



*Rudolf Steiner School
Mbagathi*

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NEWSLETTER

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Anja Carlsson

Welcome to our Newsletter

Our school has moved on in 2014, with continued enthusiasm which the children generate in us from our everyday work together. Through our vision building sessions with all staff we aim to bring our teachers/staff and parents closer together as we continue to build our school.

This past year has brought changes that are needed for a growing and maturing school. We are developing new structures – the trustees saw the need for a School Leader as the College presently rests and a new administrator will join us at the beginning of July. This reflects the huge task required to ensure the school runs smoothly now and in the future. Our special fund raising projects this year are a new school bus, and fire and safety prevention. All contributions are greatly needed.

The children remain our focus, and their needs are high, with increasing attention required for all aspects of the growing child. The requirements are wide ranging and demanding. Each child needs love, care, a safe environment, teachers, food, materials and a lot more. Through all the support from parents, friends and sponsors we do our best. The children are grateful and we all say thank you for pulling together towards a brighter future for our children.

By Judith Brown – School Leader



Sports Day

By Michelle Dimba

Term one towards the end, was all wet and rainy, a good thing, but not so nice to imagine a muddy sports day. We were so lucky that the rains heard our plea and shut its doors on the Sports day. Ball games were the theme of 1st term. The school was split up into two teams, Nyati (Buffalo) and Ndovu (Elephant). Classes 1-3 were the first ones on the field. They did a playful race carrying balloons and jumping in sacks. The older classes were split up in different teams who competed in volleyball, netball, handball and soccer.

The focus was more on fun and learning than winning the game. Another big competition was rubbish picking, where the Ndovu team was very strong! This term we are already preparing the children for athletics.



The Boarding

By Agnes Ndungwa

In the school there are as many as 94 children in the boarding. Some are staying the whole term, three months, while others go home for the weekends. In the boarding we have both poor children and middle class children, whose parents have chosen Steiner education but live far away.

The children love being in the boarding, and some cry when they have to go home. During the weekends they do different activities like drawing, painting, indoor and outdoor games. Our boarding father likes to put on his football shoes to play with the children. They have a social evening on Saturday evenings where they sing and dance and present small skits. On Sunday mornings we all go to church in the nearby town Ongata Rongai.

We boarding parents handle the children as our own children giving them the love and care they need. We also have routines for them for washing dishes, washing their own clothes and cleaning their rooms and the compound.

Every evening we have a homework session from 7 to 8.30 where the children help each other with their homework. The older children usually act like a brother or sister to the younger ones. Some children volunteer to help in the kitchen. It is lovely to see on a chapatti day how the boys enter the kitchen to cook!





MAKING COMPOST MANURE

To make compost manure, the class Threes used a slasher, jembe, panga, and rakes. Class Threes used grass, cow dung, leftover food and kitchen waste to make the compost manure. They also used slashers to cut down grass and used wheelbarrows to ferry cowdung from the cowshed to the compost heap. We made three layers, 1st layer was grass, 2nd layer was cow dung and 3rd layer had smelly kitchen waste and rotten vegetables. Class Threes used rakes to spread the compost heap.

Class Threes were very hard working. They went to the garden early to work. Class Threes planted some seeds and potatoes. This was fun.

By Abby Wanjira class
Three pupil.

Nature and the Child

The child and work

Farming in Class 3

Michelle Dimba

Steiner School is one that allows children to have a good connection to nature. This year Class Threes, together with their class teachers, had the opportunity to experience farming processes from the formation of the compost manure to the planting and harvesting of their crop. Considering that children in many schools these days have little to experience when it comes to farming, our children here at Steiner are so lucky to have a farming block as part of their curriculum.

In our timetable, our kindergarten children together with the class One children have the privilege to go for nature walks with their teachers as part of learning through experiencing nature.



