

# Abigail NEWS

Spring 2014



## A “Pit Latrine” Brings Joy!

It was a pleasure to see so many people that we had met on our previous visit in 2011. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting all the families in Shena's Village and of course it was a joy to meet 'my' little girl Caroline again and the rest of the children who are sponsored.

I was asked to open a “pit latrine”, cutting the lovely green ribbon, and handing over the key to Esther. My first thoughts were that I would not thank you if someone gave me a gift of a “pit latrine” I usually avoid them as often as possible, so I was perhaps not very enthusiastic about the honour. I was amazed, however, to discover how much it meant to Esther. It made me realise how different our way of life is in contrast to the lives of these African women.

Esther is the grandmother to Winnie, Dennis and Edwin. These three children tugged at our heartstrings when we met them 3 years ago but it was wonderful to see them looking healthy and happy in their school uniforms thanks to their sponsors in the UK. Esther's home is very poor but she is obviously looking after the children and was so moved by her gift that she intended going to church on the Sunday.

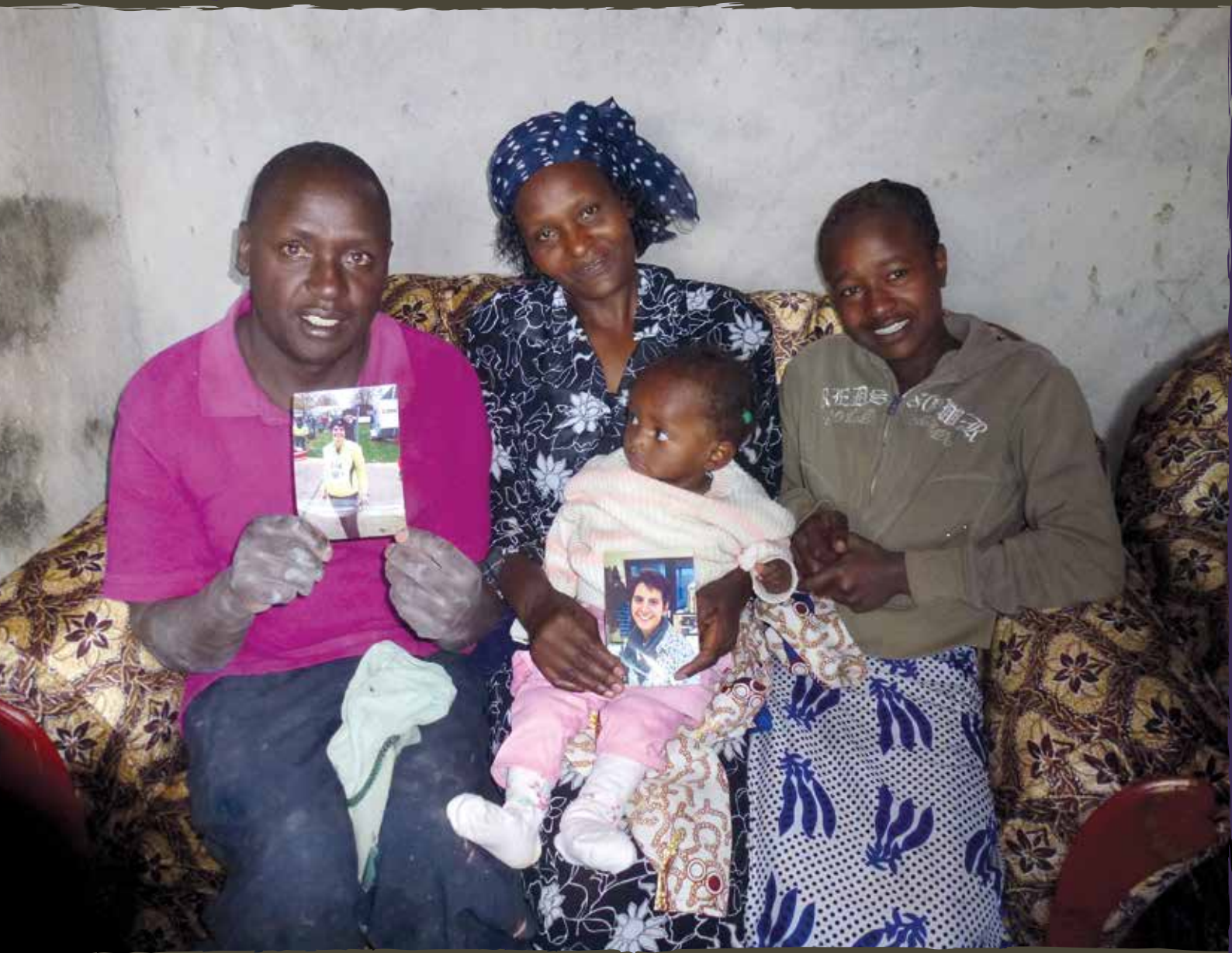
At the other home where a latrine was opened the young man who had pleaded with AM for latrines for his family and their neighbours on a previous visit had kept his promise and given up drinking in anticipation of getting his latrine!!! For Roger and Shena it was a humbling and thrilling experience to see what these (to us)

