

April 2005



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The Reeth Ramble

Saturday 1st October

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Annual Update, Sheffield

Welcome to our Spring newsletter.

As I write it on the laptop, the family is watching a DVD of Riverdance – I keep stopping to watch the stunning dance and to tap along to the wonderful rhythms. But I have been struck by the continual references to nature, almost enduing nature with the power to manage and restore itself – with absolutely no reference to its Creator.

Is this not so typical of the 'last days' when men see creation and are able to marvel at it, yet totally reject the Sovereign hand behind it?

In Nigeria, vast numbers of men and women go to church and worship the God of creation. But, as soon as they get home, they ignore His Sovereignty; preferring instead to take on the values of the world and engage in corrupt and dishonest practices. TASTE is working to persuade men and women that real Christianity is life-changing and God-honouring.

Please pray that our witness will be transparently Christ-like and will persuade men and women to turn back to the Saviour.

Why are things so slow at Achi?

The community at Achi were, in the providence of God, responsible for bringing TASTE into being. It was their request for help to provide clean water to their homes that acted as the catalyst in our formation. Since 1999, we have been raising funds to take the work of TASTE forward but progress at Achi has been so slow. What's been holding us up?

Well, in the first instance there are technical difficulties. Many boreholes are able to reach water at between 25 and 50 metres, with many finding water at 10 metres. In Achi our surveys have revealed that we'll not encounter water until we reach a depth of 200 metres. To employ a drilling consultancy to sink a borehole that deep would cost an absolute fortune! However, our supporters have raised sufficient funds for us to purchase a drilling rig in the UK and ship it to Nigeria. Very recently we have successfully drilled our first borehole, which required us to drill 25 metres through rock. A second borehole of 40 metres depth, again through rock is planned shortly. We hope that our drilling team will feel suitably confident after that to attempt the task at Achi.

The technical problems of depth also bring a financial burden. As we drill deeper, the costs per drilled metre also increase. Add to that the requirement to purchase a large generator to drive the water pump and you can see another reason for the slow progress at Achi. However, our Nigerian drilling team is seeking to gain local drilling contracts to raise funds for the Achi project.

But that's the technical story, there's also local politics to deal with! Our manager, Mark Lipdo, arranged to meet with the local Pastors to discuss how the project was going to be organised. On the day of the meeting, he was surprised that the Pastors' earlier enthusiasm seemed to have seriously waned. On further investigation, he discovered why. The meeting was also attended by representatives

of the Achi Brethren, a group of men who had left the village for the city and who saw themselves as the educated, business-savvy professionals who should look-out for their poorer, less educated brothers and sisters. The Pastors were intimidated by the presence of these men, many of whom were really only interested in how they might personally benefit from the new borehole. Once he'd discovered this, Mark had to persuade the Achi Brethren to leave the meeting so that he could get down to business with the Pastors. Once that had been achieved, the meeting became much more profitable and plans were laid for taking things forward.

The Pastors have subsequently spoken with the owners of the land where the borehole could be sited and agreed that the land should be given over to public ownership to prevent individuals seeking to exploit the water supply. However, much still has to be agreed in Achi concerning piping the water and community involvement in the project. Please continue to pray for wisdom in how to proceed with the project, especially concerning the area of fundraising.

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★ March 31st was a key date in **TASTE**'s 2005 ★
calendar. It was the day that Kathryn left us. ★
★ For the last three years, Kathryn has been the ★
'office voice' of **TASTE** and has dealt with ★
★ many of our supporters. The Trustees would ★
★ like to publicly acknowledge Kathryn's work ★
★ and thank her for all her efforts. ★
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Isn't Fudge simple to run?

Well, it's only a water tanker and that shouldn't take that much skill!
Oh that it was that simple!

We decided not to launch into charitable action immediately. The plan was to provide water to homes and businesses at a profit to build up a reserve for maintenance and to cover costs of running Fudge when we need to supply the rig with water.

It took a while to find a driver that was experienced with tankers but, once one was found, there appeared to be lots of work locally supplying clean water. Fudge was filled up at the government-owned water plant and delivered around Jos. Three trips a day were the norm. But something was wrong – there was very little profit and it was hard to get the driver to keep records. Mark tried to keep a check of the distance travelled by checking the speedometer but the driver found a way to damage the speedo so the checks could not be carried out.

