



FRIENDS OF LESOTHO #11

METSOALLE EA LESOTHO

2801 Spencer Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815
(301) 589-4236 ■ Editor: Lisa Labella Mitchell

MARCH 1992

Lesotho Prepares for Elections

VOTER REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN

A rigorous campaign is underway in Lesotho to register all eligible voters for elections that are planned for later this year. What has been termed by *The Mirror* as a "house to house raid" began on Dec. 18 of last year and is expected to take four months to complete. 400 registrars have been appointed to complete the task and registration centers are in existence throughout the country. Migrant workers are also being located and registered. Officials are looking forward to having the population and demographic information that will be obtained through this massive voter registration effort. The registration of citizens is compulsory in Lesotho, though voting is not.



ELECTION DETAILS UNKNOWN

Little information is available about when the elections will actually be held, though it has been widely publicized that 1992 is the year proclaimed by the present military government as the time when Lesotho returns to democratic rule. There are many new political parties operating in Lesotho at present, though it appears that the BCP and the BNP are still the predominant parties.

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Highlands Water Project

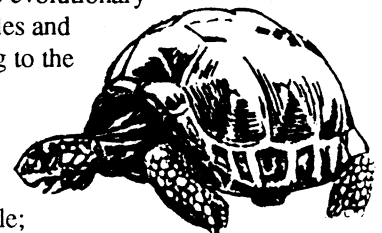
The Lesotho Highlands Water Project, whose objective is to divert water from the mountains in Lesotho northwards to flow into the Vaal River in South Africa, is in its first phase. The plan is for Lesotho to provide water for the industrial area of Pretoria/Witwatersrand/Vereeniging in South Africa and to generate hydro-electricity in Lesotho, which imports 98% of its power from South Africa at present. There is concern amongst many that there will be negative consequences for the natural and human environment of the project area which include the loss of a large amount of arable and grazing land due to construction and the flooding of reservoirs, a reduction in the habitat of animals and plants and the destruction of some archaeological sites. These concerns are being addressed by the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority. Discussion about the benefits and viability of the project are certain to be heard in the country's hotels and shebeens for years to come.

Friends of Lesotho has access to an unlimited amount of information about this project and is looking for someone with an interest in it to be our LHWP person. We can put you in contact with resource people and turn over to your the stacks of information we already have. . .you can inform us about the issues and progress of the project and write a column for the newsletter. Please contact the Board today.

Lesotho Highlands Water Project Treasures

Some interesting items have been unearthed during excavation for the Highlands Water Project.

- A 3" fossil thought to represent an advanced shrew-like evolutionary phase between reptiles and mammals, belonging to the cynodontia family;
- Dinosaur egg;
- The earliest known tortoise;
- Small, early crocodile;
- Some of the earliest known mammals.



NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

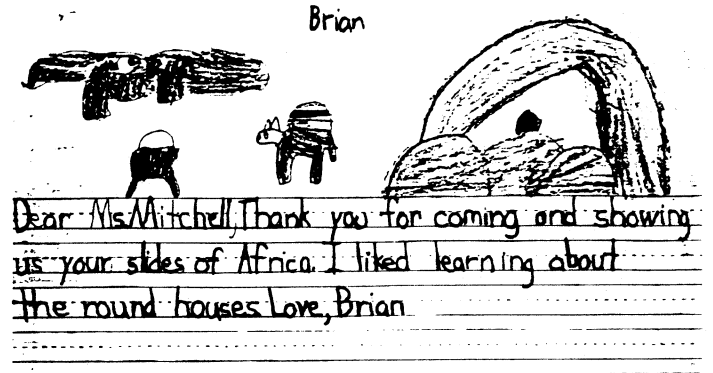
At the most recent Friends of Lesotho Board of Directors meeting, the Board formally acknowledged the changes in its membership and organization. For the present, the Board consists of Don Spicer, who has taken over the role of president and will continue his role as treasurer, Scott Brumburgh, Lisa Labella Mitchell, Corey Bent, Mantai Murray and Ian Duncan in Oregon. Bill Dunn continues to provide invaluable assistance by maintaining our database and membership information. Leaving the Board are Ted Hochstadt and Tom Carroll who have agreed to continue their administrative assistance to the organization. I am sure I can speak for the FOL membership in thanking Scott, Ted and Tom for their tireless efforts. We all look forward to their ongoing involvement in FOL activities. The addition of Mantai Murray to the Board is certain to be an asset to us all.