basic gifts mean to these people and how they can transform their lives. A few days later there was an article in a Kenyan National Newspaper describing the desperate need there is for latrines throughout the country to help with improving the health conditions of the poor people.

It was good to see improvements in some of the homes of the other ladies in the crocheting group. Agnes had a larger chicken run and another lady had a new room built for her son. The people in the area are still very poor, but by raising chickens, selling produce from their gardens etc. they are able to support their families a little better. It was great to feel the warmth of the welcome that we received from the people.

Sheila





# NEW BEGINNINGS

Joseph's faith had faltered when he had to uproot his family and flee from tribal clashes in the area where he and his family were living. Monica, his wife, clung tentatively on to hers. God led them to New Hope where Anne offered them accommodation in a furnished house where the owner was away for a while. Monica looked after the house as if it were her own, but of course the family always knew that the day would come when they would have to move on and they had dreaded becoming homeless again.

Joseph was given building work on the latest village being built to provide homes for teenagers leaving New Hope. One of those houses was fenced off in its own compound. As Joseph built that particular house, he had no idea that he was actually building his own home! Unknown to him and Monica, Abigail Ministries had sponsored the house to be built for them and Sarah had raised money for their furniture by running a half marathon.

While the Group were there we asked Joseph and Monica to meet us at the house. They both turned up separately looking very shy and confused. People react differently to good news. Joseph and Monica's reactions were to sob with tears rolling down their cheeks as for several minutes they silently took in the astonishing news we had just given them. Joseph's tears spoke volumes as to just how much this gift meant to them as it practically unheard of for an African man to cry! God had blessed them way beyond all they could think or imagine with a home which would be theirs and their family's for as long as they needed it and nobody would ever uproot them again.

After composing themselves, they danced together while their friends and neighbours sang and joined in the dance, sharing in their joy. Apparently the dance was one which is usually reserved for couples at their wedding but was one which appropriately celebrated the beginning of a new chapter in their lives for Joseph, Monica and their children.



## A Day We Will Always Remember

We are so glad that our fortieth Wedding Anniversary fell on the middle Sunday of our visit. It turned into an amazing day thanks to Roger and Shena and the rest of the group. The day had been shrouded in mystery. We couldn't get any information about where we were going to church or what the itinerary was for the day – most unusual on such a well planned trip. The day started with a present and cards at breakfast and then the big reveal – we were going somewhere special for lunch. Comfortable transport arrived and with the whole group we were taken to Lake Naivasha. It was amazing,

