Chairman’s Report
Given to the AGM and Reunion Lunch
12 June 2014

AKWAABA!
It was four years ago that we witnessed the success of Ghana’s footballers when they came within a kick of reaching the World Cup Semi Finals. That in itself was a remarkable achievement, and as the thirty-two nations assemble again, all of us involved in Ghana School Aid will be following them once again. The last football World Cup took place in South Africa and since then South Africa has lost its greatest son, Nelson Mandela. He was an icon who strove for most of his life to improve the quality of life of his people and his primary aim was education. He regarded schooling as essential and a path to a better future and, shortly after his release from detention after serving 27 years in prison, he was appalled at the limited schooling available to so many of his people and he said “MAKE EVERY HOME, EVERY SHACK OR RICKETY STRUCTURE A CENTRE OF LEARNING”. These were brave words and we who are assembled here today, along with our supporters, are building on Mandela’s vision.

For us we have had an interesting year and continue to make progress. Our supporters may have been reduced in numbers but we continue to grow in other ways. Since our last
meeting, when we were addressed by Lalage Bown, a true stalwart of education in Africa, we have seen our projects prosper in so many different ways. From the Sandema project in the north where Patrick Heinecke strives so manfully to keep this project running, to the School of the Good Shepherd on the coast near to Kasoa, we have enabled struggling educational establishments not only to survive but also to grow and prosper. One has only to look at the Volta Region where Penny Sewell is so active monitoring two schools which have literally grown from nothing into successful schools which have been funded by GSA. Likewise in Bolgatanga Jo Hallett’s regular trips ensure that the Ghana Let’s Read project remains on the rails. We now have plans to help in Tamale as a result of the interest shown by [our Patron] Paul Boateng and having our Representative Baako in that area, we have someone on site to keep us fully updated on their progress.

We recently noted the death of Bill Peters who was an active supporter of GSA. He originally came on board following a successful global partnership gathering in the Barbican [London]. He was an old African hand and was at our reunions until recently. [An obituary of Bill is included on page 23].

Our two Patrons remain very supportive but sadly cannot be with us today. I was in touch with Baroness Chalker recently and she expressed her disappointment at not being able to come today. On my part I must express my appreciation to Paul Boateng who has given us a lot of support and his donations through his speaking engagements have ensured that our funds remain healthy and we can now embark on ambitious programmes in areas otherwise untouched. Paul has also helped out with visa applications for GSA sponsored students keen to visit the UK.

I could go on at length about our work but will refrain from doing so because our website is kept up to date [by Penny Sewell] and it contains details of what we are doing. This is thanks to our hard-working committee members who have mastered modern IT. The committee has worked tirelessly to keep the show on the road. Our quarterly meetings present us with opportunities to discuss the needs of those applying for assistance and there is always full agreement on what should be our priorities. Nigel Dennis recently joined the committee to help with the accounts. This will be of some relief to Stanley Anthony who has held the fort for so long. Yes thank you committee, and as we enter another year, may those earlier words of Nelson Mandela be our foundation for the future.

Thank you all for your support.

Ted Mayne

Children in Sirigu say thank you to GSA. See Jo Hallett’s report on Let’s Read Ghana, page 10
Other items from the 2014 AGM were included in the minutes by Jo Hallett:

Stanley Anthony presented the accounts for 2012 – 2013. He noted that our expenditure exceeded our income in 2013 – 2014 by nearly £3,000. It is the aim of the committee to use our resources to support educational initiatives in Ghana, rather than leaving a large amount in the bank!

Income included several donations in memory of late members of the Ghana School Aid, as well as donations from fund-raising events through Just Giving. The list of items under expenditure illustrates the wide range of projects that GSA is currently supporting.

Stanley welcomed the support and help of Nigel Dennis, who will take over as treasurer before long. Ted said that a huge thank you should be given to Stanley for his work as treasurer over many years – a task undertaken with such “aplomb and efficiency”. Lalage Bown proposed a vote of thanks and appreciation for all the work that Stanley has done, and that was seconded.

Lynne Symonds of the Wulugu Project thanked Ghana School Aid for their support during the past year. We heard from David Mustil about the progress at the Good Shepherd School at Kasoa. Sonia Hinton told us about the work of the Sabre Trust in supporting and encouraging KG education in the Cape Coast area, through the training of KG teachers in conjunction with the GES and Ola College. Lalage Bown told us that she had recently met up with two people who had been VSOs in Ghana many decades ago. That experience had had a significant impact on both their lives.

In the afternoon session, we heard progress reports on a number of projects that are supported by GSA. Penny Sewell gave us an update on the work at the Joe Bedu Primary school and the Cambridge Bethel School. Jo Hallett spoke of her recent visit to UER to work with 11 schools near Paga, with the Let’s Read scheme, partnered with AfriKids. Susannah Mayhew told of a visit to the Cape Coast Primary school, and the classroom built in memory of Alan Mayhew. She also told us that Rita Ayeebo is happy to be the GSA representative in UER. Patrick Heinecke updated us on the Sandema community radio project and spoke passionately about the many inequalities between life in the north of Ghana and the south. Dr Anafu spoke in support of the Firm Foundations Academy in Bolgatanga. He also emphasised the deprivation of the northern territories, from colonial times onward. Letitia Boateng told the great success story of Abonse School and its link to Figeldean in UK, and the important part that GSA funding had provided. She said that “A journey of 1000 miles starts with the first step” - and said a big thank you to Ghana School Aid for its support.