Morning work

By Michelle Dimba

A productive Individual is one who receives proper nurturing while undergoing the processes of growth. It is rare to meet a grownup in love with farming if he has never met a hoe and used it during his entire childhood. As a Steiner community, our desire is to bring up responsible individuals who would later bring positive impact in the society. To meet this goal, we as a school put emphasis on morning work activities which are carried out by children as first lesson of the day before stepping into their classrooms.

Are these children empowered after many years of morning work? Yes indeed, at the end of the day, having worked as a team over the years, allows them to have focus in whatever they do. They tend to appreciate work and value each individual irrespective of the nature of their work.

Mila Zetu's trip to Denmark

By Lawrence Agira

'Mila Zetu' is a group of our beloved teachers Mr. Komora, Mr. Mutua and Mr. Lawrence who went to Denmark with the mission to show the African culture to people abroad and raise money for the school. This trip was organized by a funding organization 'Sanduko' based in Vejle, Denmark. This is Mr. Lawrence's story about all the impressions they received in the foreign country.

Mr. Komora had flown in an airplane before, but for us everything was exciting! We hung over another passenger to get to see everything outside the aircraft through the window, how the ground disappeared under us and how half of Africa and Europe passed under us.

At the enormous Schiphol Airport in Amsterdam we received a lot of attention when we walked around in our Masai gear! When we reached Billund airport in Denmark two smiling familiar friends, Troels and Clara - old friends and frequent visitors of the school in Kenya, were already there at the exit with their two cars to pick us up with our luggage. We were to stay with them when in Vejle.

Many things were new to us! In the morning we took a warm bath in a bathtub. We became used to flushing the toilet by pressing a button only. In the house there were lights that went on when you enter a room and go off when you go out automatically!

We travelled to a Steiner school in Silkeborg, and a warm lady received us cordially. Her name is Trine, a teacher at Silkeborg.

Our work began the following morning after greeting the children in the morning assembly. Curiosity and anxiety were shining in their faces - perhaps because of our colours or where we were coming from.

We love you Steiner.

When I first came to this school, I knew I belonged here. Teachers here are more understanding and kind compared to those I had before. The school understands the needs of various children from different backgrounds. We as pupils have a variety of arts to express ourselves and explore our talents. Unlike many schools, Steiner is one of a kind!

By Furaha Bigazi Class 7

When I think of my school, the first thing that crosses my mind is the peaceful environment of learning. The school is very good and spacious. We have an organic farm that serves the school with fresh healthy vegetables for all the staff and children. The staff of the school, ranging from the teachers to the cooks and even the office workers, contribute a lot to make it a heaven for the children. Please come and enjoy the splendour of the Rudolf Steiner school.

By Masato Mbagua Class 7



The entire timetable was set for our teaching for three days. Mr. Mutua worked with the kindergarten children to class 3, Mr. Komora taught classes 4 to 6 and I taught classes 7 to 9. African dance is not easy to teach white children, because they are not used to swinging their hips left and right. But after a lot of practice they managed. The children thought it was really “funny”. I think they meant “fun”. We had a big performance for the parents on Wednesday, and this was the first time we have ever signed autographs!

We also taught in the school in Skanderborg for a few days. In the weekend a parent had paid for us to go to the Tivoli. The first encounter with rollercoasters and Merry-go-rounds was very exciting. We also saw the Danish singer Medina perform for 10,000 people in the audience! Came Monday 145 children were optimistic about the magic hidden in the three black men.

The experience of teaching them was similar to Silkeborg School except for the language. We needed translators. Some of the children knew English, but mostly they only spoke Danish. The staff were warm and cooperative. One of them took part in the soloing of a Kamba song that was taught by Mr. Mutua. The children were mostly very shy to sing and dance but their teachers encouraged them that they would open up, which they did.

Here I taught a Luo song entitled Ramogi. But saying the word Ramogi was not easy and as such I used a lot of time to get it right. The letter R in the word is supposed to be dry and the tongue should vibrate on the roof of the mouth, but in the Danish language R is sounded from the throat and it's therefore longer and was often off the beat. Reconciling beats and words was a usual problem but we overcame it gradually. Finally 40 children were all Luos but in white colour.

