

Ghana School Aid

April 2002



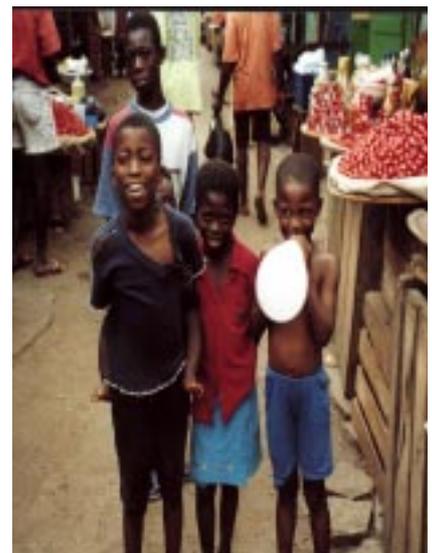
Dear Friends,

Greetings once again - another year has passed with alarming speed since the last newsletter and it is high time to report again to our members and supporters. Those of you who were able to attend the reunion/AGM/lunch last June will be a little more up-to-date but even here it is now time to announce the next one: THURSDAY 6 JUNE (in Golden Jubilee week!) - details below and booking form enclosed.

Ghana has been in the news in recent months, with the Prime Minister's visit to four West African countries in 3 days - Tony Blair clearly had a very warm welcome in Ghana. By and large, the situation still remains that Africa only receives media coverage in relation to disaster (Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe) and relative good news does not get reported. However, it has to be a positive factor that the PM has put Africa on the agenda and lets hope that words are followed by deeds (eg debt relief, tariffs etc - in this connection, see Bill Peters' article (p 6/7). Meanwhile it is very good news that Ghana has had a successful democratic change of government following the election a year ago of President John Kuffour. Some of us were very happy to attend, at the invitation of the new High Commissioner, Mr. Isaac Osei, the Reception on 6 March to mark the 45th Anniversary of Independence, which brought back vivid memories of the original event. Auriol and I with Wendy, Pam Lewis, Margaret Turner, Eric Cunningham, Alison Southern (daughter of Tom), Alan and Elizabeth Mayhew, Julian and Anne Rea enjoyed the splendid display of drumming and dancing; mixing with Ghanaian friends including Kobby and Mary Yebo-Okrah and listening to an excellent speech from the High Commissioner which concluded a memorable evening. On a sad note I have to report the death of Tom Southern after a short illness. Tom was one of the original group who organised the first reunion in 1986; it was he who, as the "senior officer" among us, received the Guest of Honour, H.E. the High Commissioner at the time, Mr.Cato. Tom will be much missed by all his friends and former colleagues; an appreciation of him appears on [p 8].

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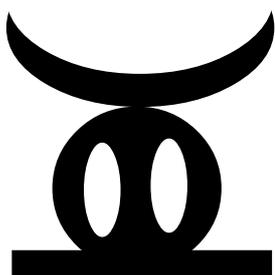


Some changes in the Committee have occurred during the year: Pam Lewis has moved to Wales and while remaining on the Committee feels that she can no longer continue as Secretary; we are most grateful to her for all the work she has done since succeeding Warren Shaw. Alan Mayhew is the new Secretary and we are very grateful to him for taking this on. Dr. Judith Smith has joined the Committee and has taken on the task of organising the Annual Reunion/AGM/Lunch from Pam and (in former years) Madge Claxton. Which brings us to that subject ...

Last year's Lunch, the sixteenth since the first reunion in 1986, was attended by about 40 members, some 20 of whom were present at our first "AGM", an initiative suggested by Pam Lewis. The Trust Deed which established GSA in 1987 provides for the appointment of a number of Trustees but does not specify a Committee (which has in practice run things from the start) or an AGM. The initiative was welcomed by those present; the Chairman reported on recent activities and a number of issues were discussed – eg the question of circulating a membership list (see p. xx). The minutes will be available at the next AGM. For the record, the original Trustees, 8 July 1987, were Brice Bending, Eric Earle and John Whittingham; Warren Shaw, who drafted the Trust Deed and corresponded with the Charity Commission, was the first Secretary, and in 1995 he, Madge Claxton and Pamela Lewis were also appointed Trustees. Since then, Brice and Warren have died and last year four further Trustees were appointed: Stanley Anthony, Alan Mayhew, Edward Mayne and Margaret Turner.