By now, Mark sensed a problem so sent one of his team to work with the driver and his mate (a bit tight – 3 men in the cab). That day Fudge turned up at a factory, only to be impounded by the factory security guards. Apparently the driver had charged in advance for water and just not delivered it – a great testimony for a Christian organisation! A bit like the UK, the driver went sick the next day! The driver's wife came to see Mark, concerned that Mark had discovered that her husband was HIV infected. Mark explained that he had not known of the man's infection but that his honesty was the key problem. Understandably, Mark was reluctant to sack a sick man but the driver resigned anyway.

Throughout the days that followed, Mark was approached by a number of people who all had the same story; the driver had taken money but not delivered the water. Mark apologised and explained that **TASTE** had little funds and would find it difficult to deliver

water for free. But, he suggested, if they were willing to cover our costs, we'd deliver the water they ordered at no profit. All accepted this deal as tanker water is much cheaper than bottled and much safer than rainwater. In time, every defrauded person that we discovered was visited a supplied with water.

TASTE now has a new driver and Mark is seeking to find a profit-sharing approach to wages that will encourage both honesty and industry on the driver's part. Please pray that they will together find a way to reward honest labour.

Family Fete on Bank Holiday Monday

Monday 30th May will almost certainly enjoy a sunny afternoon. At least it will in Sheffield. A presumptuous prediction? Yes, of course. But we'll be aiming to have a great time whether it rains or shines.

Venue: Bethany School, Finlay Street
(they've got hall space if it's wet)

Time: 2.00 p.m.— 5.00 p.m. Entry Cost: Free

Activities: African drumming opens the afternoon
Live music throughout the afternoon
Gospel music from Jubal
The famous Pauline's Pantry for tea and cake
Barbeque all afternoon
Sideshowes for all ages
Huge auction of skills, tickets and food

It will be a great way for you to support the work of TASTE and have a great afternoon out with the family. Please join us and bring your friends - you can put them in the stocks!

Thanks for making the Fun Run a success

The 4th **TASTE** 5k Fun Run was a great day out for all involved. The Trustees would like to thank all the runners, supporters, sponsors and marshals who helped on the day.

We were blessed, yet again, with dry weather and enjoyed the company of around 170 participants. Dobcroft School brought along 50 children and parents at 10.00, prior to their Easter Egg hunt at school. Then, at 11.30, 120 started the main event that was completed in times ranging from 16 - 90 minutes.

Initial estimates suggest that sponsorship will raise about £5000, so please make sure that you collect all promised support and get your sponsors to tick the Gift Aid box on the form.

Sena, our 'official' Fun Run photographer returned to Taiwan earlier this year but we did manage to get a few shots to share with you.

If you'd like to see a few more of them, just follow the links on the website — www.taste.org.uk

Prayer Points

We are working harder at keeping the *Prayer Requests* section of the website more up to date! Hopefully, when you find yourself thinking, "there must be some more news coming from **TASTE**" you ought to be able to log on and get up-to-date items for prayer. In the meantime, here are some pointers to keep you going.

Give thanks for:

- ◆ The success of the Fun Run ... again!
- ◆ Wisdom granted to Mark in dealing with the tricky issue of the dishonest driver
- ◆ Being able to get a team together to start test-drilling with Rocky
- ◆ Ibi joining as Trustee, despite his heavy work commitments
- ◆ The peace that has held for the last few months

Let's pray that:

- ◆ Peace will be established in Nigeria
- ◆ The threatened jihad will come to nothing
- ◆ Mark will establish a good working relationship with the new tanker driver
- ◆ All our staff will have wisdom in their everyday dealings, so that others will be challenged by their Christian walk
- ◆ We'll find a replacement for Kathryn
- ◆ Trustees will be able to source additional funding support for Achi
- ◆ We can soon help Mashiah Foundation
- ◆ The Trustees will know God's directing and guidance in all their decision making
- ◆ The daily testimony of Trustees and staff will give occasion for men and women turning to the Saviour

Meet the Trustee

This is the first in an occasional series of articles where we bring you a little more information on the people behind the name. As the trustee in today's spotlight has been serving for nearly 6 months without us announcing the fact, we thought that we ought to correct the oversight and introduce him.

Ibiwari Erekosima (aka Ibi) was born and raised in Port Harcourt, where he completed his graduate studies in medicine. One of 4 children, Ibi met his wife Eno at University and they married in 1995. In 1997, they were blessed with a daughter, Sotonye. When Ibi came to UK to study for his Masters Degree in Medical Sciences in Nephrology (Kidney Medicine) at University of Sheffield in 2000, his two ladies were not far behind, joining him in 2001.

After worshipping at a few different churches, Ibi and his family felt at home in Wycliffe Church, where they met our founder, Ben, and got to know about the work of **TASTE**. Looking back and seeing how God guided the family to Wycliffe, the rest has a certain inevitability about it and Ibi soon found himself responding to the invitation of the Trustees to use his contemporary knowledge of Nigerian issues to guide **TASTE** forward.

