Karonga was hit by an earthquake just before Christmas 2009 and the school and pupils’ hostels were affected.

Aid for the community of Karonga is being organised by Colin Cameron, the Honorary Consul from Scotland in Malawi and managed in Malawi by Sister Beatrice and Brother Peter Daino of the Lusubilo Centre at Karonga. Both Sister Beatrice and Brother Daino visited Scotland recently and Colin met them at Margaret and John Sinclair’s home in Falkirk. Colin had also visited them in Karonga at the Lusubilo Centre. Donations are be used initially to look after the children displaced by the earthquake. After meeting this need any surplus funds will be given to resettling displaced families. Donations totalling nearly £2000 have already been sent to Karonga.

Donations should either be sent to Colin Cameron, 1 Hill Street, Irvine KA12 0DE or sent direct to the under noted bank

Scottish Relief Fund for Malawi
Ac No. 00762216
Sort Code 80 - 08 - 42
The Bank of Scotland
167 High Street
IRVINE
KA12 8AF

Cheques should be made out to: “Scottish Relief Fund for Malawi”

Convenor’s Comments

It’s a sad fact of life in this age of instant communication and news coverage that events which are catastrophic and have long lasting effects for many many people when they happen, can be quickly forgotten when other more “newsworthy” events follow them. This is exactly what happened to the victims of the Earthquake in Karonga which happened in December 2009. I quote the Raven Trust’s website (www.theraventrust.org):

“In what some geologists have described as a rare occurrence, Malawi’s northern district of Karonga experienced over 30 earthquakes in December, ranging from 5.0 to 6.2 on the Richter Scale. Four people lost their lives, over 300 were injured and an estimated 145,000 were advised to leave their homes. In total some 1,000 houses have been reported to have collapsed, while another 2,900 have sustained damage. Schools, hospitals and churches have also been hit. The Malawi Government declared Karonga a National Disaster Area on 21st December.”

Within 3 weeks, the Haiti earthquake had struck, devastating that other poor country and killing an unknown number of people. Estimates range from 92000 to 230000 dead. The world was stunned and then the charity of the human species responded and aid flooded into the stricken Caribbean Island.

Meantime the people of Karonga and surrounding area got on with recovering from their own disaster. Donations were being taken by the Scottish Relief Fund for Malawi (see the item on the left). Karonga Girls Secondary School suffered damage to teaching blocks and hostels, and tents have been brought in to help ease the problem.

While these countries continue to struggle through the most difficult of times, what do the British media do? They drop all news of these disasters, the stories of courage and fortitude and concentrate on the British General Election and who looks like the next Prime Minister and who might make the biggest faux pas during his party’s campaign. So……

• Don’t let the narrow-minded purveyors of News deceive you into thinking that all must be well if it’s not being reported
• Giving generously in times of crisis expresses solidarity with those afflicted by disaster
• Giving regularly allows organisations like ours to take the long view and develop partnerships and understanding with the mutual benefits that accrue

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE, SUPPORT US, OR SIMPLY NEED MORE INFORMATION , PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT:
11 Harviestoun Road, Dollar
FK14 7HG
Phone: 0785 231 7825 or 01259 742827
E-mail: admin@mamiemartin.org
Web: www.mamiemartin.org

Funded by Mamie Martin Fund donors and supporters
During the latter part of 2009, John Sinclair, one of the co-founders of the Mamie Martin Fund, died after 9 weeks in hospital, just 2 months short of his 84th birthday. He had been married to Margaret Sinclair (Mamie Martin's daughter) for nearly 56 years.

The establishment and administration of the Mamie Martin Fund was very much a joint venture, Margaret being the one with the vision and John working out how it could happen. It's almost impossible to write about one without including the other: that's how it was with them. During their first visit to Malawi in 1991 the final pieces of their plan came together. John and Margaret established the foundations of the relationship that became the partnership between MMF here in Scotland and the CCAP when they met up with the people at the Synod of Livingstonia in Mzuzu. Like so many projects it started small, and personal, with financial support being targeted to a few needy girls in one of the CCAP secondary schools, and grew steadily.

