



MAMIE MARTIN

SINCE 1993

EDUCATING GIRLS. EMPOWERING MALAWI.

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020

We're hugely grateful to our supporters and donors for your continued support of MMF during these difficult times. There is great hardship in Malawi at the moment and when the schools re-open, we know that the girls will be keen to get back into education. We can't meet face to face at the AGM this year, but we send you our grateful good wishes and hope you enjoy the Annual Review. There's a lot going on!

Mariot & Moira, Co-convenors

AGM 2020



AGM

It is impossible for us to hold an AGM in the usual way this year. However, we are determined to give our members the same opportunity to hear what the Trustees have been doing, and vote on any changes to our constitution and elections to the Board.

Therefore, we will use postal and online voting forms. If you are receiving this online you will find the information you need on our website and if you normally receive your updates digitally please do let us know if you would prefer a paper voting option.

All votes need to be recorded by 31st October at the latest.

The Board will meet on 7th November to go through the usual business of the AGM and ratify the voting results. After the meeting we will send out a short update to let everyone know of the decisions voted on by member/supporters.

Get Involved

You can support our work in a number of ways. Most importantly you are on our mailing list, since you are getting this newsletter. Thanks for that and for your on-going support.

We always welcome new people onto our Board of Trustees, even if you just want to serve for a year or two.

Outside of the Board you can support our work by:

- Becoming a regular donor, even for a very small amount
- Running your own event to raise funds and awareness
- Persuading your choir or other group to choose the Mamie Martin Fund as the beneficiary of a concert or event
- Ask your family and friends to donate to the Mamie Martin Fund in your name for big birthdays, rather than getting gifts. We can help you to set up an online page if you'd like to do it that way
- Following us on social media – like and share our posts
- Support any current fundraising activities online or donate directly. Should you wish to do this please contact Doreen our Administrator who will be glad to help.
- Leave a legacy to the Mamie Martin Fund in your Will.

Thanks for your interest and support. It makes a huge difference to the girls we help.

COVID-19 UPDATE



The Trustees are continuing to meet online as Covid-19 restrictions do not allow for face to face meetings. Good governance is always crucial for MMF. The decision was made by the Malawian Government to close schools and universities as soon as the pandemic hit Malawi, and they reopen in a staged way from 7th September. We get regular updates from Mercy, our Malawian Manager, and we are monitoring the situation as it unfolds.

After advice from Mercy, it was decided we would provide financial support to the schools to help cover core costs whilst closed. The Trustees also have decided that MMF will provide soap and water pails to schools once they reopen, ensuring that our girls have supplies for good hand hygiene. We are also supplying

cloth facemasks for each MMF girl through Mercy and a local tailor.

THE MMF TRUSTEE QUIZ: PART 1, THE QUESTIONS...

Everyone loves a quiz! Which **two** of these statements are true?

1. You need a lot of specialist knowledge to become a Trustee
2. Trustees need to live in the central belt of Scotland and to be available for lots of meetings.
3. Trustees need to be interested in education for girls, equality and open and transparent working
4. Trustees enjoy working as a team and making new friends
5. All Trustees are expected to be keen cyclists.
6. Once you are on the Board, you are there for life.

Find the correct answers later in this review!

New Administrator/Bookkeeper

As you know, we said farewell to Hazel our Administrator at the end of 2019, and although we have not been able to meet up with her because of Covid restrictions, she is enjoying her retirement and we hope to see her soon.

Her replacement Doreen started working with MMF in December 2019 and is enjoying the challenges of her new role. Doreen comes to us with several years of experience in the charitable sector, working as office manager for Glasgow Samaritans and as the Scotland Office Co-ordinator for Christian Aid.

Report from Masters Student on Placement with MMF

From April to August 2020, I worked in partnership with the Mamie Martin Fund (MMF) to research my Master's dissertation, which investigated the barriers and enablers to girls' secondary school education in Northern Malawi. Co-convener and Trustee, Moira Dunworth, plus ex-Trustee and Volunteer, Jean Gordon, oversaw my placement. We met weekly using the MMF's online video-chat software, whereby.com, where they provided support and helped guide my research.

First, I was given access to the MMF's internal database which contains information on the students supported. I then carried out Excel data analysis to identify the barriers to education experienced by the MMF's beneficiaries. I also interviewed the MMF's trustees and members of staff to increase the depth of my research and examine different approaches aiming to overcome education-barriers. This was combined with

literature review in order to explore the education-barriers girls faced in Northern Malawi more broadly, plus the different tactics taken by other Non-Governmental Organisations. The use of both quantitative and qualitative data increased the validity of the conclusions made.

