



# SHOCC Newsletter 2025

## Edition 1

## Dear friends of SHOCC,

### The birth and development of the charity

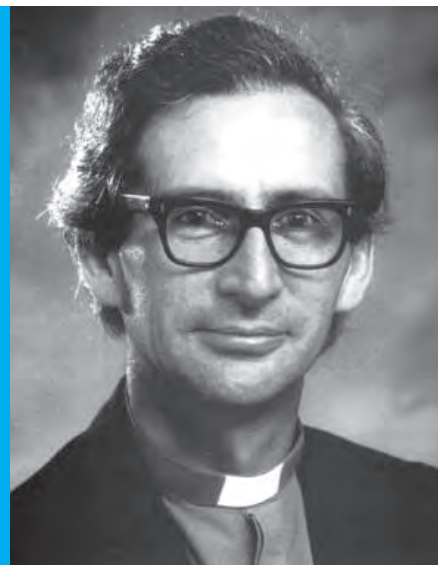
SHOC began life in 1971 as a way of linking the University and its staff and students with institutions in the Global South. It was started by three members of staff, Fr Rafferty, Ken Breen and Theresa O'Donovan. Kevin had recently returned from visiting Vincentian schools in Nigeria and all three shared a vision of the College, as it then was, of "doing something to help education in the Global South". I, Kevin Cook, joined the group in 1972.

Typical of projects supported in the early years were the fledgling libraries run by Simmarians Fr Joe Holmes (1971-72) at Mabanga Secondary School, Bungoma, Kenya and Sister Mary Ann Katiti (1997-98) at the Angelina Tembo Secondary School, Kabwe, Zambia. We also began supporting Dee Smith (1972-75) during her work as a volunteer with the Volunteer Missionary Movement at Namwela High School, Chwele, Kenya, then as Director of the East Pokot Education Project. We provided funding for water harvesting tanks and educational materials at the fifteen schools she established among the semi-nomadic Pokot pastoralists. We continue to support her work at the St Mary's HIV/AIDS hospice in Guatemala, named after St Mary's.

In 2007 SHOC became a registered charity (1120787) and added another 'C' to its name, becoming Strawberry Hill Overseas and Community Concern (SHOCC), and has since raised over £1 million for 40+ projects in its local area and overseas.

### Our Mission

SHOCC's Mission links back to Fr Rafferty's original intentions, as we seek to bear witness to universal social justice in accordance with our faith values and to support the poorest and most vulnerable in transforming their own lives. To achieve this, we focus primarily on advancing education and providing support and activities that develop skills, capacities and capabilities, enabling others to participate fully in society.



*Rev. Fr Kevin Rafferty (CM) (1936-2008)  
Member of staff and Head of Religious  
Studies at St Mary's 1966-1982. Co-Founder  
of SHOC, Fr Rafferty will be remembered with  
much affection by past Simmarian students.*

## A closer look at over 50 years of helping others to help themselves

Full details of some of the projects we have supported can be found on our website [<https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/strawberry-hill-overseas-community-concern/completed-projects.aspx>]. In keeping with our charitable objectives, 75% of our support has been given to educational projects including the construction of schools and the provision of student fees. The remainder has provided humanitarian relief to local projects such as the Vineyard Community Centre in Richmond and more widely, to the St Mary's HIV/AIDS hospice in Guatemala and the Christ the King women's refuge in Tombura in South Sudan.



*Left: Pupils at several schools have been provided with nutritious school lunches funded by SHOC/ SHOCC. These young children are enjoying a meal of maize and beans in the SHOCC funder school hall at St Jude's Academy, Mto Wa Mbu, Tanzania.*

*Below: A view of the Khayelitsha township in Cape Town, South Africa. It is one of the largest townships in South Africa and is situated 30 kms from the city centre.*

## Examples of projects funded by SHOC in the period from 1971 to 2007

Chris Luscombe (1969-1972) was selected by the Volunteer Missionary Movement (VMM) and worked at Kamna Harambe School at Kitui in Kenya from 1972-1974. He contacted SHOC asking for funding to provide school lunches for pupils. We were able to help and the children received regular meals of maize and beans each lunchtime. The scheme continued after he returned to the UK..

In 2004 staff in the St Mary's School of Education were invited to take part in a scheme to enable young teachers living and working in the township of Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa to obtain external St Mary's degrees. Several dozen staff agreed to donate a regular amount from their salaries each month through *Give as you Earn*. SHOC helped coordinate the project. In 2005, the students graduated at a ceremony in Khayelitsha attended by several St Mary's staff.



