

# Ghana School Aid



## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

### *Dear Friends*

*Not for the first time, I have to apologise for the late arrival of what used to be the annual newsletter; though since the last one was December 2004, you will have received short up-dates in connection with the annual reunions. Those of you who were able to attend those events in Highgate (2005) and Bristol (2006) will have had more recent news about GSA than the rest of the membership. I hope you will feel from what follows that your Committee have not been inactive.*

*The Annual Lunch and AGM 2005 at the High Commission offices in Highgate was attended by about 50 members who were welcomed by the High Commissioner, Hon. Isaac Osei who has been a great friend to GSA. The venue, in the garden of a listed building which houses some of the High Commission offices, allowed space for an informal gathering with plenty of circulating; and fortunately the rain held off! We were welcomed by our Patron and the speakers included Helen Hiam (Anthony) and Veronica Corvell who reported on their recent visit to Pampawie on behalf of Oakfield Primary School Rugby, now part of the Polesworth/Pampawie Link; Dr Mercy Talawie who provided an up-date on the MoDega project; and Humphrey Barclay, Nkosuahene of Kwahu Tafo (see article p.7). This year, our Reunion at the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum in Bristol was the first held outside London and to our relief was very well attended. Over 50 assembled in the Boardroom of the splendid Brunel building which houses the museum, which we were able to tour at leisure after an excellent buffet lunch. We were welcomed by John Smith, the distinguished Chairman of the Friends of the Museum and short talks were given by Sharon Leftwich on the progress of the Polesworth/Pampawie Link (see p.13ff), and by the Rev Colin Duncan about his teaching days at Adisadel College in the 1960s. Warm thanks to Judith Smith for her excellent planning.*

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*Reports on school links have been a feature of both the last reunions; see articles by Letitia Boateng and Elizabeth Mayhew and others, about GSA's growing involvement in linking (p. 14).*

*A notable feature at Bristol was the launch of our long-awaited book "Memories of the Gold Coast and Ghana" edited by Eric Cunningham. Over 85 copies have been sold to date and the resulting donations, including Gift Aid in many cases, have more than covered the printing costs. See Eric Cunningham's article on p. 18 which includes details on how to order your copy if you have not already obtained one. I must also pay particular tribute to Jennifer MacDougall (Roddick) and Michael Hammer for their invaluable work on the final stages of production; and to Florence Lartey (a new member) whose firm was able to provide a most competitive quote for printing. I hope you will agree that they did a very good job. (NB I wonder how many of you can identify the photo on the front cover? Answers on a postcard...)*

*This issue includes a number of articles/reports on recent projects, the most substantial of them being Michael Asiedu's report on the Coastal Villages scheme which he proposed and organised completely with funding provided by GSA (see p 3). The feedback provided by the articles on Otaakrom and Nadowli and the visit reports by Sue Hewlett and Jo Hallet provide graphic descriptions of how effectively our aid money is used on the spot.*

*As some of you will recall from personal experience, next year will be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ghana Independence. As yet we have no information about plans either in Ghana or UK-based to celebrate this historic event, but we have been looking into the possibility of a group visit (following those of 1990 and 1995) to revisit familiar scenes and, if possible, visit some of our projects. Wilfred Court has obtained information about their Tour of Ghana from Explore Worldwide and Eric Cunningham has also provided some suggestions – see note on p. 20). If you are interested please respond asap.*

*I must say a very warm thank you to all members of the Committee, with particular mention of the Treasurer and Gift Aid Chief, Stanley Anthony, and*

*Pamela Lewis who took on committee and AGM minutes when Alan Mayhew was ill and before Elizabeth took over. All Committee members play a full part and take on various jobs. Above all I must pay a warm tribute to Alan for all his devoted work as Secretary; he leaves an enormous gap and we are greatly in his debt. I'm sure he would be pleased at the way in which his family have become involved with GSA: Elizabeth, very bravely taking on some of his secretarial duties and daughter Susannah and son-in-law Michael joining the Committee and already making valuable contributions.*