Family and friends of the two became aware of what they were doing and were enthused and motivated to become helpers, fund-raisers, committee members and, above all, donors. As the number of donors grew, so did the number of girls who could be supported. And knowledge of their work spread. John and Margaret's vast network of contacts expanded to include the informal Malawi-Scotland world.

John had vacated the Convenor's chair when the "rigours" of that job started to become more onerous than his advancing years allowed, but remained very actively on the management committee. His "teacher's mind" waslegendarily employed in proof-reading every document produced in MMF's name, and he was in charge of the Finance sub-committee until he finally retired from MMF work in 2007, at the age of 81.

It is a mark of the regard in which he was held that the Synod organised and held a memorial Service at Ekwendeni Mission Station Church at which eulogies were delivered by a MMF beneficiary from EGSS, Mrs F Msowoye (Headteacher from BAGSS), Mr. P Thole (MMF local Administrator), Rev. M M Banda (Education Secretary, CCAP, SoL, and long-time friend of John and Margaret) and Rev. L N Nyondo General Secretary CCAP SoL.

Their service was timed to coincide with the funeral here, which would have appealed to John. Maxwell Banda, said in his eulogy: "I wish to give as an example the story of T****e N*****o, a state registered nurse with a BSc in Nursing and Midwifery. She works as a hospital matron in a district of Chikwawa, serving thousands of people in that impoverished district. T****e’s work benefits herself personally, but it also benefits many other people. It has a multiplier effect. John and Margaret founded something that is benefitting more and more people – changing lives for the better...... Her success and that of her colleagues makes us today celebrate John's life. As a school teacher he always wanted to see his charges move an extra mile. What he did as a school master for the Scottish children he did for the children of Malawi as well."

In a letter to Margaret from the Office of the Malawi High Commissioner, Dr Francis Moto, Flossie Gomile Chidya-onge, his Deputy, who is herself "an advocate of women and girls' empowerment through education" wrote:

"I am sure (MMF's) ongoing success will be a Memorial to Mr Sinclair's involvement and support to you, and on our part a continued celebration of the life of a man whose works continue to make a difference to the lives of many girls in Malawi."

Many messages from Vera Chirwa, our Malawi Patron, referred to John - "I will miss him personally, he was a jolly person. The love he showed to Malawians by establishing the MMF which has been very successful, will always be their memories. May his soul rest in peace."

It is no exaggeration to state that John's life and work had a huge impact on the development of MMF, and therefore, directly, on the education prospects for many girls in Malawi.

Margaret would like to hi-jack this article and thank everyone for their support before during and after John's illness.

And as the present incumbent of the Convenor's Chair I can confirm that the groundwork and the principles they laid down are still very definitely the governing principles by which MMF abides.

William J Sinclair
Elvas and 500 Miles ...

Elvas Singini, who received support from MMF during her schooldays at Ekwendeni, started at the 500 Miles Prosthetics Workshop in Lilongwe on 2nd November 2009 and Olivia Giles, the founder of 500 Miles, travelled from Scotland to Malawi in November and met Elvas about a week into her work placement. Elvas will work at the workshop for a year. She got excellent grades in her exams and so she will be eligible to apply for a 500 Miles Scholarship which funds a university place in Tanzania where a four year prosthetics course is offered.

Everything is going well – Elvas is working hard and is enjoying her time at the workshop. In a future MMF publication we will keep you up to date with developments!

Elvas Singini and Olivia Giles at the clinic in Lilongwe

SOKO Fund

The Mamie Martin Fund exists because it is difficult for females to access secondary education in Malawi – so it is not surprising that going on to college or university is well nigh impossible. The Soko Fund was set up in 2003 by Trust Deed. The idea for the Fund arose from the experience of two of the current Soko Fund Trustees, who spent the year 1999 teaching at Bandawe School for Girls in Malawi. Working with these students and seeing the barriers to higher education for female students made evident the great need to provide support for them.

Since its inception in 2004 the Soko Fund has supported 24 female students to access further education in Malawi, working with both the University of Malawi and the University of Livingstonia.

