

# The Stanford Shout-Out

August, 2024

It's been a busy 2 months for us. Very exciting news is that we were finally able to complete the Recreation Room at the Koshuis and officially open it up to the children who reside there.

## ***Converting a Dull Store Room into a Fun Space***

Our Club is one of the smallest in our District with only 9 members, all of whom are fully committed to serving our community as best we can. Most of our time and resources are spent on our feeding scheme (our main focus in Stanford), providing blankets and warm woollies in winter and assisting school children in need with stationery and school clothes. So when we were presented with a project which would provide a lot of fun as a team, we grabbed the opportunity.

In November 2023 two of our members met with Hilton Temmers – the Headmaster at Okkie Smuts Primary School – to discuss projects we could undertake within the school campus. Mr Temmers expressed his dream of creating a Recreation Room for the students who reside at the School Koshuis (Hostel) during the week. A space for the children to call their own, a space for them to relax, play games, be creative, read, and so on. Since we, and many other Stanfordinians, have a special place in our hearts for the Koshuis, we jumped at the opportunity to fulfil this dream.

A brief history of the Koshuis: The original Koshuis, established in 1921, was in a house on the corner of Shortmarket and Morton streets. The children were expected to carry out chores such as clean their rooms, tend the garden and help prepare meals. In 1932 the Matron, Miss Uys, purchased the parsonage from the DR Church, made some alterations and moved the Koshuis to its current site between the DR Church and the school.

The Koshuis can house up to 60 children, 30 boys and 30 girls in separate dormitories.

But back to the Rec Room. Some people don't believe in coincidences, but in Rotary they seem to happen pretty often. As it happened, also in November 2023, Stanford was visited by a traveller from Belgium, who wanted to spend the month in Stanford, working with children and creating some magic. After some discussion about the Rec Room Dream and a few visits to the site, she raised some funds in Belgium which would primarily pay for the artists (she being an artist herself).

Meetings and brain-storming sessions were held and a plan-of-action decided on.

Local artists were invited to create murals on some of the wall space, 2 large chalk-board sections would be created, table-tennis and foosball tables would be brought in, a reading corner would be created and areas for drawing, table-top games, puzzles, etc would also be created using some old desks which were destined for the dump. And let's not forget about some curtains for the windows.

After many months of getting the murals done our team got together and scrubbed cupboards, cleaned windows and floors, collected donated items, shopped for what was still needed. Finally the invitations could go out and we could open this fabulous space to the children.

First reactions were awe, then specific activities were 'discovered' and they were off! Some playing table-tennis and foosball, others already drawing on the chalk-boards while smaller groups were into the crayons and paints. What absolute joy for us to see the delight on those little faces. They all shook our hands in thanks, but we could see they couldn't wait to get back to the activities.

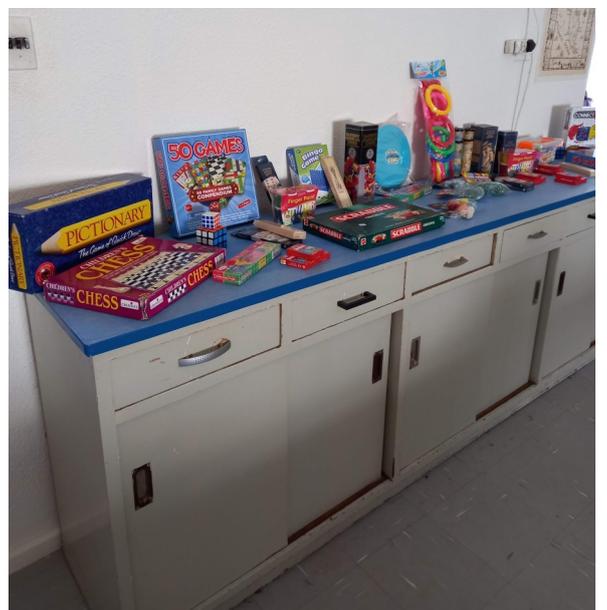
The children's excitement was absolutely wonderful—they didn't know what to try out first. We lost count of how many "thank-you's" we received, but just their excitement and joy was enough for us.



*Step 1: Clearing the Space. This space has been utilised for storing old desks and other items no longer in use, as well as all the spare bed bases and mattresses not currently in use. All the broken and unwanted items were cleared out and a space was created for the beds and mattresses, using existing cupboards as a divider. The walls were painted white in readiness for the artists, who had been very busy planning their murals.*



*Step 3:  
Bringing it all Together.*



# Step 4: The Result





*Hilton Temmers, Robyn Lavender, Rotarians, Artists, Koshuis Parents Vicky & Willem*



*These notes mean the world to us—from the hearts of children*



Next steps: Creating a fun outdoor space for the summer months, which will include a jungle gym, swings, soccer balls, swing-ball, cricket – a variety of bat-and-ball games.

We would like to thank everyone who was involved in any way with this project. You helped tremendously in making this dream a reality.

**Should you wish to know more about any of our projects, or would like to contribute in any way, please contact Lana on 082 216 4398. Better still, join us at a meeting to find out more about what we do in Stanford**



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