

a gift of HOPE



The Old Grammarians' Association have recently donated \$2,000 towards an Educational Youth Centre, situated in one of the poorest areas in the world, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The 120 orphaned and vulnerable children who attend the centre completely appreciate the opportunity education affords. Rescued from the streets, many of these abandoned children never knew where they would sleep or where their next meal would come from. With support from Direct Reach Ethiopia (DRE) and partner Hope for Children Organisation Ethiopia, these children are now attending school and 12 are attending university. The Youth Centre provides a safe haven for the children to learn after school

and on weekends. They can access reference books, a computer lab, tutors, table tennis, dance and art classes – all of which are out of reach of most Ethiopian students.

The funds donated through the HOPE programme have been used to pay for teaching staff, as well as providing prizes to 23 of the children who achieved over 80% in their recent exams - an outstanding result for such a disadvantaged group. **Sara Franklyn nee Mardon (82)**, Managing Director of DRE, awarded some of the prizes to the students. For children who may only ever possess one toy and no books, to win an academic book prize is something really special. It may well be the only book in their house.

The children are motivated, focused and achieve great results in difficult domestic conditions. Power is costly and some children have to hide their reading lights from their landlords under tables and blankets - that is if the power is working. They usually only have one water tap for five or six houses in a compound and there is no room for a kitchen table - study desks are unheard of. DRE routinely distributes blankets, warm clothes, shoes, school bags, school materials and second hand laptops to the university students.

Sara has tracked many of these children over the past 13 years, including two children who came to Perth for emergency medical treatment and are now thriving. Sara is in the process of bringing another critical evacuee to Australia, for surgery on a tumour that is inoperable in Ethiopia.

Grants from organisations like the OGA's HOPE programme make all of this possible. DRE is staffed entirely by volunteers who all pay for their own travel expenses. Donations are quarantined for the children, so administrative costs are kept to a minimum and funded separately.

Thank you HOPE - the dollars go a very long way in Ethiopia. The heartfelt gratitude is also evident in every student's eyes. If you are lucky enough to go to Ethiopia, you are welcome to share the DRE/Hope for Children Ethiopia experience. See dre.org.au for more information.

**Mrs Sara Franklyn (nee Mardon)
:: Class of 1982**

For further information
about obtaining funding
via the Hope Programme
please visit
www.bcgs.wa.edu.au