

Issue 25  
February 2013

Bulawayo Projects Centre  
Cnr. Station Rd/Candelabra Rd.  
Thorngrove, P.O.Box 7033  
Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe  
Tel: 00263 9 888296; 0772126724  
Email: [procen@netconnect.co.zw](mailto:procen@netconnect.co.zw)  
Compiled by: Piet te Velde



# Newsletter

## Bulawayo Projects Centre



A project of the Bulawayo Churches in support of aspiring small scale entrepreneurs.

## Cowdray Park business incubation workshop and training centre

### Inside this issue:

Office damaged by fire	2
Vendors attend business	2
A few statistics	2
BPC facilitates contract farming	3
New Project Coordinator	3
Innovative businesses	4

### Would you like to make a donation?

Bank details Zimbabwe:  
Bulawayo Projects Centre  
Account: 171026000555  
MBCA bank, Leopold Takawira branch, Bulawayo.  
Swift: MBCAZWHX

Bank details Netherlands:  
Stichting Bulawayo  
Account: 130351385  
Rabobank, Rotterdam  
BIC: RABONL2U  
IBAN: NL10RABO 0130351385



The construction of the Cowdray Park business incubation workshop and training centre is underway. The more than 100 members of the satellite Projects Centre in Cowdray Park are very excited about the new business facility and training centre that is rising up. A donation by the Netherlands Embassy has made it possible to start its construction (up to roof level), while fundraising is ongoing. The 'Wild Geese' in the Netherlands is adding 55% to donations made by private individuals in the Netherlands, which is funding the roof and other finishing. Construction works started in November 2012

and the roof is about to be completed. When completed the workshop will house several start-up businesses, while a number of business and skills training courses are being planned. The first course to be conducted is bicycle mechanic training. The trainees will assist in assembling the more than 100 bicycles that are still in the brown container (see picture), while they learn how to service and repair the bikes. The bicycles are issued (at a small fee) to members who are starting a business activity and who need a bicycle for their business. Cowdray Park is a fast growing

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Pictures on this page:

Various stages of the construction of the business incubation workshop and training centre in Cowdray Park suburb.



Very early in the morning of November 4 (Sunday morning) the administrator of the BPC was woken up by a call from the neighbourhood with the terrible news that the office was on fire. By the time the fire brigade arrived the contents of the office and two store rooms and already been reduced to ashes and a part of the roof had collapsed (see picture).

Was it an accident? Was it deliberate? The police and the fire brigade ruled out an electrical fault as a possible cause. But there were signs of forced entry as some of the door frames were damaged. Was it a burglar who set fire to the building accidentally or perhaps deliberately to remove any trace of the burglary?

A few days after the sad event, a person from the neighbourhood came to the Centre with a used Pritt (glue) stick, which had been dropped by a person he saw carrying what he thought could be stolen goods. He had spoken to the man and while they spoke the Pritt stick fell on the ground. He picked it up thinking that it was a contact adhesive which he could use to mend his bicycle. When he heard about the fire, after a day or two, he realised that the man could have something to do with that and he reported it to the office and disclosed who the suspect was.

The suspect was arrested and convicted. A few items in his possession could be traced back to the office. He was given a custodial sentence, but he refused to identify his (2) accomplices who are still at large. One of the suspected accomplices is the son of the caretaker, who has disappeared. The caretaker himself, although not suspected of being directly involved, was sacked because of gross negligence of duty.

Property worth more than \$ 30,000.00 was destroyed by the fire. This includes office furniture & equipment, computers, tools, stationery and other electrical gadgets used for training.

## A few statistics:

The total number of new members accepted by the 4 Centres (Thorngrove, Nketa, Cowdray Park and Njube) during the year 2012 amounted to 275.

At the year end 32 internal businesses were operating at the 4 Centres, some of them with several employees.

The number of external businesses monitored and visited by the staff amounted to 243.