[More information on many of these projects is in the News and Projects section, pages 10 - 21]
BAAKO’S VISIT TO ENGLAND
October 2014

by Alhassan Salifu Baako, Headteacher, Kanvilli Tawfikiya Islamic JHS and GSA Representative, Tamale, Ghana. [With additional material by Sue Hewlett, Committee Member GSA and former teacher at Stutton Primary School]

My visit to England in October this year was like a dream. It was my first visit to the UK. Earlier plans by Sue Hewlett and GSA for me to be there to participate in the AGM on 12th June 2014 failed because we were unable to get the visa in time. It was then rescheduled for a ten day visit in October.

I left Accra on board the Air Portugal on 2nd October at 10.15pm local time on transit to Lisbon and arrived at 3.30am, then left Lisbon at 9.05am for London and arrived at Heathrow at about 11.30am. After going through the immigration procedures I was then shown the way out wondering how to find my way through the many people to meet Sue, and her friend Ian [Heywood, a musician who worked at Stutton] who had promised to meet me. Lucky me, after walking for a while and eagerly looking carefully to identify them, I spotted them also patiently looking keenly to find me. I just walked straight to them and I was warmly received with broad smiles on our faces. After a short discussion we then headed towards the train station to travel to Stutton. On our way to the station I said to myself, now that I am in safe hands I can be walking and looking at the numerous wonders of technology found in almost everything. People also looked very smart in their movement not excluding my host. Sometimes they had to wait and look back to be sure that I was following them.

We travelled by train and tube, my very first experience and a lot of interesting things to see. Our journey by train ended at Manningtree, where Bill, Sue’s husband picked us to take us home in his car to Stutton.

The next day Kassim [Kassim Prince, a Ghanaian friend who has lived in Ipswich for many years and supported Stutton School’s link and always helped visiting teachers] paid us a visit from Ipswich and I went back with him and both of us returned to Stutton the next day (Sunday). An honour was bestowed on me as the committee members of ‘Stutton Grows’ led by the secretary, Bill, organized for me to plant an oak sapling in their new wood to mark my visit and to promote unity between the people of Northern Ghana and of Stutton. The oak tree was said to have a life span of 800 years. We were shown round the wood and other trees planted earlier by some people from Northern Ghana. I was surprised to see vegetation like that around the country side. You could still see some wild animals such as the antelopes, squirrels, geese among others in their natural home unharmed by people and large river birds also found by the river side.
After the activities in the forest we then moved home and prepared for the French Game, [petanque] a game that attracted many in the community. It is played by throwing a small metal ball at a target from a reasonable distance. One of the good things about the game was that both the young and the elderly played it. At the end of the day Bill’s team won the cup. Bill and his son, David, helped me to practise how to play the game.

On Monday 6th October, Sue and I drove to Brantham and crossed the river Stour to Manningtree, Bradfield and Wix, all in Essex. We crossed back across River Stour to East Bergholt in Suffolk. In the afternoon I joined Sue to serve voluntarily in the Stutton Community Shop for two hours. I admired volunteers’ commitment working in the shop in turns. I had an opportunity to study the currency and coins and giving change using the sales machine after making sales.

On Tuesday the 7th Sue and I visited the Stutton Primary, a well organised school which has a link with Nawuni Primary in the Northern Region of Ghana. We spent appreciable time with the pupils and teachers. They were all happy meeting us and so were we.

We carried along items such as the calabash, unity stool, broom, bracelets, chewing sticks, stool, sponge, toys and pictures typically of Ghana as teaching and learning materials and the map of Ghana to show the pupils the location of Tamale and Yendi in Ghana. Pupils were happy to see and handle the items and learned more about what the items were made of and the uses. I had good interaction with the pupils and teachers. They asked a lot of funny and interesting questions as we moved from one class to the other which I answered in turn. As a teacher, I had the opportunity to compare learning behaviours between the pupils and my school pupils in Ghana. By the time we left the school the pupils with the help of their teachers had done some exercises on what we had discussed and they brought the work to me to see and they were able to give accurate answers; that was a good learning habit.

On Wednesday 8th October Sue and I left Stutton early in the morning to attend the GSA meeting in London. As usual we travelled by train and tube. The venue was the Royal Festival Hall. Members of the committee travelled from far and near to have a meeting with me and for us to know each other for the first time. They met me with enthusiasm. Those who could not attend the meeting called me earlier and apologised with good reasons why they could not make it to the meeting; to me this alone was an honour done me.
The meeting was chaired by Ted Mayne. I felt proud in their midst as they were all glad to meet me. I was regarded as the special guest and I also admired them for their dedication to voluntary service to the organisation with the common intention of bringing relief to needy schools in Ghana. I was given the opportunity to explain my role for GSA in the Northern Region of Ghana, regarding support given to schools. I explained that, after being informed by a school requesting support, I visit the school to interact with the headteacher and teachers, look at the project and meet the stakeholders for a discussion on the importance of the project to the community and also find out what contribution and role would they play if support is given. After gathering all the necessary information I then ask them to write their application, addressed to the GSA chair through me. I then add pictures of the project and forward it to GSA together with my recommendation letter from my observations about the project on the ground for consideration. If a project is approved and funding is made available for it, I do follow up visits and monitor the use of funds to ensure that the school and community spend the money judiciously on the project and I take receipts for materials bought and report to GSA on the progress of the project as it moves from one level to the other. I presented pictures of completed projects, ongoing ones and also fresh applications at the meeting. Members gave me a good hearing and asked questions where necessary for further deliberation. We took pictures and they showed me a few things around before we departed company.

