

# 2010 report

## MUSIC AND ART CAMP

Denise Pelley and I returned to Sudan once again to share music and art with the children of Sudan.

### 2010 Music and Art Camp

Once again I had the privilege to travel to South Sudan with the Humanitarian organization CANADIAN AID for SOUTH SUDAN.

During my trip this year, Denise Pelley and I continued with our Music and Art Camp for the children of Gordhim, Sudan.

This year we were also joined by two additional CASS volunteers participating in our programs.

The new volunteers were two Londoners, Jacque Gautier and Brian Ratcliff, who brought their suggestions and ideas to our camp. Their ideas helped to add a whole new dimension to our program.

The first day of camp the kids were already in the church waiting for us to arrive. Although most do not have clocks they always know when camp begins.

Brian played the guitar he brought along which really added a wonderful backdrop to the songs the kids were singing. By the smiles I saw on the children's faces they enjoyed the new musical accompaniment.

It still amazes me how quickly the Sudanese children learn new songs.



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The children joined us under the huge Mahogany tree outside of the church to work on their art projects.



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Denise also brought a few little musical instruments for the children to play while singing their songs. Although there were not enough for everyone, Denise tried to make sure everyone got a chance to use them.

After the music portion of the camp we had the children join us under the huge Mahogany tree outside the church. Here there were rows of logs where the kids can sit to work on their art projects.

Because of the wide range of ages, from toddlers to 10 years old, we had to find art projects that all the children could participate in. It has been our wish to never exclude any child from our camp.

Most of the children in Sudan do not have toys so I try to create craft projects that they can enjoy at home as well. I also like projects that will allow them to express their own unique creative ability.

This year I brought plastic masks that the kids could decorate with colorful stickers. They loved it. In fact we would see them around the village still wearing their creations many days later.

Sudanese children also love to draw and color so

we always had lots of pencil crayons and paper on hand.

Once they finished their crafts we ended our first camp day with a song.

The second day of the Music and Art Camp proved to be more challenging than the first.

Sister Teresa wanted us to use the Canada school for our camp. The school desks and chairs are stored during the winter break so we had the children sit on the floor.

But it was very difficult to get the children to sit down since most wanted to be near the front.

Also the building is made of cement block, so the acoustics are very poor and with all the babies crying and the children talking it created a chaotic and noisy environment to run a music camp.

The art portion of our camp was also difficult to run on the second day.

Sister Teresa had all the small children go to the preschool class room. It is a great environment for preschoolers since there are little tables and chairs for the kids to work at.

However, the little preschoolers began running back to the other classroom because they wanted to make the same crafts as the older children.

Sister Teresa encouraged the “baby sitters” (girls taking care of their baby siblings) to stay with the older children.

This proved to be difficult, since the older kids in their excitement to get their craft supplies, were a little pushy around the babies.

After trying this school environment for our camp, we decided that the church was a much better location for the children.

Denise, Jacquie, Brian and I also discussed what steps we could take to help the camp run smoother.

Sister Teresa suggested that we buy biscuits for the children since quite a number of them had probably not eaten any breakfast. The kids were very good about going outside and sitting down to get their biscuits.

Since most of the children attending were younger than 10 years old we also felt that 2 hours of camp might be a little too long. We decided to take our cue from the kids. When they looked tired we would end the camp for that day.

Also it was suggested that we do a game or dance before we began the craft portion of camp. Because the kids had been sitting for almost an hour inside the church during the music portion, these games or dances would give them a chance to stretch their legs.

For this dance time Brian and Jacquie suggested we teach the kids the “Conga”. The kids loved it and most of them participated. Some of the smaller children formed their own “Conga” lines. In fact the last day of our camp we had 150 kids doing the “Conga”

We also agreed that the crafts had to be less complicated. So I designed some templates of a bird, lion, and tucal (a Sudanese house) to make it easier.

We thought the more complicated craft projects

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would work if we could break the children up into smaller groups according to age.

However this ended up not being possible because we could not count on the interpreters to be available to help us and we also never knew how many kids would be in attendance on any particular day.

This year I also tried some different craft supplies and preparation techniques. I chose glue sticks over white glue. Glue sticks dry fast and aren't as messy to use.

On one occasion we had the interpreters help us prep the craft projects for the next day which helped save time.

I also had a volunteer in Canada prepare one of the crafts for us. This saved a great deal of time in Sudan.

Another thing that I tried this year was to pre-pack craft supplies into kits. The idea was to cut down on time handing out the



**The children enjoyed decorating plastic masks that they ended up taking home and wearing around the village for many days later.**

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Lucy Ogletree helping one of the Sudanese children with their craft project.



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supplies. Unfortunately, this idea didn't really work well since the little children could not get the bags open.

With the suggestions and ideas from the other team members running our Music and Art Camp, we came up with some new strategies for next year. These strategies include:

1. Keep it simple
2. Supply snacks
3. Play a game half way through the morning
4. Have no more than 2 or 3 steps to a craft
5. Use pipe cleaners, paper plates, glue sticks, foam or paper stickers, pencil crayons, white paper, construction paper and yarn

We implemented these strategy ideas for the remainder of the camp this year.

I am very grateful to have had Jacquie and Brian help with our camp this year. Thank you.

It is my personal hope that the memories the Sudanese children have of our Music and Art Camp are of the fun, laughter, music and joy we shared with each other.

Sincerely,

Lucy Ogletree

## Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan



Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan (CASS) is working to help the people of southern Sudan rebuild their lives and communities after decades of brutal war.

<http://www.web.net/cass/>