## Examples of post-2007 projects funded by SHOCC

SHOCC was approached in 2015 by Muthetheni Girls' School near Machakos in Kenya asking for support to develop its science laboratories. The school had a link with St Mary's through a SHOCC trustee who had visited on several occasions. Around that time we received notification that a past member of staff, Amy Hemmings, had left a portion of her estate to SHOCC. The SHOCC trustees agreed that the charity would provide £27,000 or 90% of the costs of completely renovating the three science laboratories, provided the school donated the rest. The laboratories are now the best in the area, pupil numbers have increased, and the science results are excellent.



*Amy Hemmings, member of the geography staff at St Mary's, died in 2013 and left 10% of her estate to SHOCC in her will. We used this to renovate completely the science laboratories at Muthetheni Girls' School near Machakos in Kenya. The school is now one of the best performing in science in the district.*





Following the tragic death of St Mary's second year undergraduate, Molly Burdett, in 2015, SHOCC worked with Molly's mother, Jane, to help raise the £22,000 needed to construct an Assistive Learning Suite in the Library at St Mary's. This is a dedicated space for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia. It was officially opened in 2018 and proved especially valuable during Covid.

## Examples of some of our current projects, our partners and how we provide funding for them

### The Vineyard Community in Richmond and other local groups

When SHOC changed its name to SHOCC in 2007 and became a registered charity, it did so primarily to enable it to support its local community. Since that time it has provided over £10,000 to local organisations such as the *Vineyard Community* in Richmond, *Spear* in Twickenham and *React* in Kew. It raises these funds in a variety of ways. A typical example was the Lenten 2025 project that raised £2,000 through a sponsored walk to and from Bushy Park, as well as a cake and bake sale after Sunday Mass and a thrift sale in the Refectory. The events involved SHOCC trustees, students, the Chaplaincy and the Assumption Sisters.

### Kisaki and the concerts

We have been holding popular evening concerts in the Waldegrave Drawing Room at St Mary's for several years. They are held on or near 22nd November, the Feast of St Cecilia, Patron Saint of Music. This year we hope to hold a series of musical performances to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of St Mary's. All proceeds from these events go towards the Assumption Sisters' new girls' secondary school at Kisaki near Singida in Tanzania.

## St Mary's Hospice (named after the University)

We have been supporting the work of Maryknoll Sister and Simmarian, Dee Smith (1972-1975) for many years, first in Kenya (see above) and more recently in Guatemala. We provided funds, along with the Parish of St Margaret of Scotland in St Margaret's, to construct the St Mary's 18 bed HIV/AIDS hospice at Pajapita, San Marcos in Guatemala. We have also enabled Dee to purchase land for the hospice's five-acre farm and, recently, we were delighted when we received news that three of our funding bids had been successful: one from ARCAID, the Parish of St Joan of Arc Farnham charity, one from the Christadelphian Community Trust, and one from the Fr O'Mahony Memorial Trust. Together, these have enabled Dee to expand her work of renovating the homes and developing the kitchen gardens for local women living with HIV.



*Patients exercising in the SHOCC funded hydrotherapy pool at the St Mary's hospice.*



*Two classrooms at St Jude's were constructed thanks to SHOCC funding. The school now has ten classrooms, a spacious dining hall capable of seating 300+ pupils and has opened a boarding section for its final year pupils.*

## St Jude's Mto Wa Mbu – a dream comes true!

SHOCC's connections with St Jude's Academy, Mto Wa Mbu in Tanzania began in 2016 when Fr Peter Kway became Parish priest. SHOCC had supported his previous role as Parish Priest at Marigat in Kenya.

Following requests from parents whose children attended the highly successful infant school at St Jude's, he approached SHOCC for help to fund a new primary school. Through a link with SHOCC, 60 scouts and their leaders from Cleveland, UK visited St Jude's in the summer of 2017 and constructed the first two classrooms. The following year SHOCC supported a successful bid to the Little Way Association and a third classroom was constructed.

SHOCC then raised the funds to construct the remaining four classrooms. A successful bid to The Loyola Foundation in the US provided \$20,000 to construct a large, 300-seater dining hall.

SHOCC has funded the construction of five greenhouses used

to grow tomatoes and other vegetables for school lunches, funded the painting of the school bus and provided new tyres. It has also provided books for the school library and chess sets. One additional building that is proving very popular is a two-bedroom cottage complete with washroom and kitchen. This is being used by volunteers when they stay at the school (see later information on our volunteer programme).

