

BrassTacks

Autumn 2024 Issue 76



Paul, David and Philip at Ross-On-Wye

Serving those who serve...



Paul on the plasterboard, Ross-on-Wye

Contents

Face-lift at Ross-on-Wye.....	4
Re-roofing the old mission house at Camundambala, Angola	6
Anny's Reflections on the BT team visit.....	8
Cardiff Missionary Home	12
A true "Church in the community"	14
Income for the period May to September 2024	15

Editorial

Have you ever wondered why we are called “Brass Tacks”? I have to confess that when I was first approached to be asked to pray about potentially joining the Board of the charity back in 2019, I wasn’t too sure myself. I subsequently learned from a member of our church in Kirkliston that it stood for British Assemblies Tactical Support. This made sense – effectively, the charity is set up to provide skilled labour and technical advice to churches and missions who have building maintenance and construction projects to complete. For nearly 40 years, Brass Tacks has been “Serving Those Who Serve” across the world with practical help in construction projects and it is a real privilege to be able to provide this assistance to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

There are several examples of building projects in the Bible. One of these was the building of the Tabernacle. In Exodus 26 and the surrounding chapters, Moses records in precise detail what materials, dimensions and construction methods God had instructed the Israelites to use in order that the finished project would be exactly as He had intended. Having observed the Brass Tacks team at work, it is wonderful to witness their professionalism and determination to deliver the best quality construction projects each time they are called upon to help with a church or mission's building needs. We receive many encouraging letters from the recipients of the completed projects who often comment on the Brass Tacks workers and their cheerful spirit as well as their fabulous work ethic.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of God's people who have faithfully sought to support the work of Brass Tacks by giving financially, either through regular donations or by legacy through their wills. We are so grateful to those who remember the work we are involved with and play their part by supporting the charity. Whilst we provide

the skilled labour free of charge, we do need to cover the travel and subsistence costs for our team as they go around the world to complete the projects. We also seek to assist supporting the costs which volunteers might incur when they join our teams. Thank you for your continued support.

This latest edition of the Brass Tacks magazine includes several features about our activities over the past few months. These include projects for churches in Scotland, England and Wales which we have been working on, as well as news updates from projects in Africa. Please pray that as we continue to send out our teams to tactically support those who are serving God that they will be kept safe, as well as being a blessing to those they are seeking to help.

Enjoy reading the magazine!



Colin Haxton

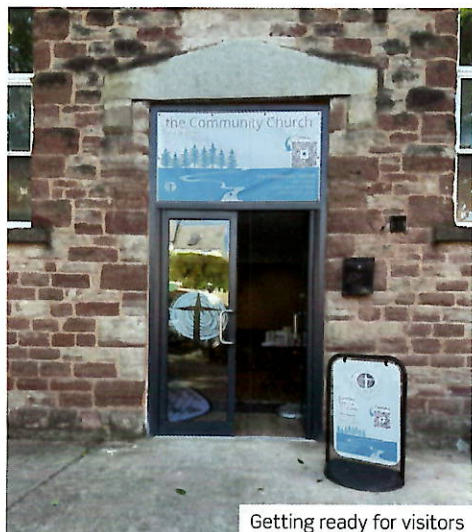
Colin is employed as a Major Account Director for GAP Hire Solutions as well as being a Deacon at Kirkliston Community Church, near Edinburgh.

Face-lift at Ross-on-Wye

Tim Cracknell

Editor's note.

The writer of the following article is Tim Cracknell, whose parents used to hold regular gospel meetings in the old hall. The Cracknells are a well-known farming family who are involved in several outreach programmes in the area. With so many requests for help from Brass Tacks, much thought and prayer go into the decision of whether to accept a new project or not. We can certainly say that we are very privileged to have been part of this renewed effort at Ross, and we pray that many will come under the sound of the gospel and that lives will be changed.



