

Masi-Mail

A newsletter for our friends

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Did you know this about Masiphumelele?

- The population is about 25,000
- There are some brick and block houses but the majority live in shacks
- Unemployment is very high—probably over 50%
- HIV AIDS and other health problems can affect many
- Drug addiction and alcoholism is a problem
- It was the first community in SA to rise up and counter the recent xenophobic violence
- Education is seen by the community as the No 1 priority
- People want work not hand-outs—everywhere they can be seen trying hard to get a qualification, to find a job, to start a small business
- In Xhosa, the word Masiphumelele means 'we will succeed'!

Under new management....

Under new management, but with the same objectives and with the same team on the ground in South Africa, all working to help the people of Masiphumelele.

John and Carol Thompson have left us with a very well set-up organisation and we are as keen as mustard to continue their work.

We are very proud of what has been achieved and with your help we are determined to build on the 'Thompson legacy' over the coming years.

Andrew Smith

President & CEO

Education—you just can't beat it!

We recently asked many of the community leaders in Masiphumelele to tell us where they would like us to concentrate our efforts – the list was long, as you may imagine, but education came top and given that it is the key to a better life, perhaps that's not so surprising.

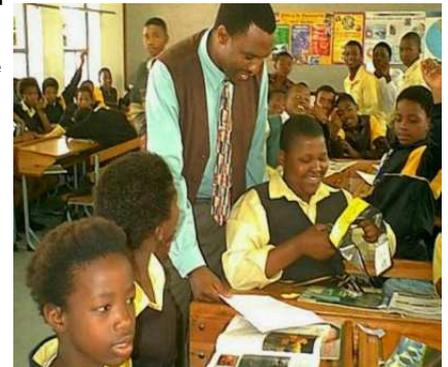
The other things that were consistently mentioned were; help to find work, help to start or improve a business venture and help to have a decent house in which to live and raise a family. [More about all these issues in later editions of Masi-Mail]

Happily, most of what we currently do fits very well with what we were told is most needed, but the exercise of asking was worthwhile - it keeps us on track and allows us to identify areas where we could do more.

Over the coming years, we will continue to keep asking the question and with the help of our fantastic team of volunteers and our many generous sponsors we hope to continue to help meet the needs of residents in Masiphumelele.

On other pages of Masi-Mail you will find three items about education – one long established and highly successful, our bursary programme. One newly introduced, "p4c" at Ukhanyo Primary School and one planned to begin in January, "English – please!"

We believe in the words; 'Education – you can't beat it' and we know the people of Masiphumelele have that opinion too. The state education provision is not yet good enough and we can make a big difference in this area.



Michael Tyhali, Headmaster, Ukhanyo Primary School

This newsletter is the first we have produced since John and Carol retired from active service in South Africa and we hope you will find it informative and interesting – if not, please tell us and we will do our best to learn [education – again!] and improve.

The Library extension project

You will know from our last newsletter that the project to extend the Library, again, is well under way and we are delighted to tell you that we are now very close to building work being started.

The building cost is R1.7m and more than R1.3m has been raised in South Africa – the balance, to allow the construction contract to be signed, has largely been met with a promised future commitment from a SA corporate donor and bridging finance.

Fundraising

We are lucky to have the on-going support of John and Carol – they remain directors of MasiCorp and we keep in close touch with them. They represent us in the USA and they will continue to help us raise funds. You can reach them on (603) 279-3305 and at jmtjabula@aol.com

We have plans to raise funds in South Africa [where we have made a good start with the Library project] and other countries and we will have more news about this in a future newsletter.

What's in a name?

Masiphumelele Corporation and **Trust**?

You may have noticed we have added 'Trust' to our title – this comes from our proposed new fund raising efforts in the UK and some other countries where 'Corporation' or 'NGO' are not commonly used to

We therefore need a little more – to avoid, if at all possible, the cost of bridging finance and for enough to fit out the new extension with furniture and equipment. If you or anyone you know would like to help with this very important project and would like more information – please be in touch with us or John and Carol.

