

# MAKHAD TRUST NEWSLETTER

## Orchard and Community Wells project

To date the Trust has enabled the restoration of over 250 wells. About half are orchard garden wells and the other half are community wells. This represents a whopping £240,000 going into the local economy, which brings work and money to many more Bedouin, than just the well owners. However, there are still 303 wells on the waiting list. If you are interested in sponsoring a well then do get in touch.

## Working Journeys

There have been two recent journeys, last October a working journey went out to build extensions to Oda's Dam in the high mountains. The original dam, one of our largest had become quite silted up which reduces the holding capacity of water. However, the advantage of silt held water is that it takes longer for water to evaporate. The two new smaller dams will help to both increase water capacity and reduce further silting. The upper photo shows the team after completion.



## News from the office

For the first time in two years, the Cheltenham office is now manned regularly. Helen Cranston has taken up the part time post of Project Manager with a remit to enabling the various projects and journeys to move forward successfully. Helen has also taken on the wells project from Susie. In addition, last week, we have been joined by Matt who has kindly agreed to offer his services to administering the projects in the capacity of intern. Welcome Matt!

It has been quite a while since we last sent out a newsletter and there is much news to share with you about Sinai, the Bedouin and the projects.





### Future Journeys

If you would like to take part in one of our working journeys or you would like us to organise a bespoke journey to Sinai, please do not hesitate to contact Helen. Journeys can include working on a dam, helping with a garden restoration, trekking in the mountains, visiting St Katherine's Monastery or spending a few days in the desert.

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## Egypt and Sinai

Egyptian politics continue to evolve. After the promising Arab Spring came the election of the Muslim Brotherhood, which it seems was not quite what many of the electorate had in mind. There seemed to be a sigh of relief when the army took back power and a feeling of normality has gradually returned but there are still the flashpoints on the North Sinai border. It is difficult for us in our longstanding democratic country to understand how alien and unprepared other countries are for moving to a democratic way. We often forget that Britain underwent a long civil war in order to establish democracy and for such a major change to happen there needs to be major changes in culture and society too. Egypt is only at the start of this process. Meanwhile, Sharm El Sheikh is well policed and guarded so holidaymakers can go there without worry. The rest of Sinai, including St Katherine's, remains peaceful, though the FCO has decreed the area Amber and to go on essential business only. This has caused a massive decline in the number of tourists visiting St Katherine's and Nuweiba with a resulting lack of income for the local people. The Bedouin are very keen for us to come and visit, so that needed work and money can flow back into the local economy.





## The Cairo Office

For the last few years, we have been connected with Dr Sherif Samra, an engineer living in Cairo. He came to know about the Makhad Trust through the Rotary International organisation. Now Sherif is one of our Trustees. Sherif's office includes Nora, his assistant, and Nassif who is in charge of finances. From there they have been running the Nawamis Development Society, an Egyptian NGO that has taken care of our project at Nawamis and the running of a school there. It is good to have Arabic speaking colleagues on the ground in Egypt to help the projects move forward.



## Susie's Last Journey

At the end of April Susie travelled to Sinai for her last trip as Wells Project Manager. Susie set up the wells project back in 2007 and since then has been instrumental in enabling the restoration of over 250 orchard garden and community drinking wells. A garden well generally helps a single family of 8 to 10 people while a community drinking well provides good water for communities of around 30 people. This means that an astounding number of around 4800 people now have access to good water thanks to Susie. Farah Fox told us that before the children used to get sick when they were forced to drink meagre rations of government provided borehole water but now thanks to Susie's efforts they are much healthier. In addition, as another positive outcome, many Bedouins grow more food for their families, which makes them healthier, and surplus food can be sold to produce an income. Some Bedouin earn money for digging out the wells too, so the ripples spread wider into the community. Susie is going to spend much more time at home in Scotland but will not be resting. She plans to work with the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme enabling young people to have great experiences in the outdoors. We wish you well Susie.



