

Message from the Managing Director



Brendan O'Brien Nathans Wastesavers

Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of Renews. With the summer holiday season firmly behind us it is normal for us to look ahead to the changing seasons. Very soon at Nathans Wastesavers, we will notice that there is a shift in the types of textiles that we get to recycle.

Typically we will see more lightweight spring and summer clothing being disposed of and so we have to look abroad to those countries with climates suited to the types of materials we have to process.

For us that means countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Benin, Ghana, Togo and the Central African Republic and since our last newsletter we have made several trips to Africa to better understand what the needs of the traders are there.

In the last newsletter Alan Florence, our Export Manager gave you a flavour of our export activities and some of what is involved. In this issue he introduces one of our African friends with whom we have traded for several years and we let him give you an African perspective.

A theme that this newsletter keeps returning to is that of co-operation and the importance of it is clear to us when we reflect on the relationships we have with the many charities with whom we work.

This month we focus on Cancer Research UK, a partner in one of our longest standing relationships and one that has seen us achieve some remarkable things over the years. As Cancer Research UK embarks upon its national "Clear out for Cancer" campaign we are delighted to do what we can to help and wish you all well until next time.

Let's get it sorted!

Brendan



CHARITY FOCUS

Cancer Research UK



Cancer Research UK is the world's leading charity dedicated to research into the causes, treatment and prevention of cancer. The organisation's proudly held vision is to conquer cancer through leading international, aiming to control the disease within two generations.

Cancer Research UK began operating on 4 February 2002 as a result of a merger between two of the nation's best-known charities; The Cancer Research Campaign and Imperial Cancer Research Fund. As in so many of the issues we have covered in our newsletter the story behind this

merger was one of a long history of collaboration between these two organisations.

Fascinatingly, these two organisations were themselves born out of a single organisation, The Cancer Research Fund that began in 1902. This organisation was renamed Imperial Cancer Research Fund two years later and it was the first independent institute in Europe devoted to cancer research. In 1923 a group of doctors, unhappy with the direction of some of the organisation's research, broke away to form the British Empire Cancer Campaign for Research (BECC).

In May 1970 this became The Cancer Research Campaign and its focus was to increase the involvement of patients and hospitals in their research by making it less laboratory based. In the 1970's the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and The Cancer Research Campaign embarked upon a 32-year period of scientific collaboration that brought the story full-circle when in 2002 the two organisations merged to form Cancer Research UK. That circle took 100 years to make and the result is an organisation that is the largest single funder of cancer research in the UK.

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Funded overwhelmingly by donations from the general public, Cancer Research UK supports the work of over 3,000 scientists, doctors and nurses working across the UK. In excess of £213 million pounds is spent annually in more than 30 cities and 80 leading academic centres in the UK on research into one of the major health scourges of mankind.

At Nathans Wastesavers Ltd we are proud to be able to say that from the very early days of our organisation's life we worked with both of these charities to recycle textiles generating money that could be used to support the pioneering work they were both involved in. In fact, the two charities were the first that we ever collaborated with. Imperial Cancer Research Fund's Edinburgh shop was one of the first charity shops in Scotland and in the early 1980's was the first charity shop that we collected from in the country. It is of no little pride to us that the birth of our company was closely tied to the work of these two organisations and that we have been able to develop that relationship with Cancer Research UK, now one of our leading partners.

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To give an understanding of what kind of organisation is needed to carry this out consider the following: Cancer Research UK runs over 600 high street shops – more than most major retail chains! The charity depends upon over 30,000 people who volunteer their time to carry out the huge array of jobs that exist in such a vast and complex organisation. This includes a network of around 1,000 local groups who give their time to organise a bewildering variety of community events that generate the donations the charity depends on.

It is sadly true that that most of us will find our lives touched by cancer at some point and it is good to know that charities such as Cancer Research UK are taking head-on the challenges posed by this major threat to our health. The £213 million pounds spent annually enables the charity to fund centres of excellence that attract internationally-renowned scientists and provide the facilities and technology that they need to stay at the leading edge of their fields. Support and training is provided for scientists from all professional backgrounds, in laboratory, clinical and population-based

cancer research enabling Cancer Research UK to be the leader in the development of novel anti-cancer treatments. The development of effective treatments is of course key to improving the quality of life for cancer patients whose diseases cannot be cured and so it is not surprising that this is a major focus. Neither is it surprising that the organisation takes a proactive role in the prevention of and education about cancer. A major goal is to see a reduction in the number of people getting cancer and the organisation funds major research into the influence of lifestyle, environment and interventions such as vaccination on cancer, and into how people can change their behaviours to reduce their risk of developing the disease.

For many people, there is a sense of familiarity with Cancer Research UK created by the presence of the 600 high street shops that work extremely hard to provide a major source of the charity's funding. There are over 70 in Scotland and Nathan's Wastesavers Ltd collect both weekly and twice-weekly from these shops. In April this year we collected over 130,000 kgs from the charity shops. Last year we collected over one and a half million kgs (1,500,00 kgs) and this year the total will hopefully be in excess of that. Nevertheless, the charity does not rest content and so we are pleased report that Cancer Research UK is running a nation-wide appeal urging the nation to 'Clear Out for Cancer'.

Clear out for Cancer

Shop teams across the UK are currently asking their local communities to check their shelves, lofts, wardrobes and cupboards to see whether they can help raise funds for vital cancer research.

"Throughout September, we are urging the UK to Clear out for Cancer", says Julia Russell, Cancer Research UK's Retail Marketing Manager, "Everyone has at least a few things that are just taking up space – a vase that no longer fits in with your décor, trousers that you bought on a whim

and simply haven't worn, books that you're never going to read again – anything like this is just what we need!"

