

# Publicity

## The DVD is coming!

Over the past few months we have been working on a short film to promote the work of the BET with a small film company who have generously given of their time for virtually no cost. We hope this will be finished by the end of 2011 and intend to upload it to our website and Youtube. Wendy Edwards has also offered to upload it to her facebook page. We are intending to have some DVDs made to distribute to help supporters who may like to adopt the BET as their sponsored charity for school or church. Please do let us know if you would like a copy by emailing [rebeccac@henley.com](mailto:rebeccac@henley.com), or [rhandlerwilde@gmail.com](mailto:rhandlerwilde@gmail.com), or phoning 07854 712072.



## The Trustees

Mrs Philippa Bird (*Chair & Treasurer*)

Sister Jean Mary, Community of the Holy Name (*Secretary*)

Revd Sister Monica, Community of the Holy Name

Mr Graeme Shaw

Dr Rebecca Chandler-Wilde

**42 Ridley Avenue, Ealing, London W13 9XW**

Charity Number: 285451

[www.basotho-educational-trust.org.uk](http://www.basotho-educational-trust.org.uk)

# 2012 Newsletter

Happy New Year to all our supporters in this our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year!

Who would have thought that BET would still be going 30 years after it was first established? We have carried on, with your help, because there is still a need for vocational training in Lesotho and so many would-be students, including AIDS orphans, who can't otherwise afford to go to a vocational centre.

Over the last 30 years, profound changes have happened in Africa and around the world which have changed the environment in which the Trust operates. The end of apartheid and the dawn of majority rule in the Republic of South Africa has had a dramatic effect. It is now a more attractive place for Basotho to work leading to a skills drain back home. Agencies and embassies including our own High Commission have left Lesotho for the bigger stage of a free South Africa. A gap has emerged in the economy where aid and earned income from these once flourished. Like many other parts of Africa, Lesotho has seen Chinese investment on a substantial scale but where China has not acted to end injustices such as low wages and poor conditions.

We hope, that with your help, the BET may continue into another decade where it can make a real and lasting difference to young Basotho. On June 9<sup>th</sup> 2012 we will be holding a celebration at Lea Abbey House in central London to say thank you to all our supporters, to say more about the work of the Trust and to hear about the future for Lesotho. Invitations will go out after Easter and we hope as many people as possible will be able to join us.

As the Basotho say, "Go well, stay well".

Basotho Educational Trust

## Student News

Some years ago you sponsored a young man called Phoofolo. He attended TSL . This is very good technical school in Leribe. The students are very conscientious and enthusiastic. They specialise in motor mechanics, bricklaying, carpentry and other skills. We arranged to visit to them. We had a great welcome. The students were working hard but were also very keen to talk about their courses and the opportunities you had given them by your sponsorship. They had arranged for us to meet with the Principal and they showed us round the various departments. We were delighted to be met by no other than Phoofolo, the student, who you sponsored years ago. Surely he wasn't still a student? No, he was not a student. He was now a teacher in the very place he was trained. Phoofolo is not the only student sponsored by you who is now teaching others but we think he is the only student who has become a member of the BET Committee in Leribe. The committee which meets twice a year helps to place potential students in the best school for them. TSL is one of the more expensive training schools but it also gives good opportunities for work when the course is completed. Phoofolo is a very welcome new member of the committee as he can speak from experience.



## Visit to the High Commissioner of Lesotho

On September 8<sup>th</sup> Phillippa and myself were honored to be invited to meet HRH Prince Seeiso B Seeiso, the High Commissioner of Lesotho in London. He is the younger brother of the reigning King of Lesotho King Letsie III. The parallels between himself and Prince Harry, also a younger brother with a deep interest in Lesotho had not been lost on him!



Prince Seeiso is a charming man with a brief to promote his country's interests in the UK, in particular by encouraging inward investment in the tourist industry and international trade. We talked with him about his work with any trade, charitable or other bodies that had interests in Lesotho. He saw it as his role to encourage any possible links, particularly since the British Embassy in Lesotho had been closed. It was sad to hear his views on how life in Lesotho had become worse over the past decades in some significant ways. For example the education system, once famed for its quality and attracting students from outside the country, no longer did so. This seemed to be because an excellent initiative to offer primary education to all children had not been matched by an increase in funding or teacher training places. The result was very large classes, hard to control and resultant slow pupil progress. He was very interested in BET and offered to visit our sponsored students on his return in 2012 to Lesotho to see how they were doing and encourage them. We hope to be able to continue our links with the next Commissioner when they arrive next year.

*Rebecca Chandler-Wilde*