pelicans, marabou stork, cormorant, sea eagles, hippo and water buck were in abundance – it was a glorious day and we were thrilled with every bit of it. On our return to New Hope we thought that the excitement for the day was over – however, more was to come. First Alan was taken off by some of the ladies and then others appeared to dress me as a Massai bride – the full works, long red dress and bead head dress and necklace. I was then led into the main hall by dancing ladies and my Massai 'mother'. Alan was standing there in full warrior gear looking more handsome than on our original wedding

day!! The generosity of Anne and the New Hope folk was overwhelming. We had a full banquet with roast lamb – enough for all the children to have a chunk, followed by cake. We went through some of the Massai ceremony and were presented with traditional gifts for our home. It was such a special time, these few words cannot express how fantastic it was and how grateful we are, first of all to God for our 40 years of marriage and to all our Abigail friends for making it so special.

Geraldine and Alan

## Developments at 'Smith Bakery'



Since our last visit in 2011 there have been several developments at the bakery which is situated at New Hope Children's Centre. The building has been extended and new equipment installed which will enable the bakery workers to make bread, which is still a luxury item for the rural areas where the staple diet is rice, beans, maize and some green vegetables. The vision is to make bread at a price that is affordable for the local community and eventually become a supplier to local traders. To achieve this the bakery ladies have received training from a Master Baker in the art of bread making and their first attempts have been extremely promising and delicious!

The present work of the bakery is a huge daily order from a local school of mendasi – triangular donuts – very popular with all the students. This order keeps the bakery very busy. Buns are also produced which are favourites with the New Hope children.

The ladies in the bakery come from Shena's Village, about a 45 minute walk away. It is a joy to see the pride and sense of achievement they have in their work, how happy they are and how they and their families are thriving because of the difference a regular wage is making.

Geraldine





# A special thank you to all the children who are raising money to help those less fortunate than themselves.

A big THANK YOU to Eleanor for running the children's race at the Grand East Anglia Fun Run. Also to all the children at Newton Farm School for again raising money to buy the children at SEED School food and books.

Many thanks to everybody who has donated money so generously over the past few months. We appreciate all your support, encouragement and prayers through what has been a very stressful time.

## VERY WELL DONE TO ALL OF YOU!



# THEIR FIRST FOOTBALL BOOTS!

Once again, the most memorable moments of my time in Kenya involved the children. There seemed to be an appreciable improvement in the welfare of the children compared to three years ago. Although the future looks more optimistic for the children, a lot more work needs to be done, both materially and spiritually, and hopefully this support will be endorsed by the Kenyan government.

football boots which were purchased in Eldoret. This involved an arduous shopping expedition by the four men on the trip. But it was all worthwhile when we saw the sheer delight on the children's' faces when they were presented with their boots which will remain at the school for future use of the younger children when they join the football team.

Money was raised to provide the pupils of SEED School and a local youth team with

The youth team were also excited and won the next match against the top team in the area.

David



# THE DESIRE FOR BIBLE STUDY SPREADS

The ladies in Western Kenya have been following the 'Burning Hearts Bible Studies' Shena has written for them on women of the Old Testament for a few years now. While we were there in February Shena had the pleasure of launching the series with a new group of 24 ladies from the New Hope community, all eager to learn more about God. We pray they will be blessed by them. God promises if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us.







# A VISIT TO A TEA PLANTATION

It's not all visiting needy families! The group got the chance to visit a tea plantation. I thought that it was only coffee grown in Kenya but I was wrong! Kambaa Tea Factory is near New Hope Children's Centre and is involved in the production of black tea for the international tea market. Our visit guide took the group through the process of turning tea leaves into the finished item, which takes eight hours. We even did some tea tasting, which was quite disgusting as we could not swallow the tea!!

Malcolm

# HAPPY, HEALTHY CHILDREN

What a joy it was to see the children at SEED School looking so happy and healthy. We had so much fun in the playground playing "Matthew, Mark", a clapping and name game and "Pass the Shoe". Their exuberance was quite overwhelming. These children have no material possessions but were content and showed an abundance of love for each other.