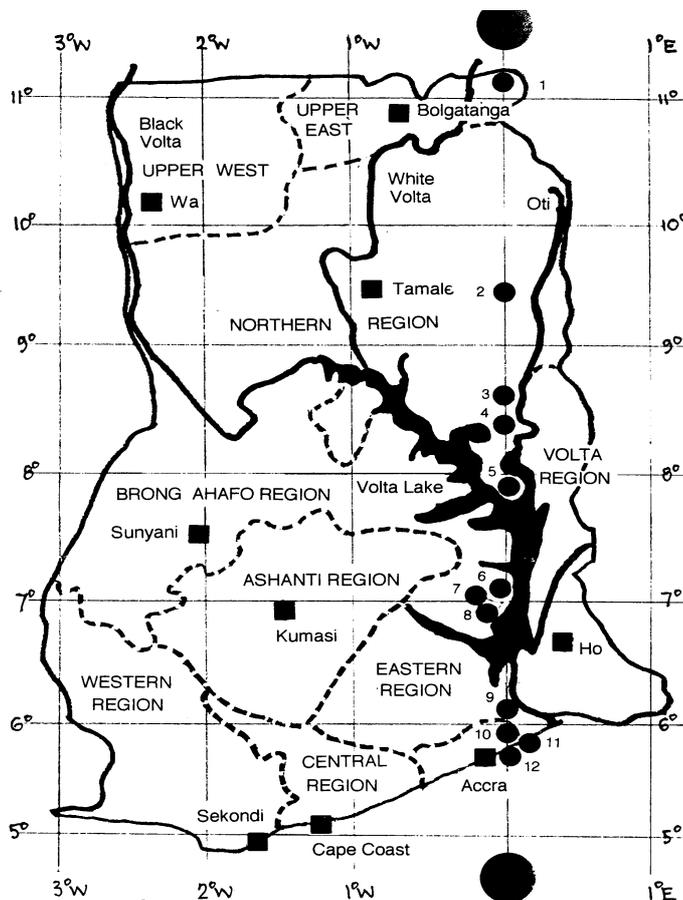
Unfortunately none of our Patrons was able to attend last year, but the High Commissioner was represented by Mr. Anani Demuyakor. After lunch, we had interesting talks from Lynne Symonds about recent Wulugu Project activities, Kobby Yebo-Okrah about current events in Ghana, Bill Peters on the follow-on from the Jubilee 2000 campaign, Catherine Batten about her recent "link" visit to northern Ghana and Patrick Heinecke about his Sandema project.

The Committee decided to continue this year with the newly established arrangement for an AGM, preceding the Lunch and a programme of talks/presentations in the afternoon. **We hope to see many of you on Thursday 6 June at John Adams Hall: details and booking form attached.**



SCHOOLS ON THE LINE

This project, after some delays, is now approaching completion - a little way into the new millennium but a Millennium Project nonetheless! An approach by Alan Mayhew to the Mercers' Company resulted in a grant of £650 from their Whittington Charity which has enabled us to meet our target of £2400 and allocate £200 each to 12 schools. Many thanks to all of you who made special contributions to this project, launched at the 1999 Reunion. Michael Asiedu has made plans for the distribution of books and school materials to each school, from Pusiga in the north to Tema (see map); with the help of the Anglican diocese of Tamale for the more remote northern schools. He wrote recently: "I have planned to organise for each Primary and JSS a package consisting of textbooks, supplementary readers, library books and other materials such as volley balls and table tennis set. These will be packed in a chopbox fitted with padlock and keys, with an inscription on top indicating Millennium Gift from GSA". Arrangements are in hand to transfer the necessary funds to Michael. As an addition to the main project, the Committee agreed to his proposal that a photocopier be provided for Pusiga Training College, bearing in mind Brice Bending's close connection with the college and £1200 has been allocated for this.



Schools-on-the-Line Millennium Project

Ghana
School Aid

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1 Pusiga | 5 Kete Krachi | 9 Odumasi Krobo |
| 2 Yendi | 6 Abomasarefan | 10 Larleh |
| 3 Wulensi | 7 Mem Chemfe | 11 Afienyia |
| 4 Kpandae | 8 Amankwakrom | 12 Tema |

OTHER GRANTS

During the past year we have allocated grants as follows:
Havilah Academy, Gomoa (near Winneba) - total of £2720 in three instalments for a new school/community library. Grant made to Nana Kwa Budu III, a local businessman/benefactor; introduction from Caroline Johnston who taught in the school (see last newsletter). Ted Mayne visited the village and has reported favourably.

Abokobi Presbyterian JS School - the first school to which we gave aid, on the Visit in 1990. The Committee agreed that £800 from the Warren Shaw Memorial Fund should be allocated to provide a new roof for part of the school building. A letter of thanks has been received from the school stating that the work has been carried out.

Nkanfoa Methodist Primary School Cape Coast - £600 for books conveyed by Wendy Spratling who taught in the school on a recent visit (see her article opposite).

Nuru Islam Primary School near Yendi - £1000 to help build a new classroom block, on recommendation of Sue Hewlett, a teacher at Sutton Primary Ipswich, who was teaching in Yendi.

