm Incubator (KSFI). Just over a year ago when lockdown happened it was a perfect opportunity for several Kidlinks supporters to develop a business plan based on an idea they had been discussing since 2015.

The result is the development of a 23-hectare demonstration farm and training centre in the Eastern Cape, combining hands-on training, an online learning curriculum and expert local instructors to empower aspiring youth farmers to start farming businesses, who may otherwise have been unemployed. Although this area was highly productive for farming during the Apartheid era, it has since fallen into disuse and degradation. However, recent opportunities for land access for young farmers have emerged. With our ongoing partnership with the University of Wisconsin LAND project, Fort Cox Agricultural Institute and Fort Hare University, we are well supported by academia. One of our goals is to work with Gumboots youth to offer a respite from urban life by bringing them to KSFI to experience life on a working farm.

UK Gumboots

Many of us in the UK have now had both Covid vaccines and life is slowly returning to normal. Sadly though social distancing rules still apply in many venues and we've had to cancel our planned Spring Craft Fair. Starved of shopping experiences, we had hoped to attract a good crowd, but will now have to wait until November for our regular Christmas Fair. One of our craft themes this year is recycling. We have been making items from discarded drinks cans, plastic bottles and fallen trees – see photos below.



Ingenious tin-can tulip and dragonfly

Like everyone, the UK Trustees have relied on Zoom for our quarterly meetings. The advantage has been that two of the Gumboots SA trustees have been able to join us. We have been so inspired by their progress on the Sakhimfundo youth project, despite the extreme difficulties created by the pandemic. In support of the second phase of the project we are gearing up for this year's fundraising campaign beginning once again with our application to participate in the 2021 Big Give Christmas Challenge.



THE CAITLIN FUND

Mbali continues to have the academic advantage of attending the United Church School – thanks to the Caitlin Fund. She is getting some good grades in a few subjects but very poor in others – when asked, she says she hates those subjects. Ingrid's answer is: "Don't hate them ... they didn't do anything to you!" Hopefully this will work! Ingrid has an amazing philosophy and shares the following with her children in the Safe House ... "You remain protected under my roof, and you need to respect your elders, go to church, eat healthily and study hard. We must always discuss all topics together. And remember to share the spirit!"