We are seeking R350,000 [\$43,750/£25,900/€31,800] which will get us over the bridging finance problem and fit out the class rooms, multi-purpose hall, snack

In the meantime, we know the world-wide financial crisis has affected our existing donors and we thank them all for their continued support.

These are tough times for many but especially the very poor in places like Masiphumelele. That's why you will find a number of our news items come with a request for financial assistance.

describe a charitable organisation such as ours.

In the UK we will register with the Charities Commissioners as Masiphumelele Trust. Its sole purpose is to help raise money for our work in Masiphumelele. The registration will allow UK tax payers to either reclaim



You can see why we need more space!

bar, courtyard, video suite, new computer equipment etc.

Donations of any amount are welcome. R200/\$25 will buy a chair, R400/\$50 will buy a tree for the courtyard, R6500/\$500 will buy an additional computer, R40,000/\$5000 will provide the equipment for the cinema room



...and thanks from us too!

Anything you can help us with personally and anyone or any organisation you can introduce who would like to help will be greatly appreciated - by everyone in our team of volunteers and the people of Masiphumelele. Thank you.

“These are tough times for many but especially the very poor in places like Masiphumelele.”

their income tax or to have it added by the tax authorities to their donation.

We will introduce you to our UK-based team very soon!

Bursary students rule – OK!

So many of our students have done well over the past few months that we have taken this page to tell you about them – it's not all the news but a selection that we hope you will enjoy reading –

Olwethu – you may remember he has started a final year at CPUT [Cape Province University of Technology] where he is studying to convert his diploma in engineering to a B.Sc. He just received his results for the thermo dynamics module – 92%. And he has been offered a permanent job, pay rise, pension, health insurance and good prospects at the engineering company where he recently undertook an internship. Well done Olwethu – SA is in great need of engineers.



Zizi – also at CPUT, has been studying marketing and has just landed an internship with Distell the huge wine and beverages business based in Stellenbosch. There is much competition for an internship with Distell and Zizi has done very well to win a place – it is a fine company in which to gain experience.



“...moving out of Masiphumelele and into university is a very big step.” Jill Stirrup our bursary team coordinator



Sibongiseni – studying for a B.Ed at CPUT with the ambition to teach and in his first year. He has made a great start and has taken to university life with gusto! All his assessment results have been over 70%, he has been teaching other students and was elected a student rep to the university council. Not sure what he will do with his third term, but watch this space!



Seni at CPUT inauguration day

Loyiso – is working in his first year for a Business Administration degree at UWC [University of the Western Cape] where he has settled in very quickly, has gained some good initial assessment results and

is obviously enjoying his new life – well done Loyiso because moving out of Masiphumelele and into university is a very big step.

Busisiwe— following her college



course, Busi has been offered a permanent job with the company where she undertook an internship. She is now an assistant in the costing department responsible for calculating hourly rates costs, defining production times and costs, specifying material costs and invoicing. She is thrilled with this opportunity. Bravo Busi—you have made a great start to your career.

We are very keen to expand our bursary programme—do please contact us for further information if you would like to consider sponsoring a student

Sponsorship can be for an individual student by either a single donor or shared between donors. Per year:
residential at a university R40,000/\$5000/£3000/€3,500
and at a local college R25,000/\$3,000/£1,900/€2,200
Sponsorship can also be arranged for students not individually supported at any amount from R2,500/\$300/£200/€200 per year.

Philosophy for Children or p4c—**UPDATE FROM LAST Masi-Mail**



Pupils from an earlier trial programme

Unless you are an educator, you may not have come across this before now. It is a teaching method, originating in USA, that has gained worldwide recognition and is being adopted in many schools and col-

leges where it has brought great benefits to both students and their teachers.

We are lucky to have Polly Saul working with us as a volunteer – she is an expert teacher and is highly experienced in p4c. She has recruited and trained 10 other volunteer teachers and designed a programme for Ukhanyo Primary School where her team introduced p4c at the start of this academic year.

