



# Friends of Messef Newsletter

## Our 1st Birthday!

I find it hard to believe that a year has passed since Friends of Messef was formed. A lot has happened in that time and many wonderful new people have joined us to help improve life for the children at Messef... and thankfully many of the original supporters are still with us, especially Donna and Gerald and all their friends.

During this time, Haiti has been experiencing one of the most difficult periods in its history, with the earthquake, cholera epidemic, flooding and hurricanes, not to mention a world recession.

When Friends of Messef was born, the Ministry, MESREDEN, had already been involved with the orphanage for around three years and had achieved a fantastic amount during that period—sanitation and bathrooms; a well and water pump; a regular supply of food; beds for the children to sleep in, which we are still building on ... and the list goes on.

As well as the essentials, we have brought some extra blessings to the children during visits from you. A little later, I will mention some of the most memorable visits that I was privi-

leged to share, but there are many others that I have only heard about or seen the photos.

Posting on the blog is possible for everyone who becomes a Member of the Website and I would love for you to upload your own photos, reports etc.

Please read on to see what is happening in Friends of Messef.



*About the same age as us*

## Leaflets for Messef

Many of you come into contact with a lot of people in the course of your work or play. If you are as passionate about Messef as we are, you will talk to some of them about the children and Haiti.

Simona works at a horse ranch in the DR; Sandra sells fast food at huge fairs etc.; MeLissa teaches in Canada; Trudy also works at a school in England etc., Between us, we have the chance to spread the word.

Now we have a leaflet to follow up on the conversations. Write to us if you haven't received a copy:

[friendsofmessef@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessef@gmail.com)

Thanks, Kay, for taking care of the printing in Canada.

## Part of the Ministry MESREDEN

Volume 1, Issue 1

September, 2011

### Special points of interest:

- ☺ Sandra Wood's daughter, April, is recovering well
- ☺ Leaflets now available
- ☺ You Tube Channel live
- ☺ PayPal facility
- ☺ Egg Sandwiches on the menu soon
- ☺ The bus is ready to make some more visits

### Inside this issue:

Canadians for Messef	2
The way forward	2
Joy from the world	2
Donate with PayPal	3
You Tube Channel	3
FOM on the road	3
Resume of FOM. How can I help?	4

## Canadians for Messef are our next visitors...God willing

Sandra Wood answered a request for used clothing, the only one to answer, and she has turned into one of our most fervent supporters. She visited Messef with Tammy Drew earlier this year and now they are hooked!

Sandra's daughter, April, experienced a terrible car accident recently so the next trip planned for September has had to be postponed, but Sandra is determined to come with her Team as soon as she possibly can.

In preparation, we held a very successful Father's Day Appeal to raise funds for the Hen Coop project this Team is going to work on. Thanks,

Glenda, for the idea. We reached our target of US\$500, but the main project appeal is still ongoing on the website. See "How to help and wish list: Donations—Projects." Thanks to everyone who sponsored a hen in memory or honour of a loved one. Jeanette and Stu are working hard on a design for the hen coop, which will also help improve the soil.

The Team will also repair the leaking



Sandra and Tammy with two of our children in April, 2011

dormitory roofs: many thanks to Lisa for all your support in this. Posie has been working hard to secure medical supplies, so we hope to achieve a lot.

Canadians for Messef have a Facebook Page; everyone is welcome, not just Canadians! Please join us at:

[Canadians for Messef Orphanage in Haiti](#) on Facebook.



## The way forward — self-sustaining projects

During a very productive meeting between members of the Ministry recently, we discussed the way forward for Messef. We decided against any type of Child Sponsorship scheme, preferring to work towards helping Messef to become more self-sufficient. Jeanette is working on improved fruit and vegetable production and fresh eggs will be produced through the hen coop project.

Our main income generating scheme is to set up a small **commercial bakery** at Messef. This has been a long term goal for the original members of the Ministry, Juan Gomez (Danilo) and Pastor Quirico Diaz. We have Pastor Altesse, the Director of Messef's, full backing on this and we have all the necessary skills within our Ministry to train the local people.

For full details, see our latest project on the website—under "How to help and wish list: Donations—Projects."



**"Give a man a fish and you will feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime"**

## Bringing a lot of joy from around the world....

Once people meet our children they fall in love! This year, Friends of Messef has introduced Andrea from Hawaii and Trudy and Ken from England to our children, as well as Sandra and Tammy, of course. Other faithful



Pastor Altesse and Huguette, receiving a laptop from Trudy

supporters from Canada have visited again, along with those of us who live in the DR: Martin, Jeanette and David and Ann, plus Dominican Friends.

Andrea kindly brought masses of gifts—clothes, medicines,

toys, sweets etc; many things the children only receive when we visit.

