

GHANA SCHOOL AID NEWSLETTER
October 1998

Hello again!

It's time, high time some would say, for another newsletter to let you know what we have been up to since the last one in March. The **Reunion Lunch** which took place in May was attended by around 55, including some welcome new faces (some as a result of Global Partnership contact). Our new Patron, Lady Chalker, was in the event unable to attend as she was in Namibia, but she sent a very friendly message. However, the recently-appointed High Commissioner, James Aggrey-Orleans, was present and made a very warm contribution to the occasion; he met some old friends (he and Janet Sewell greeted each other like long-lost comrades) and gave a very nice "vote of thanks" in which, looking round the gathering, he changed a reference to "brothers and sisters" to "uncles and aunts"! This was followed by a very illuminating short talk from Bill Peters about Jubilee 2000, the movement to reform the basis of Third World debt (see note below). We then had a series of talks with slides and video: Barbara Bowman describing a recent reunion at Wesley Girls High School, Lynne Symonds on the work of her Wulugu project in the North, Sue Bleasdale (a new member) describing the work of TRAX near Bolgatanga, Hilary Eastwood, ex-VSO, talking about agricultural extension work at Pusiga (where Brice Bending and Eric Cunningham both worked, a few decades ago). James Gibbs from the Morel Trust referred to further projects on which they and GSA might cooperate, including a proposal to make better blackboards for use in schools (see below). It was very rewarding to hear about these activities and I think those present enjoyed this aspect as well as the usual encounters with old friends etc. If you were not able to make it try and come next year!

At the lunch we made a presentation to **Kofi and Floria Ohene** who have been great friends to GSA during Kofi's term as Head of the Ghana Universities Office in London, which has now ended. I'm sure that when he returns to Ghana he will be a very useful link in our work, in cooperation with Michael Asiedu. We are most grateful to him for all his help on the Committee and in conveying items of aid to schools, as well as providing the hospitality of his office for our committee meetings. His successor, Kobby Yebo-Okrah, has kindly agreed to continue with this arrangement; the office in City Road is a very convenient meeting place and we are most grateful.

The next VISIT TO GHANA

Some of you have been enquiring about plans for 1999, following the cancellation of the visit proposed for this year. Details of a possible visit in March 1999, with alternative itineraries, are attached. If you would like to participate please return the form without delay to Pam Lewis. An additional point of interest will be the Golden Jubilee of the University of Ghana, with a Jubilee Congregation at Legon on Saturday 21 March. GHANA has been in the news recently: some of you may have seen the news item on the BBC 9 o'clock News on 7 October about recent economic development in Ghana and there was an article in The Economist on 3 Oct. 1998. Ted Mayne confirms from his recent visit that a tremendous amount of work is going on in Accra - Buildings, roads, bridges

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP 98 Friday, Saturday, Sunday 11 - 13 December

The Fair is being held this year at Olympia 2 Kensington and as usual GSA has taken a Small Agency stand. The stand needs to be manned throughout the three days; in previous years Committee members have provided all the support but the hours are long and we would be very grateful if any members who live in or near London could lend a hand this year. **Volunteers please contact Pam Lewis on 0181 693 1803.**

AID PROJECTS

- We have made progress with the Books from Small Publishers project, referred to in the last two newsletters. Some 150 titles selected by Richard Crabbe and his colleagues in the Ghana Book Publishers Association, will shortly be distributed to 30 primary, JS and senior secondary schools. Ted Mayne on a recent visit to Accra delivered the grant of £3100 (£2000 from the Morel Trust, £1100 from our own funds).
- Ted also handed over to Paul Yemeh the building grant of £1000 for the Nyagli village school near Wa. He conveyed a grant of £650 which we have made to the National Health Learning Centre in Kumasi for a pilot project to provide School Health exhibition boards in 20 schools.
- The further grant of £1200, mentioned in the last newsletter, for the the Child-to-Child work in schools in Winneba, Nima and the Afram Plains has now been delivered, to supply more books and materials. The Coordinator of those projects, Paul Ackom, was in London recently and we had a most useful meeting with him. I am confident that our money is being very well spent in those schools.
- We have made a grant of £500 to provide books for schools in the Wulugu Project founded and organised by Lynne Symonds.
- We are currently considering a proposal put forward by James Gibbs for a scheme to make better blackboards for use in schools. Patience Gibbs, following a visit to family and friends this summer, has provided a most interesting report with illustrations of boards made by the Tetteh family in Madina near Accra; the 'trial' examples include boards for writing and doing sums as well as maps which can be used in classrooms. About 10 prototype boards have been made with an initial grant of £100 provided by Mrs. Gibbs. and at our last meeting the Committee approved a contribution of up to £200 to develop this project further.

Our good friend **Michael Asiedu**, Nana Atta-Nuamah III, of Asin Achiase, has been a very active Representative of GSA in Ghana since taking over from the late and much-missed Robert Asiedu. I have received several letters from him about our projects, he cooperated with Kofi Ohene over the delivery of aid funds last February, he has recently sent a circular letter to all the schools which we assist and he had a meeting with Ted Mayne on his recent visit to discuss plans. We are most grateful to him for all this work.

