KATHRYN QUINCEY, LILONGWE, MALAWI

Lilongwe Lowdown - Winter 2014

There is a saying amongst the expatriate community 'TCK' meaning **'Third Culture Kid'**… a child born and brought up in a place and culture different from that of their parents, or passport identity.
Over the last few years I've realised that

I've become a 'TCA' … a **'Third Culture Adult'**. I did most of my growing and discovery of myself outside of the United Kingdom (a big 'shout out' to all of the Scots for keeping us united… thanks), but I'm clearly not Malawian, neither do I have a clue about current trends or happenings back home.

I have more **Malawian friends** than most expats here, but never quite fit in, neither do I fit in with the crowd of expats, as I've been here too long! I think differently, perhaps more in line with the culture I grew up in, I say this not as an excuse for anything, but just thoughts that have been laid on my heart recently, issues I am working through I guess.

I am honoured that God has placed me in such a **beautiful country**, surrounded by amazing people.

I have always said the hardest part of living in Malawi is its transient **people traffic**. You are forever **meeting new people**, making friends, answering questions about life in Malawi, which sends you a little mad! ("Yes, people can and do carry things on their heads!" - "No I don't see lions every day!") Then you have the heartache of forever **saying goodbye** to people. Thankfully I have been planted in a **fantastic church**; Flood.

I am on the leadership team and enjoy being part of a caring, fun and accountable Growth Group.

I also have the most amazing group of friends who are Malawian, and whom I know will be there for me, whatever life throws at me. For this I am **grateful to God**, and to those of you that continue to lift me up in prayer.

As a leader at Flood and in order to fulfil our mission, to see the lives of upcoming generations transformed by Jesus Christ, I have been involved in some pretty **brilliant projects** this year! We have **decorated children's classrooms** and held **discussion panels** about jobs, in both the health and creative sector.

We have led teachings on **'effective childrens church'** and run a 'Strengths Finder' Course. We see Flood continue to grow and the **young people mature and blossom** into men and women, hungry to serve God, the church and their communities.

My work at Bambino School continues to be demanding and it is safe to say that on the average day I can be on the verge of tears one minute and then laughing out loud the next. This is all thanks to the children I'm able to interact with in class!

In the morning I lead a small team of a teaching assistant and a 1:1 support staff. Between us we manage a class of 17 children, all of whom have a learning disability of some kind: we have children on the autism spectrum, ranging from non-verbal to high functioning; children with

severe behaviour and learning difficulties; two girls with Downs Syndrome; as well as Cerebral Palsy and children who are learning English as their second language and as yet cannot cope in a mainstream setting. **Putting this combination in a class with an English girl with a northern twang, who talks faster than she thinks, seems to be the language-learning equivalent of the 'deep end'!!**

I do enjoy my work, and my classroom is full of great characters, about which I'm learning more and more every day.

In the afternoons I go over to the High School and run a group for children with learning difficulties and Dyslexia, which I'm also really enjoying.

Truth be told, I'm kept so busy at Bambino, I have sadly had to reduce other activities that I love doing. However, a meeting will take place shortly with my managers to look at the contract I signed. This should allow me some time to **continue volunteering**, so I hope my next newsletter will have **more adventures** in it and I can be back out in the villages.

It is true, **'a picture can say a thousand words'**, so here is a little **snap shot** into life here...

No newsletter would be complete without me being able to say **thank you**!

Thank you for this **amazing experience** you allow me to have by your **faithful giving** into my mission.

Slowly, person-by-person, I trust and believe I am **giving hope** and showing **unconditional love** to children that have a disability; Children, that often in this culture, are over looked, mistreated, abandoned and unloved. It is with your help I am able to stay here, doing what I do. So really... thank you! **It really is all about the kids!**

lots of love
Kathryn

PRAYER REQUESTS

Safety - we have seen an increased number of violent break-ins in the area. People are desperate and this is leading to crime. Please pray for safety at night in our homes, as well as protection while driving, as car-jacking is also on the rise.

Rains are coming! This equals malaria season! Please pray for yet another year of good health for me. I do not take it for granted that I have been so healthy year after year here.

Direction - if life is a journey then I want to be going in the right direction! I don't want to fear change or challenge, but know I will only overcome this with God's strength, guidance and direction.

For a little joy to be rekindled - I seem to have got myself busy, tired, stressed and perhaps a little disheartened at times; struggles we all go through and face I know, but I would love for you to pray for joy to be discovered again.

For each of the beautiful children I get to work alongside... for their families too. Please pray for abundant blessings to be poured out on them.

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