

School for Peace Support Group

Minutes of meeting held

Tuesday 29th January 2020

Present:, Michael Ellwood, Mary Ellwood, Sydna Playford, Rona Baxter, Jane Mawer, Colin Childs, Father Martin

Apologies: Alan Williams, Alison Scott, Neil Bauers

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by Michael

Sponsorship/ Donations news

We have had photos of two of the further education students but Mary should remind Sr Angéline that termly information must be sent. We hope that two new potential sponsors who said they would start in January are still interested.

News from the Congo

Mary showed the most recent WhatsApp message from Sr Angéline (see attached). It is clear that the medical centre is playing an important role in the lives of the children as well as the community and so we should alter the mission statement to include health as well as education at the next AGM. This would enable us to do more fundraising for the medical centre which up until now has been piece meal. Two articles from the press were passed around: The President, Félix Tshisekedi, has visited the Pope in Rome (Congo is 54% Catholic) and Australians have just discovered that its Government has been selling arms to the rebels in Eastern Congo.

Treasurer's report

Alan has had to rush off to see his father who is very ill. We hope to hear his report at the next meeting. We will need to send some more money towards the stocking of the library (just over £6000 is needed – see attached) as well as the rest of the money for the toilets when we know how much they need. We were only able to send £2000 in December because of our electronic banking issues. Mary to check the bank address with the bursar in Brussels in order to facilitate electronic money transactions. Michael suggested that we might transfer more money to Santander for future transactions when speed is important.

Recent events

- More money has come in from the two stalls at St Benet's Church on 1st December: £30 with £5 still to come
- Mary updated the children at St Benet's Primary School on 13th January. Not all of the children and teachers were present unfortunately, but the children listened attentively and were shown photos including some of their sponsored girl, Tridia, who is doing well.
- Two parishioners have been busy making marmalade.

Forthcoming Events

- Italian Buffet at Barsham Rectory on 15th February 2020 . There are now 44 people on the list which has now closed, although only three people have paid to date! Mary has been discussing the seating and requirements. A pianist has kindly agreed to play and will take his own keyboard. There will be three singers present so there should be plenty of entertainment. Colin pointed out that he has a bankcard reader should we need it. Mary read out a list of lessons learnt from the last Italian supper including that payment must be made before the evening as there will be nobody 'on the door'. Two well sishers have very kindly donated 12 bottles of sparkling wine and two others have donated the Italian hamper which we'll use for the raffle. We are very grateful for their generosity.
- Regarding the potential concert at St Benet's Church: the conductor of Suffolk Strings has now made contact with Father Martin, although no date has yet been set for Father's eye procedure so the concert is unlikely to take place in the Spring.

AOB

- Perhaps the summer event in the garden in Barsham could be in July. Two people have gazebos that could be erected in case of inclement weather.
- A friend has suggested giving a talk for the charity We looked at his list of possible topics and thought that the Easter theme could be good perhaps advertising to the Deanery. The talk could take place at Beccles Library and refreshments could be offered as at the AGM.
- Two excellent musicians who live just outside Beccles, have suggested doing a concert this year either at their home or elsewhere. Mary will be in touch with them.
- Rona is making a tapestry which she will turn into a cushion cover to sell
- Our friend in Leicester, has been given a quantity of Lladró porcelain which is being sold on Ebay for the school.
- Father Martin said he would draw up the list of second collections for 2020 very soon. He said he might give a homily on the Congo and what has been achieved on the day of the second collection if we are allocated one. There could also be more information in the hall using our display boards and some of us could be on hand to answer any questions.
- Relatives of Margaret Knox have been in touch, clearly pleased with the naming of the library and suggesting that her family might be able to do some fundraising in order to stock it.

**The next meeting will be on Tuesday 25th February
at 7.30pm**

Message from Sr Angéline January 2020

The Health Minster has organised a vaccination campaign in Lubumbashi against measles. In fact, it's malaria which has had a big impact recently but because of the proximity of the medical centre, the children (as well as the population of Tshamalale) can get help urgently if they fall ill. Tridia Kamin (sponsored by St Benet's Primary School) comes to school regularly and is reserved and very polite. She is now in the second year of secondary school and will soon take a new national exam to mark the end of basic education (TENASOSP*). The results will be issued on 20th February. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your recent donation (£2000) as the students will now be able to pay their university fees before the start of the new term. May God reward you a hundred fold!

*Test National de Sélection, et d'Orientation Scolaire Professionnelle

Furnishing and stocking of the library at the St Benet's School for Peace
Information received in May 2019

Sorry for the delay in sending this information regarding the cost of the materials for the library. We were waiting for the pricelist for the educational books from Saint Paul Publications – as well as the price of the metal shelving which we’ve heard we can get from a business in town.

Today we received 17,770 \$ which is the equivalent of the £15,000 you sent to Father Jo (in Brussels) a while ago. We’re taking that sum to finish the building (12,800 \$) which leaves us with 4,970 \$ to equip the library in the following way:

4 metal book cases (3 metres long)	2,960 \$
2 reading tables (2 meters by 1.2 m)	1,500 \$
1 office table for the library	250 \$
What we have left	260 \$
What we need:	
33 chairs x 45\$	1,485 \$
1 static computer	525 \$
1 printer	800 \$
860 books for children of all ages	5,327 \$
Total needed	8,137 \$
minus 260\$	7,877 \$ = £6,054.30

We are deeply grateful for the help you never fail to give us for the progress of St Benet’s.

NB: Good news! Our nursery and secondary schools have today been told they have ‘succeeded’ in the big cultural competition organised for the schools of Lubumbashi. Thank you for everything! Sisters Angéline and Agnès