



SPECIAL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021

It is with great sadness that I write this, my first regular Newsletter. My father, William, died suddenly of a coronary on the morning of Sunday 10 January. I think of him now, with the half of his family who had gone before him, and many others, whom he had greatly missed.

There are so many people who will miss him very much – his calm guidance, encouragement to others, his stand against injustice and his compassion. He has taught us all well and the work which he started – his vision – is being carried on by the teams in Malawi and the UK, with sadness but with no delay.

SHOWER BLOCKS ARE COMING



A wonderful sum of money was raised from the Race for Water and we thank all the individuals and teams and donors who supported the initiative.

Not only do we have our well, tank and standpipes, there is enough to build shower blocks with sinks. This is what this photo shows – the site lay-out, levelled and ready. It's taking shape although the builders, helped by the community and even the children, have to work in between the heavy rains.

GREAT NEWS BUT TINGED WITH WORRY TOO



This is a photo of Catherine and Emily. They had just been told the news that they both have sponsors and will be able to go to Wenya District Secondary School to complete their education.

Levison had been called in by the Head of Chambo Primary School who told him that the 20 of our children whom the Foundation supports had come top in their Primary School Leavers' exam, out of a class of 80.

Catherine and Emily achieved the highest marks and were entitled to go to the bigger Wenya School. But, as with the other 18 young people, they had no chance of being able to go because school fees, uniform, stationery etc. could not be afforded. They do now have sponsors and were overwhelmed by the news that they could now achieve their aims.

We have just learned that three more of the children have been sponsored but are hoping that all can go on to secondary education. As soon as we're able we will be revising Sponsor a Child on our website but if, in the meantime, you are able to help, or wish to know more about sponsorship, please e mail me.

ON THE ROAD TO SELF-SUSTAINABILITY



The aim of the Foundation is to be as self-sustainable as possible. This takes time, of course, but a good first step has been made in the sale of surplus cabbages. A tidy sum was made

which has gone towards the feeding programme.

Maize is growing well, and groundnuts and other vegetables too and we are hoping that the harvest will be even better than last year.

FOUNDATION FRUITS



A new piece of ground at the Centre is being prepared - for the Foundation Orchard. We do have fruit trees in the dambo (by the river) - where Levison and the agricultural team had already planted guavas and avocados.

But it's been decided, now that there is the huge benefit of water on site, to make the orchard at the Centre itself. In December we announced that the orchard would be under way this month and we told of the exciting new partnership between Fair Trade Scotland, the Foundation and the Mzuzu Coffee Growers who roast, grind and package their own coffee in Malawi.

All aspects of the coffee roasting process taking place in the country of origin means that greater financial, social and sustainability benefits come to local farmers than the traditional green bean exporting – a truly fair trade product. It is also better from the environmental perspective, too, as it cuts the number of ships needed for transportation.

Fair Trade Scotland has imported 500 bags of coffee which will be sold through outlets including our UK sister charity Friends of the William Stewart Centre Malawi. Each bag contains 250g of coffee, a copy of the article Mzuzu Golden Coffee - Sunshine in a Cup which tells the story of the Mzuzu Coffee Planters Cooperative Union and their coffee, and our new trifold brochure which shows some of the work of the Foundation.

The bags retail at £10 + p&p. £2 from each bag will be donated to the Foundation to buy fruit tree saplings for Foundation Fruits. The bags of coffee are available from our UK sister charity's facebook shop - <https://www.facebook.com/williamstewartmalawi> - or by getting in touch with us via the contact form on our website www.williamstewartfoundation.org

There are many individuals, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations and smaller charities working in Malawi – all doing great work. Networking and helping one another where possible is, many of us recognise, the way forward, especially in these Covid-19 impacted times.

Starfish Malawi is one of those charities. Please have a look at the tremendous job they have made of promoting, on their website, the coffee partnership mentioned above. Thank you, Starfish - <http://starfishmalawi.com/produce-of-malawi>

THE WILLIAM STEWART MEMORIAL FUND

Immediately following William's death, people asked where they could donate in memory of him as we sadly had to pull his Aussie Will crowdfunder on his death – he had friends from all walks of life and my family and I, and the Foundation teams, have been sustained in our grief by so many lovely comments, messages, e mails, phone calls, cards, and gifts of flowers.

Sarah has organised a fund in William's memory, which will be an ongoing fundraiser supporting the work of the Foundation.

https://www.gofundme.com/f/williamstewartmemorial?sharetype=teams&member=7975422&utm_medium=copy_link&utm_source=customer&utm_campaign=p_na%20share-sheet&rcid=7dac240c8248490b88efe8d6c69bd6b3&fbclid=IwAR3dNrQ7WiCthTIm7bdwY0u0HrKYbrUGp51yPg8pDB50UoRLeDwYGbBrSH4

Finally, on the more mundane subject of GDPR, could I ask, now that I have taken over the writing and sending of the newsletters, that if you no longer wish to receive them, you let me know. I hope, of course, that you will wish to continue hearing about the Foundation's progress. Rest assured that your e mail addresses will not be given to any third parties and will be used solely for the purpose of sending you the newsletters.



Very happy days when my brother and my honorary sister (my sister Jean's very special carer and friend) brought my father to visit his old child and boyhood haunts in Scotland.

We travelled over 1000 miles – saw the place where he had learned to swim with his brother; where ancestors are buried; where he lived; met relatives of my mother and just had generally a great time.

Here he is leaning on one of the cannons in Stirling Castle, with the Wallace Monument in the background. The best of memories.

With best wishes,

Mary