Notably, I found that on-average, 80.62 percent of the MMF-supported students, enrolled between 2014 and 2016, successfully reached and completed Form 4. This figure compares very favourably with the most recent Malawi-wide data about school completion which stood at just 21% in 2013 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2013). I also found the three most requested practical resources by the MMF's beneficiaries to be: school uniforms and clothing, school bags, and school books.

Many thanks to the MMF for giving me the opportunity to conduct this research. The experience is one I greatly value and I hope my final report is interesting and of some use.

Anna Freidenfeld, University of Edinburgh Student

The MMF Trustee Quiz: Part 2, the answers...

Numbers 2 and 3 are the correct answers. Mariot would love to hear from you if you are interested in joining our Board of Trustees. When you read Angie's article here in the newsletter you get an idea of the motivation for working for MMF: *'Poverty and gender inequality present so many barriers... school and, in particular, boarding school, is a refuge and is life changing.'* Whatever time and experience you can bring to our Board can make a significant difference to Malawian girls and the women they grow up to be.

Here is Lynsey, our Treasurer, describing why she became a Trustee.

I'm a Trustee for the Mamie Martin Fund because I believe all women should have access to education, no matter their circumstances, and MMF's work has been shown to have a positive impact on the lives of the young women supported. It also provides me with invaluable work experience within the Third Sector, developing both my personal and professional skills!

Email Mariot at mariot@mamiemartin.org or phone 01324 639245. No hard sell, but she'd be happy to give more information or answer questions.

Photo Exhibition



Thanks to a generous donor, we have a photo exhibition which will be shown in a number of venues over the next few months.

Some photos hung in [The Wonder Spot Café](#) in Stockbridge, Edinburgh during August and September and two currently grace the walls of the lovely [Humbie Hub](#) in East Lothian,

where we will exhibit all of the photos when life becomes easier for venues like this.

Trustee Visits to Malawi

Moira Dunworth and Angie Wynn visited Malawi from 26th September to 17th October 2019. With Mercy Sibande, MMF Malawian manager, they visited all 6 MMF-supported schools, meeting all the girls and all our partners, spending time with the MaSP (Malawi Scottish Partnership) at two of their events and meeting up with other friends of MMF.

Our Trustees were once again struck by the huge amount of work that has to be done in very challenging circumstances. Mercy's understanding of the context in which we work is invaluable, as well as her ability to communicate in 4 languages! Those schools with a very large population (over 36) of MMF girls are particularly challenging for Mercy. A trusting relationship between her and the girls is essential and that takes an immense amount of time and energy. Getting to know each new girl and having individual interviews with others who have more personal problems is all very emotionally exhausting and makes the Autumn visits (start of the new academic year) particularly challenging. The Trustees were pleased to be able to give Mercy some moral support and spend time with the girls, reinforcing their membership of the Mamie Martin family. Significantly, Mercy feels that it is really helpful for Trustees to visit Malawi so as to aid their understanding of the context and to reinforce with our partners, her role as Malawian Manager. We are pleased that we were able to support Mercy and engage with her in discussions about the management of her work and about safeguarding (her and the girls). As always, the visit raised a lot of issues which were brought back to the Board.

As ever, the visit highlighted the need for our Ready2Learn Fund and the challenge of distributing that fund in the face of such need.

Good "Firsts"

The Trustees had very positive meetings with the new Executive Director, Education Department for the CCAP, Mr Joseph Munyimbili. Discussions highlighted that we both share the problem of balancing quantity versus quality.



The Partnership Agreement with a new partner, the RC Diocese of Karonga, was signed on Wednesday 9th October 2019 with Mr Remie Kamanga, Education Desk Officer for the Diocese. He broke his holiday to attend this meeting! Both Trustees were impressed with him and with the management of St Mary's Karonga, the new school we support. Mercy and our Trustees were delighted to

meet the first six MMF girls to attend the school, but deeply affected by the extreme circumstances from which they came.

Our new MMF wristbands were excitedly received by all our girls. Some of our girls had asked for something which would identify them within school so that they could better support each other and as a result the Board had these made for them.



All the girls in receipt of the Alison Cameron and Thompson Scholarships spent time with the Trustees. The latter 3 all attend Embangweni School for Deaf Children which is situated in the area which was very important to Jack and Phyllis Thompson.