Once again, we are making an urgent request to members in all locations to both participate in the projects we have undertaken and contribute to the production of this newsletter. As our membership grows and our ability to become involved in projects in Lesotho strengthens, it becomes increasingly difficult to have everything administered by just a handful of people. At this printing, our organization has either an ongoing relationship or a strong prospective relationship with seven projects in Lesotho. It is our intention to locate members who are willing to administer these projects from their home; to correspond, solicit feedback, request money from the treasury and make periodic reports to the Board (which will be included in the newsletter!) on the status of the projects. It is essential that some of these projects become adopted by the membership or we will not be able to maintain this level of commitment to work in Lesotho. Please contact a member of the Board and let us know what you will do. The continued production of an informative, interesting newsletter also requires your input—articles, letters photographs, prose, poetry, news of people or just bits of information of interest to the membership. Please take the time to send something off or offer your time for the next newsletter.

In this issue we are including a photograph section which contains pictures of some of the people and places we are involved with. Since recent news from Lesotho is relatively scarce right now, this issue focuses largely on FOL activities. Much of this information comes from Don Spicer who was recently in Lesotho with his family. It is great to have first hand information on some of our projects as well as stories and reports on the situation there. Thank you Don! If anyone out there is planning a trip to Lesotho, please contact a Board member about what you might do to help our efforts. Our appreciation is also extended to FOL member David Ambrose in Lesotho for sending magazines and other current publications and information.

Please remember that membership renewals for 1992 are now being solicited!! Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter. I'll be looking forward to receiving your piece for the June/July issue. Bala hantle!

Lisa Labella Mitchell



Sharing Lesotho with a new generation: These drawings were done by Mary Rossetti and Brian Kane of Charles Barrett Elementary School (Alex., VA) after a slide presentation of "Life in Lesotho."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"The last news letter carried news about Lesotho rather than all about Peace Corps people. I like that because such news is not plentiful . . . I enclose another then to support the good work."

Elegin M. Cornett
Retired Agriculture Conservation
Near East Foundation
Lesotho Project

"Thought I would drop a quick note to congratulate you on a great looking newsletter for FOL. You did a wonderful job putting the first one together — read every word!"

Wade Dallagrana

"The Oct. '91 FOL which I just received last week is so full of wonderful news and information. I'm devouring its, marking it up, and passing it on to a non-member. . . the news of the status of the government and conditions in the country were very interesting . . . this issue is great. Kea leboha."

Ruby Jones, PCV 1987-1988
Moriya English Medium School

Friends of Lesotho: Five Year Report

At FOL's 5th anniversary conference held in August 1991, a number of questions were raised by both members and nonmembers as to what FOL's goals and objectives were and where the organization was headed. Since the Board members meet regularly and are always working on one thing or another for the group, we tend to forget that others might not have a real clear idea of what FOL is set up to do, where it came from, how much it has grown, and where it is going. I guess in the words of President Bush (or Doonesbury—I have forgotten which), we need to define that "vision thing". I will attempt to do so here and encourage one and all to let us know if this agrees with your perception of the organization.

BEGINNINGS

FOL was established in Washington D.C. in 1986 during the 25th anniversary conference of Peace Corps. At the Lesotho Ambassador's residence a group of about 25 former volunteers formed the group with a little seed money from those on hand and an agreement that dues should be \$10 per year. The basic objectives were to:

- 1) Bring Lesotho RPCVs and other individuals who have ties to Lesotho together through the use of a directory listing all members, non-member RPCVs, and Basotho in the United States;
- 2) Establish a newsletter which would provide the members with up-to-date information about Lesotho, Peace Corps activities in Lesotho, and other information about projects occurring in Lesotho;
- 3) Participate directly in small scale development and education projects in Lesotho with both cash and in-kind support; and,
- 4) Promote cultural and other types of exchange programs (i.e. sister cities) in the United States.

