

JACOB'S WELL APPEAL

Summer Newsletter 2015



Jacob's Well Appeal

July 1st was a day of great celebration for us as we opened the post to find our first ever certificate to say that we had been granted a license - the wholesale dealers authorisation, needed under the new regulations to enable us to continue sending medicines abroad. It was a long, painful and expensive process for us to get this far. We can keep working with any medicines donated by manufacturers and we are able to purchase from other wholesalers (assuming we have enough funds to buy them!). The big down-side is that we are no longer able to accept or send abroad any medication that comes to us from individuals. This is now illegal! A Godsend for me has been Elizabeth Lyle, the pharmacist who has been brave enough to come alongside me as Responsible Officer to help us to jump all the hurdles and search out all the right answers from her contacts in the industry.

To all our pill room staff who have now suddenly lost their jobs I want to send a heartfelt thanks for the many years of dedicated, careful work and to tell you all that we are missing you. We hope that in the future our new work will bring in many more medicines to help to replace those we have just lost. Our team of workers in our newly built bottle room have done us proud, adapting to the many new regulations, stock taking and recording everything. Thanks to you all for your help. Medical work is still a part of our future!

This year we have delivered two more containers to Ghana, one to the Tamale teaching hospital in February for the Northern Region and one to Upper Eastern Region's main hospital in Bolgatanga, a first time for us to this region and they were very grateful for the gifts which are very needed.

Often their equipment is old and outdated and in the rural areas health care is often lacking. They have already asked for more help soon!



Life in rural Africa is still very primitive

Our leader, Sandra, has now moved from Upper West to Tamale. She is now better positioned to move around the country to distribute our containers and also to start new development projects.

We are now partnering with a new hospital in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, which our team visited last November. It is the only hospital in the capital that offers free health care to people. It is staffed by voluntary doctors and nurses who give some hours of their free time to run the hospital.

When we visited, the hospital was full of sick people, lining the corridors waiting to be seen. On the wards, patients were lying two to a bed as there were not enough beds to hold them. We were shocked by the lack of equipment and medicine, but inspired by the faith and enterprise of the hospital's leaders who were helping hundreds of sick people with almost no money.

Since that trip we have sent 2 containers full of valuable medicine and medical supplies to that hospital, which has helped them a great deal.



Medicines from Jacob's Well fill the previously empty shelves of the hospital in Ouagadougou

In the autumn we plan to start drilling wells in Burkina Faso. This is a new project for us, and we are quite excited about the possibilities. Someone recently asked why, given our name, it had taken Jacob's Well 30 years to start drilling wells! We are now the proud owners of our own drilling rig, bought from the USA. Over the next few weeks we are learning how to use it by drilling on a local farm! Then, once it is shipped to Burkina we will try drilling our first wells in October.

There will still be a cost to drill each well - the cost of a hand-pump and some plastic pipes to line the bore-hole, but it will be a few hundred pounds, rather than the £5,000 that the local companies charge for each bore hole that they drill!

It is hard to over-state how much a good water source can change the lives of everyone in a community. Drinking polluted water is one of the biggest causes of death in Africa. Water also enables people to grow more crops which, in turn, helps to overcome Africa's biggest killer. The UN reckons that poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five. In Sub-Saharan Africa one person in four is undernourished.

We have been really encouraged by the response to our Fruit Trees appeal. Hundreds have already been planted in Burkina Faso with many more planned to be planted in the next few weeks in Ghana.

In the autumn, a Jacob's Well team will visit Burkina Faso and Ghana, and plan to identify village communities that we can work with to drill a well and then plant groves of fruit trees in protected orchards.

Trees produce fruit within two years in Africa. When different species are planted, it ensures a supply of various kinds of fruit and nuts through many months of the year. Surplus fruit can be sold at market, giving the villagers money which they can then use to purchase other necessary items. Each fruit tree costs around £2 when you include the cost of building a secure enclosure to keep grazing animals out.

In February we had been planning to send a container of clothes to Ukraine but the necessary permission from the government had not arrived so this load went to a group of Christians in Falesti, Moldova, who help orphans and others in need. We are now planning to send the next load of clothes to Kiev after the summer.

After the terrible earthquake in Nepal happened we started an appeal and now several hundred pounds have been sent to a group who are helping families who have lost everything to restart their lives in this disaster area, a difficult task in these remote areas.

Our last official visit to Romania was in May and I am very happy to tell you that the Rehab unit has housed 9 young men who were all in need. The visit was peaceful and we were able to meet up with most of our first inhabitants and their families living locally. Our shop is closed and is now being used as a centre for children's parties and it was doing very well. So far the hospital has not been able to start the Day Centre at the Rehab as they cannot afford the extra staff they will need. We would welcome any volunteer helpers and some extra funding for the extra staff to make this possible. The new hospital is a great improvement on the old one with smaller wards and because of this more staff are needed.

Our new shop in Bridlington is doing really well, and has become quite a thriving community hub as well as raising valuable funds. We have just refurbished the upstairs of the Beverley shop. Karen Buxton, who previously worked in our office is re-joining us to manage that shop from August. The shop in Withernsea continues to do well, both in connecting with needy people in the area and also raising money. Our monthly book sales, outside the Toll Gavel Methodist church, usually raise a thousand pounds, when the weather allows us! The next are on **Aug. 8th**, then **Sept. 10th** and **Oct. 31st**. We are also planning to hold a Grand Warehouse Clearance Sale on **Saturday. 28th November**

Very soon I will have my first ever revalidation as a doctor - yes - I do still have my license to practice but Peter and I are both 79 years old now and it is time to hand over to the younger team - more modern and surprisingly willing to tackle the job. God has provided for us two younger GPs, a man and wife team who will take the work to new heights. God's networking has been a miracle for us. Alistair and Margaret Robertson will take over responsibility for the medical side of the work from me in November. They will join our son John and the other staff and volunteers to take the charity forward into the future. I am sure that John will find us some small jobs when we run out of jobs at home and when we are not going on long holidays! We thank you all for supporting us in so many ways that has made Jacob's Well that source of living water for so many people. Please remember our new team in your prayers.

- Beryl Beynon, Medical Director.



Children in Burkina Faso are happy to receive our shoe boxes!

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