Professionally, Ibi has continued in medicine and is currently heading up a specialist kidney service in Greater Manchester.

What's the latest on Tim?

Many readers will remember that **TASTE** is supporting Tim Gotorongs, a Nigerian studying at the University of East Anglia in Ipswich. Thanks to the generosity of our supporters **TASTE** has been able to offer Tim £1250 towards the cost of his education. We caught up with him recently when he joined the Fun Run (as a marshal because he was nursing an injured toe!) and got an update for supporters.

Tim was planning to complete his degree in February 2006 but problems with his visa prevented him from rejoining the course last October and he effectively missed hand-in dates for a number of assignments. As soon as the visa was sorted out, Tim re-enrolled and got all his work accepted but will consequently have to extend his studies to May 2006.

Financially, this means that Tim will now have to find up to £6500 for his final year. He will be seeking to reduce this with a Bursary from the University and has asked us to hold the £1250 you donated until he knows the exact position. We will keep you informed as soon as we hear anything from Tim.

In the meantime, Tim is doing agency work in the Estates Department of Ipswich Hospital. Tim was sent for one week initially but the Estates manager was so impressed by Tim's attitude to work that he asked the agency to send him back on a permanent basis. When Tim explained that he was a student, the hospital boss told him to arrange his work shifts around his studies, effectively working when it suited him.

Please continue to pray for Tim, especially for his witness to his new flatmates.

If you would like a personal update on Tim's progress, feel free to call Steve Horton in the Sheffield office.

AIDS Clinic needs help ...

TASTE has been asked to assist the Mashiah Foundation, a non-governmental, non-political, Christian faith-based organization in Jos, which uses HIV/AIDS as an advantage to reach out to people in need and to show them the love of Christ. **TASTE** has been asked to construct a borehole for the clinic, as patients and staff often have to resort to water collected from the roof during the rains and stored outside in steel drums. You can imagine the health consequences for already ill people.

Mashiah counsellors are the first contact with new patients. They visit the patient and their family to allay their fears and share hope in Christ with them. After receiving counselling, the patients then see the doctor who prescribes drugs to aid the immune system and protect against opportunistic infections. Mashiah Foundation has about 400 people living with HIV/AIDS who visit the ministry on a regular basis for free treatment and medication. There are plans to build a clinic in the near future.

Amongst the range of support offered by the Foundation is assistance to families living in severe poverty as a result of a breadwinner becoming ill; a ministry to teach young people about the importance of moral values and abstinence; and a home for displaced patients and their families.

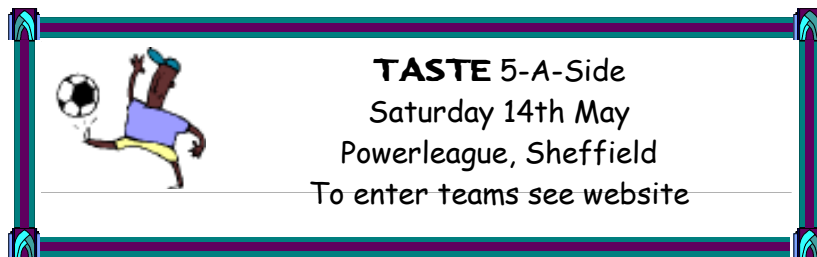
An initial survey suggests that it will cost £2500 to drill and construct a borehole and pump water to the surface. This work is crucial to the further development of the Foundation.

A project of this size could be entirely funded by a single supporter group. A sponsored event, a special collection in church, a family fun day ... all could generate the funds to make a huge difference to this needy work. If you'd like to get involved, just call the Sheffield office (0114 258 5990) and we'll update you on the situation and help you with your fundraising.

If you are new to **TASTE**

TASTE was formed in September 1999 to demonstrate the love of Christ as seen in Christian works and values. A charity which focuses on practical service in Nigeria, **TASTE** seeks to encourage the spread of appropriate and sustainable technology throughout the country. This could take the form of managing or delivering a project, sending suitably qualified Christian professionals to work alongside local people or offering a placement to young Nigerian professionals.

TASTE has identified Achi as the first community with which it will work and has appointed Mark Lipdo as Project Manager to take the work forward. Mark is a qualified engineer resident in Jos and he will oversee the Achi project and recommend future **TASTE** activities.



If you received this newsletter, it is because you have requested it or some-one thought that you might be interested in our work.

If you do not wish to be on our mailing list, contact us at the address opposite and we will remove you from the list.

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