To date, 17 students have graduated with degrees in the following topics:

14 students have graduated in Education and are now teachers  
1 student has graduated in Accountancy and has gone on to become an auditor  
1 student has graduated in environmental science  
1 student has graduated in medicine and is about to start her hospital internship

Currently, 7 women are studying nursing, forestry, medical technology, electrical engineering, science education, education (2) and 1 student is undertaking postgraduate studies in Health and Nutrition at the University of Malawi.

For more information about the Soko Fund please visit their website at www.sokofund.org

MMF COMMITTEE in SCOTLAND

The up to date list of Committee members as at April 2010 is:

Convenor Willie Sinclair  
Vice Convenor Nicola Jones  
Treasurer Rhiannon Sinclair  
Secretary Wendy MacFarlane  
Patron Alison Cameron  
Committee members: Alan Kimmitt, Ewan McKay, Gill McIlwaine, Allan Prentice, Isabelle Uny and Margaret Duffy
Paul Thole, the Mamie Martin Fund’s Administrator in Malawi and Naomi Ngwira, the headteacher of Karonga Girls’ Secondary School visited Scotland in late October 2009. For both of them this was the first visit to the UK. Their journey here took them from home to Lilongwe, a flight to Addis Ababa, followed by a flight to Rome and then Heathrow, before arriving in Edinburgh. It was a long journey – up in the air and in airports for over 24 hours.

Paul wrote about his memories of the trip to Scotland ...

In my travel I was touched by the Livingstone Memorial Centre at Blantyre where I saw some of the materials used in the time of Livingstone. We did not see the river nearby but I was given enough time with the visit to New Lanark by the Clyde River to appreciate David Livingstone’s travels in Africa. Eaglesham’s Whitelee Windfarm was of interest too as a project to supplement Scotland power from the wind. It also had some items for sale- rulers, torches, binoculars…

Students had a lot of interesting questions:
- What type of houses are found in Malawi?
- Did I have a family?
- Are our schools here like theirs in Scotland? Do they have central heating?
- Do we have electricity?
- What did I make of ultra rightist political parties like the ones in Britain? Do we also have such type of parties in Malawi?
- How did I find Scotland? Did I like it?

Paul visited all five MaScoTT Schools – Falkirk High School, Kinross High School, Alva Academy, Balfron High School and Williamwood High School - during the fortnight’s visit, Naomi accompanying him on all visits except that made to Williamwood.

Naomi spent the second week of her stay in Scotland at Alva Academy which is partnered with her school at Karonga. Under the care of Jane Smith, Modern Studies teacher at Alva, Naomi not only spent time with staff and pupils at the school but also went to meet some staff at Stirling University.

Both Paul and Naomi attended the Cross Party Group on Malawi which is held at the Scottish Parliament – their presence coincided with the attendance of Members of Parliament from Malawi. They also attended the Scotland Malawi Fellowship meeting held in Glasgow towards the end of their stay and the Mamie Martin Fund AGM. Paul went to the David Livingston Centre in Blantyre which was a highlight of his trip. Many donors met Paul and Naomi at the AGM. Committee members were crucial to the success of the visit and it was enormously helpful to discuss various issues of importance.

Paul and Naomi spent an afternoon with Margaret and John Sinclair, who together founded the Mamie Martin Fund in 1993 in memory of Margaret’s mother, at their home in Falkirk.

During his time staying with Willie Sinclair and his family in Irvine Paul was able to meet and hold discussions with members of Ayr Presbytery which is funding a building project in Bandawe.

In the middle of this very busy visit Paul squeezed in a short trip to London to visit his nephew!

Committee members and the Administrator spent a lot of time with both Paul and Naomi during their stay in Scotland and agreed that meeting people who you have known purely over the phone or through email is wonderful and adds a new dimension to the way you work together.

Naomi wrote ... The trip was an eye opener as to what is happening in this wonderful world given to us. Also we do appreciate what people do for others who are not blood related. I learned a lot during the trip. All places I visited were interesting and the welcome and everything were just good.