642 Smallholder irrigation farmers attended 'Market Gardening is a Business' and contract farming training sessions.

*(Continued from page 1)*

high density suburb on the outskirts of Bulawayo, 20km from the city centre. The rate of unemployment in Cowdray Park is very high, but there are numerous business opportunities waiting to be exploited. The members who make a living of the nearby municipal dump and the informal traders along the road will all benefit from the new centre and the market stalls that have been constructed. More market stalls will be added and a public toilet block is also under construction.

## Office damaged by fire



## Vendors attended business training courses

During the year 2012 the business training was focused on vendors: 107 vendors completed the MICRO-MBA business training course. 89 Bicycles were issued, many of them to vendors after completing their business course. Efforts were also made to provide market shelters or vending bays; 36 vending bays were constructed in Cowdray

Park. Market shelters accommodating 30 vending bays to be constructed in Nketa are awaiting City Council approval. Some vending bays were demarcated at the Fifth Avenue market in the City Centre, but the City Council did not complete the exercise and the construction of market stalls remains uncertain.



**The mission of the Bulawayo Projects Centre is to provide encouragement, support and assistance to underprivileged unemployed members of our society, who aspire to be self-employed. In doing so, we aim to create opportunities for development of the whole person, both materially and spiritually, recognising that each person has received God-given talents.**

## BPC facilitates contract farming

BPC successfully concluded a farmer training contract with SNV (Netherlands Development Organization), involving 300 farmers at 5 irrigation projects who were offered contracts to grow tomatoes for a private sector company (Sondelani). Following the SNV contract a second contract was entered into with World Vision involving 336 farmers, who are members of 11 small irrigation projects in Umzingwane District. This contract covered Health and Hygiene, Market Gardening is a Business and Contract farming. The training was conducted in 11 sessions of 2 days and attended by a total of 267 farmers. The training of 20 out of school youth, temporarily suspended because of the above contracts, will resume in early 2013.

In the August issue of this newsletter it was reported that 161 farmers at 4 irrigation projects (Moza, Mzinyathini, Duncal and Silalabuhwa) had received seed garlic earlier in the year. Almost all of them produced an excellent crop of garlic. The harvest exceeded 10 000kg and after collecting the equivalent of the seed garlic issued on credit more than 8 000kg of garlic was bought by the BPC. Unfortunately the market was flooded with garlic

and only 2000kg have been disposed of to date. In order to be able to sell the balance and create a sustainable market for garlic, negotiations are taking place with a small factory in Worringham just outside Bulawayo to produce garlic in brine and crushed garlic as an experiment. The factory nearly collapsed during the time of hyper inflation, but if it can successfully produce and market processed garlic, the smallholder farmers will be able to carry on growing garlic.

Meanwhile 20 farmers at Moza have received tomato seed from Sondelani of a high yielding variety in December but excessive rainfall seems to have adversely affected the young seedlings.

Rose Geranium plants have been introduced at 4 irrigation projects (Mzinyathini, Duncal, Thornville and Moza). The farmers are waiting to be invited by Lynwood Ranching to witness the extraction of oil from Rose Geranium, before they will commit themselves to grow geranium on a commercial scale. The mobile still is reported to be operational and the demonstration is expected to take place soon.

*Pictures from top: Tomatoes, Rose Geranium and Garlic are currently the main contract crops.*



## New project coordinator

Mrs Judith Mwenje resigned as (part time) Project Coordinator due to family circumstances and her other commitments as a pastor of Harvest House International and her job as a lecturer at NUST. She has served the BPC as a consultant for 2½ years and as part time Project Coordinator for more than 4 years. We wish to express our gratitude to Mrs Mwenje for her dedication and commitment to the mission of the BPC and we are particularly grateful that she



will continue to serve as a member of the Executive Committee.