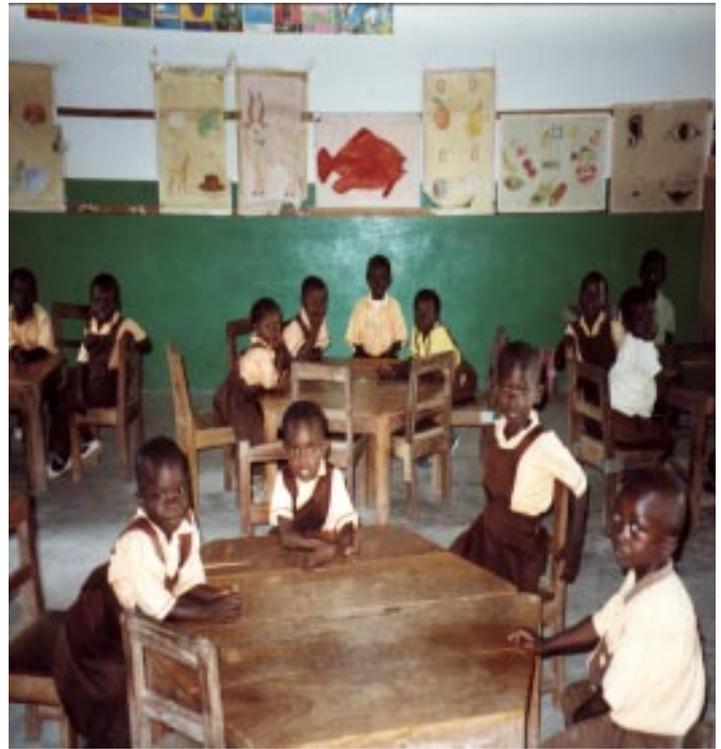
West Africa Secondary School Accra - £1200 to purchase a photocopier for the school (Helen Dodoo helped to provide a computer for this school, c3 years ago).

Child-to-Child - we donated a further amount of £2000 which provided for the shipment of a consignment of readers (eg "Diseases Defeated") which were distributed to 25 schools in Accra (Nima), the Afram Plains and around Winneba. Paul Ackom at University College Winneba, who heads the project locally, reported that supplies of newsprint, pencils etc were also purchased locally for these schools. We consider this to be a very effective use of our funds.

Aburaman Secondary School, Abura Dunkwa - a £300 grant for library reference books, provided via Michael Asiedu.

In addition, the Committee agreed to a request from John Kibble to channel a grant of £1550 to help with the education of children in **MoDega** a very deprived area on the borders of Brong-Ahafo and Northern Regions. This is a Methodist Church project with which John has been connected for some time; more details in a subsequent newsletter.

I am delighted to announce that the **David Anderson Africa Trust** has approved a proposal from Alan Mayhew for funds to train a staff member at Yelwoko, either for the community library or the clinic's out-reach programme. This will be the Trust's first project in Ghana. More information next time; and meanwhile I hope we shall be able to thank Mary Anderson in person at the Lunch on 6 June.



Teaching in Cape Coast Region

by Wendy Spratling

My first visit to Ghana was during the time leading up to the election in late 2000. I spent six weeks based in Cape Coast visiting my friends Pam and Alan Harvey who are working with the Methodist Church. Alan is Methodist Chaplain to boarding schools and teacher or nurse training colleges. Pam is head teacher of The Rev. Alee Jones Methodist Primary School in Nkanfoa which is a village about five miles inland from Cape Coast. I am a semi-retired Primary School teacher with over 30 years experience in London and Wolverhampton schools.

During my first visit I was able to teach at Nkanfoa and join with Pam in various headteachers' meetings while observing teaching methods and the curriculum. I was also able to appreciate the warmth, friendliness and hard work of the teachers and children. This was a very valuable learning experience. I soon realised that in Ghana the schools are very short of resources which in England we would think essential. The school had very few books and no teaching resources such as mathematics equipment, rulers, card, crayons or paint. There is no phone or electricity, but they have recently been provided with a tap (funded by a UK donor) so each class can have a fresh bucket of drinking water. Parents have to provide all pencils and paper as well as paying school fees in all state schools. Many books for younger children are not easily available and suitable can not be ordered even if one has the cash to pay for them.

By the time I returned to Ghana in October 2001 I had

been able to collect suitable books, simple equipment, wooden jigsaws and many laminated posters. (Wall displays in Ghana curl and tear with the high humidity and dusty winds.) I was also able to collect from schools and colleagues' photocopiable ideas and worksheets as well as a good supply of card, bluetac, and clear plastic pockets.

