

UBWINO WA AMAYI

For the good of the women, educate the girls

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Hypnotic Hi-Jinks in Blantyre

Ubwino Wa Amayi Blantyre Round Table No.20 joined forces to bring the renowned South African (well, there might be some Glaswegian in there) stage hypnotist Max Kaan to do a show for the entertainment starved big spenders of Blantyre. MK800, 000 (US5755) was raised of which Ubwino got half for our latest project to build and staff a pre-school in Namitembo. The work will start after the rains.

An Udder Marathon fun-raiser

Mary O'Neill, the fund raiser for Ubwino Wa Amayi has a lot of tricks up her sleeve for bringing money and focus in to Girls literacy and education. Last year was the Dublin women's mini marathon, this year was the Moo-athon in Donegal, Ireland. Money raised buys cows for Africa and Mary's sponsorship money was also donated to Ubwino. Next year it is The Two Ocean's Marathon in Cape Town. Let her know if you want to join in!

Achievements in Namitembo

This year, the project really got off the ground. The girls were identified through community meetings. The village committees found the girls that couldn't go to school due to lack of money, family commitments and distance to school so money was made available for their school fees. This has not solved the problem completely. Girl's access to secondary education is much more complicated than just lack of school fees. Some of the barriers are that some young women have children to look after, husbands have left school early themselves, parents are illiterate and don't see the value of girls education, and there are not enough resources in schools such as teachers and books. Some schools do not have basic toilet facilities. Ubwino Wa Amayi plans to address some of these issues in 2008, which is why we need to continue fundraising.

Recap of the year:

- St Patrick's night brought in around K600, 000
- Chris Williams donated over one thousand pounds he raised by running in the London marathon- no mean feat!
- The generosity of our local and international friends from Ireland, England and the Bahamas has boosted our fund considerably. Thanks to The teachers Union of Ireland, the Wolverhampton Soroptomists, Ananda foundation and Lughaidh MacGiolla Bhrighde who has brought us starter packs of school equipment. A special thank you must go to Portfolio designs for always being there, Fattani offset printers for printing the Christmas card free of charge, Wilderness Safaris and Danforth Yachting for always providing coveted raffle prizes and Gestetner for printing our leaflets.

- **A Careers Day 12th July 2007** was held in Namitembo. Role models from different disciplines were identified to speak to the school children and parents about the benefits of staying at school to finish their education. It was an overwhelming day; the school pupils used traditional dances, drama, songs and testimonials to get the message across.
- In October was the hypnotist night- a lot of hard work fundraising but it paid off. Round Table got half the proceeds and their money went to the physiotherapy unit at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital in Blantyre and to the fire service.
- In November we visited Namitembo for the last time before the rains when the roads to Namitembo become treacherous, even for us Dakar rally dynamic drivers. The JSC and MSCE exams were finished, so many of the pupils had broken up from school. Sadly, nationally, the exam papers had been leaked, consequently many innocent students will have to retake the examinations, including those in Namitembo. Many of the girls we fund want to be nurses, teachers and police women- we want to help them to achieve their aspirations. The young women learning a trade at the Trade school are also doing well but we want more girls to pass their MSCE to equip them to take Computer studies and other subjects such as building, carpentry and drafting.

In 2007 we met many interesting people, marveled at people's generosity and their capacity for giving both their time and money to people who don't have the same choices and chances.

To all of you, we hope you had a Merry Christmas and wish you a happy and prosperous New Year in 2008.



Original painting by Sara Oblon in Namitembo parish church



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Christmas