



KARAKOL ORPHANAGE & MICRO CREDIT SCHEMES



Update November 2013

Introduction

I would like to apologise for such a long delay in updating you on the life and times of the projects in Karakol.

To be honest there is some good news to report but also some bad news. I will get the bad news out of the way first.

During my visit to Karakol in April, accompanied by my daughter, Roisin and colleague Danielle Riley, Roots and Wings, we were brought up to date by some friends in Bishkek regarding the Orphanage. It became clear that the Orphanage had not been as active as I had been led to believe and, in fact, there was only pretence of activity by the time we arrived. To say that we were upset would be an understatement. We were devastated as the Orphanage was Hugh's pride and joy and the driving force behind all the other activities developed in Karakol.

We visited the Orphanage and were faced with the reality that all was far from how it should be. Rest assured that no children have been affected by this situation. There had been a steady decline in the number of children being cared for at the orphanage leading finally to no children by the time of our visit. I cannot go into full details at this stage except to say that I am taking legal advice on how best to proceed and hope that in due course the building can be used for another community based project.

On a positive note I would like to emphasise that over the course of eight years almost 250 children were cared for in an incredibly loving environment and for those children I am very happy that we played a small part in giving them a second chance in life.

None of this work would have been possible without the generosity of all our family, friends and donors from all over the world who continued to dig deep for a very special cause.

Now to the good news!!!!

As you know, from reading earlier newsletters, I have been collaborating with Danielle Riley, Roots and

Wings Foundation. Danielle came to the Kyrgyz Republic with Roisin and me in April to reassess our strategy for moving forward on current projects and also to look at new opportunities in the Karakol area.

During this visit we committed to joining forces officially with Roots and Wings and over the next year we are aiming to incorporate the Foundation formally in Kyrgyz Republic. Roots and Wings will be the umbrella organisation under which all Karakol Projects will operate.

This new partnership is incredibly exciting for me personally in terms of securing the future of our projects and also in striving to realize Hugh's vision of improving the life chances of as many families as possible in the Karakol area.

During our visit to Karakol we were busy developing relationships with other NGO's, in order to understand more fully the needs of the community in general and to see how best we can assist in promoting existing initiatives and exploring new opportunities.

Roots and Wings are also actively involved with projects in India and Cameroon. Danielle invited me to visit these projects during the year and I am excited to have the opportunity to continue my involvement into the future.

The Micro credit projects, Issyk-kul Development, are still operational and continuing to support businesses in Karakol.

During our visit we were introduced to a private Kindergarten, Kinder Land. It demonstrates 'Best Practice' in early childhood education. We were very impressed by the owner, Mira, and the overall organisation of this school. We decided to set up two scholarships for children of disadvantaged families; the intention is to give the mother's an opportunity to find employment while their children are being well cared for and educated. This opportunity will enable the families to improve their overall quality of life. Roisin came up with the name for the Scholarships – 'Hugh's Bear Cubs'

More to follow!!!!

Hugh's Bear Cubs



Nurdolot



Elaman

Roisin Charlie Coulter

We are delighted to announce that, with Roots and Wings, we have awarded two boys, Nurdolot and Elaman the first two 'Hugh's Bear Cubs' scholarships at Kinder Land. We visited Kinder World on our trip in April and were so impressed with how it was run we wanted to be able to offer the opportunity to assist a family with one parent who cannot work but with this opportunity they could improve their life chances. We also set up a clothing fund so the children would fit in with their classmates. Mira, the director of Kinder World, has told us that the 'Bear Cubs' are enjoying making new friends, doing art and crafts, learning math, language and music. Nurdolot says 'I don't want to go home; I would like to stay here'. We look forward to hearing how the 'Bear Cubs' progress this year. The scholarship name stems from a joke my Dad, Hugh, used to PERFORM to liven up conferences and the like

about bears, and his family and colleagues around the world used to hear, on NUMEROUS occasions, so we thought it would be only fitting to name this scholarship in his memory.

P.S. Have just heard, that due to family circumstances that Elaman will not be continuing at Kinder Land. We will be sorry to see him go. A replacement for the scholarship place will be found.



Roisin with Jonathon (from Australia) at Kinder Land

Children's Clothing Fund

In addition to the scholarship program we decided that it would be a good idea to set up a clothing fund to support the children starting at Kinder Land.

A colleague of Hugh's from Karakol, Almaz Kemelov, who has been an incredible support to us over the years, and particularly, during this difficult visit in April was again able to help us in regard to the clothing fund. His wife, Zina runs a children's shop in Karakol. Zina was happy to be able to assist with supplying clothing and school bags to the children to ensure that they were ready for starting school.



Nurdolot on his shopping day!



Elaman trying his new clothes

We also asked Zina to identify other 'children-in-need' in the community and the fund would be available to ensure that they had adequate clothing to get them through the winter months.

Both funds are being run on a pilot basis to give us time to determine the level of assistance that may be required going forward.

Karakol Micro Business Fund – Social Fund Microcredit Agency “Development”

Sonun is progressing well with Karakol Micro Business Fund. Despite the difficult economic climate there are still an impressive number of developing and inspiring businesses meeting the challenge.

In the past year 14 businesses have been supported. These businesses cover many sectors and include; livestock, agriculture, production of boilers for heating, taxi, clothing, Veterinary Pharmacy to chicken production. It is like a breath of fresh air to see so many families benefiting from relatively small loans and to see businesses grow in such difficult economic times.



Aigul Dyusheeva
Producer of boilers for heating
Systems (Electric & coal)



Vera Shuvalova, shop owner, 2nd from
left with Sonun, Roisin and Talant



Danielle with staff member at
Jonishkul Tilemisheva's Bakery Karakol Bazaar

Last word

Again, this has been a year full of challenge and opportunity.

2014 will be a year of new beginnings in terms of moving forward, as one, with Roots and Wings. The newsletter will take on a new look and will also include exciting new projects being developed in India and Cameroon.

I would like to thank all of Hugh's former Project staff, Gulcha, Asel, Altynai, Maripa and Talant who have always been so supportive of Hugh and me over so many years. They helped me organize so many meetings, accommodation, travel but more importantly were my family away from home. Thank you all for being so special and for your on-going support.

Thank you all, once again, for your continued interest and support.

Happy Christmas and good wishes for 2014.

Just remember that *'a little goes a long way'*. Hugh's catch phrase will continue to impact.

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