*Special thanks are due to Jennifer MacDougall for taking on virtually all of the editorial work for this issue of the newsletter and preparing all the contributions for printing. Thank you too to Michael Hammer for his work in preparing the layout for printing.*

*Finally, this is a "farewell message" from me as Chairman of GSA. As I announced at the AGM, the Committee have agreed that I should resign as Chairman and be succeeded by Ted Mayne, the Vice-Chairman, and this will be formalised at the next Committee meeting. Having been involved since the start over 20 years ago along with Brice Bending (the first Chairman), Tom Southern and Eric Cunningham (plus slightly later, Warren Shaw and John Whittingham) and Chairman for the past 12 years, and having reached the "retirement age" of 80, it seems the appropriate time to hand over to Ted Mayne. I hope to remain on the Committee and contribute for a while yet.*

*Ted Mayne has been a committee member for some years (we met at one of the Ghana Independence Day parties), Membership Secretary and organiser of the address list, and latterly Vice-Chairman. He is a former member of the Foreign Office who, after serving in Ghana formed many links there and has been a frequent visitor; on recent visits linking up with our Representative, Michael Asiedu. You will be in good hands!*

*Over and out..... Eric Earle.*

# SCHOOLS FROM THE FISHING COAST LINE

Final report on GSA Project 2005 by Michael Asiedu. [For reasons of space this report has been slightly abbreviated – the full report is available from Jennifer MacDougall, Tel 020 7588 7520]

## Rationale of the project

The GSA Project 2005 was aimed at assisting ten Ghanaian basic schools (Primary and JSS) located on the coastline stretching from Half Assini area in the Western Region to Aflao in the Volta Region. The intention was to improve facilities for learning and teaching in the schools as well as for sports / games, and also for music and dance in order to enliven the school atmosphere and thereby encourage the children to attend school regularly without dropping out prematurely to join their fishing parents and thus deprive them of schooling. The project was also meant to induce the children to remain at home in their local communities with their parents without falling prey to monetary inducements offered to them and their parents by some unscrupulous child traffickers who would take the children away for employment and other pursuits up country especially along the Volta River, e.g. Yegi.

Various Ghana Government efforts to return these unfortunate children to their home communities are currently in place in Ghana. Some NGOs are also assisting in this direction. The GSA project therefore falls in line with current Government and other rescue interventions on behalf of the children in these coastal fishing villages.

## The selected schools

Following consultations between Michael and the GSA Executive Committee most of whom knew these villages personally from previous contact with them as former Schools Inspectors the Committee accepted Michael's selections of the villages and the particular schools as follows:

### Western Region

Kengen – Salvation International JSS

Dixcove – Dixcove Methodist JSS

### Central Region

Moree – Moree Catholic Primary

Montford – Montford Catholic Primary A & B

Arkra – Arkra District Assembly (DA) JSS

### Greater Accra Region

Old Ningo – Old Ningo Presbyterian Primary

Lolonya – Lolonya DA Primary

Kpone – Kpone Methodist Primary

### Volta Region

Woe-Aklorbordzi – Woe-Aklorbordzi DA Primary

Adina – Adina Ame Zion Primary

The list of the selected schools was compiled by Michael after consulting the Ministry of Education computer information regarding approved schools within the regions concerned. Michael also wanted to make sure that the list of selected schools represents a fair distribution having regard to the interests of the various Educational Units. The GSA should be seen as a NEUTRAL organisation interested in all schools of whatever type or educational unit.

## Materials

The materials supplied followed the previous pattern of:

- Approved class text books and supplementary readers.
- Teaching / learning materials i.e. pens, pencils, exercise books etc.
- Digital wall clock with batteries
- Games / sports materials comprising football, volleyball, table tennis set, and inflator (pump).
- Three piece locally made musical band instruments with drum sticks and a spanner.

