

MVUMI HIGH SCHOOL, TANZANIA

FINAL NEWSLETTER 2006



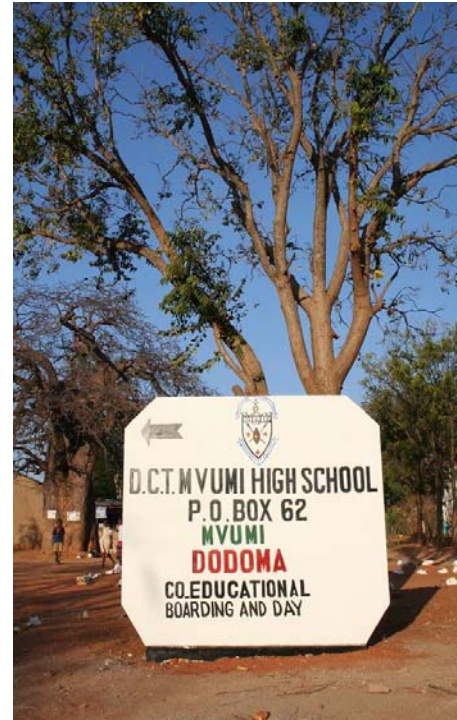
Flags flying after school assembly



Students relaxing in the new gazebo



The new school gates.



Dear Friends and Supporters,

Greetings from Mvumi village, at present in the middle of a very long and dry summer. Hopefully the rains will come in November. Many of the parents and guardians of children in this school depend on the crops grown on their small farm plots (known as shambas) to pay for school fees.

So how is the year going in this co-educational boarding and day school? Early January saw Term One begin with a record number of teachers, twenty five in all, and the largest school roll ever. With myself on sabbatical leave until late January the school began under the sound and steady leadership of Mr. Francis Malugu, the Deputy Headmaster. By that time the winter rains had failed to come and a severe drought meant students struggled to pay their fees. The building contractors were still working on the huge 400-seat dining hall and kitchen as well as the Senior Science Laboratory. We were pleased when these buildings were finally finished and ready to be used by the beginning of Term Two. Recently much needed scientific apparatus and chemicals were purchased with overseas funds and soon we will have new textbooks thanks to our donors.

We have a very committed staff room with more graduate teachers arriving every year, essential for teaching the Senior School. Currently at this level we offer Economics, Commerce, Accountancy, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and Geography. In addition we also offer the London University IGCSE Business Studies course. The Senior School is now in its second year and it has changed the atmosphere of the school for the better. The new Harry Rose House for senior boarders has excellent facilities with two students to each room. Since its inception in May 2005, the demanding task of establishing and leading the Senior School has been ably performed by Mrs. Pamela Martin. In February next year our 6th Form will sit national exams for the first time, and we hope that soon we will have students leaving the school bound directly for university - a significant achievement! During the year our school roll has climbed to 400 and almost a quarter of these students school fees are paid for by the "Friends of Mvumi". Many more students would like to come but have to be turned away to prevent overcrowded classrooms.

To encourage all students to work well we have created excellence awards for those who come top in their subjects and those who work hard. It is very important that we do well in the National exams for Forms

Two and Four, hence we were proud of our 2005 results. For the second year in a row not a single student failed their national exams. We were placed 11th out of 86 schools in the Central Zone – up from 28th last year. Since 2002 the school inspectors have placed us as the top graded secondary school in the Dodoma Region. As you can see, we are heading for the top!

Saturday 22nd July saw a proud day in the history of the school, with the official opening of the Senior School. For the first time the school was honoured with a visit from the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania, the Hon. Edward Lowassa. Amongst the many other dignitaries in attendance were The Rt. Revd. Mdimi Mhogolo of the Diocese of Central Tanganyika, Mrs Margaret Sitta, the Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Mr Philip Parham, the British High Commissioner and Mr. Stuart Rose, Chairman of Marks and Spencer UK with his wife Jenny. It is Mr. Rose who has financed the construction and furnishing of the Senior School which includes the laboratory, a boarding house named after his father Harry Rose and a new dining room / kitchen, to be called the School Hall.