Ghana school Aid provided a grant to ship many library books, reading books and Big Books to Cape Coast to begin a Teachers' library of resources. While I was in Cape Coast Pam and I organized - with the backing of the Methodist Education Department - five one day 'Workshops' for teachers and head teachers from the lower primary classes. The days were largely practical concentrating on developing mental mathematics skills and encouraging early literacy. The courses were held at schools around the Cape Coast Region and involved over 150 teachers. We found that much teaching of reading is based on reading capital letters and begins by teaching two letter words such as go, to, we. Rather than using initial sounds and then regular three letter words such as fat, cat men, red. This is surprising since written Fante is very phonetic. The children (and the teachers) really struggled with spelling patterns and were learning the hard way.

Ghanaian teachers were very keen to learn more effective ways of teaching mathematics and reading. Millions have been spent recently in the U.K. on research and training of teachers for the Numeracy and Literacy Projects. I felt it was wonderful to be able to share our experience and expertise and adapt to the needs of the Ghanaian curriculum and the limited resources available. During the five courses held in and around Cape Coast Region over 150 teachers joined with enthusiasm in making counting sticks, number cards, foam die for mental mathematics, as well as learning initial sounds, reading activities and ways of making spoken English teaching fun. Several teachers brought their babies with them and worked tirelessly through the darkness and roof leaking tropical rainstorms.

We were struck by how hard simple tasks become when photocopiers and telephones are not available. Teachers in England rely so heavily on a good supply of carefully graded reading books and plenty of paper as well as pencils and paper. The children and their parents are anxious for education, but it is not easy amidst poverty, ill health and constantly rising prices to put money into education.

I would put in a plea to all those involved in Education in Ghana to use the expertise developed in more affluent countries, import more books (second- hand or new), do not re-invent the wheel! In the U.K. we use individual white boards with felt tip pens, but blackboards and chalk are just as good. Computers are not necessary but

blackboards are! Use the research findings, adapt them to the needs of Ghana and encourage the great talents hidden in the villages and towns of Ghana.

LETTER FROM ACCRA

1. This is the second month of the third millennium. From Michael in Accra Ghana, at the invitation of the Editor of the GSA NEWSLETTER comes a contribution for inclusion in the paper. I shall in this piece attempt a modest appraisal of the work of the GSA having regard to the attainment or otherwise of its stated aims and objectives. And I do this of course from the Ghanaian perspective as the local Representative of the Trust (GSA).

2. Since May 1998 when I look over from the late Robert Asiedu of blessed memory the work of the Ghana Representative of the GSA, I have had the opportunity to know at first hand what role the GSA has been playing in Ghana. I had earlier watched their operations from the sidelines.

3. From my observations and later involvement in the work of the Trust, I have no doubt in my mind that the three former British colleague Education Officers in the Gold Coast, Ministry of Education (Later Ghana Education Service (GES) namely Messrs Brice Bending, now deceased, Eric Earle and Eric Cunningham, who originally formed the GSA as a Trust in 1986 embarked on a worthy cause.

4. The Trust constitution was approved on 8 July 1987. Here is a voluntary group of British men and women who after their service in Ghana coming together to form a charitable Trust to seek funds to assist Ghanaian schools. Their motivation, they say derives from their admiration and respect for the Ghanaian people among whom they spent much of their youthful days. I know they were also inspired by their determination to assist the school children and teachers they left behind on their retirement to their country.

5. From their own individual contributions, supported by occasional donations from interested charitable foundations such as the MOREL TRUST led by James Gibbs, and the REUTER FOUNDATION as well as bequests from wills of expired members, etc., they have been able to accumulate some sizeable funds to pursue their aims and intentions in Ghana.

6. From 1986 the GSA has been engaged in a number of activities, all in a supreme effort to assist the Ghanaian school children to make the best of their time in School. The Trust has been supplying books, teaching and learning materials and equipment to a number of Schools in several parts of the country. Besides, the GSA has supported local efforts to improve the infrastructure of

their schools by way of providing limited funds for cement, roofing sheets and other building materials. For example the SING PRIMARY SCHOOL near Wa in the Upper West region, as well as the Mount Mary Primary School at Ofankor, near Accra, as well as the Naomi Roberts Nursery School at Assin Nyankomase, will have their own story to tell about what help they have received from the GSA. Up to date, I estimate that by the time all the on-going projects including the Schools On Line programme, the Fanteakwa Community Initiative etc. have been covered, the GSA will have some working relations of one kind or another in over one hundred schools, in the different categories of Primary, Junior Secondary School (JSS) and the Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) throughout the length and breadth of Ghana. This is a solid achievement for which I say to the GSA, on behalf of the Ghanaian School children and their parents, "AYEKOO", that is, Ghanaian expression » for CONGRATULATIONS and WELL DONE!