RALEIGH INTERNATIONAL, formerly Operation Raleigh, provides adventure training for 17-25 year-olds through engagement in environmental and community development projects. An expedition to Ghana, which is likely to include school building work in the Bolgatanga area, is being planned and a reconnaissance visit was made in July by Simon Ramm and a colleague. GSA made contact with Simon before his visit to express an interest in RI's proposed work and to indicate willingness to help with classroom equipment/materials when building is completed, so that development continues. Eric Cunningham wrote to Michael Asiedu who was able to meet Simon in Accra and provide him with an additional local contact for

advice/help. Simon has reported a useful meeting and a successful visit to Bolgatanga; RI's plans for the expedition are now being developed and contact with GSA continues. We welcome this contact with Raleigh International and hope that it will lead to wider publicity for GSA's work and an increase in the number of supporters (I am most grateful to Eric for initiating this).

FINANCE, a brief report

- Income for the 6 months to 30 September was £5152.03, comprising general donations, a grant of £2000 from the Morel Trust and interest.
- Expenditure in the same period was £6231.50, mainly on the Aid projects outlined above.
- TOTAL INCOME raised from all sources since GSA started in 1987 is £49312.44.
- Expenditure on AID PROJECTS totals £35806.92 and the BALANCE in hand for further projects is £11820.68 (£10000 of which is in the CAF Charities Deposit Fund, earning a good rate of interest).
- Acute readers will notice a gap: this refers to TOTAL admin. overheads / office expenses of £1684.84 for the 10-year period, a very low percentage of total income (perhaps not surprising as there are no paid staff!); these expenses relate mainly to postage, the newsletters and printing the publicity leaflet, the cost in 1997-98 being £154.76.

I hope you can feel assured that the highest possible proportion of your generous donations to Ghana School Aid reach the point of impact in the schools.

1999 COMMEMORATION (HMOCS) This was mentioned in the last newsletter. The closing date for applications has now passed (30 Sept) but I hope that supporters of GSA who attend as part of the Gold Coast/ Ghana group will be able to foregather during the event.

A new UNIVERSITY? John Kibble has written to me about an ambitious project for a new university in Ghana to be sponsored by the Methodist Church. He appreciates that this is not something which GSA is in a position to support but he would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to know more about it and/or has advice to offer. His address is 5 Llandaff Close, Penarth, CF64 3JH.

Dr. Nellie ADJAYE (daughter of the late J.S. Annan) has written to me with a warm tribute to Norah Whapham, who died on 1 January and is much missed. Nellie's first meeting with Norah was in 1963 when when Norah took her out for the day from her school in Bury St. Edmunds; that was the start of a long friendship in the course of which "Aunty Norah" often spoke of her work with JS Annan in the Ministry of Health when he was Principal Secretary.

• Sad to report that another of our friends has left us: **Sarah deLima (Ayensu)** died recently - I have not got the exact date as I write. Sarah was known to many of us as a colleague and friend; in the sixties, on secondment from the Ministry of Education, she was in charge of student welfare at the Ghana High Commission.

MILLENIUM project: representatives of GSA and the Guildford Borough Council are discussing a project which would involve the Borough collecting new / secondhand sports equipment to send out to schools in Ghana. The basic idea is to use local schools in the Guildford Borough area as collection points for unwanted sports equipment and kit which are desperately needed to support the enthusiasm which

exists for sport in Ghanaian schools. The scheme is being coordinated by Steve de Wint, the Sports Development Officer of Guildford Borough Council, who met with Paul Ackom of the University College of Education, Winneba (see above); Paul has offered to help the scheme by looking into possible methods of distribution in Ghana. The scheme is gathering pace and any suggestions or assistance, especially concerning shipment of the collected kit to Ghana, would be gratefully received (Auriol and I will happily pass on any ideas.)

JUBILEE 2000 As noted above, Bill Peters who has been much involved with the Jubilee 2000 campaign, spoke about it at the Lunch. We have obtained the following facts about Ghana's debt repayments: 1. Currently, for every £1 received in Aid, Ghana pays £2.15 in debt-repayment. 2. Ghana spends more money on debt repayment than on Health and Education together. 6.6% of GNP goes on debt repayment, 1.7% on Health, 3.1% on Education. A United Nations report, 1996, states that worldwide 21 million children will have died by the year 2000 because money that is needed for health services is spent on debt repayment (information from Jubilee 2000 office). I am indebted to Margaret Turner for this information. **Please support any local Jubilee 2000 events**

REUNION LUNCH 1999 the suggestion has been made from time to time that we should meet outside London. At last year's Lunch, I think Bristol was suggested; some years ago Birmingham was put forward. If any volunteer(s) would like to arrange a reunion gathering in one of these locations, please get in touch. Meanwhile, a provisional date at John Adams Hall has been arranged: **Thursday 20 May 1999**. Details and booking-form in the new year.

Earlier this year I made contact with **Professor John Knapton**, mentioned in last October's newsletter and had a friendly letter from him, but he was not able to get to the Lunch. I mentioned him to Michael Asiedu and in a long letter which touches on almost all our projects (just received), Michael refers to his "inability to locate the "kingdom" of Nana Professor Knapton "even the Winneba police could not help me locate the place. The nearest name I got was Gomoa-Tarkwa but before I could undertake the David Livingstone journey to see that village I wanted to be sure I was on the right track Let Professor Nana John tell us where he is a chief and I will pursue now that he is also a "good friend" like James Moxon and Lynne Symonds". I shall pursue Nana Professor for the correct information!

Please write if you have any items of news or comment. And please try and recruit new members/supporters, preferably in the pre-pensioner age-groups!

Best wishes in advance for Christmas 1998 and for the new year 1999



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