On our way back to the train station to return to Stutton, Sue took me to see the London Bridge, the Tower and visited the National Gallery among other interesting things.

While in Stutton I spent some good time with Ian who visited Tamale with Sue in 2005. We talked for a long time about that. I also went to Felixstowe where Bill works and visited other beautiful places there. I met Felix, the grandson of the Hewletts, with his parents, Christopher and Jessica in Colchester. Felix and my son Danna, who are children about the same age are friends and we hope they grow to know each other well and strengthen their friendship.

Throughout my stay in Stutton, Sue and her husband, Bill treated me exceptionally. They were always concerned about my health from what I wear to keep me warm to what I eat as well as my general welfare. My accommodation was excellent and Sue would always ask if I was warm enough with what I wear either when I was going to bed or whenever we were going out. She always made sure I wore enough clothes. She sometimes had to set fire in the chimney to keep the living room warm and in my bedroom she would ask me to turn on the heater when I was cold. Although I always wore a singlet, a thick shirt, a long-sleeve shirt, a sweater and a cap, then two trousers and socks and when I was in bed there was a thick cover- cloth to cover myself in addition to my clothes, upon all that, I sometimes had to turn on the heater for a while.
However, whenever we met friends outside and they asked me how I felt about the weather, I always told them it was not too bad, and they would always tell me that I was lucky I came at a time the weather was better. I was always surprised to hear that because to me it was very cold.

Bill was a very good cook. He cooks for the house and treated me to a lot of the British diet. Apart from potatoes and rice, all the other foods were new to me and each day he prepared a different kind of food for us. He would always inform me first what he would cook for the day. I enjoyed every food he prepared. He would always ask to know how I felt about each meal I took and I would tell him it was good. There was a day he asked me about a particular meal which was very strange to me in taste and I replied him that it was manageable. This made him laugh. None of the food actually disturbed me in anyway. I never lacked food to eat. Most often they would ask if I needed to take tea, etc.

Most people in England have dogs as their pets and Sue has one. She is called Bosun. We often took her for a walk early in the morning along the fields and rivers. We walked between one and one and half hours, a good exercise for all of us.

Sunday 12th October 2014 was my tenth and last day in England. Early in the morning we took our breakfast together and Sue bid to me a hearty farewell. We set off in Bill’s car at 7.00am to catch my flight at Heathrow airport scheduled for 11.00am to return to Ghana through Lisbon on TAP Portugal Air. Bill kept me company throughout the journey to the airport and saw me through at the airport till we got to a point he could not go further. There, he shook hands with me well before we parted company saying good bye to each other.

I cherished every bit of my time living with the Hewletts for their hospitality and support right from getting the visa to buying the ticket and embarking on the journey. I was therefore not surprised to hear at the GSA meeting that Sue footed the cost of my trip and I say bravo to her and the husband. Again I thank all the members of GSA Committee who made time with me at the Royal Festival Hall in London as space would not allow me to list their names. I also thank all the members of Stutton Grows and teachers of Stutton Primary School and all friends I made in Stutton, for without their company my trip would have been in vain. Although I sometimes have to strain my ears in order to understand them when they speak due to their accent and ask them to come again with their message, nonetheless my trip has been very successful indeed and would remain an everlasting memory I shall always remember.

Sue Hewlett adds:

The Link Teacher [at Stutton] remains keen to try and strengthen the link with Nawuni School, which has received grants from GSA. Baako is hopeful that, because the school now has a more settled staff, the link will develop. He will do all he can to monitor its progress and to support the staff at Nawuni, even though the work entails a long, dangerous journey by moped.

It is certain that the highlight of Baako’s ten days in the UK was the meeting with GSA members. He explained very clearly how he works with schools that request money from GSA. He is firm about the need to show what the school itself is prepared to do towards a project, and ensures that parents are well-informed about
how the process must work from GSA’s point of view. It was clearly an honour for Baako to meet Letitia [Boateng] and they made plans to keep in touch. I understand that there is also a plan for Patrick [Heinecke] to meet Baako next time he is in Tamale. All of these links will of course be beneficial to the work undertaken by GSA as these experts in different regions will learn from each other about effective ways of helping communities.

Baako appeared to love Suffolk. He managed to endure a whole afternoon of petanque at our local pub, watched golf at Felixstowe and accompanied me on early morning dog walks. Many have commented on his charisma and enthusiasm for the UK.
WILLIAM TURNER
by Eric Cunningham

Newsletter readers who have seen the film Mr Turner [by British director Mike Leigh] may be surprised, as I was, to learn that the painter had a connection, albeit tenuous, with the Gold Coast. One scene in the film is of a visit to William Turner by Sarah Danby and his two unacknowledged daughters by her, Evelina and Georgiana, together with Evelina’s infant child. Evelina’s husband was Joseph Dupuis, whom she married when she was 17. He was appointed British consul in Kumasi to negotiate with the Asantehene following Bowdich’s visit in 1817. Publication of Bowdich’s account of what he had seen and learned there had astonished the western world and promoted huge interest in Ashanti.