CURRENT STATUS

By the end of 1991, FOL had grown to approximately 300 members and had received dues and extra contributions in excess of \$10,000 over the five year period. The group had also:

- 1) Received a \$2,500 grant from the Sasakawa Foundation to fund one of its projects assisting Basotho students in the United States.

- 2) Established a database with over 600 names of members, non-member RPCVs, and Basotho in the United States.
- 3) Developed an ongoing relationship with the Lesotho Embassy in Washington, Peace Corps in Washington and Maseru, the National Council of Returned Peace Corps Volunteers, and various other organizations.

Based on the Board's own assessment, FOL was one of the more active and well focused of all the "FRIENDS OF" groups that came out of the 25th anniversary conference.

This did not occur without changes being made to some of the original objectives outlined above. While attempts were made to institute a hospitality program and an accurate listing of Basotho in the U.S., this proved to be quite difficult and the Board has dropped that as a structured objective, hoping that through the directory and word-of-mouth that this might occur spontaneously. Also, while some activities have been coordinated with the Lesotho Embassy, the cultural exchange objective has not materialized.

However, self-help projects have been made a major emphasis of the group, along with the directory and newsletter. FOL currently issues its directory once a year, usually in February/March, attempts to put out three newsletters each year, keeps up an active dialogue with Peace Corps, the Lesotho Embassy and the NCRPCV, and is now participating in a number of projects which will become the focus of the group for the next few years.

WHERE WE ARE GOING

Within the past five years, the Board has identified a number of projects which it feels it can support and is at the point where this effort needs to be focused and maintained. Some of the projects FOL is actively involved with include:

- 1) *Trickle-Up* - A total of \$1,500 has been given since 1989 for use in setting up small businesses in Lesotho.
- 2) *UNDP Staff Education Scholarship Fund* - FOL began a commitment in 1992 to provide for school fees for 3 to 4 students per year, to be administrated through this U.N. program in Lesotho. Our first contribution was \$1,000.
- 3) *Peace Corps Volunteer Liaison Committee* - FOL has asked this volunteer run committee of Lesotho PCVs to administer a small project development fund in-country. An initial donation of \$500 was made in 1991 and a second of \$500 in 1992. This fund is currently being used to work on a Women in Development calendar project as well as other small-scale volunteer projects.

Friends of Lesotho: Five Year Report

- 4) Roma Hospital - A donation of \$300 was made to the hospital to assist in the purchase of equipment.
- 5) Morija Museum - A \$100 donation was made to the country's national museum.
- 6) Center of Hope School - A \$250 donation was made to help homeless children in Maseru.
- 7) Boiteko Women's Association - A \$300 donation was made assist in setting up small businesses and for training at its regional conferences.

While some of these are one-time donations, others represent an annual commitment. These have become the main focus of the group. They need to be monitored and evaluated to assure the money is well spent, and the Board is reluctant to take on any more projects at this time until both the worth of these projects is determined as well as the group's ability to monitor their progress.

In summary, this is the direction in which FOL is headed:

- We have built up a good and loyal membership and we will make every effort to increase that.
- We will continue to publish an annual directory and three newsletters a year.
- We will continue to support those projects that we feel are worthwhile and may in fact solicit the membership for additional contributions to support some of the projects mentioned above.

All in all, the group has grown in its capacity to foster U.S. - Lesotho activities over its first five years and credit for that goes to its membership, the Board, and particularly Scott Brumburgh for holding it all together. Now it is time to maintain what we have done and to work within our resources to provide whatever assistance we can to both our membership and the citizens of Lesotho. If you have questions, comments, or concerns about the direction we are headed, please let us know.