With more than 160 pupils in grade 7 to teach each week [the final year at the primary school], you will appreciate that this is a significant and important commitment for us to take on.

Initial reaction and results from Ukhanyo pupils and teachers has been super. More news about this in the next newsletter but, in the meantime, please be in touch with us if you would like more information – we need some funding to support the programme - course materials, training of our tutors **and most importantly, for the training of the Ukhanyo teachers.**

We think this may be a very significant development for Ukhanyo Primary, and any assistance you can give us will make a big difference to the children. Thank you.

A donation of R200/\$25/£15/€18 will sponsor a pupil in this programme for two years!

A letter from America.....

Since our last newsletter we have returned home to New Hampshire. "What are you going to do", friends ask, "now that you are retired from Masi?". Well the answer is that we are going to help raise money to make sure that what we started will continue.

Like most of us, we have lost a lot of our money in the last two years and like most of us there is less to donate to worthy causes, but this is one cause that we know about - intimately - and we will make sure that we continue to invest in success and make sure that the work in Masi survives and thrives.

Notice that there are now more than 75 people working (mostly as volunteers) for MasiCorp. Ten

years ago when we walked in here there was no one. Imagine an organization where most of the staff are dedicated, committed and working without pay! And many of these are South Africans who grew up socialized by the powerful poison of apartheid. 20 years ago it was illegal for them to go into a township; now they are working very hard to right some ancient wrongs. And they need all the support we can give them. So we hope that you will not forget about us despite the difficult financial times. Remember that being a volunteer-based organization, every dollar you give goes straight to the beneficiaries.

"A letter from America" ...from John and Carol Thompson

Where else can you provide a deserving kid with a three year residential college education for \$5,000 a year??? or give a pre-primary kid a chance to learn English for \$50??? or give a woman computer skills to help her find a job for \$25???

It has been a very successful ten years - thanks to you, our donors and supporters.

But you ain't seen nothin' yet!
Stick with usplease!

John & Carol

English...please! **A proposed new initiative for us...**

In the nearby town of Fish Hoek, the primary school has an enviable reputation and achieves standards of education that would please parents and educators anywhere. It is well led and its team of motivated teachers work hard to provide their learners [the most common term for 'pupil' in SA] with a stimulating and effective primary education.

A place at Fish Hoek Primary School is prized for any child and not least by children and parents of Masi-phumelele lucky enough to gain entrance.

Not surprisingly, there is always a great desire in Masiphumelele for parents to have their child educated at Fish Hoek Primary School, **but** gaining a place can cause difficulties for many of these learners:

The school teaches exclusively in English.

For the 40 learners who attend from Masiphumelele, Xhosa, or another African language, is their first language and understandably they struggle to get properly started and to keep up.



Milli Firth also works as a volunteer in many of our Library-based education programmes. One of these is the adult literacy classes.

All the parents of the Masi children she teaches at Fish Hoek Primary are invited to attend, free of charge.

Here are some, with Milli, who now have enough English to visit the school to discuss their child's education without need of an interpreter.

A great result all round!



...what happens just now

Most often the children come from families where parents have little English themselves and little understanding or experience of education in a school like Fish Hoek Primary.

It makes it very tough for them to give their child the support they need, especially in their first few years of schooling.

Fish Hoek Primary School, of course, recognises the problem and has helped the children most badly affected through an arrangement with Milli Firth, an independent specialist teacher of English.

Milli has for the past few years given one-to-one lessons, free of charge, to learners identified by the school as most in need.

Unfortunately, it has been possible to do this only for a relatively small number of Masiphumelele children.

Because Milli earns her living as a specialist English teacher and is not paid by the State, she is presently able to offer free tuition to only 4 Masiphumelele learners each year. The need is far greater and this project is designed to give many more the help they so badly need.

...what we propose to do to help

We plan to increase the number of learners in the programme from the current 4 to more than 18 per year.

This level of teaching provision will make a significant impact on the school and its ability to more quickly integrate learners from Masiphumelele.

The learners in the programme will obviously benefit - they will be enabled to make a much greater contribution - one that stems from confidence with English language and literacy.