Mercy and the Trustees visited the local business, "Supreme Malawi", meeting the staff who make the sanitary pads which we now distribute to MMF girls. It is good to hear about this company employing local women and producing something which benefits all women and girls and makes such a difference to those in education.



One of a number of highlights was meeting Elvas Benadeta Singini, an ex-beneficiary who was supported by MMF 2004-2008. She is employed by the government at Mzuzu Central Hospital. *500 Miles* have supported her through university and professional education and she is now a senior prosthetist and orthotist.

This was Angie's first visit. She comments that "the visit exceeded all expectations. I was pleasantly surprised at the friendliness of the Malawians and, having met all our MMF girls, we should be very proud to be supporting them. Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the world, yet I saw in our girls a remarkable resilience. Poverty and gender inequality present so many barriers which only a very small minority of our young people in Scotland have any idea of. For many of our MMF Girls school and, in particular, boarding school, is a refuge and is life changing."

Story on Bikes



The story of Mamie Martin was told through a bike ride this year. The ride went to Blantyre, the home of David Livingstone, to Tarbet, the home of Mamie Martin and took the long way back to Edinburgh, where the ride had started. Conceived as a small profile-raising event, a stay-at-home option was launched and was hugely successful.

50 riders across Scotland, England and Ireland took part, 43 of them on the stay-at-home option. Their median age was 63 and the total at-home miles cycled was just almost equal to the pounds raised – 6,433 miles. Thanks to the enthusiasm and generosity of the riders and their supporters, we raised over £6,700 for girls' education in Malawi. This figure is the net amount raised. Our costs were fair-wear tee-shirts, postage and medals. The medals were for the Kelpies fun ride event which had to be postponed to next year. Here's to 2021. You can see videos from the event on our YouTube channel.

Schools and numbers

The number of girls who are supported through their secondary schooling via the Mamie Martin Fund fluctuates slightly throughout any academic year because of the personal circumstances of individual girls. All schools in Malawi closed for several months this year but pupils are now returning to school in stages. The numbers of girls whom we support at each of the schools are:

- Bandawe Girls' Secondary School – 43 girls
- Elangeni Secondary School – 24 girls
- Embangweni Secondary School for Deaf Children - 6 girls
- Karonga Girls' Secondary School – 42 girls
- St Mary's, Karonga – 6 girls
- Mchengautuba Community Day Secondary School – 16 girls



We are now moving into the fourth year of our partnership with the Soko fund. This Scottish based charity enables women students to complete vocational (nursing, pharmacy, education, etc) degree courses in Universities in Malawi. The agreement we have with Soko allows us to nominate young women who have

been supported at School by MMF, and who have gained a place at University, to Soko for a scholarship and some help with living costs. Soko fund guarantees to support at least five of these for the whole of their undergraduate education; and will consider the other nominations alongside those from their other partners. In addition, the Cameron endowment funds four undergraduate

students, and this aspect is managed by the Mamie Martin Fund as part of this partnership agreement.

- The Soko fund is currently supporting 11 MMF young women. University education in Malawi has been directly affected in Malawi by the pandemic, and government action there to combat it. Universities were closed completely as part of this. At the time of writing they have been authorised to reopen, but it is not yet clear exactly when and how each will do this. However, MMF has already nominated students for the new University intake, and we are optimistic that the successful applicants will be able to start their University careers before too long.
- Mercy has worked very hard to provide advice and guidance to MMF school leavers about higher education and the possibilities for them. This both generates and highlights the growing interest in vocational higher education and of course the extremely limited opportunities in Malawi, especially for young women.
- Soko has now established a graduate association (**SGA**) which focuses primarily on helping graduates into employment, through, for example internships, and 'job shops'. The association is run by the women themselves and has proved remarkably successful. For example, SGA worked up a number of initiatives designed to support local communities during the pandemic, and providing some employment for graduates. More details on that and the rest of the Soko fund's activities at www.thesokofund.org.

Gift Cards for return to school – the perfect gift

School closure has been a difficult time for girls in Malawi. It is challenging to get them back to school after such a long interruption and we hope that our support can help. The proceeds from this gift card will go to our 'Ready to Learn' fund, from which Mercy provides the girls with the basics that they need at the start of a school year. This fund has a huge impact because many girls are so poor that they don't have bags, shoes or essential personal items. You can have this card in a print-at-home or email version.



<https://mamie martin.org/shop/> for further details or email admin@mamie martin.org

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