## Mode of distribution

Unlike in the previous projects where the materials were distributed through some VIPs including Ministers of State, Members of Parliament, and retired diplomats etc. Michael decided to deal direct with the Heads of the schools. In this way Michael was sure that the materials would reach the schools in good time without interference from local interested persons. Michael was unhappy about some specific situations in the former process. Accordingly, circulars were sent round, directed to the Heads of schools through their various District Directors of Education (former DEOS) asking them to come to Michael's residence in Labone, Accra, to collect the items. The strategy worked well. Michael had pleasant occasions to converse with the Heads of Schools on the role and membership of the GSA and the need for them to take good care of the items for the benefit of the children and teachers. The Heads all showed deep appreciation for the gifts and wished GSA continued progress and success in their efforts to help the Ghanaian schools.

## Conclusion: summary

The GSA 2005 project cost Cedi57,096,000.80 (\$6,329.93) out of the budget of Cedi58,076,081.80 leaving a modest credit balance of Cedi 980,081.80 in the bank for future GSA operations.

The materials were collected directly from Michael's residence in Labone, Accra, between 30<sup>th</sup> June and 30<sup>th</sup> July 2005. Michael is sure that the items are in the schools and are in use by the children and the teachers.

The Heads of Schools and their District Directors of Education (DDE) are very appreciative of what the GSA has done. Some letters of appreciation from the schools will be redirected to the GSA Chairman in due course.

Michael is satisfied with the execution of the project and has learnt a number of useful lessons, which would guide him in the execution of future GSA projects.

Michael wishes to take this opportunity once again to render sincere thanks to the GSA for their continued

interest in the Schools and children they left behind some years ago. Good luck and greetings to all GSA members and their families from Michael and the family. Speedy recovery for all my ailing British Brothers and Sisters.

Submitted as above, please.

*Michael Asiedu (Nana Atta Nuamah III)*

*GSA Representative in Ghana*

## TREASURER'S REPORT 2005

Our income in the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 totalled £13,432.84, almost the same as in the previous year. It was again boosted by legacy income, viz. a bequest for £3000.00 from Madge Caxton, and also by donations totalling £575.00 given in memory of Mr WN Goldie-Scott. Our Income has, therefore, again gone beyond the £10,000 point at which the Charity Commissioners normally require accounts to be examined by professional accountants. However, because this amount of income is again due to the exceptional income from the legacies, I shall ask that we continue to be in the under-£10,000 category for the time being. We have, however, been asked for the first time to submit a report from the Trustees.

We spent £10,190.00 on grants to schools in Ghana in the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, and since then a further £4930.00 has been sent to Ghana, mainly for the schools in the Coastal Fishing Villages project. Sending these sums has cost in addition £230.00 on bank transfer charges, and Nana Michael Asiedu, our hard-working Committee member based in Ghana has been sent £200.00 in honoraria towards his operating costs in distributing our gifts to the schools in the 2° West and Fishing Village projects. Michael, with his parliamentary contacts, was able to enrol the local MPs on the 2° West Line as the distributors of the packages to most of the schools.

Our school links sub-committee has asked if we could help the link schools in Ghana to afford the costs of maintaining communications with their UK link school by giving £30.00 to each school. This was readily approved by the Committee, but putting it

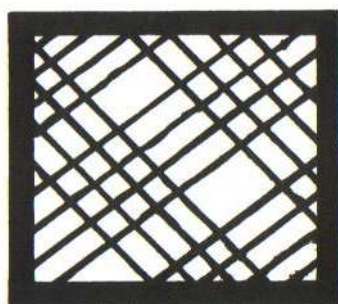
into effect runs into the problem of transferring small sums of money to often remote places. We are hoping to be able to do this by lodging the money in Nana Michael Asiedu's GSA account and then for him to disburse it to the nominated schools – probably by cheques to the schools' bank accounts. Michael has already done this kind of thing for a grant for roof building to a school whose bank was not accredited for receiving foreign currency from the Ghana International Bank.

Our operating costs in 2004/5 were £1270.24, mainly made up of Committee expenses and the costs of producing and sending out the Newsletter. We are now putting into practice the idea that Committee members, instead of bearing their expenses, should claim them and then give what they claim back to GSA, so that those amounts could be included when recovering income tax under Gift Aid. This, therefore, shows in the accounts as increased operating costs.