7. The GSA Newsletter of March 2001 indicates that the funds raised since the inception of the Trust in 1986 amounts to over Sixty-one thousand pounds sterling out of which Forty-eight thousand pounds sterling has been spent in Ghana. In present day Ghanaian terms this is the equivalent of 601 million Cedis and 480 million Cedis respectively. For a small private NGO operating on their own resources this is quite an impressive record of performance.

8. I should like to take this opportunity to urge the GSA not to relent in their determination to help with the education of children in Ghana, especially those in the rural areas and particularly in the North, where the need for help is greatest. In this regard let the GSA Committee not forget to equip the Sandema Education Resource Centre. The Yelwoko Primary School should always have access to some cows provided by the GSA, one or two of which could be sold to help the final year children to register for the Basic Education Certificate Exams (BECE) which will determine their chances of entering the Senior Secondary School (SSS). I am also hoping that the Nural-Islam Primary School, as well as the Women's Development Centre at Yelwoko and the Balungu Training Centre will receive the support they need from GSA

9. Coming down South, let the GSA, please, not forget the promise of the photocopier for the West Africa Secondary School at Accra. Similarly, I would urge support for the completion of the Library block at the Havilah Academy at Gomoa Ojobi, on the Winneba road. I have visited the place and will report formally later. I am hoping that the other programmes requiring priority attention will be attended to in due course.

10. It is assumed of course that the Schools-On-Line

project, as well as the Fanteakwa Community Link project will be 'pursued to their successful completion in due course. I have completed all the preparation for the Schools-On-Line programme and I am ready for a take off with the receipt of the money. Also the Ghana Book Publishers/ Richard Crabb Supply Programme was successfully completed before the end of the Year 2000. Transport was provided by the Ghana Breweries Limited through the help of Francis Koranteng of the GIBBS family, parcels of books were sent to sixty five (65) schools (Primary, JSS, and SSS) throughout the regions and the feed back from the schools indicates deep appreciation for the books received. There is an undertaking from everywhere that the books will "be put to good use at the schools library and that it will go along way to enhance teaching and learning in the school (from Achimota School acknowledge letter dated 12 December 2000).

11. Further areas of operation to be considered by the GSA Committee may include provision of games and sports materials, such as footballs, tennis balls, valley balls basket balls, etc. as well as cultural drums and simple school percussion bands with wooden flutes. These materials, all locally made and quite affordable will help to enliven the often drab school atmosphere to reduce school dropout which is a known problem in several communities.

12. I cannot conclude this piece without reference to some important matters of special interest to me:-

12.1 First of all, the original interest of the GIBBS family in the production of the better School Blackboards appears to be waning off. I want to encourage them to pursue the project. I can see its usefulness in the schools in the rural areas.

12.2 And lastly, I can understand the interest which the GSA shows in Debt Cancellation Jubilee 2000 Campaign. Our own Bill Peters and the campaign group deserve our congratulations for achieving the \$100 billion dollars debt cancellation, even though we know this is not enough. The struggle should continue unabated.

13. For our part in Ghana we have recently joined the World Bank HIPC Initiative (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) by which we are told we will get debt relief of between \$773 million and 875 million dollars within three years when the decision point is reached this year. The figures were obtained from a recent Daily Graphic newspaper publication. The only condition is that the debt relief package obtained under the HIPC initiative should be applied to poverty alleviation projects in the field of rural development, health, education, agriculture, etc. We are hoping for the best, especially for our schools in the rural areas.

14. Michael's greetings go to the junior members of

GSA, especially those who were born in the Gold Coast/Ghana, including Mark Tregidgo, Clare Strong, Wendy Earle, Roderic Earle and others unknown to me. They should stand-by to continue the work of GSA when their elders hang up the gloves.

15. Here endeth Michael's letter from Accra, Ghana with best compliments and greetings from his family to all members of the GSA especially Sister Madge Claxton for whom we pray for speedy recovery from her illness.

Michael Asiedu (Nana Atta Nuamah III)
GSA Representative February 2002

Was the world changed by two former DC's, as the Archbishop said?

(By Bill Peters, former DC/GA/Regional Secretary
Tamale, Co-Founder of Jubilee 2000)

The events on the streets while the G8 Summit met in Genoa 20-22 July last year achieved wide press coverage, primarily because the G8, considering the state of the global economy, might take vital decisions affecting the lives of billions of people. Moreover, this was the first G8 Summit attended by Bush, chaired by similar novice-President, Berlusconi of Italy. The Genoa crowds from all continents had diverse aims. Most, dissatisfied in 2000 at Okinawa, wanted more cancellation of Heavily Indebted Poor Countries' (HIPC) debts and were convinced that the initial commitments given at Cologne in 1999 had been diluted. But many environmentalists, human rights advocates, feminists and critics of neo-liberal open market economic policies flocked in, some so disillusioned by the apparent immovability of the "powers and principalities" in Washington that, like the Paris crowds in 1789 and 1848 and Moscow's in 1917 and in 1991, they saw violence as their only recourse. Unfortunately, careful planning by Genoa Social Forum and peaceful NGO's to keep separate from the "anarchists" and their allies did not succeed completely. The media happily allowed a maximum of 5,000 of the latter, faced with a proactive police force (three senior members disciplined), to overshadow the pacific, good humour of 250-300,000 of the former. This suited a principal purpose of the G8 and the institutional aims of the WB/IMF, viz to divert grassroots and public attention from the precise, short-term aim of debt cancellation to the much vaguer long-term aim of halving poverty by 2015, along with even vaguer forecasts that globalising trade would sooner or later benefit the poor world-wide.