Joseph Dupuis and Evelina arrived at Cape Coast on 24 January 1819 on board the store ship Sarah. Evelina was then some seven months pregnant. Dupuis records the birth of their son (William Turner’s putative first grandchild) two months later on 17 March. It appears that the child did not survive, for there is no further record of him. Joseph and Evelina left Cape Coast in April 1820 on board HMS Tartar, to return to England via Freetown.

Dupuis’ service as consul in Kumasi was controversial. He antagonised the Cape Coast merchants by reminding them that his was a Crown appointment, and the treaty he drew up with the Asantehene was never ratified, for inter alia it gave the Asantehene the authority over the Fantis he claimed, a sure recipe for conflict. It appears that while Dupuis was engaged in Kumasi Evelina, his wife, remained in Cape Coast.

Evelina’s arrival, pregnant, in Cape Coast is clear evidence that European wives were on the Gold Coast much earlier than has been popularly believed. William Hutton, who accompanied Dupuis to Kumasi, sailed for the Coast in 1816 with five ladies among his fellow passengers.
In April/May this year, four Sirigu headteachers were invited to come to the UK on a 2-week working visit. They spent time in schools in London, Coventry and Durham, observing teaching styles and the way that schools are run in UK. We held lengthy discussions after these visits to tease out which things they had seen could be transferred to their own schools back in Ghana. Of course there was time for sightseeing too! This group of 4 have become the LR support group in the Sirigu circuit, with a deeper understanding of our methods, encouraging change in their own schools and in other nearby schools. They are an invaluable part of making Let’s Read sustainable.

Interestingly, some of the schools that have made most progress are the schools in the worst buildings. And class size is not always a good indicator of effective learning (though some of the largest classes do present a considerable challenge).

Our conclusions are that the most important factors enabling children to make good progress are the attitude of the teacher and the effectiveness of the teaching. We have assessed children’s learning with regular testing. At first some teachers were suspicious and felt that the results were a personal criticism, but they have
all come to see that objective assessment can be a useful tool to guide their future teaching. We have encouraged them to assess alongside us and then on their own. The criteria for a good lesson is not the scholarship of the presentation, but the progress of the pupils!

In a recent school assessment for GES by another NGO, the schools involved in Let’s Read far outshone the others, with significant improvements in scores. [See page 23 for chart].

Where next for Let’s Read?
Working in close partnership with AfriKids, a child rights NGO based in Bolgatanga, we have agreed to extend Let’s Read to two more circuits, near to Sirigu – a total of 20 more schools – in two phases. The key elements of headteacher and teacher workshops, phonics training and ongoing classroom support will be maintained, but we feel confident that we can achieve the same level of progress in learning with a smaller range of teaching materials. So – exciting times ahead! More information is at www.letsreadghana.com
Abonse / Aseseeso Update

by Letitia Boateng

Abonse Projects

In the newsletter of 2012/2013, I reported that GSA had provided a grant of £1500 for the complete installation of ceiling, doors, windows and louvres to the Primary 1 & 2 block. I am pleased to inform you that the work has been done. In February 2014, £1100 was kindly granted for plastering, flooring and painting to finish the project. This job has also been completed and the end result is a much appreciated beautiful school building.

Abonse will forever be grateful and thankful to GSA for the positive impact our work has had on the children, the community and the village. [See the cover image of children holding up signs which spell out ‘GSA We Love You’].

Back in 1982 a diaspora from Abonse and Aseseeso living in the UK, came together and formed an association called The Aseseeso - Abonse Citizens Association, of which I am a member. Our aim, among other things, was to assist in the promotion of education in our two sister towns, Abonse and Aseseeso.

Incidentally, a shed at that time was sadly a classroom for JSS, now JHS (Junior High School). Primary 1 to 6 were having classes in a Presbyterian Church building. A disturbing situation indeed. Adhering to our objectives, the association provided materials and cost of labour for foundation work for a badly needed JHS block.

Eventually, the School Link was established and GSA came in to help complete two beautiful blocks for JHS and Primary 1 & 2. Abonse has every reason to commend GSA for their fantastic work, the fruits of which have started changing lives of many children.

Academically, exam results get better each year. Achievement in the BECE (Basic Education Certificate Examination) rose from 27% to 87% last year and steadily hit the target mark of 100% this year. An outstanding record to be proud of!! One can say with certainty that this great accomplishment has come to pass as a result of the pleasant and conducive learning environment provided by GSA, and of cause the result of tremendous input from a strong team of teachers headed by Patrick Nyanteh. You may remember that, once upon a time, for about 10 long years before the link, Abonse School was languishing.

Children from Abonse Primary 1 & 2 attending lessons in their completed classrooms

Children from Abonse Primary 1 & 2 outside their completed classrooms
in a pit of 0%. Having come out of their terrible misery, I hope and pray that complacency will not set in again. The unfortunate situation at the moment is that, although the children are now passing their exams, some of them do not continue to secondary school because their parents are unable to afford the cost.