"We sell around 50,000 donated items in our chain of 600+ stores every day, so we are always in need of more clothing, books, music, film, homewares, games, shoes and accessories etc. A bag of good quality clothing and homewares is typically worth around £30 to us – what easier way could there be to show your support".

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Anyone wanting to make donations should call 020 7121 6699 or by visit the shop locator on web site www.cancerresearch.co.uk.org/shops



Finally, we would like to say a warm hello to Suzanne Scott who has recently taken over as Regional Manager for Scotland and Northern Ireland. We look forward to working with you!

Second Hand Clothes and Shoes

The Hope of Africa

Alan Florence
Export Manager
Nathans Wastesavers



In our last issue we briefly described how the African second-hand clothes industry is a major employer and told how one major benefit of this thriving industry is that it helps support entrepreneurship.

This is important not only because it allows individuals to establish themselves in business thereby providing a means of supporting themselves and their families but also because it provides vital revenue for African governments who can earn up to \$10,000 in duty on each imported container.

This industry is creating jobs not only in the direct operations of buying and selling but also in transport and handling operations, both overland and in shipping. There is even a growing industry in clothes repairs and alterations.

One might ask 'why is there such a vibrant market for our cast-off clothing?' It is simply because when we have sorted and graded our textiles, what we can export is of superior quality to the cheap and new clothing that would otherwise be imported into Africa from Asia.

All this is achieved at a cost though. At Nathans we have invested very heavily in grading and quality control operations employing an army of people and a lot of handling machinery. We have to ensure that what we send is what the market wants.

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This is as true in the African second-hand clothes market as it is in Scotland's high street. Furthermore, we have to travel extensively to the African countries to meet potential customers and this is not just to the major cities either.

Over the last year we have spent considerable time travelling into rural Africa to understand what people want, what transport infrastructure exists and what interest there is from local people in getting involved.

We try hard to encourage independent business start-ups and many of the people who now run businesses are people who started off by taking single bales of clothing from one of our wholesale importers.

One of those is Faustin who set up Africa International. We will let one of his local managers, Yakam Ndounkeu Walter tell you what it means to him.

Introducing Yakam Ndounkeu Walter...

"All over Africa there are serious economic problems. Governments have failed to find the solutions to eliminate economic crises and reduce poverty. The solution has to come from individuals and second-hand clothing and shoes can be part of the solution that we provide for ourselves. It is not easy though.



Africa International receiving a container

The market is hard for several reasons; heavy customs fees imposed by the government and low spending power of the population are two hurdles that we have to try hard to overcome. Another difficulty is that suppliers of clothes and shoes from Asia

will sell very cheaply into Africa to get established. Very quickly though, these low quality clothes become more expensive and a poor population cannot support businesses selling expensive goods.

However, it is possible to keep a 'heart of hope'. We have the spirit to fight against these things. As a customer we work hand in hand with Brendan and Nathans Wastesavers to study our market and we can deliver better quality and get prices that make it possible to be successful and employ people.

It is essential to work together to be successful in the long term. Second-hand clothing and shoes can bring hope to

Africans if the importers and suppliers are 'looking in the same direction'. The kindness of people in Britain and the work of the charities are helping us help ourselves".

I hope it was interesting to get a glimpse of some of what African export means to 'us and them'.

In another edition I will introduce some of the businesses that we work with in Eastern European Markets. Until then...

Best Wishes

Alan



Friday market and first customers arriving

Edzell, Doing it for themselves

Fraser reports that the Village Improvement Society of Edzell in Angus has given him one of the most satisfying opportunities he can remember. The Society contacted Fraser because they wanted to set up Scotland's first community run re-cycling centre. Nathans was delighted to be asked and keen to get involved. "These are the first banks that we have put into Angus and it is particularly satisfying that we have been able to help the first community-run recycling operation too" said Fraser. "We are keen to assist anyone else thinking of operating their own re-cycling centre. We will do all we can to see textile re-cycling facilities made available to other communities within Angus, particularly in rural areas".



Anyone wanting more information about how we can help should call Fraser Cassels on 01324 826633 or 822599

A Little Competition is Healthy



We are excited to be getting the chance to work with Falkirk Council as it gets to work with schools in its area on a new recycling initiative.

Towards the end of the year the Council is hoping to encourage every school in its area to participate in a textile re-cycling competition. Children will be asked to bring unwanted clothing in to school and we will agree a weighing and collection schedule for each school. All money paid for textiles will go to local charities. Look out for more information in the next issue on this and a planned expansion of re-cycling sites with 30 new banks being sited in the near future.

New Hope in Aberdeenshire

We are delighted to report that Nathans Wastesavers has just reached an agreement with Aberdeenshire Council to supply 14 textile banks to new sites. We will be doing this in conjunction with the Aberdeen based New Hope Trust who will receive the revenue generated from the textiles collected. By carrying their name and signage on the banks it is hoped that their profile will receive a considerable boost.

Higher Hopes for Highland Recycling

In the last issue we reported that we were in discussions with Highland Regional Council about a plan to bring textile re-cycling to the whole of the Highland Region.

Financial viability and environmental sustainability are always issues with remote sites and we have had to take a creative approach to make this work. And working it surely is...! We now have a collection vehicle based in Inverness City.

This has proved so successful in the first few months that we will have an additional 24 sites operational by the end of November. This means that by the end of the year we will have a total of 100 textile recycling sites in Highland Region located from Thurso in the North to Caol by Fort William in the West. It pays to have High Hopes!

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next issue

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If you have any comments or ideas for topics to be covered in the next issue of **renews**, contact Will Goodall on 01786 813283.

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE



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