## Establishing a library in St Katherine's

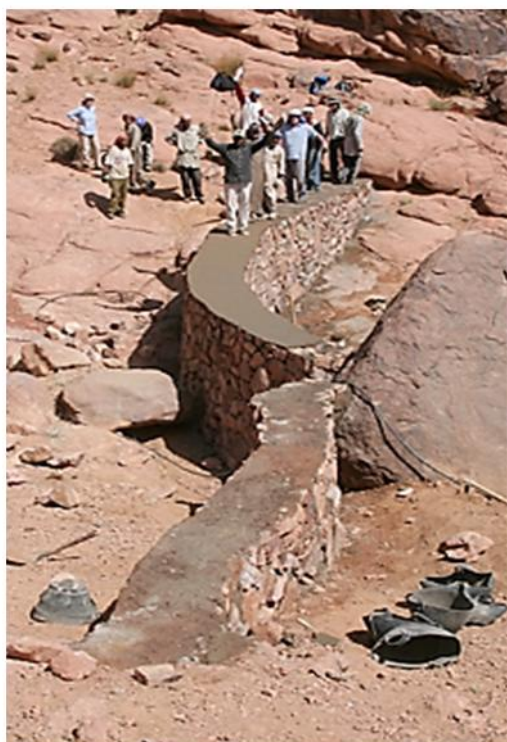
The most recent triumph for the Trust is the establishment of a library for women and children in St Katherine's. On a fortuitous full moon on 4th of May 2015, the Makhad Trust opened a new library in St Katherine's. The project was a combined venture with the Nawamis Development Society (Makhad's sister charity based in Egypt), the American University in Cairo and the Ministry of Culture. The Mayor of St Katherine's was also supportive and provided a large room to house the library, 1200 books were donated by the University and another 805 by the Ministry of Culture. The library will primarily be for the use of Bedouin women and children and in near future we will be providing more books specifically for them through fundraising efforts. The Library is being managed by Farhana, the first Bedouin woman to run a library there and who was fortunate in having a good education herself. Most Bedouin women are unable to read, so one of Farhana's priorities is to set up literacy courses. She also has some great ideas for

encouraging children to come and use the facilities. So far her ideas are so successful that the library has been full of children after just one week and so she is going to offer twice as many sessions as expected!



### ***The Recent Journey - Rachel's Group***

Trustees Rachel Devas and Dick Stainer took a journey out to Sinai at the end of April this year to build Marufa Dam. This dam is in Farsh Rumana, at the end of Wadi Gibal in the high mountains. It will increase the water source to many very dry gardens in this area. It is a bit further away than previous dams but by building it we have increased the numbers of gardens we are supporting. Rachel and Dick were accompanied by Johnny and Fabiene plus two friends from Bristol.





## Solar Panels



Recently Dick has also been very busy on another project, organising the installation of a prototype solar pump in Hussein's garden. Now the pump is installed and it is pumping water out of the well automatically to the birka, even when Hussein is not there - which he thinks is magic! We intend this to be the first pump of this type but we hope to get funding for all the wells over the next 5 years or more.

## Bag Parties

Do not forget that you can support the projects by hosting a bag party for your friends. This works just like a Tupperware party or an Ann Summers party but more interesting than the former and less embarrassing than the latter. Anni can bring the bags and a slide show of the background to production these bags. All profits from the sale of the bags go to funding more wells. Contact Anni on 01452 831003 or [asummerj@gmail.com](mailto:asummerj@gmail.com).



## Friends of MT Functions

The next Friends event will be towards the end of the summer and will be held at Trustee Rachel's house in Bristol. This will be an opportunity for old friends and new to meet up and find out more about the work of the Trust and to support the projects. The event will be a BBQ and high tea. Invitations will be sent out soon and you can find out more on our Facebook page. We will send you more details and an invitation when we have clarified the date. Watch out for future emails!

As you can see there are lots of exciting things happening. If you are on Facebook you can find our page The Makhad Trust and keep up to date as events unfold. We are on Twitter too @MakhadTrust.

We welcome suggestions, offers of help, donations, sponsorship, or participation in our journeys. Please get in touch with Helen at [helencranston@makhad.org](mailto:helencranston@makhad.org). We look forward to hearing from you!