The Link Sponsorship Programme helped many children to have further education but due to economic constraints, the programme stopped about 3 years ago when 3 students were in their second year. With much difficulty, I continued to sponsor them till they finished last year. Luckily, my brother has joined in and both of us are sponsoring 2 students at the moment. Please, if anybody wants to help a child, or if you know someone who is thinking of sponsoring a child, I would be grateful if you would contact me on 0208-571-9345 or 07741-985634.

**Link News**

The coordinator for St. Michael School in Figheldaen, Mrs. Anne Wilkins retired in August 2014 and has not been replaced yet. She has however volunteered to assist until her successor is found.

Abonse attended a workshop on Grant Application for Teacher Exchange Programme, organised by the British Council in Accra in September 2014. The required Grant Application Forms will be submitted in due course, and it is hoped that the next teacher exchange will take place late in 2015.

Eric Earle’s grand daughter, Chloe expressed her desire to go to Ghana to teach for a few weeks during her vacation period. Incidentally, the Head of Abonse School, Patrick was visiting Figheldaen so they discussed her plans and Chloe was granted the opportunity to teach at Abonse. Her arrival coincided with an installation (enstoolment) of a new chief. The experience, she said, was amazing. She may attend the next AGM to tell us all about her trip to Ghana.

With regard to Aseseeso School, the average BECE exam result is 52%. The head and all concerned are doing whatever is necessary to improve performance in future. Unfortunately, the school has had 3 headteachers in quick succession and that has made it difficult to organise School Link activities. The headteacher situation seems to be stable now, so Kate Regan has introduced staff in both schools to get the link between John O’Gaunt and Aseseeso going again.

At the beginning of October 2014 Kate [Regan] and I met with the Governor of John O’Gaunt, Penny Locke and a couple of teachers to find a way forward. We prioritised communication, so John O’Gaunt has sent a laptop and mobile phone to Aseseeso to facilitate correspondence. A skype chat was planned for late November 2014. John O’Gaunt had a Special Activity Day for Year 7 students some few days after our meeting. The theme, which was run by the English and Music teachers, was GHANA (Assesso in particular). All the year 7 students wrote letters to their friends at Aseseeso to set the ball rolling. There was also an exhibition in the school library featuring the Link and History of Ghana. Ghanaian artifacts were also displayed.
A Visit To The Hartley Trust Foundation School

Earlier this year I had the pleasure to visit The Hartley Trust Foundation School at Kasoa, near Winneba. I was accompanied by the Head of Abonse School, Patrick Nyanteh. We were warmly welcomed by the Acting Head Mr. William Doe. After a short conversation in his office, he took us round the school from Creche to JHS 3. The compound, the classrooms and the smartness of the children was very impressive. I was delighted when former pupils who are now teachers were introduced to us. I complimented them for giving back what they gained when they were younger.

Proceeding from one classroom to another and talking to both teachers and pupils, it became apparent that flooding in the school is a big problem. A problem that is far beyond GSA ability and which is not within our objectives.

I was thrilled to see the commemorative plaque mounted in remembrance of our late member and friend David Bradshaw. If I may remind you, donations from David’s funeral and additional funds from GSA were sent to Kasoa to complete the JHS 2 & 3 block.

The General Administrator, Mr. Samuel Nyarko and Ms. Ruby Alhassan, manageress of the Non Teaching Staff joined us in a lengthy conversation, mainly about the school and GSA. Ms. Alhassan attended our Annual General Meeting when she visited UK in 2011. It was nice to see her again.

Some pictures were taken in front of the plaque and I returned to Abonse content that I was able to make the trip. I hope to be able to visit more of the schools we support when I go back to Ghana, probably early 2015.
**Other Projects**

*by Jo Hallett*

**Wechiau Community Library UWR**

This very active community library in the far north-west of Ghana has been supported by Ghana School Aid in the past with a grant for books for their mobile library. They were clearly delighted with the money we gave them and sent us photographs and lists of the books they have bought. They included photos of the Community Reading Clinic and a Spelling Bee competition, as well as the books themselves. Their latest project is the installation of solar power in the library itself – and the purchase of 100 solar lamps for children to use in their own communities. This will enable children to read and do homework in the evenings, and the library to be open for a longer period each day. We are particularly pleased that they have chosen sustainable energy for this project.

Frank Dugassee, who is the founder and motivator for this innovative project was recently selected for the new Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. This is part of the citation from the US Embassy Ghana:

> “Frank started the first ever Mobile Library Service (MLS) in Northern Ghana with 5 story books on a bicycle after his National Service in 2007. Through social media and families he collected over 2000 reading materials and funding to purchase a van to reach more in the rural communities. In 2011 he founded the Wechiau Community Library in Wa to augment MLS.

The library has been transformed into a self-sustaining social enterprise, which is improving the level of literacy and numeracy of people in rural communities. Currently the library has a collection of over 3,000 reading materials and serves close to 1,500 children in 5 districts across the Upper West Region. The library’s inclusive approach welcomes the visually impaired with appropriate materials, and gathers over 400 annually for the regional spelling bee.