On Wednesday we held a performance of Mila Zetu in a town where we first met parents and relatives of the children we'd been teaching. The audience was stuck on their chairs and faces hardly showing whether they were enjoying the performance or not. The brightest was a simple smile from someone in the audience but we decided to be interactive. At the very end we came to realize their style of enjoyment is different, they enjoy with silence while Africans enjoy with ululations.

On Saturday all classes performed with very high standards and the hall was unable to contain everyone. Mila Zetu also performed a story from Africa and you could hear a pin drop.

Mr. Mutua and I went to Copenhagen. We had been told to visit Christiania to see the other side of freedom. But funnily enough the standard was like the best side of Eastleigh in Nairobi. The smell of

Rudolf is the school of new thoughts and ideas. When I first came here, it felt weird because of the many lessons I had never done before.

Amongst them, woodwork is my best. We get to make lots of wooden items and take them home. Handwork is also amazing! We knit and make mats, woollen animals and many more. I'm glad to be here.

Margaret Moraa Class 7

My school is spacious and beautiful. We have a lovely dining hall with beautiful painting on its walls. I appreciate all the arts and craft lessons I get to have here; Handwork and woodwork being my best.

Rahma Musse Class 7

I started schooling in Steiner and I'm now in grade nine. I've had nice and most loving moments. I sincerely thank the sponsors that helped me, the staff and friends for the care they showed. I like how we co-operate in studies, sports and work around the compound. I like the curriculum of the school. It is different from the neighbouring schools. The school is clean, that makes us comfortable and enjoy the stay in school. I learnt many nice things from teachers, visitors and friends, poems, shairis and songs which I like most.

Yours Faithfully,
Angelinah Mkiwa Class 9



hashish conquered the air and people's bodies were decorated with horror tattoos. We were told the police didn't visit this place. Maybe too much freedom is dangerous also. We also experienced the electric train running underground at a terrific speed. On our way back Martin took us to the parliament. Outside the parliament were the best vehicles in the world parked... the bicycle! Even politicians use bicycles in this flat country.

Now our journey took us to Roskilde. Here we stayed in a community. The community of twenty families alternated in cooking dinner for each other and serving it. We were lucky to be their guests the second night. There was a common hall with an equipped kitchen where they all gathered for the dinner. At the entrance were photos of the members of the community and their dogs. I felt humanity should adapt this concept then discrimination and social classes would have no place.

Afterwards we had a gathering around the campfire with songs and drumming. Mr. Komora was at his best! Next morning we had a workshop at Marjatta, a home for mentally handicapped people. It was amazing to see that the teachers helped the learners to move to the right beat in the dance by using their hands to move their feet around!

Afterwards we watched a moving play performed by them, which was stunning! In this play we forgot that the actors were handicapped.



All in all we enjoyed our stay and want to thank everybody who have made this possible, and especially the class that had made a big effort to raise money for the school in Kenya. Apart from all the presents we brought to our school I think the biggest present is all the new experiences that we can share with our teachers.



Mr. Komora teaching dance in a Secondary school in Holland which he also visited.

KINDERGARTEN TRIP TO NGONG HILLS by Edna Amunga

We had a fantastic trip to the Ngong Hills last term on our kindergarten closing day. Some of our parents joined us and it was wonderful to be together.

We left school at around 9.00 am and we reached the Ngong Hills at around 10:30 am. It was a long trip despite the short distance mainly because of the potholed road at Kiserian.

When we reached there we first shared our breakfast; tea/hot chocolate and mandazis. It really helped because it was a bit cold. We then started walking through the trees. Some areas were steep but of course the children made it back to our starting point. Though we were all tired we jumped over some trenches and also sang a lot. We collected lots of cones which we brought back to our classes so that we can play with them.