Don Spicer
President



Financial Activities of FOL in 1991

Opening Balance of Funds on Hand:	\$5,675.91
+ Revenue:	
Dues	\$1,865.00
Extra Contributions	762.50
Interest on Bank Accounts	298.41
Subtotal Revenue	+ \$2,925.91
- Expenses:	
Operating Expenses (Postage, envelopes, newsletter costs, Duplicating, Supplies, etc.)	\$1,557.56
Subtotal Expenses	- \$1,557.56
- Donations:	
NCRPCV	\$ 200.00
Trickle-Up	1,000.00
Roma Hospital	300.00
Morija Museum	100.00
Peace Corps Lesotho/ Volunteer Liaison Committee	500.00
Bad Loan Write-Off (<i>See note</i>)	500.00
Subtotal Donations	- \$2,600.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$4,444.26

NOTE: In December of 1988, the Board of FOL was approached on Christmas Eve by a Masotho woman and her four children who, due to various circumstances, were on the streets with no place to do in Washington, DC. FOL made arrangements to rent a small apartment for her (costing \$500) for a month while she got back on her feet. Others in FOL and the are also contributed privately their own time, cash and food in order to help her get a job and take care of her family. The donation from FOL was considered a loan to her and she signed an agreement to pay it back in small payments when she was able. Unfortunately, the individual soon thereafter disappeared and all of our attempts to locate her have failed. As it is extremely unlikely that we will ever be repaid, the Board has decided to write-off this loan. While at the time, the actions taken seemed to be the appropriate thing to do, in hindsight the Board made an error in judgement in handling the situation as it did. Please be assured that it will not occur again.

If you have any questions about any of this information, please contact Don Spicer at (H) 301-890-1003 or (O) 202-452-3195.

During a recent trip to Lesotho, Don Spicer had the opportunity to talk with a few people who are involved in projects with which FOL is affiliated. The following information and updates are a result of his visit:

Trickle-Up: Don met with Amelia Majoro, the Trickle-Up volunteer in Lesotho. She has assisted in the establishment of 56 business there but has the obvious logistical and administrative difficulties in monitoring them, due to long distances, lack of transportation and voluminous paperwork required by Trickle-Up. FOL is in communication with Trickle-Up/NY about the program in Lesotho and will continue to monitor the effectiveness of its efforts. Amelia Majoro also runs the Boiteko Women's Association which has been in existence since 1960 to help Basotho women with the establishment of small scale business, agricultural efforts and other self-help efforts. FOL has made a contribution to this association and will investigate it further as a project to which we could potentially make an ongoing commitment.

Peace Corps: Don met with the new PC Director, Donovan Russell and the APCD/Agric., Palesa Matete, and reports that we continue to have a good working relationship with the Peace Corps office in Lesotho. Don learned that there is a PC/L newsletter and suggested that FOL members interested in information about their former projects could send a letter to FOL for forwarding to Lesotho. Corey Bent has agreed to coordinate this effort, the details of which will appear in the next newsletter.

FOL/NRPVC Affiliation Changes

Scott Brumburgh

Board of Directors members recently decided to change affiliation status to a more informal arrangement with the NCRPCV. A new policy of the National Council makes it mandatory for all affiliates to include NCRPCV membership dues requests on their membership applications and renewal forms. After a number of attempts to work around this requirement with Council representatives, it was determined non-RPCV members of FRIENDS OF LESOTHO, and the public, may interpret this request for Council dues on our membership form as an expression that we are strictly a RPCV organization. In an attempt to remain clear in our policies and procedures that we are, first, an open "Friends" organization and, second, an affiliate with other organizations which share common interests, FOL did not renew its affiliation membership for 1992.

What does this mean for FOL members who are RPCVs and join through the Council? First, the Council will not pass through a portion of your NCRPCV membership to FOL. You will need to send us our membership fee of \$10.00 directly to us. Sorry for the extra work on your part.

