



# MASAZANE

SOUP KITCHEN & CHILD  
PROTECTION PROJECT

September 2017

What does **Masazane** mean?

It is a Xhosa word that can be translated as "**Let us know each other together**" and that is what we've been trying to do over the past newsletters, by introducing you to our team of gogos (grannies) and supporters.

This time it's the turn of two of our founder members, Judy Cooke and Frances Barnett, and your scribe, Kate Laburn Peart (see below).

All three are members of Rondebosch United Church which has been a primary supporter of this project, itself an off-spring of the Lovelife (youth-focused HIV and AIDS) programme, founded by another member of the church. Lovelife enlisted the help of grannies – the "Gogogogetters" - who are often primary carers of children affected by HIV and AIDS. (See <http://www.rondeboschunited.org.za/content/introducing-lovelifes-gogogogetters-david-harrison>)

It was on one of the visits by the Mbekweni Gogogogetters to the church in 2012, with some of their grandchildren, that the issue of children's' hunger came to the fore. Marilyn Votaw noticed two unhappy children in the group, and in following it up with the gogos (grannies), they shared their dream of starting a soup kitchen, because they said there were many such hungry children in Mbekweni. Poverty and hunger stalks the townships daily.

And so the project was born....



*Pictures on this page show gogos and children visiting Rondebosch United Church earlier this year.*



In February this year, the gogos returned to the church and brought a number of children with them to visit and also to have an outing to St James beach, Cape Town. This was such a joyous occasion – there was singing and dancing (with bubbles) in church and splashing, fish and chips and relaxation at the beach.

For some of the children, it was their first visit to the beach, but for all of us, it was a happy day together to celebrate the wonderful work that the gogos

do, and to get to know each other better – literally some “Masazane” time!.

Thanks to D.G.Murray Trust for sponsoring such a special day out for us all.



Back in Mbekweni township in Paarl, that work continues, with the gogos continuing to feed up to 350 children during school terms.

Our container is situated in the grounds of the Mbekweni Primary School, and most of the children who come to the soup kitchen are from that school and the neighbouring school, Imbonisela.

The meals vary from day to day, but include:

Soup; samp and beans; fish with onion and tomato, potatoes and carrots (“smoor”) served with pap; rice with stew; or vetkoek. In the fierce summer heat, peanut butter sandwiches and a piece of fruit may take the place of a hot meal. Recently we’ve also been giving the children hard-boiled eggs with some of their meals.



And now, as promised, something about three more of our volunteers!

**Judy Cooke**, (pictured centre in this photo), was there at the start of the project back in 2012 and continues to lead and inspire the team that backs up the gogos in their work.

For many years Judy worked at FAMSA's (Family and Marriage Society of South Africa), Western Cape Branch where she was co-ordinator of the Community Development Team. Among many other things, she established counselling services for families affected by HIV and AIDS.

Judy says that it has been a great joy and privilege, over the past five years, to see the MSK project realized more and more effectively, with a growing team of volunteers and supporters, and the blessing of working with women of such great humanity and commitment to children in their neighbourhoods.



Camera shy **Frances Barnett** was also there at the start of the project in 2012 and continues to provide indispensable hands-on help and a great sense of humour at the soup kitchen.

Born in Windhoek, Namibia, she went to school in the town of Carnarvon but has lived in Cape Town since the age of 16. She worked while at night-school to complete her studies and has held a range of jobs in the city. Since 1996, she has worked with immigrants and asylum seekers helping those with immigration paperwork problems. Frances has three children and six grandchildren. She wonders if the children of South Africa will become better than the previous generations who lived in the apartheid era – “we want to take the country forwards, not backwards!”



**Kate Laburn Peart** (your scribe, who prefers to be behind the camera, but here pictured on our beach outing) joined the project in 2013 and assists Judy with admin and fund-raising for the project. She used to work for World Vision International and also as an academic. Having lived in the UK for nearly 17 years, it is Kate's great joy to be back in South Africa contributing where she can, and encouraging the gogos to fill MSK's three enormous pots with food for the children.

## Our special thanks go to our supporters and donors:

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### **Donations to:**

#### **Samaritan Partners Trust**

**Ref: Masazane Soup Kitchen**

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#### **Masazane Soup Kitchen**

c/o Rondebosch United Church  
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