

It's Mother's Day on Sunday, March 15 – the perfect time to celebrate some inspirational Norfolk mums, writes Rowan Mantell.

She's the best!

"I am Evie and I am eight years old. Today I was very proud because Mummy came into my school and taught everyone African music. I was very happy."

Evie's mum is Anna Mudeka, and it's no wonder that Evie is proud. Anna grew up in Zimbabwe and not only looks after Evie and her five-year-old sister Carly, but also helps feed 150 children in Africa.

Anna is a musician, dancer and businesswoman, performing around the world as well as running music and dance workshops. Home is Southburgh, near Dereham, where she lives with poultry farmer Mark Gorton and their two daughters.

Five-year-old Carly says: "My mummy is the best, she looks after us all the time and reads us lovely stories every night. She lets us watch Frozen!"

Evie adds: "My mummy is lovely; she takes me to my swimming, choir, piano and Brownies. She cooks for us and lets us help out. I like making pizza, meatballs and pancakes with her. She has taught me to make an omelette."

Evie knows that she and Carly are not the only children who are getting meals every day because of their mum. Anna launched her charity, The Mudeka Foundation, after returning to Zimbabwe for her own mother's funeral and seeing conditions at her old school, where at least a third of the children were orphans.

She collected equipment to send to the schools and held a fundraising festival of world music, dance and



Thanks Mum!

the arts to raise money to sponsor Zimbabwean children through their education. This year her charity launched a feeding programme for primary schoolchildren in Muda township.

Evie explains: "My mummy has a charity and she plays music all over to raise awareness and money for the children in Zimbabwe. Her charity sponsors children so that they can get

food and education. She sends clothes to the children at Muda donated by local companies and people. She has set up a feeding programme for the poor children who don't have enough to eat."

Anna says: "Zimbabwe gave me the music to come to teach children in Norfolk and now these children and their families are helping me give back to children in Zimbabwe." 🙌

TOP: Anna Mudeka with her daughters, Carly and Evie.

LEFT: Children in Muda, Zimbabwe who Anna's charity helps.

Tickets for the 2015 Southburgh Festival on August 1, are on sale from March 9; www.southburghfestival.com; www.mudekafoundation.com



ABOVE: Lady Dannatt relaxing at her home in Norfolk.
RIGHT: Tom Dannatt, founder of Street Child of Sierra Leone.

Truly amazing

Tom Dannatt's mother, Lady Philippa Dannatt, is the current High Sheriff of Norfolk. Tom, a Norwich father-of-four who founded the charity Street Child to work with the very poorest children in Sierra Leone and Liberia, says: "I have a truly amazing mother." Lady Philippa is married to Richard, General the Lord Dannatt, now Constable of the Tower of London but previously head of the British Army.

"As an army family, we were constantly on the move," says Tom. "But wherever we were, and whether Dad was there or

off bothering some warlord in Bosnia, Afghanistan or somewhere else, home felt like home, family mattered and we all felt loved and together. That foundation of love and security has given all four of us siblings the best possible platform for life – and is something that I try very hard to have a cornerstone of in my own family life. It is also a value that sits at the heart of my professional life. The most important thing we do for street children, and presently those orphaned by ebola, is help bring them back to their, typically vulnerable,



families and then support them from that point."

He says his mother makes everyone she meets feel valued: "I know no-one else on the planet who is as good as Mum at this. Mum is as amazing with queens and princes as she is with junior soldiers, their families and with those suffering the most from the mental health issues she has championed as High Sheriff. She has an extraordinary ability to make everyone feel special and that they matter to her. I know I can't replicate her remarkable warmth but I do try hard to carry the underlying value that 'everyone matters' with me wherever I go."

www.street-child.co.uk



LEFT: The Dannatt family – (back) Tom, Lucinda, Chloe, Oli, Richenda. (Front) Hal, Lady Dannatt, Arthur, Freddie, Emma, General the Lord Dannatt with his dog Phylis, William, Bertie, Alexander.



ABOVE: Norwich author Sheridan Winn with her daughter, artist Rosie Winn.

She's my best friend

Artist Rosie Winn, 30, is inspired in her work and life by her mum, Norwich author Sheridan Winn. "My mother and I are very close. She's a tower of strength and been an inspiration to me with her writing. It has really helped me develop my own career as an artist. Mum has always been great at picking me up when I've had a low patch in my life and helped to give me motivation to carry on. She is my best friend and we love going to Cinema City, cooking, crosswords,

nattering on the phone, eating cake, going to exhibitions at Norwich Castle and walks around Blickling Park lake in our wellies!"

Sheridan has just published the eighth story in her Sprite Sisters series for children, which have sold 400,000 copies. The Sprite Sisters: The Mystery of the Locked Room continues the magical adventures of four girls who live in a rambling house, based on the Drayton home where Sheridan grew up.

BELOW: Artist Lucy Loveheart with her mum, Meg Clibbon.



ABOVE: Model Kerri Parker and her mum, Kathleen.

My inspiration

Kerri Parker, of Norwich, is a model and runs her own model agency. But last year her glamorous lifestyle of photo-shoots, pageants and travel was rocked when she discovered she had a brain tumour.

"My mum, Kathleen, has helped me since a young age, providing an entrepreneurial role model for me, allowing me to set up my own successful businesses, and giving me her full support in my decision to become a model at a young age. When I was diagnosed with cancer she put her life on hold to help me get well and I couldn't have gone through it without her. We went on to win an inspirational mother and daughter award a few weeks after my brain surgery, which I'd nominated her for and which was well deserved."

99.9pc perfect!

Artist Lucy Loveheart says her writer mum, Meg Clibbon, is practically perfect. Meg has just moved to Norfolk, from Suffolk, to be closer to her family.

"She has an amazing temperament, very relaxed and easy going and she has phenomenal inner strength. She is kind, lovely, understanding, tolerant, witty and great fun to be with. She is only human so once in a blue moon she will do something which isn't 100pc perfect like burning the milk, or shrinking something in the wash . . . so we all take huge delight in teasing her. But she is 99.9pc perfect and I feel so lucky to be her daughter." ♦