On the first day of the new millennium the Archbishop of Canterbury chose to describe Jubilee 2000 as "world changing". Post-Genoa, how does Jubilee 2000 measure up to that ambitious description? Our aim was

100% cancellation of the unpayable sovereign debt of 52 Highly Indebted Poor Countries on a case-by-case basis by 31 December 2000. Our method was to attract massive, grassroots support in not only indebted but also in rich countries. Our name helped. "Jubilee" was inspired by biblical injunctions (Deut. 15.1, Lev. 25.8-9) to the Israelites to establish septennial festivals to clear slates for those in communities impoverished by vicissitudes during the septennium, and two more comprehensive clearings each century. "2000" reflected the end of the second millennium, clearly a multiple of 50, and presented a spur to financial bureaucrats to sustain any momentum our campaign generated. It was also evident that our Christian base needed widening to all faith communities advocating compassion.

By 31 December 2000 we had over 24 million supporters from 160 countries. The majority were in developed countries, 5 million in the USA, 2.5 million in Britain, but 1.2 million in Bangladesh. Our message to politicians in developed countries was that in sizeable numbers electors were convinced of the need for debt cancellation in HIPCs. Lobbying from 1984 onwards in London had produced some improvements - many aid loans converted to grants, and payment levels for bilateral loans gradually eased (Trinidad Terms, etc). But until September 1996 the WB/IMF on bogus constitutional grounds opposed relief for multilateral loans. The WB announced its HIPC Initiative, the first major success of Jubilee 2000; we had shaken the citadel into a major policy change. But the Initiative was cumbersome and painfully slow - 5,000 economists' jobs rested in the status quo. By 31 December 2000 only 2 HIPCs had achieved partial remission, 9 more were progressing towards some remission and, as a dramatic millennial gesture, Wolfensohn announced that 11 more would enter the cancellation process ... by 2003.

In 1996 we reckoned that the 52 HIPCs owed \$350 billion unpayable debt. They pre-qualified for HIPC status when GNP was less than \$750 per head, debt unpayable if their debt service/GNP ratio was 80% or more, or the debt /service export of goods and service ratio 150% or more (WB/IMF ratios, not accepted by Jubilee 2000). Following launch of the HIPC initiative, concessions were won at the Birmingham and Cologne G8 meetings in 1998 and 1999. On a generous interpretation, - commitments not yet fulfilled were announced - \$100 billion of bilateral debt was to be cancelled and up to \$50 billion of multilateral debt designated under the HIPC Initiative (UK Treasury figures Feb.2001; totals at face, not discounted values). Hopes of further concessions at the 2000 and 2001 G8 Summits in Okinawa and Genoa

were vain: Both Summits' consensus was to divert pressure for cancellation by offers of help to enable poor countries to combat HIV/Aids and benefit from the IT revolution. More damagingly for Jubilee 2000, the end of the Millennium was used to spread the word "HIPC debt dealt with", and that the main focus for future attempts to close the rich-poor gap should be on the UN programme for halving poverty by 2015. This is economic nonsense; debt cancellation is the first step towards poverty reduction not an alternative to it; while a considerable debt overhang exists no HIPC will get the essential means for earning their way out of debt, foreign investment.