Paul with the Head-boy at Balfron High School— November 2009

Willie Sinclair, Naomi Ngwira and Paul Thole at the Scottish Parliament October 2009
In the Spring of 2009 a private donor indicated to the Scotland Malawi Partnership that they wished to give £2500 to the community of Embangweni and invited the SMP to find a suitable recipient of the donation. The Mamie Martin Fund applied but was unsuccessful. A short while later a cheque for £2500 arrived – the donor had chosen to extend their generosity and make an additional gift. This money was passed on to CCAP to be directed to the Robert Laws Secondary School in Embangweni. The headteacher at ROLASS, Mr Augustine Chirambo, was responsible for ensuring that this grant was used within the school and community at Embangweni. In February this year we were able to ask the SMP if they could inform the donor that their grant had been spent on school fees, costs relating to science and sport activities, pocket money for pupils, mattresses and desks for the school and repairs to buildings and electrical repairs to the local maize mill. The maize mill had been out of action for some time but is now operating well. The remainder of the grant was used to pay examination fees and to meet the costs of a training workshop for teachers.

The grant for Embangweni was very welcome and the last year has also seen generous donations from:

- Common Grounds coffee shop in Milnathort,
- The Joan MacVicar School of Dance
- Alex Laws (great-nephew of Robert Laws)
- Prentice Events
- Eleanor Rathbone Charitable Trust

**Online Fundraising**

Since June last year, many of you have been helping us to raise money each day, by using our Whitebox homepage and search box. You've raised almost £200 just by searching online through Whitebox. Thank you!

We've changed our homepage address to make it even easier for people to use, but we need you to check that you're using the correct address or else your searching will be going to waste!

The address to use is [http://sites.whitebox.org.uk/mmf](http://sites.whitebox.org.uk/mmf)

If you need any technical help to check this, or to change it, please send us an email and we'll send you instructions

The bedrock of MMF’s work is, as ever, formed from donations by committed supporters who are unstinting in their generosity and loyalty. It is those donations which allow the work of the Fund to continue. Thank you from members of the Mamie Martin Fund in Scotland and all our friends and colleagues in Malawi.
Photographs from the Mamie Martin Fund archives …..

the photographs in the 1920s were taken by Jack Martin, husband of Mamie Martin. We are not sure who took the other photographs …

PE in the 1920s

An Open Air Service

Reading books in the 1920s

Margaret and John Sinclair and Rev Maxwell Banda at the MMF AGM in Stirling in 2007

Carrying …..

Getting ready for building at Embangweni

Farming ….
SCHOOLS NEWS

ROLASS at Embangweni: The Robert Laws Secondary School is now for boys only. The Partnership with Balfron High School is well established and new arrangements are being discussed following the changes to the school population.

Kinross High School and Livingstonia Secondary School: The school at Livingstonia was closed during 2009 and pupils now attend other schools including one at a school in Elangeni which is managed by CCAP. Kinross High School is investigating partnership arrangements with other schools.

Williamwood High School and Ekwendeni Girls Secondary School: A small group of teachers from Williamwood visited Ekwendeni in May 2009 and two teachers from Ekwendeni came to Scotland in October 2009. This year a group of 15 students and 2 teachers will travel out to Ekwendeni in the middle of June for 3 weeks. They will stay in the community of Ekwendeni most of the time and visit the school.

Alva Academy and Karonga Girls Secondary School: Naomi Ngwira, the headteacher at Karonga, visited Scotland in October 2009 and spent a week of her visit at Alva Academy. Teachers and pupils from Alva plan to visit Karonga in 2012 but arrangements are very dependent on circumstances in Karonga following the earthquake there in December 2009. (see Page 1).

Falkirk High School and Bandawe Girls Secondary School: The most recent visit took place when a group from Bandawe travelled to Falkirk in December 2009.

During 2009 the success rate of pupils sitting the Junior Certificate of Examination was extremely high – all the schools in which MMF supports pupils achieved pass rates of over 90%, with Ekwendeni leading the field at 98%.

Visit the Mamie Martin Fund website to read the latest news and view recent documents.

www.mamiemartin.org