It was a great occasion with a huge crowd and a large media contingent representing five newspapers and the major TV networks. The official guests were received with high ceremony, and the spectators treated to a cultural smorgasbord of dance and song. After the speeches a celebration lunch was served to over 500 people. In my speech I said of Stuart Rose; “You have moved this school forward from a secondary school to a Form I to VI High School. There are no words of mine today which can sufficiently praise your generosity, but just know that you are helping us to shape future leaders for all walks of life in Tanzania.”

Another major sponsor, Mr. George Davies, has recently come in to help us financially. We are most grateful for his assistance, given that with an ever increasing school roll we urgently need to build new classrooms and a 48 bed extension to the first boys’ boarding house.



The official party for the opening of the Senior School in the new Senior Science Laboratory.



Marching past. The local primary school in action.



The boys show the P.M. a power station model, with Bishop Mhogolo, Stuart and Jenny Rose alongside him.



The new School Hall.



The new classroom and Senior Science Laboratory.



The Harry Rose Senior Boarding House.



Wagogo tribesmen dancing.



Wagogo women dance.



The quad dressed up for the Prime Minister

The UKWATA choir won the UKWATA Dodoma Ngonjera [poetry/prose] prize at the Easter conference held for the first time at our school. Under the guidance of the Rev. Venuce Mazengo, the choir was competing against many other schools, with over 600 pupils in attendance. In late March pupils from Dr Challoner's High School for Girls in England visited us for a week. We had a wonderful evening of song, dance and skits – we always enjoy their bi-annual visits!



Bongo flavour at the Culture Evening



Dr. Challoner's girls not to be outdone.

Under the leadership of Mr Augustino Mhaiki, the playing fields have seen much activity. Two events stand out. For the first time we shared an enjoyable all day sports event with Kikuyu High School in Dodoma. We played football, volleyball, netball and basketball and won every game, bar a draw in the football match. We hope to make this an annual event. Recently we had a week long inter-house sports event organised by German gap student Gesa Rittinghaus. The houses are Malecela, Hart, Avis Richardson and Judith Chidosa. Every afternoon saw a round-robin competition between the houses in many sports, including cross-country. Malecela House eventually emerged the winners and won The Mhogolo Cup, presented to them in the School Hall by Bishop Mhogolo, at my school and village farewell in September.



Football at sunset on the Sports Arena



Library and classrooms in 1998



... again in 2006

Wednesday afternoon clubs have flourished. A recent Wednesday saw twelve clubs in action covering areas like reading, mathematics and French. A playlet was performed by the Sanoa Club (say no to AIDS) organised by Miss Tatu Mambue, and the Art Club students created posters from collage and letter design. Last month saw an Art Competition overseen by NZ gap student Sarah Caldwell-Watson.



The art competition underway.



One of the final works.



Discussing ideas.

In August a unique event took place – the internet was introduced into the school! Thanks to sterling work from Mr. John O’Sullivan of New Zealand, three computers with internet connections have been installed in my old study. Along with the twenty classroom computers and a server the school now has an outstanding Computer Centre. Most students in Tanzania do not have access to IT education, so important in today’s world. Our students can now take full advantage of the information age. In the Administration Block the academic staff have four computers in one room and are being trained to use them. Nearby all heads of department have their own computers.

The school has grown from a few classrooms to a high school with new classrooms, a Computer Centre with Internet and two laboratories, three new boarding houses, a dining hall, an administration block, day toilet facilities, many more staff houses and a Sports Arena with concrete pitches for volleyball, netball and basketball. Drilling beneath the sports grounds led to the exciting discovery of a water table which now provides a supply of water for the houses and school gardens all year. Over the years I have visited and spoken to many schools overseas to raise funds for our school. A huge thank you must go to these schools and Rotary Clubs in England, together with individual donors in Australia, New Zealand and its government, and especially Great Britain, who have through generous donations and fundraising made many of the above projects possible. Also to all those kind people who allowed me to stay overnight in their homes whilst overseas and the many gap students who came to Mvumi to share the village and school life with us. The Christian Social Services Commission in Tanzania renovated all the old classrooms, the library with many books and built two new staff houses.