Second, FOL still supports the Council: an unsolicited contribution of \$100.00 was made as a good faith gesture of cooperation on common objectives and programs.

As of this writing, the Council Board of Directors may consider later this year a new affiliation policy so this kind of situation may be avoided in the future.

FOL Contribution to Centre of Hope School

Scott Brumburgh

An end-of-year gift of US \$250.00 was made to the Lesotho Centre of Hope School in Maseru in hopes that the needs of children of street vendors or families where children are lacking the basic needs because their families are trying to economically sustain themselves, can be better met.

Kwame Bessa Boison, principal of the school, had solicited our support in 1991, indicating the acute need of helping parent-less children and needy families who have no means of obtaining the basic amenities of food, shelter and clothing. Their good work over their short history was supported by Ms. Candace Buzzard from US/AID in Lesotho.



Lesotho Loan Signed

World Bank Watch

World Bank Vice President for Africa Edward V.K. Jaycox and Lesotho's permanent representative to the United Nations, Monyane P. Phoofofo, signed a \$110 million Lesotho Highlands Water Development Project loan in Washington recently.

Two months earlier the Bank approved the loan supporting the largest development project in the country's history, a \$2.1 billion first stage of a massive ongoing project to export water and electricity to neighboring South Africa for decades to come.

The loan, by far the World Bank's largest ever for tiny Lesotho, supports a project under study since the 1950s. The first phase is due to come on line in 1996.

The Bank support anchored a total financing package that includes \$291 of additional aid from donors including the African Development Bank, European Community and others, \$418 million from four different export credit guarantee agencies, \$67 million from a private commercial banking consortium led by Banque National de Paris and Credit Lyonnais and \$1.5 billion from South African sources, the chief being a \$579 million export credit.

The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority in Maseru expects to issue tenders for the 72 megawatt Muela dam hydropower component in April 1992.

Last year, it awarded credits for the water transfer component civil works to a consortium led by Spie Battignoles S.A. and Campenon Bernard of France with Balfour Beatty of the U.K. Among the foreign firms that have done early design work are: Sogreah and Coyne et Bellier of France; Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners and Mott and MacDonald International Ltd. of the U.K. and Lahmeyer International of Germany.



Literary News & Recent Releases

NUL Journal of Research

This publication is an inter-disciplinary journal of research relevant to Lesotho, published by the National University. It is intended primarily as a publication of research and results by University staff but welcomes submissions from outside as well. Presently available is Volume One (1991) which includes articles on the following:

- Structural Adjustment Programs
- Education in Swaziland
- Sesotho Poetry
- reports on work in progress
- annual (cumulative) bibliography

Also now available is the *NUL Journal of Research Occasional Paper (Number One)* called "A Tentative History of Lesotho Palaeontology" by David Ambrose.

To order, contact The Editor, *NUL Journal of Research*, National University of Lesotho, PO Roma 180, Lesotho. Orders should include payment by cheque or money order. Contact FOL for subscription rates for other than Lesotho or USA.

Occasional Publication #1: Lesotho: M8.00
 USA surface: \$4.80
 USA airmail: \$8.00

Subscription Rate (per annual issue): Lesotho: M20.00
 USA surface: \$9.60
 USA airmail: \$16.00

What You Can Do For Your Country: An Original History of the Peace Corps by Karen Schwarz

Drawing from interviews with volunteers who have served in different countries and eras, this is an account of the volunteer experience and the evolution of the Peace Corps over various presidential administrations and cultural trends in America. Volunteers discuss subjects ranging from Kennedy's inspiration to draft avoidance during the Vietnam war, to practicing safe sex in the age of AIDS. Reviewers have said the book was "an inclusive and extremely useful history" and "mystique busting" (Washington Post) and that "Schwarz conducted hundreds of interviews and gives her subjects a chance to tell it like it was." (NY Times) To order, send a check for \$23.00 (which covers postage) to Trouper Books, Box 164, 61 E. 8th St., NY, NY 10003. The author will sign your copy if requested.