I optimistically placed a laptop computer on our "Wish List" and Trudy and Ken brought one when they visited, along with very many other blessings, including a caterpillar tunnel and two sizes of parachutes which will keep the children amused for hours. **Thank you all!**

## It's now easy to donate online through PayPal

Transferring money across the globe has become much easier over the years but the Dominican Republic is a developing country and things are not always as straightforward as they could be! We were pleased to take the step forward to set up a PayPal facility on the website for people to donate online, either via PayPal or most major credit cards.

This is currently linked to a dedicated bank account in the UK, my home country, as PayPal does not operate with accounts in the Dominican Republic. The only downside with this is the number of currency exchanges

required. We will consider alternatives when the Canadians for Messef come down for their visit.

Posie has been looking into the possibility of obtaining charitable status in Canada and this is something which will be discussed in future. It is a complex and lengthy process but does carry some benefits, including tax concessions and being able to fundraise on Facebook. We have a Facebook

Cause with well over 100 members, but this group is virtually inactive.

With charitable status we would be able to add a donate facility on the Cause, but we have by no means decided to go down this route yet.

See [Friends of Messef Facebook Cause](#).



PayPal now available on Friends of Messef Website



## YouTube Friends of Messef Video Channel

We love our photos of the children at Messef, but a video captures them in a way that isn't possible in a photograph.

We now have a Friends of Messef Channel on You Tube, where we can upload all of your videos and put the link on the website so that you can all enjoy happy memories or feel as though you have entered into the

children's lives even if you haven't been able to visit in person...yet.

My personal favourite is of Juan Gomez (Danilo), our Ministry President, skipping with the children. I don't know where that man gets his energy (well, actually I do) but he was up way before the crack of dawn, probably had very few hours sleep, drove for five hours and is still skipping like a

10 year old. Take a look at him on You Tube, via the website.

Perhaps you will see your little man in these videos, MeLissa.

"A picture is worth a thousand words, but the memories are priceless."

## Keeping Friends of Messef on the road

Everyone involved with Friends of Messef gives their time and labour freely. However, it is sometimes a challenge to cover the expenses to make the trips to Messef, which is why we ask visitors to contribute towards travelling costs. Danilo's paid work is to provide School Transport so it is essential that his vehicle is kept running well. The regular trip to

Haiti really takes its toll, despite the fact that the roads have improved dramatically since the early days. We have recently carried out a major overhaul on the bus (NOT out of Messef funds) which we hope will give it a few more years



Danilo's bus is a vital part of the Ministry work

of hard service.

We need to think about budgeting for a little more than fuel, to allow for oil changes, maintenance etc.

We keep our expenses to a bare minimum but, naturally, there are costs involved.

## Friends of Messef

Part of the Ministry MESREDEN,  
Sabaneta/Cabarete, Dominican Rep.  
For Fondation Messef,  
Ouanaminthe, Haiti.

Phone: 001 809 907 0349  
E-mail: [friendsofmessef@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmessef@gmail.com)

Helping the children of  
Messef Orphanage in Haiti



**MESREDEN**

FRIENDS OF MESSEF was formed as an offshoot of the Ministry MESREDEN in July, 2010. Its purpose is to help provide a better life for the children of Messef Orphanage in Haiti and to keep their supporters informed and involved.

The Ministry MESREDEN had secured the help of a number of supporters since it first became involved with Messef, but it was not always easy to keep in touch. Through our website, email and Facebook we hope to keep everyone motivated and informed.

**Linda Stapleton de Martinez** is the Webmaster and English Speaking Co-ordinator and will communicate with anyone interested in Messef and happily pass on any questions or messages to the Ministry Leaders.

**We hope you will keep in touch.**

## How can I help?

There are so many charitable organizations, or "non-profits", in today's world that it is impossible for a little group like Friends of Messef to try to compete with the "big fish", especially in Haiti. However, many people do have growing concerns about the use of donations to the mega-charities and feel impotent to influence change.

Friends of Messef is a small, hands-on group, run purely by volunteers, that can only grow through word of mouth and personal involvement. Those of you who have visited Messef and love the children are the best people to spread the word about the work we are doing and what is still required.

If you are considering visiting, there is accommodation, albeit basic, at Messef. For groups that are not working on a project, it is better to visit in a day from the Dominican Republic. Please get in touch to talk about the possibilities.

The best way to spread the word is by talking to friends and family and giving them a copy of our new Leaflet so that they can take a look at the Website themselves, watch the videos, learn about life at Messef and then join us, too.



**We guarantee you a warm welcome at Messef**

You can also add a Facebook friend to the Canadians for Messef page so that they can meet other members,

get involved in the chats and feel a part of things even before they visit. It is all very friendly and informal. Anyone can sign up, too.

Messef receives no government help whatsoever, so please help us to continue working to give the children a

brighter future.

**A million thanks to those of you already involved—God bless you!**