Imagine that Frank accomplished all this in his spare time while working in other positions. Frank currently works with AngloGold Ashanti Malaria Control Limited (AGAMal) as a District Operations Manager for Garu-Tempane in the Upper East Region. He holds Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Technology from the University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale.

Congratulations Frank, one of 500 participants for the 2014 Washington Fellowship! #YALIGhana #Ghana #YALICHAT”

**Firm Foundations Academy Bolgatanga**

Dr Anafu addressed the 2014 AGM and told us about this relatively new school on the outskirts of Bolgatanga. Dorothy Abaah wrote:

> “The school was started in September 2010 as a response to the crisis in education in the Bolgatanga district. And in that period, it has made progress in the teeth of considerable difficulties. To their credit, the parents refuse to be diverted by these difficulties and are resolved to do all they can within their limited means to keep their school going. This is heartening, coming as it does from a parent body of mainly subsistence farmers, but it is not enough in the context of what the school now needs to move..."
forward.

The school will be entering its fifth academic year in September. For this, a new classroom block will need to be built. The estimated cost of this classroom block is between £1,200 and £1,400, inclusive of labour, building materials and fittings.”

They also expressed a need for computers and books.

A member of GSA attending the AGM kindly gave £700 towards this project, and GSA gave a grant of another £700 – making a total of £1400 for their new classroom block.

Gbedema JHS, UER

We were contacted by Elizabeth Howe, a Peace Corps volunteer working at Gbedema School near Fumbisi, UER. She wrote:

“Gbedema JHS is in the Builsa South district 20 km south of Sandema on the Fumbisi road. We are a GES school with 225 pupils in 3 classrooms. Only form 3 has electricity from a solar panel and some of the top students were studying in the evenings and over the weekends prior to their BECE this year. The school has a small space in the Primary School (which has electricity) for the JHS’s 5 desktop computers. I take 15 pupils at a time and leave the other 60+ alone in their classroom to copy from the board and do exercises. In effect, with all the disruptions of the timetable etc., pupils get 1 hour a term in the lab. The PTA and village elders have asked for help to renovate an old classroom with an electricity pole outside to make a new and larger computer lab. I applied for a Peace Corps Grant and it has been approved. The community has to supply 25% of the cost in labour and in kind and this has been met. Last Friday Sept 5th we went to buy the materials for the carpenter to start work.”

Firm Foundations Academy classroom under construction
Elizabeth was requesting money for a digital projector and GSA agreed a grant of £500.

**Sabre Trust**  
(Supporting Africa By Rural Endeavours)

Sonia Hinton from the Sabre Trust spoke to us at our AGM in June 2014 about their work.

With the motto – “working in partnership with local education authorities to build a brighter future for school children in Ghana” – the Sabre Trust is supporting and encouraging KG education in the Cape Coast area, through the training of KG teachers, in conjunction with the GES and Ola College. Ghana School Aid was able to help them in 2013 with a grant for KG resource boxes and in 2014 with a larger grant to enable 3 teachers to complete their training. This is a 2-year programme, aiming to benefit 116 KG teachers, 16 headteachers and 1,460 pupils.

**Save Our Future Leaders Foundation**

“This Future Leaders Foundation is about Educating, Supporting, Mentoring, Encouraging and Nurturing Children in Ghana to attain their maximum Potential”

This is taken from the request for funding that we received from Patricia Akpene Tegbe-Agbo (Secretary of SOFLF).

“Vakpo is a rural community in the North Dayi District of the Volta Region of Ghana. It consists of 15 clustered communities, with a total of 14,600 residents with at least 8 schools both private and public.

The Vakpo Community is through communal labour and voluntary contributions undertaking the construction of a Children’s Library for Save Our Future Leaders Foundation, a non-governmental organization that supports orphans of HIV/AIDS victims and destitute children. The Chiefs and citizens from both home and abroad decided to embark on this humanitarian enterprise to bring smiles back to the faces of these unfortunate children to enable them to realize their full potentials. Unfortunately, the project has come to a standstill due to shortage of materials and other logistics.

The successful completion of the library project would boost education in general and enhance reading among school children and the public in particular. The presence of a community library will definitely increase the level of the children’s education. It is hopeful that the reading population as compared to present will become higher, and there will be more passes leading to intelligent/productive children in Vakpo and its environs.”

GSA agreed a grant of £750 for the project.

**Mother of Mercy School and Dazongo School**

Two of the Sirigu schools applied for grants from GSA. Mother of Mercy RC Primary School received £500 for maintenance of their building and Dazongo Primary School was given £500 for desks in an empty classroom. Both schools are making good progress in organisation, and teaching and learning, but have great challenges with poor buildings and furniture.
Desks for Wulugu Project
August 2013
by Lynne Symonds

Wulugu project has just celebrated 20 years of working in Northern Region, Ghana.

In that time we have built or renovated over 40 primary schools and provided desks for more, in an area three times that of Wales. 200,000 children have benefitted.