In January, we received a report from the new headteacher, Baltazar Lazway, on progress at the school. Pupil numbers stand at 468; a dramatic increase from fewer than 100 ten years ago when it was only an infant school. There are now ten classes with attendance rates averaging 99.5. Pupil performance is outstanding especially at year 7 (13-14 year olds). Overall, students are achieving A or B+ grades in all subjects placing the school third in the district. SHOCC is delighted to be associated with this excellent school.



# Christ the King South Sudan school classrooms, a women's refuge and washrooms

SHOCC's links with Christ the King parish at Tombura-Yambio in South Sudan began in 2018, when a Simmarian approached us wishing to help rebuild a school in the country. He had met the parish priest, Fr Morris Ibiko, when he provided supply cover in a Surrey parish in the summer of 2017. Over several years, the Simmarian donated nearly £60,000 to construct and fully furnish four new classrooms. SHOCC provided advice, set up a memorandum of understanding and facilitated the financial transfer arrangements. The new waterproof buildings now provide a dry learning environment and pupil numbers have improved.

In 2024 SHOCC was invited by Fr Morris to continue the link and to liaise with the Parish of Effingham and Fetcham who wished to provide financial support for the Tombura-Yambio parish. They asked Fr Morris to seek the views of his parishioners and to suggest a project the parish might fund. Given that the people had suffered from years of civil war with many losing family members, their choice of a women's refuge with associated washroom facilities was welcomed. The Effingham and Fetcham parish agreed to provide the funding and work is nearing completion. The parish has provided £66,302 for these facilities which will be opened shortly. In addition, Effingham and Fetcham parishioners have agreed to fund the education of orphan pupils at the Tombura-Yambio school at a cost of £200 per year. This covers school fees, uniforms and lunches. To date, the parishioners have donated nearly £20,000.



*A side view of the women's refuge At Tombura-Yambio. The washrooms are being constructed at the back of the building.*

## The SHOCC volunteering scheme

Since becoming a registered charity in 2007, and following requests from two of our project partners, St Jude's at Mto Wa Mbu in Tanzania and Holy Spirit School at Kangundo in Kenya, we have gone back to our roots and are sending volunteers to our overseas projects. The Kangundo link is particularly appropriate as the school is run by the Assumption Sisters and their last headteacher was recently based in Strawberry Hill for two years.

Each year we offer places at these schools for St Mary's students and alumni under 25. We ask that they spend at least a month at the school teaching and helping with extra-curricular activities such as chess and sport. We offer bursaries of £500 to help defray the costs of flights and we were delighted when, a few years ago, the Catenians offered to provide an annual bursary of £2,000.

A recent volunteer at Holy Spirit on his return to the UK said, "When I arrived, I was serenaded with nothing but friendliness and kindness from the Sisters of Kangundo. Thus began a very wonderful, sunny, deeply interesting extended sojourn at the school. I was very, very sad to go; I do miss Kenya and the friends I made there. Until next time!"



*Volunteer Eleanor Grant introduces pupils to the game of chess. Eleanor was a SHOCC volunteer at Holy Spirit School, Kangundo in 2024. The chess club members soon learned the main moves and were very keen to keep the club going after Eleanor's return to the UK.*



## Become a SHOCC Volunteer

If you are a St Mary's student or alumnus aged under 25 and are interested in spending 4-6 weeks at one of our project schools, log onto the volunteering page on the SHOCC website ([stmarys.ac.uk/strawberry-hill-overseas-community-concern/get-involved.aspx](https://stmarys.ac.uk/strawberry-hill-overseas-community-concern/get-involved.aspx)) for more information.

*A pupil waters cassava growing on the school farm. It can be boiled, fried, roasted or baked, and added to stews, soups and casseroles. It's a good source of carbohydrates and nutrients and forms a major part of pupils' diet. Classrooms and dormitories can be seen in the background.*

## Current projects that need your financial help

### The Mother Marie Eugenie Milleret Secondary School at Kisaki near Singida in Tanzania

In 2015 the Sisters of the Assumption purchased 45 acres of barren, windswept land near Singida, Tanzania. With SHOCC's help and the guidance of Sr Schola, the project manager, they have constructed a community school for secondary and adult education in a part of the country where there is an extreme shortage of government schools.

Classrooms, toilets, dormitories, science block, a borehole and gardens have been constructed and the school opened to its first 45 pupils in January 2024. It is now in its second year and has grown to over 100 pupils. There are plans for an official opening in September and it is hoped trustees will attend.

