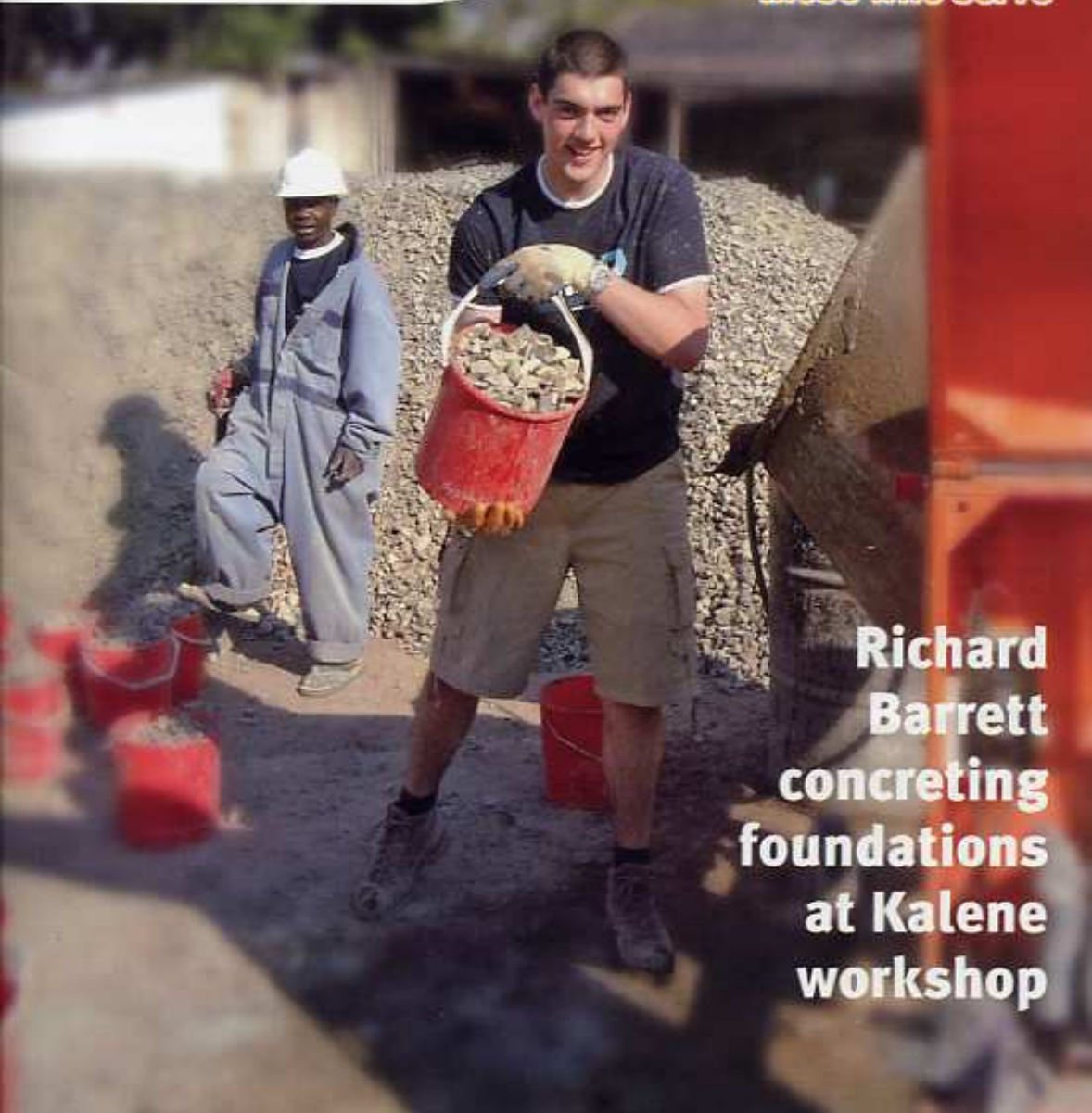




October 2006

*20 years serving
those who serve*



**Richard
Barrett
concreting
foundations
at Kalene
workshop**



The summer of 2006 saw my first trip away with Brass Tacks to Kalene Mission Hospital in the Northwest province of Zambia. The renovation project had only begun several months before I arrived, so there were still vast amounts of work for the team to get involved with. We worked alongside the Zambians who had been employed to help with the increased work around the hospital site along with the already existing maintenance crew. I was assigned three men called Paul, Nedki and Pythias who I worked with for my four week stay at the hospital. My first job was to plumb the external drains for the newly refurbished toilets in children's ward. It was fantastic to see the difference this work had made. The plans for the Hospital incorporated some new build construction as well as renovation. The foundations for a new workshop had already been excavated and so my next major task was to pour the concrete for the foundations. Along with another volunteer, David Henry, I erected shuttering to allow the poured concrete to be above ground level.

An op

Richard Barrett



Foundations for the new Ikea workshop

Then with a squad of 6 workers we poured concrete for two and a half days – that's a lot of concrete! The problem so often encountered is the provision of material for such a big job; please continue to pray for God's provision in providing materials as the work continues.

After this was completed I worked with Phil Kennedy and Luke Trotman replacing the old aluminum roof in the mornings. In the afternoon when it was too hot to be on the roof I continued with the work on the drains up the front of the hospital to

portunity seized

take wastewater away from sinks and gullies in the consulting rooms. Previously this was just flushed into soak- a-ways in the ground.

