19 YEARS AND COUNTING!!!

Wow!!! Awesome!!! Amazing!!! Challenging!!! Nerve-wracking, Rewarding, Fulfilling, and most Gratifying are just a few of the adjectives that readily come to mind in reflecting on the past nearly nineteen years.

September 10th represented a most significant milestone as we prepare to enter into our 20th year. I am sure you will agree this will be an event to celebrate -- so please plan on attending some of the yearlong activities we will be telling you about later on in commemoration of our many achievements.

Our achievements over these years are so unbelievable that one cannot but agree that these could only have been possible through the divine inspiration, guidance and provisions from the Lord.

Before thanking anyone else -- and there are scores of you -- I simply must give thanks to God for guiding, protecting and providing for me during some of my most grueling challenges and emotionally painful experiences.

And, yes, some of you may be surprised that I am still "down there" after declaring so many times that I was leaving but, I have proven the scripture to be oh so true that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

I have become convinced that where He leads, He will provide as He has provided so many of you to help me along this journey and there is absolutely no way I could ever begin to find words to adequately express my heartfelt gratitude to you.

Your financial help, no matter how modest,
has made such a big, big difference in the lives of so many, many people -- some of whom you will be hearing from regularly in future newsletters. So many have gone to higher education.

Your financial assistance has also enabled us to provide the only meals for many -- some of whom will thank you yourselves for rescuing them from a life of crime “because when you don’t have anything to eat you frass (frustrated) and you end up at the corner and . . .”

And here, I must thank The Restoration Village Farm in Portland which has just recently started to supply us with ground produce, fruits and vegetables. They have committed themselves to setting aside several plots to grow food to assist with the school’s highly subsidized feeding programme. Thanks also to the Natural Heath Whole Food Store who provided us with much need groceries for the beginning of the new school year!

Your constant donations of items to the school’s “Incentive Points Program” have brought about unimagined changes in so many of our students whose confidence and self-esteem have soared with the changes in their appearance.

Your on-going supply of school supplies has provided us with so much that we are now able to share with the wider community. We had our first community Back to School Give Away last month and we were able to reward students who were successful in their exams as well as needy students.

The appreciation we feel for your volunteerism cannot be overstated. So many of you have from Belgium, Canada, US and most recently, Alex Cameron came from the UK to help with our summer school.

The visits from so many of you have been some of our most inspiring and memorable experiences. Your prayerful support continue to strengthen and encourage us.

I am sure you must realize by now that all I have been trying to say is thanks. Thanks, thanks, thanks. You have helped me to believe that the vision is possible and with your continued support I do believe we will see our vision of "Changing our Community to Impact the Nation and the World," come to fruition -- in the not too distant future.

My prayer for the many, many of you who have supported me over these years
THOSE WHO MAKE IT POSSIBLE: INTEGRITY CHILDREN’S FUND

Jamaicans abroad have traditionally been a lifeline support to families and communities back home. In that regard, it is hard to imagine where ORCS would be without the support of Integrity Children’s Fund. Their financial support and advice have helped to keep ORCS on course to fulfilling our vision. We thank God for this partnership with the Jamaican Diaspora which began as far back as 1999. It was then that Major (retired) Richard Cooke and Mr. Richard Delisser made presentations to a group of Jamaicans living in Atlanta. They spoke of the bold efforts being made in Trench Town to provide children with a Christian based education and they emphasized the evidence of lives radically changed.

As a result of their moving presentations, a core group of Jamaicans in Atlanta, namely Marcia Sutherland, Wayde and Arlene Marr, Dr. Christopher and Jewel Parker, and Major (retired) Karl and Marcia Chambers committed themselves to providing financial support to schools in Jamaica.

The commitment gave birth to the vision of Integrity Children’s Fund which was incorporated in Georgia as a 501c 3 charity.

Every year ICF holds fundraising activities in order to support a number of schools in Jamaica including ORCS. To find out more about ICF visit http://integritychildrensfund.net/

MY STORY: RICHARD DAVIDSON, ASSISTANT TEACHER, LEVEL 1

When Richard Davidson started attending ORCS at sixteen years old he could not read but he felt a sense of relief to be back in school. For years he had stopped going to school due to bad decisions and hanging out with the wrong company.

Instead of going to school he would leave home and hang out all over Spanish Town. Due to the care and recommendation of an older brother that knew about ORCS, Richard’s mother decided to enroll him in the school.

Richard remembers his time at ORCS very fondly, he recalls the motivation he felt when his teachers recognized his potential and pushed him to do well. Amazingly, Richard learned to read fluently and excelled so quickly that he was able to sit the Grade Nine Achievement Test and pass for Jamaica College (JC)! He recalls the joy it brought to his family because he was the first to attend a traditional high school.

However, Richard describes his time at JC as very difficult, “It was stressful...because I wasn’t there from seventh grade...I was trying hard to catch on.” When the time came he did not pass his CXC exams. Nevertheless, the dreams and aspirations of better education that ORCS ignited in him were not extinguished.

Last year, he came back to ORCS to help teach Summer School and the school gave him the opportunity to stay as a teacher’s assistant while he registers to take his CXC exams again this year. When he is successful he plans to study Information Technology.

