

MalawiLink

The Cashman Family in Malawi

john@malawilink.org
robyn@malawilink.org
www.malawilink.org

Wishing you a very happy Christmas and peaceful New Year

Delighted to say we are all settling in quickly. Our Container finally arrived and after jumping through the necessary hoops and paying handsome taxes, we now have our old car back again - which is lovely.

We are now preparing for Christmas. It is lovely to be free of much of the material-

istic hype that makes up Christmas in the UK. However it is sobering to live in a place where still the main concern of the majority is simply having enough to eat and some clothes for their children, rather than concern over buying presents and when might be the best time to avoid the masses at Sainsburys.

We have loved having recent visitors from the UK with Jo Skinner and her Aunt coming to stay, followed by Sophie Towers and Marie Hole. It has been great fun.

It is now wet season and it rains heavily each day; this seems to be promising for a good maize harvest - which is

very important, being the staple food in an economy based on subsistence farming.

John felt hard done-by as had a cold earlier in the month - an ailment which he felt unjustified when so far from a chilly British winter! Otherwise we are delighted to report that we are in top health and so far have evaded any symptoms from the more frightening chapters of our tropical health and entomology textbooks.

The work at CURE continues to be challenging and very enjoyable. John is relishing learning new plastic surgical skills to treat the many sad burns that we see. He has also



been busy with being the medical lead with setting up a new National program to treat the 1200 children per year born with clubfeet in Malawi. So far it is going really well, but it does take up a lot of time and will mean escalating numbers of meetings and time in planning and administration.



John has been busy launching a new national clubfoot program and organising training courses

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hannah has greatly enjoyed starting school at St Andrews

Rachel remains smiley, healthy and happy

John is busy with the routine of work and teaching

Robyn is busy setting up the home and has enjoyed having both her girls at home over the holidays

Struggles....

It is always difficult in a land full of need to define how and when one can help. At work it is relatively easy to define parameters and limit oneself to treating children in the main, rather than trying to treat the very needy adult population as well. Socially and domestically it is harder. Many ask for help financially: From beggars on the street to

orphaned street children, and through to those who need genuine help to pay hospital and school fees. Trying to discern a Christ-like response to a world of need is a global challenge - it just is a little harder here to avoid confronting the issues on a daily basis.

Having guards to protect ones family and property seems paradoxical when spiritually

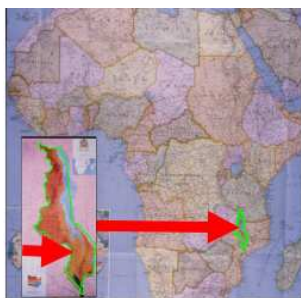
and morally one is opposed to the great poverty and income disparity that prevails.

It is also difficult to reconcile the excesses and waste of our own societies in the west, compared to the staggering needs of countries just a short flight away. We don't expect any easy answers, but hopefully are becoming more accountable.





Neglected Clubfeet
The National Clubfoot program seeks to eradicate this deformity that needlessly disables so many children in Malawi.



What next..?

John has some distant clinics to do further north that take him away from home for 3-4 days at a time. He is also struggling with how to get the work / family balance in proportion, when the need confronting one medically is so great and there is so much to do.

We would love to try and organise good internet access at home; this is proving tricky, but hopefully we will get that sorted in the next few weeks. Apologies to those who have unsuccessfully tried to email or phone.

In summary—life is full and varied. Much cause for gratitude and smiles. We all remain healthy and the children are thriving.

Thank you very much for your interest. We do hope that you will continue to keep in touch and also give some thought to coming to visit!

With our thanks and very best wishes,

John, Robyn, Hannah and Rachel

BEIT / CURE International Hospital
PO Box 31236, Blantyre 3, Malawi.
Home Tel 00265-(0)-183 1654
John's mobile: 00265 -(0)- 8797775
Robyn's mobile: 00265 -(0)- 9004735



Staying in Touch

We would love to stay in contact. Email is best, but simple text is best. I am afraid that “broadband” connections in Malawi are much slower than in the UK and at the moment are extremely expensive.

Paul and Viv Nicholson, have kindly agreed to email or print and send out a newsletter to all our friends and colleagues who would like to keep up to date. Please either complete the form below and send to Paul, or email us and we will make the necessary arrange-

Name:

Email Address

Or

Home Postal Address

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- I would like to receive John and Robyn's Newsletter by EMAIL
- I would like to receive John and Robyn's Newsletter by POST
- I would like to receive written information about financially supporting the work of the Cashman Family working for CURE in Malawi
 - £5/month £10/month other £...../month
- I would like to receive a free CD or Video (in PC format) about the work of CURE (also available as a download from www.malawilink.org)

PLEASE REPLY TO:
Paul and Viv Nicholson,
43 Partis Way, Newbridge, Bath. BA1 3QQ

OR

Simply email: john@malawilink.org