



To our dear friends and supporters of Footprints Children's Home.

Welcome to our Christmas Newsletter 2017.

It is hard to believe that yet again another year is coming to an end. 2017 has been an extraordinary year in the life of Footprints and all of the children who make up our ever growing family.

I'd like to share with you all news of our children's achievements and the developments of our ever evolving home and life here in the Shimba Hills, Kenya.

This year has seen 5 new children joining our family. Gift and Adam came to live with us in July, after the death of their mother, two very young and vulnerable little boys. After 5 months of living with security and love they are happy children, playing, laughing, learning and enjoying their young lives. It is a joy to see.



Mathias and Lupina joined us in August, after living on the rubbish dump all of their lives. They are approximately 10 and 12 years old, but with no documentation it is hard to establish just how old they actually are. Being this age, it has been more difficult to settle down into life that has security - even having 3 meals a day is a new experience for them - as all of their food was scavenged from the dump. It is hard for us all to imagine just what that type of life would be like.

Recently we took the 27 of the children on a two day camping trip to Tsavo East, National Park and all we heard was Mathias exclaiming 'Wow', "Wow, wow, wow", he could not believe what he was seeing. It is truly humbling to see children who had nothing, now understanding that life can be so much more than merely surviving!





Our final addition to the Footprints Family this year is our youngest ever child, a baby of only 10 days old. He was abandoned on the roadside and found by a 13 year old boy, who took him home to his own mother. The family reported the baby to the Chief who took them all to the Police Station. On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December the Children's Department contacted us and we drove over to collect this tiny baby. After several hours of

paperwork and discussion he was brought home, having been fed on cow's milk and screaming for more food. His skin was infected and he was in desperate need of care. We also needed to give him a name, it seemed appropriate to call him Nicholas, after St Nicholas (Santa Claus) as he is our Christmas present. The children adore him and after medication and care he is already putting on weight and his skin is healing.



Thank you to all you who responded to our Facebook appeal, we have 2 suitcases of clothes, nappies and other things that a new born needs, coming out on the 19<sup>th</sup> December, courtesy of British Airways.

Feeding and caring for Nicholas is an unexpected expense, so if anyone would like to help us buy the vital powdered milk and nappies needed, then please go to [www.justgiving.com/footprintsorphanage](http://www.justgiving.com/footprintsorphanage). Any small donation will contribute to saving his life.



An important event

took place at the end of this school year in October. Rebecca graduated from KG3 - the end of the early year's stage of education in Kenya. She has done fantastically well over the past two years, particularly considering that when she arrived at Footprints she spoke virtually no English and had had little stimulation of any kind. She is now a happy, confident little girl, who smiles, is kind and loves to learn. She will proudly start in Standard 1 in January and is excited to be in the Primary Department at Maasai Corner Academy.

I think you'll agree what a wonderful achievement this is for her.

The end of our younger children's first year at Maasai Corner Academy.



The 11 children attending Maasai Corner, from 3 - 10 years old have had much success this academic year and after a Christmas break of 3 months are looking forward to getting back to their studies. It is a long day for them, getting up at 5 am and setting off for school at 5.40 am after a quick breakfast. Their day is full, home to complete homework, eat, shower and straight to bed - little time for any play in the week, so weekends are very special. The children never moan because they know just how lucky they are.

The 12 children who have attended The Makemba Academy have also done well; Eliza completed her KCPE examinations and has now been allocated a secondary school place, so it is an exciting time ahead for her. We also see Joseph, Matua, Kijana, Hassan and Uchi entering their last year of primary education, as they move to Standard 8, an immensely important year, as they like Eliza, will sit their KCPE exams in 2018. It is hard to believe that by January 2019 we will see 12 of our children in secondary education, none of this would be possible for any of these children without your continued support - so again a huge 'thank you' to you all.



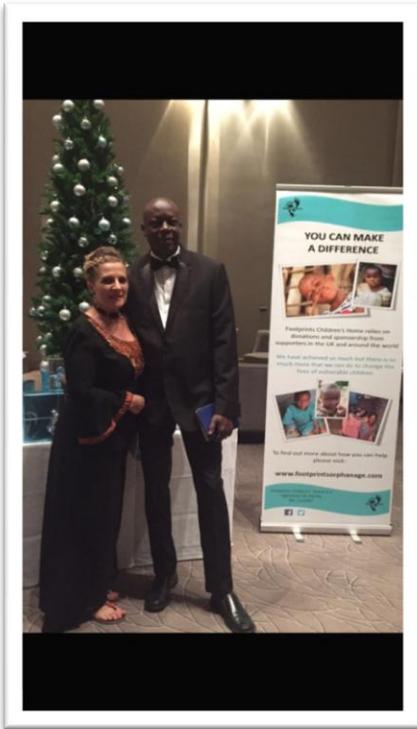
We all know that education is the way out of poverty and here at Footprints we believe that we are investing in leaders for the future in Kenyan society.