Getting ready for visitors

The old Gospel Hall in Ross-on-Wye had been in numerical decline for several decades without a baptism this century. Seven years ago, the elders engaged in discussions with Counties' Martin Erwin and Tim Cracknell, with a view to invite

them to help bring change to the church and start a new chapter. Part of the arrangement was for the growing Community Church in nearby Cinderford to supply support and leadership in cooperation with Counties to bring about this process. Things were starting to move forward steadily and then covid came along and almost derailed everything, leaving only seven people in attendance on Sundays. Since then, a new nucleus of people has been drawn together in Ross to kick-start the church again with a more hands on approach given by the Community Church in Cinderford. This has gathered more momentum in the intervening three years with regular attendance on Sundays rising to the 30 mark.

The building sits on a plum site, right in the middle of a supermarket car park with a considerable footfall passing by its doors each day. However, apart from a new kitchen built a number of years ago, the building has not had any money spent on it since it was refurbished 50 years ago. To make the most of its location and to make the place attractive for a new younger generation of worshippers considerable work was needed to refurbish the building. The toilet facilities in particular needed up grading as they sometimes froze up in winter and were less than ideal to say the least. This was going to require the demolition of the old toilet, and an internal stud wall, to be replaced by three new toilets and at the same time enlarging the size of the main hall. Whilst

this work was carried out it would not be possible to use the main hall.

One of the issues we discovered about the church was that despite its attractive location, very few people in the town knew the church existed. Therefore, the leadership decided to do an official relaunch of the Community Church once the toilets were complete to raise the banner and reach out to the community. 15,000 leaflets were distributed, a lot of social media used to share the news, new signage was put up on the church, 4 metre flags decked the entrance and word of mouth spread the news of the launch day.

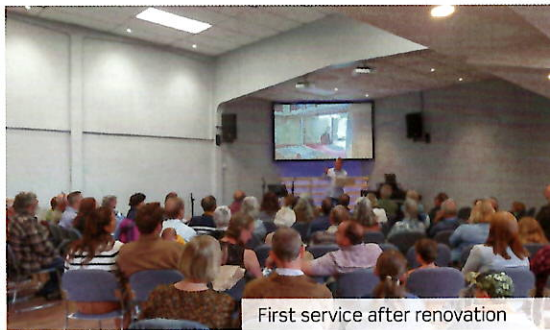
A week before the launch a lot of work was still to be done to get the building ready. An army of volunteers from the church in Ross and Cinderford joined the wonderful Brass Tacks team, to paint and clean the church in a very busy week. By Sunday morning a transformation had taken place both in the building and the congregation. Thirty minutes before the service was due to start a real buzz was

going round the church hall as the seats filled up quickly. Double the normal congregation showed up including several people who described themselves as “seekers” or had been unchurched connections built up via community outreach. During the service we were able to link live with the church in Cinderford and do part of the service from each place seeing each other on the big screens via the wonders of the internet. It truly was a very special occasion marking the beginning of a new chapter which we believe God will use mightily to build His kingdom.

How we are thankful for the fantastic help of Brass Tacks who helped make this change to the building possible. We now have a building which is fit for modern day worship and by raising our banner quite literally, Ross-on-Wye knows that there is a church who meets in the middle of the Sainsburys car park to worship the living God. Oh, and by the way we also have our first request for baptism! A young man who has come to faith in Christ recently in the church. Exciting times! How we praise the Lord!



Work in progress



First service after renovation

Re-roofing the old mission house at Camundambala, Angola

Ruth Singleton



House with the original roof

Editor's note.

The old mission station at Camundambala lies near to the town of Saurimo with the main airport in that area. Ruth Hadley, Brian and Debbie Howden and others have used Camundambala as a centre of operations. Ruth and Jonathan Singleton travel back and forth from the UK as health allows and are very committed to the ongoing work there. Brass Tacks have been involved in several maintenance and building works over the years, giving help in the new school building and the recently completed Gospel Hall. The old house used by the Singletons had some very unwelcome visitors which is a hazard in such buildings. The bats damage the ceilings with their potent droppings and make a very distinctive and unpleasant smell as well as posing a hazard to health.