As my interview with Richard drew to a close he placed everything in context for me, “If it wasn’t for this school, I would probably be a gun man now in Spanish Town.”

“If it wasn’t for this school, I would probably be a gun man now in Spanish Town.”

Richard Davidson, Level 1 Assistant Teacher
SWOTT
STRONG WOMEN OF TRENCH TOWN

SWOTT is a women’s group which was formed with a vision to empower women in Trench Town to make significant and positive impact on their community.

Spiritually, socially and economically – SWOTT is a vehicle for change crossing all the community’s boundaries and barriers. Last month, SWOTT hosted their annual women’s breakfast annual women’s breakfast. Members of SWOTT from all over the community were invited to have a good time, eating, fellowshipping and receiving ministry. The guest speaker shared the importance of faith in God and the power of prayer to their everyday lives as mothers and those struggling as single mothers.

The message did not fall on deaf ears—the women were challenged to take their faith and prayer-life to another level.

Since the breakfast, SWOTT women have come together again re-energized to make a difference in Trench Town. Admittedly, the task before them is overwhelming but as was emphasised at the breakfast – “All things are possible through Christ who gives us strength”.

ALEX CAMERON: COW SHED DREAMS TO TRENCH TOWN REALITY

Three years ago I sat in a cow shed surrounded by muddy fields at a youth conference called Soul Survivor which is held each year in the UK. The seminar was being taken by a man named Patrick Regan, the CEO of XLP, and he was sharing about this place he had visited in Jamaica.

He spoke of how this awesome God-fearing woman had had a vision to make a difference in a society most people had written off as being God-forsaken. Instead of allowing children to slip though the gaps this school, that had been created from that vision, refused to give up hope that these children were lost causes.

These stories stayed with me over the coming years until finally in January the crazy notion of actually going to the school came into my head. So I emailed Miss Lorna and, a long story short, here I am!

I never could have imagined sitting in that muddy field that I would now be sitting in an Operation Restoration classroom. Not only have I had the amazing opportunity to meet some of those I had heard about so long ago, I have also been able to see the breath-taking

Continued on pg. 3

Alexandra Cameron posing with some of the Summer School 2013 students
ALEX CAMERON CONT'D.

Alexandra Cameron, Summer 2013 volunteer from the United Kingdom

impact the school has had on so many lives.

Teachers who at one point felt no hope are now leaders, not just at the school, but across their community as shining examples of lives changed. Children who had dropped out of education are now learning to read and write so that they can go off to high school; dreams that seemed out of reach to become doctors, lawyers and business leaders are now within grasp. On top of all this the school lives up to its motto ‘changing the community to impact the world’ as meetings are held regularly to encourage local members of the community to become the change they want to see.

While change is taking place it is still an uphill struggle for all involved. It can be so disheartening to see something you have spent years helping to build destroyed overnight, and in Trench Town it is not just buildings being vandalized but the lives of the children being cut short as well. Yet God continues to miraculously provide not only physically with new pledges to support the teaching staff and their continued training, and the beginnings of a garden being planted at the back of the school; but also spiritually where the staff seem to take each new turn of events in their stride. Miss Lorna has always been a determined soul and continues to pass on her passion to the staff around her.

As I leave on the 14th August my prayer for the school is that over the coming years new leaders will rise up as new struggles come along and the role of the school evolves. If you would like to hear more about my stay here please feel free to email me at alex.s.cameron@hotmail.co.uk.

“ It can be so disheartening to see something you have spent years helping to build destroyed overnight.”

Alex's pics of Trench Town
On the 20th Anniversary of her dental practice Dr. Lawson-Myers gave ORCS the stage to make an appeal for sponsorship. Due to Dr. Lawson-Myers example of generosity and Lorna Stanley’s appeal we were able to secure full sponsorships for some very needy students!!

We’re on the web! www.operation-restoration.org

Banking Information:

Sterling Account (UK£) - Victoria Mutual Building Society (VMBS) /Barclay’s Bank
Account No. 0025723594

US Dollar Account ($USD) Bank of Nova Scotia
80 Half Way Tree Rd., Kingston 10, Jamaica
Account number: 601471000
Wire: ABA#NOSCJMKN

You can mail cheques payable to:
Operation Restoration
c/o Lorna Stanley
P.O. Box 537
Kingston 6, Jamaica

Sponsor a child: $30 USD OR £20/month

Mentor a child or a teacher

Volunteer:
Teach a skill
Counsel
Teach after-school lessons

Visit our website to make secure donations through PayPal.

ORCS children performing at Terra Nova Hotel for UWI School of Education

Patrons of Integrity Children’s Fund Annual Wine and Cheese Affair held on June 1, 2013 in Atlanta, Georgia. We are so grateful for the patriotic support of those who give their time and money to make these events possible.

On the 20th Anniversary of her dental practice Dr. Lawson-Myers gave ORCS the stage to make an appeal for sponsorship. Due to Dr. Lawson-Myers example of generosity and Lorna Stanley’s appeal we were able to secure full sponsorships for some very needy students!!

Picture this!