They are enjoying their new classrooms and looking forward to the next block being completed. For the first time, the senior class are preparing to sit their national exams and the staff are optimistic for excellent results from the pupils. Who would have thought that such progress was possible a few years ago! This is very encouraging for the future of SEED School.

Kathleen



## Support

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*(Please make your cheques payable to Abigail Ministries)*

I am an eligible tax payer, please Gift Aid my donation.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS FOR YOUR VERY KIND GIFTS. THANK YOU ALSO FOR ALL YOUR PRAYERS AND THE ENCOURAGEMENT YOU HAVE GIVEN US OVER THE PAST TWO VERY DIFFICULT YEARS. WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU FOR HELPING US TO PERSEVERE!

# Special Memories From Kenya

Before we left Aberdeen a friend gave me a loan of her folding walking stick because I was having problems with my leg and back. Jean fell near the beginning of our 1st week

BUT

- 1) Nurse Sheila was there ready and willing to help. She also had some good plasters and cream.
- 2) Geraldine, while finishing her packing noticed a very wide crepe bandage, so put it in her case.
- 3) Ellen wasn't using the stick so Jean was able to make good use of it.
- 4) God had His hand in this and it just felt really special. "Before you ask – it was there"

One day whilst visiting, we were sat round the room when a lady's mobile phone rang – to the hymn tune "Because He lives, I can face to-morrow" Well, we all started to sing and it was just so nice being away out in Kenya where we didn't see many mobiles and singing this hymn together, especially the verse which goes "How sweet to hold a new born baby and feel the pride and joy he gives; but greater still the calm assurance this child can face uncertain days because He Lives!" There was a new born baby boy in the gathering which some of us mum's enjoyed holding.

At Eldoret and in the guest house where we stayed the second week the chef called Victor had seen us giving thanks and praying at the table so one day he asked if he could say grace for us. Well, he did and the result of that was other members of staff asked if they could have a Bible and these were supplied by members of our team. What a privilege to witness God at work in Kenya.

We also visited a Christian orphanage for babies and toddlers from HIV parents. This home was very nice and was run by a Christian couple. The babies and toddlers were extremely well cared for. As well as the joy of getting a baby to feed that day a lasting memory was seeing about eight or nine sitting in a row all on their potties.

Going back to Jean. She had her travel insurance through SAGA which meant she was able to get an x-ray at a good hospital while we were in Eldoret. She also got a back splint put on. This was quite a help to begin with and she was happy to accept 'lifts' from very handsome young gents. SAGA also arranged for Jean to go back to Nairobi from Eldoret by air ambulance. Of course she really needed her 'nurse' to accompany her, especially since Sheila had a birthday that very same day. At Nairobi she was transferred to business class

to London Heathrow, but her poor nurse was just given a seat in cattle class with the rest of us.

BUT

When we got off the plane at Nairobi, we noticed that there were nine wheelchairs all lined up with a porter standing behind each one. They must have been told that there were 10 wounded soldiers in the party!!

Ellen



## NOT THE TRIP I EXPECTED!!

It is amazing how 3 seconds can change one's life. I found this out when the 'road' along which we were walking suddenly gave way and I broke my ankle. Sadly that changed the trip for me and on some occasions I was unable to go with the team on visits, BUT I did manage to get to the bore hole, so can picture what things look like now.

However I got to know the staff at New Hope, particularly Beth and Peninna, very well. They were so kind and looked after me, even carrying me when I couldn't walk. They, and some of the older girls made sure I was occupied and were always ready to chat when all their duties were done. Thank you girls for all your kindness.

Next time .....maybe not!

Jean

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS, REGULAR DONORS AND ALL OF YOU WHO ARRANGE SPECIAL EVENTS OR DEDICATE YOUR OWN SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS TO ABIGAIL MINISTRIES.

**Abigail**  
MINISTRIES

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