

# MALAWI - TWIN

## *Malawi Container Project*

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Newsletter No 90

December 2023

### **Malawi Container Project**

#### **2023 Malawi Container**

Our 2023 (fourteenth) container loaded and departed the UK on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June and arrived in Blantyre on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September, the Malawi Revenue and customs authority, (MRA) impounded our container, claiming import duty on 289 items. These items were much the same items we had been sending in our previous thirteen containers, duty free under charitable status as per our import licence.

We made appeals to MRA, two weeks later these were rejected. Further appeals were made to MRA head office; the minister of revenue and customs; and the high commissioner from the London Malawi high commission. All these representations were rejected.

The Malawi shipping agent informs me that next year, the MRA will be collecting customs duty on many other items and the “duty free” charitable status is likely to end.

During this period of delay, our container was accruing additional costs in the form of shipping line container demurrage charges at a cost of 70USD per day plus secure warehousing at 30USD per day. We had no option but to pay these amounts on the 6<sup>th</sup> November, to have our container released, to stop the additional charges.

The Malawi Twin share of the additional cost is not yet known.

I am pleased to say that our fourteenth container safely unloaded at Blantyre on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November, then at Lilongwe the following day, with losses of just two cartons.

#### **Future Containers to Malawi.**

Your Malawi-twin team have met and discussed the problems encountered with this year’s container and what the MRA intentions maybe in the future, to collect customs duty on most of what we send. We raise approximately £8,000 per container and after we pay our share of the shipping cost we “buy in” lots of items for the schools and replenish printing ink for the many printers we have sent in previous containers, so there is no spare money. Your team has concluded that we cannot send further containers not knowing what costs will be imposed by the MRA in Malawi. We cannot put Malawi-Twin at risk for monies that we do not have available.

So with great sadness we will **NOT BE SENDING ANY FURTHER CONTAINERS.**

## **The Future of Malawi-Twin.**

Let's just remind ourselves that Malawi-Twin was born in August 2001 and our first container was sent some eight years later in 2009.

Before we added the container to our project, we had been assisting and financing many projects for our friends in Malawi, this was achieved by updating our parish of intended projects via our Malawi newsletters. Parishioners responded with donations, alongside social events which raised funds to aid the many projects.

Over the past 22 years the Malawi-Twin project has continued to grow with the tremendous support from our generous parishioners, in that time much has been achieved.

Jill in 2013 launched the Solar Light Appeal as most of the families don't have electricity; many cannot afford candles or oil for lamps. This project has grown year on year with the generous donations from you, our parishioners.

During March 2019 Maria took responsibility from Peter for the sponsorship program that had been operating for many years. I am delighted to say Maria has grown the sponsorship project tremendously, again with the support from our parishioners. The sponsorship program is at present supporting 53 students in full time secondary education, 3 students in community college and 1 student in university.

Lucy has full control of our Malawi website, which is fully up to date and contains many of our achievements and the history of our Malawi project. Can I suggest you take a look, our website address is [www.malawi-twin.org](http://www.malawi-twin.org).

The Malawi Team has grown, each team member has individual responsibilities, then come together to work as a team and I know they will receive your continued support to assist our friends in Malawi.

Covid-19 interrupted our social events, which was a valuable source of income; we intend to restart our social events.

Indeed, we resume with our first fund raising event 'Royale Race Night' on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at the Fisher Hall, so keep the date free. Further details will be published in early January.

Malawi-Twin has been very successful over the past 22 years and has a bright future ahead; the project is a credit to Corpus Christi, thank you for being a part of that success story.

*Brian Wilkins.*

*On behalf of Corpus Christi Malawi-Twin.*