To watch the staff developing their teaching skills, to see the students' achievements in their classrooms and in the Computer Centre, to see prefects lead by example has been a wonderful experience for all of us involved in the school. This has earned the respect and support of the education authorities, the parents and our community, both locally and further afield. There is still a way to go and plenty of challenges lie ahead.



John O'Sullivan and Sylvester Mfugale get online.



On the information super-highway.



Telecommunications arrive – the tiGo cell phone tower looms large over the new Senior classrooms.



The Computer Centre and Internet Room



Post Mvumi:
the Administration Block painted by Miss Sarah Caldwell-Watson. Presented by Messrs Richard Morris and John Clark to Mr. Stuart Rose

The school roll has 400 students with nearly one hundred either on scholarships, or sponsored by individuals and schools outside Africa. These pupils come mainly from the rural areas. Their parents may well have died of AIDS or are too poor to pay the school fees. Without this wonderful and generous support none of these pupils would be in the school. It is vital, of course, that this support continues into the future.

I will depart shortly for Cambridge, England after ten years in Mvumi village. It will be very hard to say goodbye.

My successor John Clark arrives from Eton College, England in October. I am sure he will take the school to new levels of achievement and success.

The Friends of Mvumi Secondary School Board of Trustees has never been stronger. Mr Tony Little, the Head Master of Eton College is Chairman. Messrs Stuart Rose and George Davies have joined the Board of the Trustees. Mr Roderick Watson continues to carry out sterling work as Treasurer.



The Gazebo within the School environment.



Mr Morris sizing up the future.

And finally farewell to...



the villagers in the School Hall and...



the Lower School in the Heywood Science Laboratory...



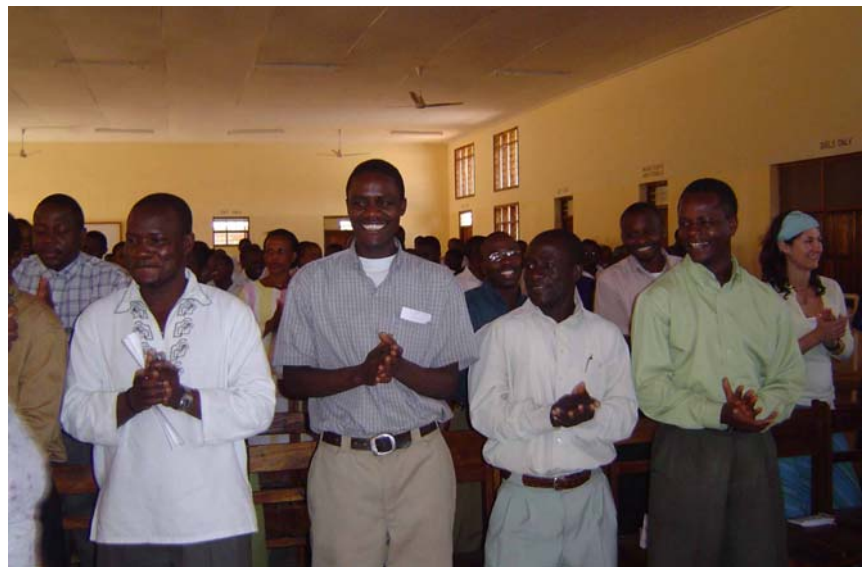
also George Gaddam, a gap student with members of the staff...



and in the Library...



some Upper School students in the classroom...



and finally the academic staff.

May Mvumi High School always remain a beacon of hope upon the hill for young people seeking a sound education.

Richard Morris,
Headmaster

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At Mvumi High School we can give an incredible opportunity to the children of Tanzania – the chance of a good education. Again many thanks to those of you who support us financially. It makes a huge difference to many young lives. If you would like to help us in the future, please send your cheque to:
FRIENDS OF MVUMI SECONDARY SCHOOL and send to:

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