So Jubilee 2000, in UK renamed Jubilee Debt Campaign (UK) and in Scotland Jubilee Scotland, continues its campaign. We draw much moral support from gurus such as Amartya Sen and Ajit Singh. The former said recently of globalisation, "The real debate ... is, ultimately not about efficiency of markets nor about the importance of modern technology ... rather about inequality of -. power". The latter, of globalisation and liberalisation, "sub-optimal for both rich_and_poor countries and ... keeping the world economy performing below its potential". A recent Guardian article says "The poorest countries went from 1.9 growth per capita annually in 1960-80 to a decline of 0.5% in 1980-2000, figures foreshadowed by Josef Stiglitz, former Chief Economist, WB. From the beginning of our campaign our cardinal principle was that the needs and wishes of the people themselves, as expressed by sister organisations in southern HIPCs, must inform our efforts. So we have welcomed the formulation by four African leaders of a Millennium Plan for Africa (MAP) now, with typical arrogance, re-named by the G8 "the Genoa-Initiative for Africa", indeed the 2 co-founders of Jubilee 2000 helped the Economic Commission for Africa in Algeria in May to consolidate its infrastructure. We hope to see similar plans for Asia and Latin America, and that, eventually, all will be given clearance at a Summit of leaders of the indebted (the Big Table) and the creditor countries (the Development Aid Committee of OECD). Without refinancing of the IMF and World Bank these plans are pointless. So far slightly more than \$1 billion has been paid by OECD countries and \$2.5 billion promised to the HIPC Trust Fund from which cancellations will have to be financed (at net current values) if the WB and the IMF are to continue their normal business. The Pearson and Brandt reports recommended action such as this and proposed sources of automatic financing. The Tobin Tax is a late elaboration from these. How long can the WB and IMF, now branded with having failed in their development mission and greatly aggravated the poverty of HIPCs

by their mismanagement of debt, stand out against the weight of informed support for an act of global generosity ensuring that all may contribute to and benefit from globalisation?

MONEY - IN & OUT

During the year we received another grant of £500 from the Morel Trust and also one of £500 from the Gibbs Charitable Trust. We are exceedingly grateful to James Gibbs and his family trusts for this support; they support a wide range of small projects in Ghana and we much appreciate the inclusion of GSA in their number. We have thus received income of £1650 this year from various trusts (these two and Mercers Company for SOTL). Nevertheless our main source of income continues to consist of donations/Gift Aid from you, gentle readers, our members and supporters; though, reverting to a theme in previous newsletters, not ALL of you! To those who have given in the last year (and some have given very generously) we say a warm Thank you. If you can't remember when you last contributed, would you consult your records and get your cheque-book out please?! A note about Gift aid was given in the last newsletter and Stanley Anthony will be happy to supply details to anyone who writes to him. Donations amounting to approx. £2500 have been received up to 31 December as well as a Tax refund of £642. Total income since the Trust was set up in 1987 is approaching £70,000. On the expenditure front, grants totalling approx £8200 have been made this year, and total grants / provision of school books/ materials amount to some £56,000.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

It has been suggested from time to time that a list of members and their addresses should be circulated to enable people to contact old friends with whom they had lost touch. When this question was asked on the Lunch booking form the response was disappointing as only 30 members responded. The Secretary felt this did not provide a strong enough basis on which to proceed. At last year's AGM, the consensus of opinion among those present was that circulation of the list would be useful. The Committee is now minded to proceed subject to checking the Data Protection position. If you have strong views, for or against, would you let us know, by a note to the Secretary or me ? (addresses on last page).

WATER PRIVATISATION

Water privatisation is now on the agenda for Ghana and is not unconnected with the issues spelt out by Bill Peters. Through e-mails provided by Margaret Turner and my son Patrick in Australia, I can quote

the following recent message “Water is not a Commodity”! Dear Sisters and Brothers around the World, Our heartfelt thanks for all your support. The campaign to stop water privatisation is building in Ghana with support from the Christian Council, the TUC, the national Associations of Teachers and Nurses ... and other groups. World Bank and IMF policies require the Government of Ghana to increase water tariffs and privatise water to gain access to ... soft loans.” (from the Ghana National Coalition against Privatisation of Water). A recent Guardian article is headed “Cash and Carry misery in Ghana” and describes how a typical poor family has to pay at a bore-hole for a bucket of water. Surely the time is ripe for a rethink of World Bank and IMF policies. We shall return to this theme and I hope that our Patron, Lady Chalker, will contribute to the discussion from her expert knowledge and experience in the field of overseas aid and development. A recent circular from the World Development Movement seeks support for the campaign to stop these developments (their address: 25 Beehive Place, London SW9 7QR. Tel.020 7738 3311.).

MP supports Cocoa Co-op

Linda Gilroy, Labour and Co-operative MP for Plymouth and a noted chocaholic has introduced Divine Fair Trade chocolate into the House of Commons. Her appetite for Divine chocolate was whetted when she visited the Ghanaian chocolate co-operative last year. Ms Gilroy told the village elders about how the Rochdale pioneers founded the co-operative movement, pointing out that from this small local initiative a world-wide movement had emerged.

Guildford Millennium Games

A follow-up to the report in the November 1999 Newsletter: the bulk of the large amount of sports equipment collected by the Games and donated to GSA was collected by the Wulugu Project and shipped by them to northern Ghana, where it has been much appreciated. A final consignment was handed over (see photo) by the Borough in April last year to Eric and Councillor Auriol Earle and delivered to Kobby Yebo-Okrah of the Ghana Universities Office, who made arrangements for it to be sent to Cape Coast for some of the schools there. The photo records the handing over of a quantity of sweat-shirts, T-shirts, tennis & squash racquets and other equipment.

