GOOD NEWS

We have new premises for our operations - well, not really, it is the location that has a NEW NAME - Pasadena High School is no more; from the start of the new school year it has been named………………

With a new motto, Igniting Inquisitive Imagination, it is off to a new life!

Books for Lesotho wishes the school community a great future under the new name and operating with renewed vigour. Based on the experience some of us had at annual Presentation Ceremony (see below), the spirit in the school is alive and well, and it deserves to thrive.

RECOGNITION BY PASADENA HIGH SCHOOL

Well, at the time, December 2018, it was still so called (see above).

David and Liz Linn and Rob Langley (pictured sporting the trophy with School Principal, Ms Wendy House) attended the ceremony at the invitation of the school, and were amazed when Books for Lesotho Inc. was awarded “Valued Volunteer”. We are pleased to be warmly welcomed users of The Barn, courtesy of The School.

CLOSED FOR A “BREAK”

The Barn was closed during January to allow volunteers to have a break. Even so, there was still a lot going on over the period: books were still being delivered by arrangement, and the 2019 shipment for Transformation Resource Centre (7 pallets/116 boxes/16,880 books) left The Barn. The shipment arrived at TRC on 15th March 2019 - another triumph for B4L and our shipping agents; thank you.

BOOK DONATIONS

I have written previously that B4L receives donations of books from too many sources to be able to list and thank each one here. One of the most prolific donors is the Lions Club of Glenunga Bookmart. During February David and Liz collected a large number of boxes; Lions Club member Yee Cheng Leong helped with the loading.
REMARKS ABOUT THE PROJECT

The source of inspiration for Books for Lesotho Inc. came from ‘Me Mosa Muso who was Librarian at Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) when David and Liz visited Lesotho in 2006. It is Mosa who had the dream to establish a library in every school in the country. Below, Mosa is pictured with her husband in Welcom, South Africa. After reading the December Newsletter, Mosa sent the following message:

Seasons greetings.
I read with great interest the newsletter which I would like to receive as long as you publish it. It’s very informative concerning the events that eventually lead to the arrival of the books at TRC.
I would like to give my thanks to these individuals who sacrifice their time for Lesotho children.
There is something that indeed fascinates me that is your continuous support to collect the books at the same time fundraising. Please let these energy never stop until all schools understand the importance of reading.
I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous 2019!
Regards
Mosa.

HOW ARE THE BOOKS USED?

The Lesotho Child Counselling Unit in Mazenod shelters children needing support. LCCU has received books from B4L. ‘Me Lydia Muso, who is the founder and key worker (the “mother” of the house), sent us these images.

On page 5 of the emailed/on-line version of this newsletter is a press release from Transformation Resource Centre about the distribution of the 2018 shipment from Books for Lesotho Inc. As reported above the 2019 shipment has recently arrived safely at TRC. We will begin packing the 2020 shipment in a few weeks.

IS IT WORTH THE EFFORT AND COST?

I read an on-line sponsored article in InDaily on 23 Jan 2019. What caught my eye was:
“Here are some things we know:

- Our attentions function differently in the contemporary era and we need to work both with and against that fact in order to ensure we can benefit from the cognitive reward of reading long-form text.
- Reading is a skill that uses the brain as a muscle and this can be exercised and trained. Just because we find it difficult to read Middlemarch doesn’t mean it always has to be this way. Every difficult activity can benefit from building up, training, practicing and not giving up.
- The benefits of long form, immersive reading on the brain, the imagination, creative capacity, empathy, on the intellect, are significant and should be sought out.
• As with other exercises, we form habits by making choices and sticking with them. Committing to reading when we are distracted by other claims on our attention is something we can develop.
• Persevering with reading even when it is challenging has significant cognitive pay-offs. This must be balanced with the idea that finding the right book for the right person is the most important thing.
• When students start a university degree, they need to be ready for the challenge of reading works that aren’t designed to grab them, to have hooks, to be “relatable”

From: Why students need to be good readers, by Kate Douglas, Professor of English and Dr Tully Barnett, Lecturer in Creative Enterprise both at Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia

On page 4 of the emailed/on-line version of this newsletter we have reproduced an editorial item from “Weekend Australian” of 16-17 February 2019. This should be read by all parents and others who look after children (including teachers) wherever they are in the world. If the advice was followed then books such as those we send to Lesotho would likely produce miracles for the children and young people in our care.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

At the February meeting of the Board, Deane Kemp tendered his resignation as a Director. Deane joined the Board in June 2016 and has made a significant contribution in that position. Thank you, Deane.

Mr Rob Langley (a key volunteer at The Barn) was co-opted to fill the vacancy. Ms Meg Coupland had offered her services to B4L and the Board co-opted her to fill one other vacant position. We welcome each of you to the Board.

