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## THE UTHANDO PROJECT *Newsletter*

### FEBRUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

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Hello Everyone, Dollmakers and Friends of Uthando,

Our last shipment of 1500 dolls has safely arrived at TREE headquarters in Durban. Soon they will be in the hands of children across Kwazulu Natal. So we begin 2013 with a clean slate and specific requests.

Happy reports have been received from Albany and Bunbury of dollmakers already at work.

Irene Swan in Tasmania wrote this week, *"We meet each Tuesday in an unused church at Cygnet where tables are set out and material, wool and trimmings are stored in large boxes ready for use. We have a sewing machine and overlocker set up ready to go as well as an iron and all fabrics are ironed before cutting....all very organised. Best of all we just tidy up and leave it all for the following week.*

*This week a delegation of 5 ladies from another group which also meets in the village on Tuesday came to see what we do and went off very excited with brown fabric and a cardboard doll pattern to get started right away. They apparently have 20 ladies in their group so I'll call by in a few weeks to see how they are going."*

### AUSTRALIAN DOLLMAKERS TO KWAZULU NATAL IN MAY

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With a group of 9 Uthando dollmakers going to meet up with our partner non government organisations in KZN from April 30 - May 20, there is a golden opportunity for dolls to be carried personally to KZN and for sewing work bags filled with 5 mini sewing kits to be given to KwaZulu Natal women through workshops.

Would you like to finish some dolls and/or make carry bags or mini sewing kits for **delivery by April 15th**? The more the merrier.

DELIVERY; Uthando Project, 2 Healey Place, Gooseberry Hill WA 6076, Fridays preferred. If you are in Victoria, NSW or Tasmania, please send to Naomi Nicholson, 699 Melbourne Rd, Sorrento, Vic 3943. Naomi will then be able to share these for carrying to KZN with two other adventurers.

Please continue to make dolls for Uthando, even if this deadline doesn't suit you. We accumulate usually 1500 - 2000 dolls for each shipment, perhaps three times each year.

## WHAT TYPE OF DOLLS SHALL I MAKE?

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Specifically we want for TREE, dlalanathi and Family Literacy Groups, knitted dolls to suit new borns to 3yrs, and sewn dolls with change of clothing for 3 - 6yrs. Knitted and crocheted African animal dolls are very useful too.

For Lifeline, we choose dolls which are strong, happy, gentle, some could be paler skins, and with change of clothes, all in a child's shoulder bag.

For Sizabantwana group of primary schools it may be possible for some schools here to have their dolls finished in time, but usually it takes a whole term to finish their project.

*This photo shows on the left, a sewn doll from our Classic Doll pattern, suitable for 3 - 6yr olds available through our website, our book "100 DOLLS, COUNTLESS HEARTS" and also packed in our Dollmaking Kits. The knitted doll on the right could suit any age, with separate dress and bag. The smaller doll in the centre which suits the youngest ones, has an easy to get off/on skirt with straps. Often they have a simple knitted vest. Pictured are a crocheted hippo and zebra to give an idea for the animals. Small is good!*



## SEWING WORK BAGS

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It is a good idea to think about the empowerment that a beautiful handmade bag can give to new dollmaker in Africa. It is about extending a hand of friendship. Note the mini inside pocket for a cell phone.

Using fabric that will give years of pleasure, with lining if necessary, make the finished bag approx. **43 cms x 43 cms** with strong, **soft straps 80cms** long. Your bag may have inside or outside large pockets as well as the one for the cell phone. The gusset, if included, may become the handles. Really the design is your choice according to your cloth, but keep roughly to this size.

We estimate that we might need 100 bags and have 45 on the go at present. So please email [georgia1@inet.net.au](mailto:georgia1@inet.net.au) to let me know how many you would like to make.

## MORE SEWING BAG DESIGNS

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This bag is sewn from furnishing fabric samples with a handpainted large pocket on the front. The corners have been sewn across diagonally inside to give a base.

## **MINI SEWING KITS**

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Ideally if we gather 500 mini sewing kits, we will be able to put 5 mini sewing kits in each of the 100 carry bags. Look closely at the photo on the right to see the contents of a typical mini kit. There is a non fray "page" (felt or or fine knit fabric, stitched at the top to take needles and pins. Insert one Chenille needle no 22 and an ordinary sharp needle, with 6 pins. We can supply the Chenille 22 needles if you prefer, and likewise we can supply the doll's body.



One piece of cardboard takes enough red, white and black thread (could be fine crochet thread) to embroider a doll's face, with ample brown machine sewing thread to stitch around the doll's body.

Another piece of cardboard has different sorts of fine to coarse threads in a range of colours, to be used anywhere, eg. clothing.

A cut out Classic Doll's body is folded to fit into the pocket. Use knit fabric or polar fleece or similar, in brown.

Make the pocket by folding up and sewing the sides, of at least one third of the length of the kit. The general size of the mini kit is a like an A4 page, but it might be narrower, approx 30cms long x 15 cms wide, folded into 3.

These five samples are tied with a ribbon, but you could use button, velcro, etc. By all means include other small items, eg buttons, beads, lace.

## KZN NEWS

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Lynn Stefano of the Family Literacy Group wrote this when she got the news of the latest doll arrivals.

*"We are so thrilled to be receiving more dolls. Thank you again for your tremendous support! This year we are extending our babies and young children home visiting programme to all our groups in the 15 villages we work in. The home visitors are focusing on 0-5 year olds, and aim to support parents to promote early literacy, language and learning. We have a wonderful new dvd which shows the kinds of activities that parents can engage in with their young children and babies, and the dolls are included in the toy kits that we prepare for our learners to use in these homes. We hope to have some lovely photos to send you once we do our monitoring visits."*



## BELMONT WORKSHOP AND OTHERS

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During the holidays we heard from many groups completing 2012.

This newsletter goes out to around 1200 people, not all dollmakers. It is our way of saying thank you for the thousands of positive actions and being open to responses.

Plans have gone ahead for a series of 5 session workshops with the **City of Belmont**, starting **March 13th**. Iris Whitelock will be the Workshop Facilitator bringing forth all her community experience and creativity. If you would like to enrol (and have a wonderful and useful time), please phone the City of Belmont, Community Development on 9477 7219.

The **City of Wanneroo** is hosting a one day intensive dollmaking workshop for its community development people and local craft groups on March 5th. Interested? Contact facilitator, Georgia Efford on [georgia1@iinet.net.au](mailto:georgia1@iinet.net.au).

A minor change needs to be noted by dollmakers sending dolls from **outside** Australia. Our patterns mention that when dolls are sent directly to TREE in KZN, please advise despatch by email to Neeroshnie, who is now no longer with TREE. Instead, please address to [fundraising@tree-eed.co.za](mailto:fundraising@tree-eed.co.za)

A highlight of Uthando Project is the success and strategic use of our **Dollmaking kits**. If you, your group or your school would like to buy them, please contact us on [georgia1@iinet.net.au](mailto:georgia1@iinet.net.au) and we will arrange postage information or pick up. Each kit (see photo) is an original mixture of all that is needed to make a doll (except the stuffing) and costs \$5. It is excellent value.

May all dollmakers' fingers keep busy, with warm hearts.

Love, from Georgia and the Friday mob



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