We arrived in April of this year, with the aim of replacing the roof of our house. The old roof leaked, and along with the weight of bat-dung this caused the ceilings to collapse into the rooms below. Two local lads in the assembly started lifting off the roofing sheets above one room at a time and clearing out the bat dung. They then covered the room over with

tarpaulin, as it was still the rainy season. Whilst helping them Jonathan was also preparing scaffolding around the house.

For the month of May, we had the incredible practical help and support of Phil Kennedy, who with Jonathan fabricated the trusses and purlins and praise the Lord, we had no rain! While the roof was off the ruined mud-block walls were repaired and topped with a concrete and steel -rod ring beam on the left side of house. Then along with supporting pillars on the corner, another few rows of concrete blocks were laid to bring all the walls up to the same height. A second concrete and steel-rod ring beam was put all around. By the time Phil left the new roofing sheets were fixed in place, except for the last four on the left-hand side where more internal work needed done.

It was a great pleasure to have Phil with us to help during this critical month, as his skills and expertise were greatly appreciated as is his ability to work well with the local young brethren. Jonathan



The ever versatile Landrover

then continued working on the roof with them. By the time we left last month an inside loft hatch entry to the roof was installed, more electrics renewed, gable end blocked up, the roof completed with plastering of the outside finished and painted. We were also able to construct a 'car port' on the right-hand side, this protects our vehicle (a typical old Landrover with a roof which leaks!). It will make it easier when trying to get into the house from the car during torrential rains, and also protects the bedroom and spare single bedroom/craft store from the midday sun heating up the end walls. This has made such a blessed reduction in the heat of the wall at night and temperature inside the bedroom. There is no air conditioning in the house, so we are very much dependent on managing nature!

Throughout this time, we can only thank our Lord for His preservation and safety, including of the men working on our roof. Around our home Jonathan killed four snakes, the helpers a few more and the herdsman a very large boa constrictor just outside our fence. As soon as the rains stopped, the locals started burning the land, so the snakes had to find somewhere else to hide! Ruth was in the kitchen one evening, next to the cooker, and took the brunt of a gas explosion, from which she has now recovered. The preserving hand of God is evident in so much of our lives, as well as all the unknowns He has faithfully prevented. We continue to thank the Lord for answered prayers and thank all who pray for us.

Youth work continued in our home, with around 22 (mainly lads) every Sunday evening squeezing in to enjoy singing, reading, teaching and discussing together; through the week they would drop by to say the memory passage. Ruth's two Saturday sewing classes were well attended by those who have been coming for years, together they studied the epistle of James and its challenges for spiritual life and daily conduct. Another mid-week sewing class of 10 girls aged 15-17 have all professed faith in Jesus, and some are recently baptised.



New roof

Jonathan and Phil Kennedy have booked to return to Angola for the month of October, along with Ben Carnall (Salisbury). They will be assisting Irene Cardoso in Cavungo with her house, by putting up the framework for ceilings to reduce the excessive heat absorbed through the metal roofing sheets. The plan was also that they would be able to fix the ceiling boards to the framework, but these are in the container in Luanda, which arrived there 11 weeks ago, and has still not been released.

Anny's reflections on the BT team visit



The Pulla family

Editor's note.

Our most recent visit to Malawi was in May of this year. This time we were joined by volunteers from Hebron Hall, Carlisle: Jonny Bainbridge is a farmer and builder and John Heatherington a car mechanic. Both were kept busy in their respective roles and were a great help. Visiting the churches on a Sunday morning was a particularly satisfying experience, and John even managed to give a thumbs-up to the local food which was served up afterwards.

One particular challenge in this trip was to manage to shop for the building supplies and the regular personnel transport needs all with just one old Toyota twin-cab vehicle. We managed to also engage the help of a local taxi driver who served us well. John was able to spend many happy hours giving the "old girl" some TLC

after the hammering it gets on the roads. Anny's mother, Grace, rose to the challenge of rising early and cooking tasty meals to sustain the workforce. She makes sure that we are well fed and watered, and takes the teasing in good part as she always over-estimates how much we can eat in a lunch-break!