They deserve to have the chance to get the most from the wonderful opportunities that their school provides.

We hope to get started in January—we need some financial help to make it happen.

Please be in touch if you would like further information.

Thank you.

Sponsor the programme for a year at R65,000/\$8,000/£5,000/€5,600 or an individual learner at R3,250/\$400/\$250/€300 or any amount you choose

Masiphumelele Corporation and Trust

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"We will succeed!"

For donations in South African Rand—write or e-mail us or transfer direct to our account:

Standard Bank
Masiphumelele Fund
374202176
036009

And please be sure to send us a confirmation e-mail.

Private donors - Masiphumelele Corporation is a registered NGO in South Africa [NPO 040994] Registration with SARS is pending and the registration number will be sent to donors as soon as it is available
Corporate donors - to the best of our knowledge, donations will comply with the Corporate Social Investment guidelines for the B-BBEE scorecard.

For donations in US Dollars—send a check made payable to 'Masiphumelele Corporation' to our founder,

John Thompson
PO Box 221, Centre Harbor, NH 03226

Masiphumelele Corporation is a tax exempt private operating foundation under section 501 © 3 of the Internal Revenue of the U.S. EIN number 02-0511758. It improves housing and schooling in Masiphumelele, an informal settlement in the Cape Peninsula, South Africa

In conformity with US federal tax laws, we will acknowledge that any gift you may make is a voluntary donation for which no goods or services were received and therefore the entire amount of the donation is tax deductible.

For donations in GB Pound Sterling—send a cheque made payable to 'Masiphumelele Trust' to our UK trustee,

John Spinks,
7 Silverdale Road, Wargrave, Reading, Berks RG10 8EA

If you are a UK taxpayer, we can reclaim tax on your donations – at least 25p for every £1, at no cost to you. Or, you may elect to reclaim the same amount as a tax deduction. The relevant declaration and details will be sent to you on receipt of your donation.

To contact John and Carol Thompson in the US:

(603) 279-3305 and jmtjabula@aol.com

For donations in other locations – please contact us for further information

A new volunteer...a cautionary tale!

I thought I should explain how I arrived and agreed to take over the reins from John and Carol - if only for my own sake, since I seemed to be enjoying a relatively quiet life only just a few months ago!

After my wife, Susan and I bought a house in Simon's Town [one of those impetuous decisions you make whilst on a 2 week holiday], I was aware of our local township and decided I would like to do some voluntary work. John and Jill Stirrup [Jill is our bursary programme coordinator] were by then friends and I asked Jill to show me around Masiphumelele and to tell me something of her work for MasiCorp. The fateful visit was arranged, John Thompson happened to be there and I was very impressed with everything they both told and showed me.

I rushed to volunteer – got given a job with the IT training programme based in the Library building, met a lot of super people working as volunteers, quickly found the people attending the IT training to be highly appreciative and enjoyed myself into the bargain.

From this point until sometime later, things seem a little blurred! I am told that when I discovered that John and Carol were about to retire, I began suggesting

that 'we' [MasiCorp] needed to carry on, to find a new leader to help keep the MasiCorp ship on track. Now, of course, I can see the danger of this behaviour, but then I must have been under the influence of some powerful charm, or hex or perhaps it was simply a surfeit of fine SA wine. Whatever, I awoke in the middle of a conversation with John with him saying '....I agree with you Andrew. I have found just the person to take the job on – you!'

It was impossible to say 'no thanks': What John and Carol have achieved over the past 10 years is fantastic. MasiCorp has a wonderful reputation in Masiphumelele and beyond. The team of volunteers – more than 75 of them – are all making a significant difference to the lives of many people who need a little help to help themselves. We have many generous sponsors who support our work.

So, I am very pleased to be associated with MasiCorp and everyone who helps to make it work. I am lucky to be part of the team.

I hope my experience of voluntary work for MasiCorp will encourage more people to bring their time and talents to help us.

Andrew Smith



We're on the web!

www.masip.org