Some useful addresses: Eric Earle, 1 Western Down, Guildown Road, Guildford, Surrey GU2 5EW. Tel.01483 562690. Alan Mayhew, Cooper's Cottage, Horsecombe Vale, Combe Down, Bath BA2 5QR. Stanley Anthony, 8 Campion Terrace, Leamington Spa, CV32 4SX.

TOM SOUTHERN

contributed by Eric Cunningham.

Readers who knew Tom will be saddened by the news of his death in October 2001. He was one of a number of education officers appointed to the Gold Coast who continued to serve after Independence and he retired in 1960 as a Principal Education Officer. After early postings which included Koforidua, Accra (where he was DEO) and Cape Coast (REO) he moved to Tamale where he taught English in the Government Secondary School, becoming Headmaster when Pat Pattinson was posted to Accra as Deputy CEO. He was well liked by his students and his colleagues and, together with his lively wife ‘Tommy’, kept open house in their bungalow for a wide range of staff, students and friends. Many of his former pupils went on to achieve success in a wide range of fields and he took both pride and pleasure in their success. After leaving Ghana, Tom joined the British Council as an English Language Officer and served in a number of countries including Pakistan, Zambia and Argentina. On retirement from the Council, Tom and Tommy and their family lived in Poole, in the house which they had built there. The sudden death of Tommy, only months after the first Ghana Reunion which they had helped to organise, was a devastating blow to him and before long, he moved to Cornwall, enjoying the remoteness of a village near St. Just and the company of Quentin and Karen. Sadly, he was not in good health in recent years, but he was able to pay his respects at Brice Bending’s funeral and reminisce with other mourners. Our sympathies go to his children Alison, Quentin, Karen (who spent their early childhood in Tamale) and Tamale (named after).





BOOKSHELF

British Empire & Commonwealth Museum, Bristol
 - some of you will have joined the BECM as a Friend and will therefore have seen the interesting newsletters which they produce. Strongly recommended. They are now running the BECM Bookclub and in a recent issue reviewed Philip Dennis' splendid memoir "Goodbye to Pith Helmets", which was published last year. Another interesting read is the Corona Anthology "Glimpses of Empire" edited by the indefatigable Tony Kirk-Greene. Some of you may have met that radical figure Thomas Hodgkin in the years after the war; if so, you will enjoy the recently published "Letters from Africa 1947-56" - impressions he gathered on journeys at a turning point in Africa's history; mostly written to his wife Dorothy. Has anyone read the recent autobiography by George Alagiah "A Passage to Africa"? He arrived in Accra with his family in 1961 and went to primary school there. A volunteer for a review for the next newsletter please! And just to mention something completely different: "Letters from the Gold Coast" by Princess Marie Louise, published in 1926 - a fascinating insight into some aspects of life "on the Coast" at the height of Empire, not so very long ago (after all John Wilson, Robbie's first boss, and my tutor at the I of E in 1951-52, joined the Education Service only two or three years later. And just to bring us totally up to date: an article in the Guardian, 20 March 2002, is headed Rebirth of a Nation, British consortium wins contract to 'rebrand' Ghana. A member of the consortium is Elsie Owusu, architect, who has just been elected the first black member of the Council of the National Trust.

AND FINALLY...

- warm thanks to a number of people and first and foremost to Pamela Lewis, who has relinquished the office of Secretary on her recent move back to her native Wales. During the past seven years since she took over from the late Warren Shaw, Pam has been quite indefatigable in keeping the GSA show on the road in all sorts of ways, including membership records, details of grants; and more recently arranging the annual reunion Lunch. She will be much missed, but I'm glad to say she is continuing as a Committee member. We are fortunate that Alan Mayhew, who joined the Committee after he and his wife attended their first Lunch two years ago, has taken on the role of Secretary. Grateful thanks too to John Whittingham and Stanley Anthony for their work as Treasurer (John has been Treasurer since the Trust was set up in 1987) and GiftAid Administrator; and to Ted Mayne for his support as Vice-Chairman and his valuable role in checking on projects and linking with Michael Asiedu on visits to Ghana. Which brings me to Nana Michael, old friend and colleague, who has recently done a tremendous amount of work in organising the Schools On The Line project, and before that the arrangements for distribution of the Ghana Book Publishers' books to schools, as well as supervising other projects and reporting on them. He is indefatigable, as demonstrated by his report in this issue ! Finally, a warm word of appreciation to Kobby Yebo-Okrah and his colleagues in the Universities of Ghana office, where we hold our committee meetings, for their warm welcome and hospitality to us. And once again thankyou to Accra-born Rod Earle, without whose computer-skills and help this newsletter (and the last two) would not have been possible.

ERIC EARLE