We thought it would be good to hear from the perspective of the younger generation:

My name is Anny Pulla, I am 16 years old, and I live in the town of Blantyre, Malawi, with my parents and my younger brother, Jack. We have been living in Blantyre, for about thirteen years now. Malawi is a really nice place with lots of beautiful nature and kind-hearted people. I came to Malawi with my family when I was four years old, by God's call and His decision we have come here to serve the Lord and to share His wonderful great love.



After five years here, we went back to visit in south India, but I don't really know much about India. I am currently doing IGCSE year 1 through online, since I was a child, I was home-schooled with my brother Jack (who is also doing IGCSE year 1).

I just love teaching the younger kids about the Bible...

I also have some friends who are locals, mostly because I interact with them, and they stay close to me. It's hard to find foreign friends because most of them are non- Christian and avoid us for being Christian. However, we also interact with our fellow classmates in our classes.

My favourite hobbies are singing, learning how to play the guitar, teaching Bible stories to Sunday school kids, travelling, and exploring new cultures.

Our church is Bethel Chapel - I just love teaching the younger kids about the Bible; most children are always friendly and ask me to teach them more songs and Bible verses. And the most fun part of Malawi is visiting the village churches; there is always a very warm welcome from local believers and smiling kids who wave their hands to say a goodbye until next time.

Some churches in villages don't have church buildings (like in town) they all gather under trees and have their worship meetings and other activities, but we can



Sunday school in the village

still see their lovely smiling faces with overflowing joy in their hearts. I am glad to be part of this because I can explore and see the wonderful people of Malawi and their heart-felt kind hospitality towards my family.

My mother and I have a great burden to bring young people and children to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In today's world, many youths are led in the wrong way by following worldly culture and trends, we have been burdened because of this. I have been seeing most young people in Malawi addicted to drugs, peer pressure, teen pregnancy, and abuse. You might wonder why it would be like this - it's because of being poor and also because of lack

of God's word and wisdom they are far away from God. I have made a goal to reach these kinds of young people and help them to know more about God, sometimes it's hard because of the local language and misunderstanding but I hope and pray one day that people of my age will know about how much God loves them. My mother and I have a great burden to bring young people and children to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Brass Tacks team have visited about three times, they have made a great influence on us, reflecting their dedication and collaborative spirit. We have a Bethel Bible Training Centre, and they started the foundation and helped us toward finishing the building. They always work hard and focus on the project during work hours. Each one of the team members has incredible talent and I have learned a lot from these servants of God and how

they behaved with us and with the Malawian people.

The Brass Tacks team's visit brought enthusiasm to each one of us, their dedication to the Lord's work and sacrificing and giving their strength and their love to serve the children of God - we have learnt from them so many good things through their lifestyle. Our church is very poor, and they raised the funds and made the impossible things to be possible this made us very encouraged. We all are so thankful for the Brass Tacks Team they have lots of experience building and projects they helped a lot in African countries. They showed love and helped by their tireless hard work, so we are thankful for this team. Forever we have lots of memories with this team, happy, joyful, heart - touched memories.

Editors note: *We did not publish all Anny's glowing praise for each team member, in case they became big headed!*



Anny helping with the painting



John and fellow labourers



Paul leaving a gift for the stonemason

Cardiff Missionary Home

Jen Andrews



Insulated and plastered bay window wall

Editor's note.

An unseen side of mission work is the provision of accommodation for those returning "home" - perhaps for leave, giving reports to churches, or an unplanned visit for medical treatment; also on leaving the field of service and settling back into UK, there can be a need for housing until a permanent home is found. Around UK, several houses have been faithfully maintained and financed by unseen servants of the Lord. As a mission family (Parks), we have benefitted from the use of these in the past, so it was a joy to be able to give help in Cardiff recently.