On our way back all of us were really tired. Children slept in the van and the bus, we later on had lunch together and bid each other goodbye for our April holidays had just began.



Gracious Silvery Moon
 Seen even at noon.
 Your look is like a queen
 Silvery, you are just like a pin.
 Gracious Silvery Moon
 With touch of glitter brightens
 waters, moon.
 Gracious Silvery Moon
 You make us sleep at night
 Your power to make calm and
 silence
 Your glittering shine on houses
 and trees
 Gracious Silvery Moon
 Your crown or dress is perfect
 How glorious you are to brighten
 the night
 The silence at night makes you
 look as a prefect.
 Gracious Silvery Moon
 You brighten the sky
 Forever you live as a queen
 With your catwalk steps continue
 to spy.

By Rosemary Class 8





Mrs. Gachiri opened the conference 'Balance in Life' by talking about balance in different cultures.

brought us a picture on how the spiritual life, state and economy would support each other with the keywords Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood as an ideal.

Aban Bana had travelled from another continent, Asia, India where she is involved in the teacher training. She talked about Steiner/Waldorf education and taught us the art of movement, eurythmy.

Our appreciation goes to the organizing committee, the Nairobi Waldorf School and the Steiner staff at large for their dedication to make it a success.

Balance in Life, what does that mean?

By Anja Carlsson

The major event this year was the Anthroposophical Conference that took place in April 2014. The theme of the conference was "BALANCE IN LIFE".

The school was clean and dressed for a festival this week in April when the conference was held. Visitors travelled from all over the continent, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Uganda and abroad Germany, USA, England, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden to be part of the conference.

We as a school were privileged to have competent speakers from all over the world: Joan Sleight from the Goetheanum in Switzerland, Aban Bana from India, Troels Ussing from Denmark and not to forget our teachers from Kenya, Mr. Mwai Wahome from the Nairobi Waldorf School and Mrs. Teresia Gachiri from this school.

Balance in life is found, according to Mr. Victor Mwai, when you balance the intellectual and the artistic forces within you. He brought us this thought through the biblical story of Esau and Jacob.

Joan Sleight guided us through "Threefold Development in the Human Being" which in short helped us to understand how the human being develops his body, soul and spirit through the journey of life. She also talked about the Threefold Society, in which she



A parent, Mrs. Sawe closed the conference.

SCHOOL REPORT 2014

By Mwakai Shake

The teachers, their classes and their enrolment at the end of term 1, 2014 were as follows:

Kindergarten teacher - Sarah Munyua	15 children
Kindergarten teacher - Jackline Juma	9 children
Kindergarten teacher - Tarasila Kimani	16 children
Kindergarten teacher - Edna Amunga	15 children
Class 1 - Philisia Shake	25 children
Class 2 - Naomi Wambui	24 children
Class 3 - Patrick Njoroge	27 children
Class 4 - Christine Ingada	28 children
Class 5 - Augustus Mutua	25 children
Class 6 - Teresia Gachiri	29 children
Class 7 - James Olang	32 children
Class 8 - Michelle Dimba	27 children
Class 9 - Kenny Wamalo	25 children
Total	297 children

Our subject teachers in the school are: Mrs. Rose Ingala the handwork and gardening teacher, Mr. Agira – English teacher, Mr. Komora – Kiswahili, games and Dance teacher; Judith Brown – Mathematics and Flutes teacher; Margaret Liani – Kiswahili teacher, Mwakai Shake – the school co-coordinator and Kiswahili / Art teacher.

We welcome Miriam Achieng a Kindergarten assistant teacher who has been on a seven months contract since January 2014 stepping in for Idah Nyambura our kindergarten teacher, who found her better half early in the year and moved to Uganda for her settlement and growth. Best wishes from the entire staff as we bid her good bye. We have also had visiting teachers to our school, Marijn van der Made from Denmark; Anja Mweri from Sweden came with

her two boys Simba and Elias. A school friend Emily Gearing-Grief from UK is here helping us in different capacities.

