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PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019/2020

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear..."

Psalm 46: 1-2

We started the year with the sad news that committee member Bob Ferguson was found deceased in his unit. Bob had been on the committee for 5 years and has been greatly missed.

We had a request from Dr Bulle to send another container full of books and educational materials to Zimbabwe. After negotiations, we signed a MoU with Dr Bulle where he accepted the responsibility of the distribution of the container contents in Zimbabwe.

We were able to include 25 all-in-one computers in this shipment thanks to Jane Johnston, from Travel With a Cause, who arranged for us to receive the ex-Education Department computers.

It was planned that the container should be shipped in early December to arrive in Zimbabwe late in February.

Everything appeared to be on schedule with the container purchased and filled however shipping could not be arranged until the new year. Thank you to Marion, Helen, Ian, Rodney, John, Paul and Derek for their help in loading the container.

During the delay the CSC certificate expired and a local surveyor refused to issue a new certificate as one of the container corner posts was too damaged. Fortunately Monson's Logistics replaced the container although this meant that we had to unpack and repack the contents.

Thanks to 3 young men who responded to a request for help on Facebook this was done in less than 5 hours. Thank you Isaac, Albert and James.

The full container was finally shipped in late February and arrived in Zimbabwe in early May.

Thinking that we would have a quiet year just sorting and repacking we suddenly found that we were in a COVID-19 pandemic. This affected our book sale at the end of February with less people passing through, but it did allow us to have clean out. All the unsold books were recycled.

A complete shutdown followed at the end of March with stage 3 restrictions being imposed on NW Tasmania following an outbreak among the staff in local hospitals.

By implementing Work Safe Tasmania's COVID-19 Safety Plan for Small Business Template we were able to restart sorting and repacking on May 26th. Thank you to Eva, Helen, Leonie and Shirley who have been busy sorting since then.

I would like to express my thanks to the schools, libraries, individuals and organisations who have provided the books and educational materials which we were able to send to needy schools in Zimbabwe and also to start putting into our next container for southern Africa.

Thank you also to the individuals, schools and organisations that have provided financial support which allowed us to purchase and ship the Zimbabwe container.

I would like to again thank the following businesses and individuals for their support.

DeBruyn's Transport has continually transported books from their depots in Tasmania for almost 14 years. They have also provided free storage for our container in their yard at Wivenhoe over that time, and delivered full containers to the required port ready for shipment overseas.

McCain Foods Smithton for supplying over 800 cartons.

Romaine Park Christian Centre for the continual use of their building rent free.

CVGT for their support with 'work for the dole' participants.

IT Excellence for updating and maintaining our website.

Wayne Blazely for his auditing work.

Thank you to all the committee members for their continued support and help which enables Library Aid International Inc to continue supporting the literacy needs of children in third world countries.

Finally some recently received feedback from Fiji where we sent our 6th container in 2018.

A Fijian Village Library by Conrad Parsons

A few years ago my friend Tomu Raiviu in Suva, Fiji, told me his vision to establish a library in his remote, rural village. He saw that the future of the children would be changed forever if they learnt to love reading and could borrow books to read at home. It would improve their schooling and their future careers. In 2017 my friend Mr Kim Smith introduced me to Library Aid International in Tasmania and they shipped to Tomu 20 boxes of carefully selected used children's books. The village worked together to construct the library shelving and the local women became the librarians. Each Saturday the children gather enthusiastically in the library. A Kids Club has also started. The whole village teamed up to change the lives of their children and teenagers and succeeded. Well done and congratulations Tomu.



PCjL

Peter Cunningham

President

Library Aid International Inc