Jen Andrews, with Angie Dodds, cleans and prepares the Cardiff home for guests. Here she writes about the Brass Tacks visit, and some new ways this home is being utilised to bless the local community.

The Cardiff Missionary home has been used to welcome missionaries since around 1914.

The guest book records an amazing history of God's goodness and faithfulness to those who serve in mission and reminds us to give thanks for churches and individuals who have supported the work and up-keep of this home throughout the years.

As the world has shrunk, getting to and from far away places within days or hours has changed the pattern of home visits. Many Christian workers often come home more frequently for shorter periods of time to visit family and supporting churches.

The guest book records an amazing history of God's goodness and faithfulness to those who serve in mission and reminds us to give thanks for churches and individuals

However, it seems that since Covid, there has been an increased need for the home. We have accommodated mission partners from France, Eastern Europe, India, Papua New Guinea to mention a few.

The home has also been used as a base for folk coming to Cardiff from overseas to support local churches. We have had our regular teams from the Gulf also using the house as they visit and encourage the Arabic speaking church and engage in street evangelism here in Cardiff.

Some of our long stays have included a family staying for six months following their return from the mission field while they completed a house purchase.



Missionary home from front entrance

Another family from the USA stayed for 3 months on sabbatical leave and worked alongside a local church.

The house, a typical Victorian terrace, needs updating and remedial work on a regular basis. Recently, we were so encouraged by the work done by Brass Tacks addressing damp issues, repairing and painting the outside and inside the front of the house. The bathroom was updated and lots of other repairs carried out.

The Brass Tacks team - Paul, Johnny and Luke - did a great job and did it cheerfully!

A true “Church in the community”

Colin McPhee



Kirkliston Community Church front entrance

Kirkliston is a lovely village located on the western outskirts of the City of Edinburgh. The village has a population of a little over 5000 people and it has grown considerably in the last 20 years. In the centre of the village lies Kirkliston Community Church – a relatively new evangelical church fellowship which was birthed back in 2007 from a church plant made by Bellevue Chapel Evangelical Church (based in

Edinburgh City Centre). The church has grown from an initial membership of 22 people back in 2007 to over 150 members now, with typical Sunday morning attendances being around 180 to 190 people!

Being in the heart of the local community, the church kitchen and café facilities are used virtually every day of the week for activities such as Breakfast Club, After School Club, Community Café, Community Lunches, Youth Café as well as after-church refreshments every Sunday. The kitchen had become fairly worn out with such regular use, so we decided to go for a complete replacement!

The church has grown from an initial membership of 22 people back in 2007 to over 150 members now



Ripped out old kitchen

We were delighted that the fantastic team from Brass Tacks was able to assist us by undertaking to do the majority of the work. This included ripping out the old kitchen.

The team worked tirelessly for three weeks alongside local plumbers and electricians and the project was completed to an extremely high standard. The finished kitchen looks superb, and the regular users of the facilities are absolutely delighted and so thankful to everyone from Brass Tacks who was involved.

We are greatly encouraged by the ministry of Brass Tacks – “Serving Those Who Serve”, and the impact of the refurbished kitchen will continue to be a huge blessing to the church fellowship and the local community. We are thrilled at the way God has been working to grow His kingdom through the ministry of Kirkliston Community Church and pray that this will continue as we benefit from the new kitchen facilities.



KCC-Inside main hall



Cafe in operation



Finished kitchen

Income for the period May to September 2024

Individual giving	£19,658.84
Assembly giving	£7,137.00
Legacy giving	£42,527.98
Trusts	£7,000
Total	£76,323.82



Alan with the Pulla family



www.brasstacks.org.uk

brasstacksuk@gmail.com 0141 237 4131

All correspondence to: Challenge House,
29 Canal Street, Glasgow, G4 0AD

Registered office: 124 Wells Road, Bath, Somerset BA2 3AH
Company Reg No. 2216281 Charity Registered No. 298767
Scottish Charities registration No. OSCR SC052170