Northern Ghana is a highly spiritual area with 45% strong Christians and about 50% strong Muslims and they live in harmony together. The Pastor of Wulugu village told us of his very active Church with women’s groups, men’s groups, choir practice, youth group and amazing Sunday meetings. Their building is tiny but their congregation large. When we open a new School, there is a Durbar or celebration, which is attended by the Chief, the Pastor and the Imam. If the Pastor gives the opening prayer, the Imam will provide the closing prayer or vice versa. The approval of these three men is very important to the school and encourages the parents to send all their children to school. This is especially important for the Muslim girls.

We have just received a promise of funding for 4 extra class-rooms at Pilo which at the moment has only 3 rooms for 450 pupils and most classes are held under the trees. Pilo is 10 miles north west of Tamale where you already have contacts and is the village of many of our skilled building team. The builders will work extra hard and for reduced rates(!) as they are building ‘their school’. Many of them have worked with us for over 10 years so they have been very patient. We hope to start building as soon as the funds actually arrive and when the rains stop. The School should take 2 to 3 months to finish. We need to find funding for the 120 new desks required at this school.

Our desks are made of strong wood, often teak which has to be shipped 200km north, from the southern tropical rain forest, to Tamale. (Northern region has very few trees as it is so dry). The wood is cut to size, shaped and planed smooth and then packed onto a lorry for transport, in the dry season, to the village. Here they are assembled by the local carpenters to
make sturdy double desk with seat units. These are robust, often seat 3 pupils and should last for at least 10 years.

3 children a year for 10 years = 30 children per desk. And all for £30 each. A bargain.
(And 3 groups of skilled Ghanaian craftsmen are employed).

Any contributions to help the children in Pilo to ‘sit comfortably’ would be most welcomed.
Ghana Education Services do provide and pay the teachers at Pilo.

[A GSA grant for desks was agreed]

The Cambridge-Bethel School, Bethel-Awudome, Volta Region
by Penny Sewell

The Cambridge-Bethel School was founded by Patience Agbeti, as a private initiative, after the death of her sister. She called it “Cambridge” in honour of that great seat of learning, and Bethel is the name of the village, about a mile off the main road to Hohoe. Parents and carers pay a modest fee for their charges, sometimes with difficulty; a sizeable group of pupils are boarders, more or less looking after themselves. When one of Ghana School Aid’s founding members, Pamela Lewis, died, her family made a wonderful donation to the association in memory of Pamela. The committee decided to support Patience Agbeti by helping her add a classroom to the two she had already for her Junior High School students. I am pleased to report that the Pamela Lewis Classroom is now up and running: it is roofed, floored and “doored”! It still lacks windows and, unfortunately, furniture, but Patience has taken little desks from the Primary classrooms and somehow, the rather large JH3 students squeeze into them! There are also a blackboard and chalk. The teachers are mainly trainees but they are doing a good job, as evidenced by last year’s examination results in which 7 out of 8 students passed and went on to Senior Secondary education elsewhere. There are currently 9 students in JH3.

To raise some cash, Patience planted a little orchard of mango trees near the Primary section and 8 months ago they harvested their first crop of mangoes. Unfortunately, the lady who sold them on behalf of the school has so far failed to deliver her takings. That’s a real shame but a lesson for next season!

Patience would love to build an administration block which would contain a sick-room. They have great difficulty caring for students who are taken ill, as the nearest medical help is several miles away with minimal transport provision. That project is a dream for the moment, but perhaps more realisable would be facilities for teaching sewing and cooking, especially for those students who are daunted by the more academic subjects. In my humble opinion, if we can find any money at all for Patience it should go towards getting desks for JH3 so that the Pamela Lewis Classroom can come into its own. The students are informed of Pamela’s life and values, and her portrait hangs in Patience’s office.
Kanvilli Tawfikiya School

Letter from Baako, Headteacher

I write to report and forward a letter of appreciation on our school project to GSA. An amount of 1000 pounds was received through me and was presented to the school PTA executives and without hesitation bought the necessary materials for the work and went on.

The following were the materials bought and also paid for workmanship:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIAL</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>UNIT COST</th>
<th>TOTAL COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sea sand</td>
<td>4 trips</td>
<td>Ghc180</td>
<td>Ghc720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cement</td>
<td>35 bags</td>
<td>Ghc20</td>
<td>Ghc700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>30 pieces</td>
<td>Ghc12</td>
<td>Ghc360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine work</td>
<td>30 pieces</td>
<td>Ghc12</td>
<td>Ghc30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assorted building materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ghc1060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter’s workmanship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ghc250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason’s workmanship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ghc260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>GHC3380</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The work was successfully done and lessons are going on. The stakeholders expressed their gratitude to GSA through me.

I attached all the receipts including pictures and letter of appreciation. Pictures show the state of the school after the disaster and new pictures show how the work was done and the state of the school today.

Thank you,

Baako
Dear Sir,

A LETTER OF APPRECIATION

We the head teachers of the Kanvilli Tawfikiya School on behalf of the community, PTA and students wish to express our profound gratitude to you and GSA for coming to our aid to re-work on our school building when it was ripped off by the storm in March last year in which the lower primary was completely destroyed.

An amount of 1000 pounds (GHC3280) was sent to us and was received through Alhassan Salifu Baako, the GSA coordinator.

The money received sped up the work as we were able to buy more of the building materials such as cement, wood, sea sand, zinc and other assorted building materials needed for the work. Acquiring these from your support the PTA also provided iron rods some wood and in some cases labour and concentrated on rebuilding and roofing the lower primary while other benevolent donors also helped with work on the upper primary.

