

The Dance Factory event in May was an amazing evening of dance, song, drumming and a lot of ubuntu. Performing with their usual energy and passion, the Sigiya Sonke group and the Soweto Gospel Choir finale produced a standing ovation from the packed auditorium. Nearly R34 000 was raised to create a new Learning Centre at Leratong. Thank you to all those who came and supported this sparkling event.



For more information or to become a Gumboot donor, visit our website [www.gumboots.org.za](http://www.gumboots.org.za) or phone Jenny Prangley on 082 928 8806

## Leratong Pre-School - school

Starting off the year with an enrolment of 177, this figure has now risen to almost 200, which is nearly double that of 3 years ago and running costs have increased dramatically. In particular, food and provisions are a large part of the Leratong budget, and with the increase in enrolment and inflation in food prices, bigger demands are being placed on our resources.



Gumboot is privileged and proud of its involvement in Leratong and again we thank our donors for their generous support, which has enabled us to continue and grow our role in this project.

### Education and support

Providing a caring and loving environment for the children has always been one of Leratong's main goals. So too, has the challenging area of providing stimulation to the young minds of the children. Although dedicated, none of our teachers are professionally trained, and we were therefore very grateful earlier in the year to have the generous input of one of our UK donors, Jacqui Archer. Jacqui is a professional teacher trainer who has given up much of her time, when visiting SA, to helping the teachers with simple and effective ways to provide this stimulation. In order to sustain this initiative we are anxious to find local support for assistance in this area.

### New learning centre

We recently completed the construction of a new learning centre at the school, built from the proceeds of the Dance Factory event. This is an exciting project and it is intended that the facility be available to ex-Leratong pupils and other older children in the area. The goal is to provide a place for extra-curricular study, where children will have access to computers and the internet. Books, magazines and other educational material will also be available. To complete the project, the items we are currently urgently in need of are desks, chairs, desk top computers, shelving and curtains. We would therefore be most grateful for any assistance in this regard.

## Sigiya Sonke

It's been a busy period for Jack and the children – as usual they have put their hearts and energy into everything they do and it is a joy to see this project flourishing. The ongoing donor support has enabled them to be involved in wonderful fulfilling activities that help them to grow. Highlighted below are snapshots of some of these events over the last three months:

### The Dance Factory

Making up most of the entertainment that night, Jack gave of his & the group's best as they filled the stage with zeal as well as traditional, pantsula, township jive, gumboots and choir performances. Backstage there was action too as 70 performers squashed into the corridor & small dressing rooms, along with the Soweto Gospel Choir, hot dogs & a mountain of popcorn.



A rousing start to the evening at The Dance Factory

### Coaching for the kids

A dance teacher is coaching the group in contemporary dance routines and discipline. Her sister runs Mzansi Dance Productions and they are keen to have some ongoing connection with Sigiya Sonke. They provided a block booking for them to see the talented Mzansi group at the Civic a few weeks back – Zenzele cannot wait to join them!



Pantsula rocks!

### Team building events

This has become a good revenue for Jack & a way of showcasing him & the group's talent. It usually takes the form of a gumbooting demo followed by the host company being taught to boot – some are initially reluctant, some are rhythmless *mulungus*, but ultimately all are enthusiastic. They recently conducted one for the Added Value group, as well as a full-day affair with the Junior JHB Mini Council.



Zenzele leaps into action

### Stand Together & Dance

About 120 people joined us for a braai and show at the Craighall Scout Hall. Thakane, a young dance group from Soweto, and the Sigiya group took turns to show what they could do, much to the delight of the landscape gardening students from America and some visitors from England. In spite of the wind, dust, braai smoke & Jack's eternal technical problems, it was a great success.

### Warehouse improvements

At last the dilapidated warehouse where the group dances is becoming more habitable. Our long-term goal is to buy a plot and build a nice studio/recreation hall, but in the meantime... glass has been added to all windows, painting has begun, toilets are getting fixed and generally improvements are afoot.

### Video for promoting Gumboots

We have had an American volunteer filming 20 hrs of Gumboots projects. As well as visits to Leratong, Chris filmed the kids dancing & incorporated individual stories – "A Day in the Life of Nomsa" is a particularly moving account of her home (where she lives with her Granny & 13 other young cousins), her Union Church School (that she attends thanks to a Gumboots donor) and her dancing. She is an exceptional young woman who is bound to go far. We are so grateful that she has this lift-up to better things. The video will be used to promote the projects in USA & UK for potential corporate funding – somehow edited down to a 5-min clip!

### Tugela River Project Launch in Dubai

We are on tenterhooks to hear if the proposal & video we put together for the group to go to Dubai in December has been accepted – a wonderful opportunity for them all & Jack! Will keep you posted.

## Khazimula & Food Gardening

### The Khazimula Children's Shelter

The shelter for street children is now in its second year of operation and the children are thriving in a healthy and safe environment. In between their studies, they continue to be involved with the food garden – planting, watering and reaping the benefits on the supper table. Unfortunately, government policy requires



Children of the Khazimula Shelter, at Lidgetton, wearing jerseys donated by school pupils in the USA

that the children at Khazimula should be returned to their families (such as they are) after six months. As their education would then be compromised, the Department of Social Development has accepted that each child should be allowed to complete their school year before being returned to their parents – or foster parents. Some of these youngsters may revert to the streets; some may never finish school; and some may not have the opportunity for further study. With this in mind, several programmes are being put into place to assist these young people (see box).



The first loaves of bread baked for destitute children of the Midlands

### Gumboots Seedbank supports training of young farmers

The Gumboots Foundation's "Seedbank", run by the Khazimula Skills Training Committee, is now planning to support young people in the Midlands of KwaZulu-Natal, as well as those from the Khazimula Children's Home, who are keen to become properly trained farmers. This follows the World Congress on Rural Development, hosted by South Africa, which highlighted an urgent need to alleviate poverty and unemployment by integrating the three pillars of sustainable agricultural development – namely economic, social and environmental.

The Midlands launch of YARD, a new national structure promoting Youth in Agriculture and Rural Development, took place at Cedara Agricultural College.

An action plan to launch the Gumboots First Step Farming and Eco-bizz Centre on a farm, adjacent to the Khazimula Children's Shelter, was greeted with enthusiasm by 160 young people.

YARD plans to take over the promotion of learner agricultural development at all schools. Young would-be farmers attending the YARD launch agreed with John Tungay's proposals that First Step Farming Centres should be established on a national basis.



Michael Ndlela, who made it all happen in Khazimula's food gardens, is now an advisor on youth farming development.

John Tungay says:

**“This will be a wonderful opportunity for any of our Khazimula young people wishing to be developed in any chosen field of farming - or any eco-business project making use of agricultural products or by-products.”**

**Skills training initiatives successfully launched by Khazimula recently include the following:**

- A large Computer IT Centre and library at Jabula Secondary School, Lidgetton
- A bakery at the Injoloba Secondary School, Howick, to train young bakers and provide bread for destitute children of the area
- An Arts and Ceramics Centre at Mooi River
- The Iqolo Services apprenticeship scheme for motor vehicle maintenance at Howick
- Distribution of vegetable seeds to schools and institutions by the Gumboots Seedbank