BOOK DONATIONS ARE NEEDED - AS FOLLOWS:

Books for Lesotho Inc. welcomes donations of suitable books at any time. There is a pressing need for books (fiction and non-fiction) at Year 7 to Year 10 level (or ages 12 to 14) - they continue to be in short supply.

Monetary donations are used to cover shipping costs from Australia to Lesotho; we do not purchase books.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

The budget for 2018/19 is $15,029 (about 60c per book). Between 01 July 2018 and 20 March 2019, donations total $13,811, of which, the Mitcham Exercise Group has collected $773 (to end of February).

The Board recently approved sending the 4th pallet (now being packed) to the Rotary Club of Maloti (RCoMa) even though it potentially places us in a deficit position this year. However, we are now only $1,200 short of covering the annual budget; can you help us meet the target before 30 June?

Thank you to all who have made a donation this financial year.

In Lesotho, both TRC and RCoMa have requested Lesotho Revenue Authority to allow B4L shipments to enter duty free - so far without success. Meanwhile, both TRC and RCoMa have advised that each will pay Lesotho duty (if applicable) and charges for customs clearance - a wonderful contribution and a sign of commitment to the project.

BOOKS FOR LESOTHO INC. invites your ongoing financial support.

YOU can make a difference by making a one-off donation or by setting up a monthly-giving plan (this method helps us with budgeting). Please donate via GiveNow - a secure on-line system with very low cost to us.

Click on the Link

David Linn
Chairman, Books for Lesotho Inc.
Discovering the joys of reading

Teachers and parents must help the young appreciate books

Vital as it is that students master reading, comprehension, writing, grammar and spelling, literacy debates sometimes leave an impression that such skills are primarily chores to be learned. They are also the gateway to so much more, of course, as Sydney Church of England Grammar School headmaster Timothy Wright explained so eloquently in his school newsletter yesterday. “Reading develops your imagination, emotional skills and reasoning power way beyond almost all other activities. If I am a reader and I have chosen my reading wisely I will see through simplistic slogans, facile arguments and tinsel values. I will understand more completely the perspectives of other people and I will not believe in unidimensional solutions to life’s problems and challenges. A wise person once said that we only get one life of our own, but reading gives us the opportunity to live as part of thousands of other lives.”

Teachers, principals and parents would do young Australians a favour if they followed Dr Wright’s approach. His school encourages non-homework related reading and, at secondary level, sets aside 20 minutes a day for students to “drop everything and read”. Like many lifelong readers, Dr Wright credits his mother with encouraging him when he was young.

The headmaster’s list of must-read authors would spark an interesting debate. All are worthy, as are many others. What is indisputable is Dr Wright’s view that one of the greatest challenges facing the modern world is that people are not well-read, which is limiting their ability to think. As an antidote to an over-reliance on social media and online news aggregators, Dr Wright has given the older boys in his school some good advice, to “read things they disagree with ... not on Reddit, but in books and longer articles”. It is no coincidence, he points out, that in George Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four “we see the authorities seeking to limit available reading, to reduce the vocabulary of the people. This reflects what happens in totalitarian states which want to stop people thinking for themselves, limit their independent knowledge and their ability to put thoughts into words.” It can also happen to people whose reading is limited to social media.

Children are never too young, as Dr Wright says, to be introduced to good books. But many educators would agree with linguist and author Lyn Stone — a passionate reader herself — who told national education correspondent Rebecca Urban that children should be taught to read well, but “once the mechanics are in place, it’s nobody’s business how far, wide or with what kind of gusto anyone reads”. We beg to differ.

Students’ interest in fiction, biography, poetry, history and science rarely develops by chance. Adults have much to contribute, guiding children towards books suitable for their reading abilities and building on their interests. In practice, parents are often unsure about what books to hand children, and inexperienced teachers are at a loss to advise them.

Most Australian families have access to libraries. Dr Wright’s insights should inspire our next generation of citizens to embrace reading. It is not an idle promise when he says: “You will find your intellectual power growing, your intellectual appetite sharper, your empathy and capacity for emotional depth greater.”
THE TRANSFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE DONATE BOOKS TO 41 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Transformation Resource Centre (TRC) is an ecumenical non-governmental organization that advocates for justice, peace and participatory development. The Centre through its library in the information and communications department will donate books to selected 15 primary schools, 24 high schools and 2 other institutions found in Maseru, Mafeteng, Leribe, Botha-Bothe and Mokhotlong. This annual occasion will be hosted at TRC premises on the 13th September 2018 at 10.00 a.m.

The project goal is to promote habitual readership culture and literacy amongst students through the establishment of mini libraries. This generous book donation project has been carried out successfully through the Books for Lesotho (B4L) support. The books will be donated to schools for a five year period with the hope that it is sufficient for the schools to collect an adequate supply of books enabling them to attain the envisioned libraries. This year the Centre will give away 105 cartons of reading books which total 16 661 individual books to foster a love for reading.

12th September 2018