My first trip to Africa and with Brass tacks turned out to be everything I had hoped for and more. The fear that you may have about going is soon overcome when you realize how much the work is needed and appreciated. It was such a great opportunity to serve God and to use my skills for His glory. I would really encourage anyone with an interest to serve with Brass Tacks to trust God as He calls you to go and work on these very needy and worthwhile projects.



Kalene Mission Hospital Zambia

The renovation project phase 1 planning began 18 months ago. Volunteers arrived on site around the 8th May 06. Work will continue until the 14th December 06. This year we will have sent 28 volunteers and completed 1850 working days.

The changes around the hospital have been welcomed by missionary staff, health authority and the hospital domestic staff. Agnes the cleaner for the children's ward cried in appreciation when she first viewed the renovated children's toilets.

There is still much work to be undertaken. Next year, subject to finance and volunteers we would like to renovate the Maternity unit and add a new toilet block, nursing and premature baby stations.

We will again need a team of Tradesmen, Building Site Engineers and Managers. Can you join the team for a month or more?



New washroom



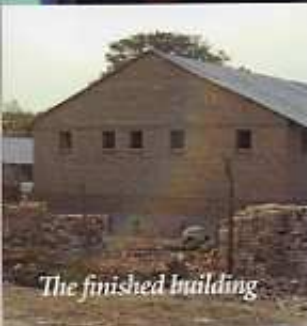
Old bath



New washroom



Old washroom



The finished building



Medical Mission News have sent 20 containers of building supplies

New male ward toilets

What's cooking Mum?



Cooking in Zambia on a Brass Tacks team certainly has its challenges and could never be described as dull! The yellow-breasted bulbul bird provides the wake up call for the start of the day around 6.30 to provide porridge, toast and coffee/tea etc - nothing too fancy - just enough to get the gang wide eyed for their 7.30 start on the building site.



Maureen Wood

No sooner have they gone than there is a queue beginning to form at the front door, a variety of locally grown produce being bartered for clothes or sold for as much as we are willing to pay is being offered by ladies with heavy boxes carried for over an hour sometimes, or men with their wares precariously strapped to the back of an old bicycle. Pineapple, pumpkin, papaya, green peppers, spring onions, carrots, bananas, potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage and even peanuts. On who comes may determine the menu that day, as the nearest shop is 8 hours' drive away! Having finally weighed out and paid for my goods, I retreat indoors to quickly shut off the water filter before it floods the floor. Just keeping enough safe drinking water for 11 is in itself a major task, filtering, boiling, cooling, but thankfully Anne Smith is there to turn the tap off as she passes by with a basket of washing ready to be hung out. Tuesday morning is particularly busy as there are three hours of electricity for operating day at the hospital. It's a good opportunity to catch up on the laundry and perhaps even use the new liquidiser to make fresh

pineapple juice or blend down the coarse, lumpy sugar for easier baking. Morning tea is at 10am so there is just enough time to bake some scones or cinnamon buns in the hot oven as well as start the bread dough, or perhaps a cake or fruit loaf in the cool oven. Two ovens? Well yes, because neither has a thermostat, it requires some juggling from shelf to shelf or hot to cool to get things nicely browned and evenly cooked. This keeps us cooks fit between running to and from the fridge to gulp down yet another cold drink, - always welcome to get rehydrated quickly and so necessary in the 33degree (top 80s) heat in the kitchen. Once a week on a Thursday the hospital driver goes to the nearby farm for meat, so the priority is to make sure the meat order, cool box and money are ready for 8am to be picked up on his rounds of the mission compound. Then, hopefully by 1pm he will have returned with some beef, lamb, pork, eggs and milk (for making yogurt) which have to be sorted and labelled ready for storage in an Aussie neighbour's freezer which is kindly loaned to Brass Tacks.

Often the order comes back with the word 'Regret' under some items – oh well just another challenge to alter the menu and create something from the stock of cans and packets in the store cupboard which have been kindly donated by people back home who are another very important part of the team in helping to keep the hungry tuckers out here well fed and able to carry out their work on the building site.

Catering for different needs and tastes provides opportunity for cooking vegetarian, checking sugar content for a diabetic and of course not forgetting the chip man Mr Jim-

Phew - Ann's in charge of the Alternative Menu! Then there are the occasional 'drop ins' and visitors so it's a case of 'shove up and share'. Everyone is welcome to join the main meal of the day, just add another potato or scoop of rice or pasta. While chopping, stirring and beating, I am interrupted by the sound of heavy boots banging the dust off, followed by a voice 'Mmm-what's cooking mum?' as each pot lid gets lifted and the contents sniffed – 'Wait and see' I reply.

There is plenty of entertainment round the table where all the UK is represented, especially with the Irish blarney and their hearty appetites. Escaping the clamour of the whistling, singing and 'Who ate the last piece of chocolate?', or 'Those are my socks' or 'That's my T shirt you're wearing', I wander outside to enjoy the cool evening breeze, the beautiful starry sky and the constant hum of night insects. It's an opportunity to give thanks that the crew remain healthy and content - quite an achievement in the middle of the African bush! Plunged into darkness I am reminded that its time for bed since the electricity is off for another night. It's been a privilege to be part of the team this summer .



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