We have held several concerts and other fund-raising events and will continue to help the school. Since we started fundraising in 2015 to purchase the land, SHOCC has donated £140,000 from a variety of sources including major corporate donors, trusts, individuals and events such as the annual St Cecilia concert. The school still requires beds and furniture for the next cohort of pupils due to join in January 2026 and also needs to build up its library facilities and science equipment. Once it is fully established, we hope it will accept St Mary's students as volunteers.



#### TARGET FOR 2025:

To raise £10,000 to meet the needs of 90 new pupils starting at Kisaki in January 2026.



## St Jude's Academy Mto Wa Mbu, Tanzania

A more detailed look at this outstanding SHOCC infant/primary academy has been provided earlier in this newsletter. Since our association began in 2016, we have provided a total of £104,378 in funding and this has enabled the construction of 10 classrooms, toilets and a dining hall. We have provided books for the library and chess sets for the new chess club. The school farm has been supported when floods destroyed several polytunnels and several orphans' school fees have been covered by benefactors.

The school urgently needs a staff room and other offices. We have revised the original two-storey building to a single storey with foundations that will allow future expansion if required. We are making applications to trusts and are looking for benefactors to help us reach our target. As with past buildings, the school has agreed to meet 10% of the costs.



### TARGET FOR 2025/6:

To raise £30,000 to construct a staff room, head teacher's and secretary's office, and reception area, along with associated washrooms at St Jude's.



Fr Peter Kway is the parish priest at Mto Wa Mbu and is our project partner at St Jude's. He has supervised all the work at the school since he moved to Tanzania from Kenya in 2015.

## SITUATION VACANT

### Would you like to become a SHOCC trustee?

SHOCC could not exist were it not for the voluntary efforts of its trustees. If you have skills in writing funding applications or marketing, do get in touch. We meet four times a year and the amount of time required is not too onerous.

## Help support SHOCC's work by leaving us a legacy in your will

A final thought... please remember us in your will. A legacy helps you to reduce inheritance tax and also enables us to help the disadvantaged both locally and in the Global South.

## CALL TO ACTION

If you would like to help us reach our targets for Kisaki and St Jude's and make a donation to our work, please use the DONATE button or scan our QR code below. You can also donate by logging onto our Just Giving site at [justgiving.com/campaign/shocc2021](https://justgiving.com/campaign/shocc2021).

## DONATE NOW

### Follow us:



[www.instagram.com/shocc.charity](https://www.instagram.com/shocc.charity)



[www.facebook.com/SimmariesSHOCC](https://www.facebook.com/SimmariesSHOCC)

### Contact:



Dr Kevin Cook, SHOCC Chair – [kevin.cook1943@gmail.com](mailto:kevin.cook1943@gmail.com)

SCAN ME





St Mary's  
University  
Twickenham  
London



**SHOCC**  
Strawberry Hill Overseas  
and Community Concern

**Strawberry Hill Overseas and  
Community Concern (SHOCC)  
invites you to a celebration of  
St Mary's 175th Anniversary**

# St Cecilia's Music Festival

**Friday 21st November  
-Sunday 23rd November 2025**

## Highlights include:

### Friday 21st November | 7.30pm

Fundraising concert featuring

**Michael Bevan** (Piano) and **Julia Yoon** (Violin)

In aid of the SHOCC project for Kisaki Girls' Secondary School, Tanzania.  
Each new pupil will need a bed, a desk and a chair costing £100. Expecting 90  
girls to enrol in January 2026, we need to raise **£9,000 total**.

### Saturday 22nd November | 4.30pm

Vespers sung by the **Southwell Consort**

### Sunday 23rd November

**Ian Coleman** will give an organ recital

There will be a performance of a recently discovered Mass setting  
written by a Benedictine of the Hammersmith community, just  
before St Mary's was established there. It will feature St Mary's  
Choral Scholars.

## Save the dates for your diary.

To register your interest and ensure you receive the latest updates,  
follow the QR code below or email Dr Kevin Cook, Chair of  
SHOCC: [kevin.cook1943@gmail.com](mailto:kevin.cook1943@gmail.com)

If you are unable to attend but would like to contribute to the  
SHOCC project for Kisaki Girls' Secondary School, Tanzania,  
please use: [justgiving.com/campaign/concertforkisaki2025](https://justgiving.com/campaign/concertforkisaki2025)

SCAN ME