Now the work is almost complete. We are still doing some petty work and painting but teaching and learning is already going on in the classrooms, both teachers and learners are now secure and happy, it is therefore our pleasure to express our appreciation to GSA for the wonderful support.

We attach receipts of materials purchased and pictures of the PTA/SMC executives, namely the two head teachers the PTA/SMC chairpersons, the proprietor, some teachers and pupils expressing our gratitude to GSA.

We thank you very much for coming to our aid when we were stranded and hope that our relationship will continue to grow.

Thank you very much.

Georgina Adaliba  
(Head teacher, Kanvilli Tawfikiya Prim.)

Signature:  
HEADTEACHER  
Kanvilli Tawfikiya Islamic Primary  
P.O.Box 1632  
Tamale

Alhassan Salifu Baako  
(Head teacher, Kanvilli Tawfikiya JHS)

Signature:  
HEADMASTER  
Kanvilli Tawfikiya JHS  
P.O.Box 1632  
Tamale

Letter of appreciation from the headteachers of Kanvilli Tawfikiya Primary and Junior High Schools
ACCOUNTS 01/04/2014 - 18/12/2014

Income and Expenditure Report, 18th December 2014
by Nigel Dennis

INCOME

- Regular Donations 2,465.00
- HMRC Gift Aid 650.25
- Donation for Let’s Read 4,000.00
- Donations via Just Giving 443.98
- Donation from Lord Boateng 781.21
- Donation from St. Alban’s Church, North Harrow; Africa Day 268.75
- Barnard Castle School, County Durham 300.00
- Sylvia Lyn-Meaden 700.00
- Annual Lunch 2014 Bookings & Donations 1,901.00

TOTAL INCOME 11,510.19

EXPENDITURE

- UKOWLA Annual Subscription 35.00
- Just Giving Fees (8 Months) 144.00
- Ghana Bank Transfer Fees 50.00
- Let’s Read 4,000.00
- Kasoa Educational Foundation 650.00
- Elikem Welfare Association 250.00
- The Sabre Trust 1,000.00
- Firm Foundation Academy 1,400.00
- Abonse Basic School 1,000.00
- Mother of Mercy Primary School 250.00
- Dzongo Primary School 500.00
- Lunch and Annual Meeting 1,142.60

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 10,671.60

BALANCE OF FUNDS at 18th December 2014

- NatWest Current Account Balance 1st April 2014 3,156.26
- Add Income Less Expenditure £11,510.19 - £10,671.60 = 838.59
- COIF Deposit Fund
  - Balance 1st April 2014 5,300.97
  - Bank Interest 11.20

TOTAL 9,307.02

GRAND TOTALS 1986 – 18th December 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>EXPENDITURE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>£214,405.54</td>
<td>£205,109.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Income £214,405.54 plus Bank Interest £11.20 less Expenditure £205,109.72 = £9,307.02
OBITUARY

Bill Peters
1923 - 2014
[Source – Guardian obituary by Jo Casebourne]

Bill Peters was a long-time active supporter of GSA and well known as the co-founder of Jubilee 2000 Drop the Debt campaign. This was an enormously influential movement which lobbied G8 summits worldwide to cancel third world debt and also led to the Make Poverty History campaign. Bill was a diplomat who joined the Colonial Service serving in the Gold Coast from 1950 where he worked towards the transition to independence and acted as an advisor to the incoming Ghanaian government. A young Kofi Annan heard a speech made by Bill and later, as UN Secretary General, told him that it had been very inspirational and made a lasting impression.

In 2001 Bill was awarded the Gandhi International Peace prize in recognition of the Jubilee 2000 campaign which “made possible the provision of basic education and healthcare to thousands of people”.

Let’s Read Ghana - P3 Scores

Improvements in spelling and reading have been noted in most of the Sirigu primary schools. Please see page 10 for the report by Jo Hallett.
PATRONS

HE Prof. Kwaku Danso-Boafo, High Commissioner for Ghana

The Rt Hon The Baroness Chalker of Wallasey PC, CH

The Rt Hon Lord Boateng of Akyem Ghana and Wembley, London, DL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Edward Mayne
Secretary: Jo Hallett
Treasurer: Nigel Dennis

AGM organisation & website administrator: Penny Sewell
Newsletter: Jennifer MacDougall

Representatives in Ghana: Kofi Ohene, Alhassan Salifu Baako, Rita Ayeebo

Other Committee Members:
Stanley Anthony, Letitia Boateng, Eric Earle, Patrick Heinecke, Sue Hewlett, Susannah Mayhew, Kate Regan, Margaret Turner

ENQUIRIES

Ghana School Aid
Edward Mayne
1 Gatley Drive, Burpham
Guildford, GU4 7JJ

Tel:
+44 (0)1483 565296

Email:
EPMayne@globalnet.co.uk

Website:
www.ghanaschoolaid.org

The next GSA Annual General Meeting and lunch will be on
Thursday June 4th 2015 at John Adams Hall, Endsleigh Street, London.

Ghana School Aid is a registered UK Charity No. 299178
Editor: Jennifer MacDougall, Layout: Anna M. MacDougall