The Basutos by Eugene Casalis

Originally published in 1859, this is an account of Basotho life in the first half of the 19th century by one of the original French Protestant missionaries in Lesotho who was a close friend and advisor of King Moshoeshoe I. It has been re-printed with a new introduction and index. To order send M45 (Lesotho) or \$30.00 (US) to Morija Museum & Archives, Box 12, Morija 190.

FOL Scholarship Program Underway 3-4 Students Tuition Paid for 1992 through Lesotho UN Fund

Scott Brumburgh

After numerous requests by members to establish a scholarship fund for students at the secondary school level and higher, FOL has joined with the Lesotho UN Staff Education Fund in a long-term commitment to sponsor students from rural areas of the country.

The UN Fund was created in 1989 from contributions to UN Day celebrations. It was originally supported by the entire UN system, the government and the diplomatic Corps, and now receives donations from individuals, private businesses and various fund-raising activities.

Funds are generated and managed by volunteers and intended to go beyond the scope of existing government and donor agencies by responding to individual urgent cases as they arise as well as maintaining a constant roster of students.

Beginning with three students in 1989, the number of students increased to 33 in 1990-91. A maximum of M750.00 is provided to each student so FOL's contribution for 1992 of US1,000.00 will provide financial assistance to 3-4 students.

The Fund focuses on students moving from grade 7 into Form A and those progressing from Form C into Form D; where the drop off rate is highest.

Student names are provided by organizations such as the Hlokomela Bana Assn., the Social Welfare and Prison departments, the Christian Council and Unitarian Service Committee.

FOL can expect to receive pictures and background information on students selected to receive funds this year, as well as progress reports. We will publish that information as soon as it is received.

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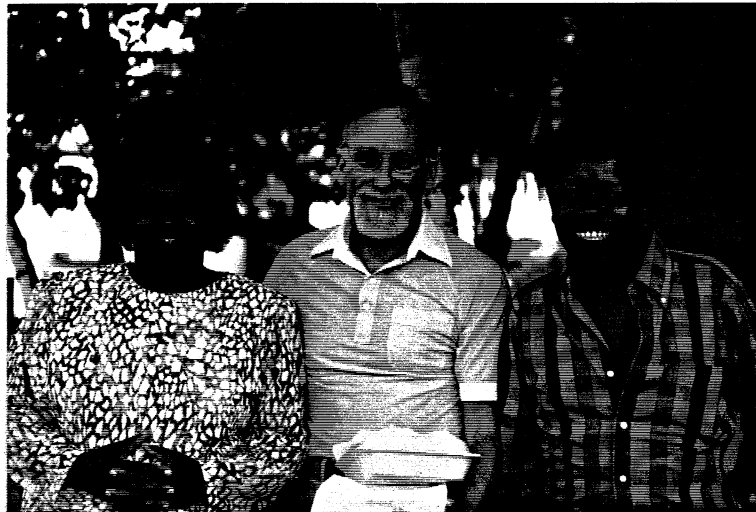
Name _____ Organization _____
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 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

FOL
Students In
America Program

Elisha
Manyatsela,
Linda Telford &
Matthew



Dennis &
Cheryl Caspe
&
Mokete Hlaso



Scott Brumburgh, Ted
Hochstadt & former
Ambassador Van Tonder



Puseletso
Ranthimo

FOL members
gather at
1991 NCRPCV
conference



Don Spicer,
Wade Dallagrana
&
Lisa Labella
Mitchell



Two
unknown
FOL members,
Becky Shaner
Palasik, Jack
Healey, Donna
Julian & Jennifer
Root



Back - Mike Burket (IVS)
Chris Bell (IVS)
MID - Sandy Fickett (PCV)
Di Bell (Shearer), Sue
Dempsey Claydon, John
Claydon (SCF)
Front - Liz Green, Duncan
MacInnes (IVS), Sheila
& George Reid (British
Council)

A. Buthe Buthe (71-75/76)
"crowd" reunion