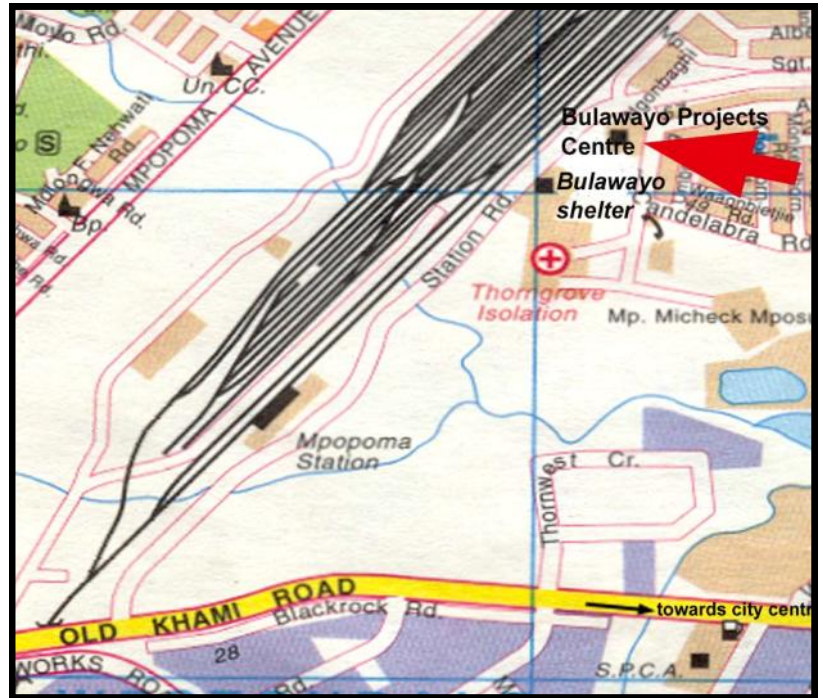
Mrs Mwenje is replaced by Miss Susan Ryce who has joined the team with effect from February 1 and who will work fulltime. Susan (34) is an active member of Harvest House International and involved in organising the children's ministry. She holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration, a BA Degree in Human Social Studies, a Diploma in Personnel Management, a Diploma in Education and a Certificate in Training Management. She has 12 years of experience working in the field of community development and activities related to entrepreneurship. She has a particular passion for 'Youth in Business' training and equipping young people with skills that will enable them to start their own businesses. She shares our passion to see small businesses grow and provide regular and sustainable income for poor families, thereby contributing to the economic development of the country. May the Lord bless her in this challenging job.

See map for directions to the Main Projects Centre at Thorngrove (only 5 km from the city centre):

## Innovative businesses



Pictures anti-clockwise from top:  
A small table with a carved lion head top, made by Calvezia Chuma;  
Sandal manufacturing by Sithabile Chipoyi;  
Sturdy wheelbarrows with axles made from shock absorber shafts, by Tendai Ndora.



### Board of Trustees:

Pastor Patson Netha, Director of the Ethics, Peace and Justice desk of the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA).  
Pastor Ray Motsi, President of the National Zimbabwe Pastors Conference and President of the Theological College of Zimbabwe (TCZ).  
Mr John Sullivan, businessman, engineer and member of the Roman Catholic Church.

### Executive committee members:

Mr Dumisani Nkomo, Chairman (Chief Executive Officer, Habakkuk Trust.)  
Pastor Tawana Phuma, Vice chairman (New Life for all Church, Mpopoma)  
Mr P. te Velde, Treasurer (City Presbyterian Church)  
Miss H. Landsmann (Whitestone Church)  
Mrs C. Sibanda, Secretary and Administrator (Anglican Church)  
Mrs Judith Mwenje, Project Coordinator (Harvest House International)  
Mr N. Ncube, Youth Adviser (Brethren in Christ Church)  
Fr Victor Dube, St. Peter and Paul Parish in Mpopoma (Roman Catholic Church).  
Mr J. Nyoni, Bulawayo City Council  
Rev Sibanda, Brethren in Christ Church, Cowdray Park  
Rev N. Kolobe, Baptist Church.  
Pastor L. Moyo, Agape Mission Church  
Pastor Albert Chatindo, Churches in Bulawayo (CIB)