Our Inland Revenue tax Claim for the period 06/04/2004 – 05/04/2005, based on Gift Aid donations from our fifty Gift Aid donors of £6212.31, amounted to £1752.19. (For the year 2003/04 it was £1187.71.)

*Stanley Anthony*

*Treasurer and Gift Aid Administrator*



## PERSONAL ACCOUNTS OF RETURN VISITS TO GHANA

### Return visit to Abonse

My seven months stay in Ghana at Abonse in the Eastern Region, from July 2004 to February 2005, was full of mixed feelings. I was extremely happy to be back in the place where I was born, and surrounded by a big family. Almost everybody at Abonse is related to each other. Although I go to Ghana and visit Abonse from time to time I have not stayed there for more than a week.

I love the place particularly for its quietness and tranquillity – no cars and therefore no pollution, and no hassle as one sees in the capital, Accra. As a kid in the late 40s and early 50s I used to compete with other children in counting the stars, and play all sorts of games in the moonlight which was one of the main sources of outdoor lighting. There was no electricity then. You can still see the moon appearing and hanging beautifully over one particular mountain. As kids we saw the dark of the moon as a man holding two drum sticks and getting ready to hit a talking drum in front of him. The interpretation as it was believed and told by our grandparents, was that the world would come to an end on the day that the man on the moon would hit the drum. In order to live we used to pray loudly to the man not to hit the drum. It is great indeed to be young.

Among the older folks who divide themselves into age groups, there would be different kinds of cultural and traditional music and dancing. I would have liked to join in if these activities were still going on but some things have changed as expected. There is electricity now and one hears the blasting sound of disco music which is not my cup of tea.

The tranquillity of the place still remains and I wished I could stay longer.

Abonse is a small town situated on the Akwapim ranges. Uniquely, it is surrounded by mountains except a small opening that gives a panoramic view of the Krobo plains and occasional view of the Volta River. To me this beautiful scenery is breathtaking and calming indeed. I particularly like looking at two



of the mountains. One is shaped like a helmet so it is called Mount Helmet, on which the moon appears, and the other is very steep and cone-like and it is called Krankran Bo. The name Krankran came from the Abonse word Krenkren which means “very high”. It is legendarily believed that the ancestors of the people of Abonse emerged from the latter mountain.

A closer look at the mountain reveals the negative effects of the influence of man. The mountains that used to be covered in thick green forests are now turning into rocks and savannah. The deforestation of the mountains and the surrounding areas is due to the fact that the trees are cut for charcoal and other uses. Unfortunately there is no planning of new trees to replace those cut to sustain the forest.

When I was a child I remember that the Abonse people used to grow all sorts of foodstuffs and traders used to come from the neighbouring towns and villages to buy them. Although the people are still mainly peasant farmers, most of them cannot grow enough food to feed themselves let alone sell some for basic necessities.

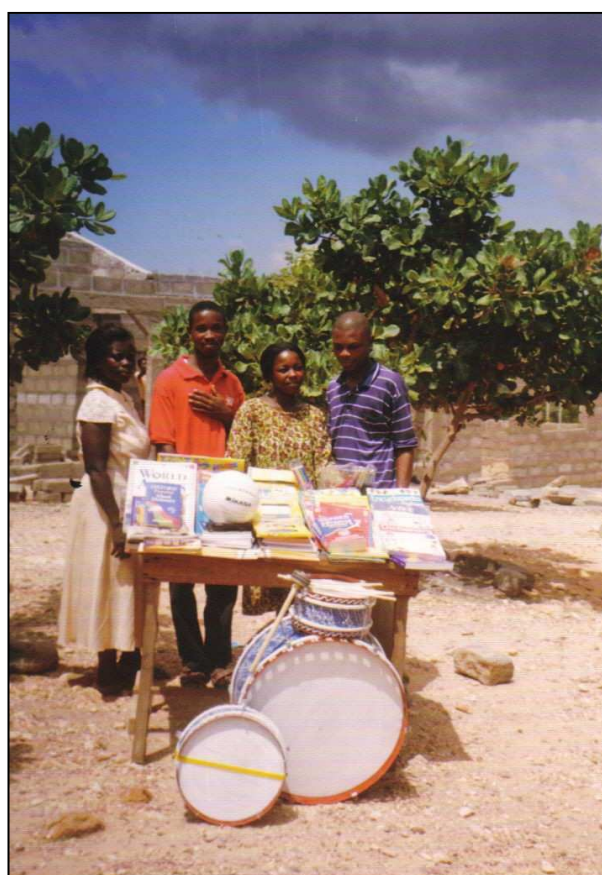
My involvement in School Links enabled me to realize that deforestation was not the only problem. The school, which is primary and junior secondary, and the entire community lack numerous necessities of life, such as drinking water, toilets, clinic and other basic amenities. Sick people walk about three miles to Aseseeso or Somanya for treatment. I was told that a week before my arrival at Abonse a pregnant mother died in labour before help arrived. Sadly that was not a one-off incident.