This year is a very special year in the school history. Three of our teachers; Mr. Mutua, Mr. Komora and Mr. Agira have travelled to Denmark for three weeks through the help of Clara Ussing. The purpose of the trip was to introduce African dances to children abroad to create the feelings of African culture and also the teachers to make some presentations to parents and their friends to raise some money to support a needy child's education in our school; and at the same time find new sponsors for the school. We hope their visit will bear some fruit. Mr. Komora has extended the visit for one week to Holland through the help of Truus Warrink. We hope the seeds they have planted out there will grow to a big tree and fruits from the tree

will be picked for many years in future to help the school.

We had a very successful conference on the theme **Balance in Life** which was from 16th - 19th April 2014. Guest speakers came from India – Aban Bana; Joan Sleight from Switzerland; Troels Ussing from Denmark; Teresia Gachiri and Victor Mwai from Kenya. As much as I love working in the school, time has come that I think of my life in a different way as age is catching up. I once prepared to join the school and I would like to thank all those who helped me then and I wish to inform them that I am preparing to retire at the end of the year. Please allow me to thank all of you whom I have met and worked with either for a long or short time since 1st May 1998 when I joined Rudolf Steiner School, Mbagathi. Thank you so much for the past and I welcome what the future brings for us.



From a Volunteer By Emily Gearing- Grief

I first came to Kenya in September of 2012 at the age of 19, looking for an adventure, to explore the world and try to find my path in life. My first stop was the Rudolf Steiner School, little did I know that the first time I walked through the school gates would only be the beginning of my adventures here, I had no idea this school would catch my heart in the way that it did. One and a half months here was definitely not enough and after a month discovering the Kenyan coast I was back at the school to finish off my first trip. A year later I returned, I had missed this place so much and when I finally set foot back in the school and saw all the smiling

faces it felt like all the pieces of the puzzle were back together again. Having raised some money whilst back in England it was great to be able to help out with a few projects including installing proper showers in the boys wash rooms and painting and freshening up the playground.

Two months flew past in the blink of an eye, and as soon as I arrived back in England I decided I wanted to return to Kenya and the school. Five months later I was back on the plane, returning. This time it felt like I had never left, I was back home, and quickly found myself helping out wherever an extra pair of hands were needed. I often think and question what brings me here, to a world so different and far from my family and home in England. But there is something incredibly rich, beautiful and magic about this school.

Within a country of tragic poverty and desperateness, this school creates a nurturing and caring environment for the children, equipping them with a broad and diverse education to help empower them to change their futures. Maybe it is the simple beauty of giving back something to the world and humanity that draws so many people, including myself to this school? I am thoroughly enjoying my third visit, with all the challenges and experiences it brings and I know for sure that



A class 3 child's drawing of the creation story.

Graduation



Four of the school's teachers graduated from the Steiner Teacher Training in April, Mr. Patrick (1st), Ms. Naomi (2nd), Mrs. Christine (3rd) and the kindergarten teacher Ms. Edna (5th), the other two are teachers from the Nairobi Waldorf School

Thanks to the Parents

Steiner parents have proven to be dedicated and open minded. So far, the parents have initiated a bus project that aims at raising income for the new bus...this is indeed inspiring to the Steiner community at large. It is our joy to see our parents taking part in a school project to see this school move forward. Thanks to all our dear parents for their great efforts.

By Michelle Dimba



Phanice Manyasi is talking to the parents. She is currently studying to be a nurse.

Past Pupils return

Ten of the school's alumni visited the parents' meeting in January. They told us about their experiences after graduating from the Steiner School in class 9. They all had similar stories. At first it was hard to adapt to the Kenyan Secondary Schools and the hardest of all was the feeling of not being respected by the teachers. When they had adapted they sailed up to the top of the class.

By Anja Carlsson