Here at Footprints we know just how important it is for all of the children to maintain their links with their extended families. Each year we hold a Guardians Day, where we invite any relatives or neighbours that have supported our children in the past. This year it was held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Aunty Grace spent a great deal of time contacting all of the children's extended families and invited them to the day. It was fantastic to see so many who had travelled to spend the day finding out about the children. Uncle Patrick and I met with each family to discuss how the children were getting on at school and at Footprints. Everyone enjoyed a meal together and the children had a special memory of the day as Uncle Howard, one of



Our volunteers brought along one of the new instant cameras. The family had a photograph to take away with them and the children had one to keep. It was a super way to finish the day.



The 9<sup>th</sup> Footprint's Charity Ball took place on Saturday the 25<sup>th</sup> November - it was as always a beautiful event organized by our dedicated UK Committee. This year it was made particularly special as Uncle Patrick, Footprints Manager and my husband attended for the first time. It took a year to organise visas and documentation but it was worth all of the effort. Patrick thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone and had a great time at the ball.

In excess of 15 thousand pounds was raised, which means that Footprints can continue to save more vulnerable and orphaned children in the Shimba Hills.

On a personal note, I was thrilled, at last to share the evening with Patrick and introduce him to so many of our supporters in the UK. He also enjoyed experiencing the good old British weather, it was a particularly cold spell and he was wrapped up in so many clothes, I could hardly see him. Thank you everyone for giving him such a warm welcome.

### The Holly Brown - Learning for Life Zone

Many of you will have read about the tragic death of Holly Brown, earlier this year. The money that her parents have donated in her memory, has enabled us to enrich the experiences that our children have, these include: dance lessons, Tae Kwando lessons, new bicycles for our younger children, sports equipment including football and volley ball posts and a local artist spent time working with the children painting murals on the site. I'd like to share some photographs with you, which show the children enjoying these activities that would not have been possible without this generous support.



Two of the old classrooms have been converted in to The Holly Brown Learning for Life Zone. The floor has been tiled, electricity and fans have been installed and the whole room has been painted. This room is now the central hub for many of the activities that take place at Footprints. Family meetings, church services, dance lessons, craft activities and community based events, including the Guardians Day all happen here. It truly is a place of learning.

Dear friends of Footprints Orphanage.  
Don't miss out on the opportunity to purchase this year's calendar. Choose either our compact desktop version or our beautiful A4 wall calendar. Just £6 and £8 respectively.

They will make a fantastic Christmas gift and a percentage of every sale goes directly to Footprints. There will be a minimal postal charge added to your order.

Please email [Mel.footprints@gmail.com](mailto:Mel.footprints@gmail.com)

Please include the number and type of calendar and your full postal address.

All calendars and postal charges should be paid directly to the Footprints Bank account no 23827607 sort code 20-15-96. Please reference with your name and 'calendar'.

Anyone wishing to purchase a calendar, who is based in or nearby Burton upon Trent, please let us know and we can try and arrange collection or delivery.

Thank you in anticipation of your generous support.



As you begin to plan for your Christmas and New Year's celebrations, we too will also be preparing to celebrate. The Christmas tree has been selected from the 'bush' and we are busily making our decorations. Aunty Michelle and Aunty Nicola, Aunty Mandy's sisters, have sent us a special handmade gift this year. Each of us has a Christmas decoration to hang on the tree and each one was made with love.



Our traditional red Santa hats are already being filled with lots of treats kindly donated by many of you - the children will love finding these on Christmas morning.



On behalf of the children, aunties and uncles and the UK Committee and Trustees at Footprints, we say 'Asante Sana Sana' (which is 'thank you very, very much') for your support and continued commitment to our Footprint's Family.

Christmas is a very special time for children all over the world- if you would like to donate something small to make our children's Christmas extra special we would be so happy.

You can do so by going to Just Giving at: [www.justgiving.com/footprintsorphanage/donate](http://www.justgiving.com/footprintsorphanage/donate)

Best wishes for a special Christmas and a peaceful and happy New Year 2018.

Mama Kerry x