In the school most of the pupils have classes under sheds, which is common to most poor areas in Ghana, but to make matters worse, these pupils did not have basic learning materials like pens, pencils, chalk, exercise books, and text books. Neither did they have enough teachers to take the classes. As a result, the performance of the school as a whole is extremely poor. Numbers on roll are poor because some parents do not have the means to pay the school fees. Consequently, some children drop out and some do not go to school at all.

The school fee is equivalent to about six pounds a year per child. I help to keep about ten pupils in

school by paying their school fees and providing their school uniforms. However, this is just a drop in the ocean of problems.

But help has come from their School Link friends at St Michael’s Church of England Primary School at Figheldean near Salisbury. When I was going to Ghana the children of this school donated money for the school in Ghana. This donation has been used to purchase some text books for teachers and pupils, exercise books, pens, pencils, chalk, mathematical sets, drawing boards, school drums, volley ball and other items.



**Picture 1: Teachers at Abonse School with items donated by St Michael's School, Figheldean**

Before I left Abonse it was obvious that both teachers and pupils were happy, full of life and enthusiasm. Some of the pupils had replied to letters they received from their “Aburokyiri” overseas friends, and one can see signs of confidence in them. In turn the pupils sent some simple items like Kente strips, the Owari game, some earthenware, bow and arrow, etc, to their friends at Figheldean.

The teachers also wrote to the teachers of the link school about life at Abonse, some festivals in Ghana, the role of the Chief in the community, children's games and other topics. The St Michael's School children are also happy to have friends at the other side of the world. They are thrilled about the new knowledge they are acquiring from their counterparts in Ghana. One can see the manifestation of some of the aims of School Links here – friendship in which partners benefit from each other, learning, respect, mutual understanding and hope.

I believe that if the link is sustained it will help to turn around the poor performance of the school. If the performance is improved then the pupils can pass their exams then to go to senior secondary school and progress to university. There is a need to ensure that all the children of Abonse go to school to improve their prospects in the future. If not they will grow up and end up on the mountains cutting the trees. Then again there might not be any trees to cut as the current generation might have done all the cutting.

I cannot end this article without mentioning Ghana School Aid which has generously donated one thousand pounds for the roofing of a school block at Abonse. The building has been constructed up to roofing level by the community through the help of the Aseseeso-Abonse Association UK, of which I am a member, and donations from other well-wishers. On behalf of the above association and the Chief and people of Abonse, I would like to thank GSA for their assistance. I am sure that the performance of the school will improve greatly when the school building is completed and the pupils have a roof over their heads.

I am trying to put together two projects, one to save and restore the forest at Abonse, and the other to create a sponsorship programme for the education of the children of Abonse. I would greatly appreciate any assistance with these projects. Please contact me on 020 8571 9345, or 0775 9246 959 for further information.

*Letitia Boateng*

## **Return visit to Yendi, July 2005**

First impressions were that Yendi has developed considerably since my first visit in 2001. There are street lights, an internet café and many more people have motorbikes. I'm delighted to report, however, that the town has lost none of its charm; it's bustling yet quiet as only African villages can be; there's lots of colour everywhere and the people are warm and welcoming.

For my friend, Ian, everything was new though he knows a huge amount about West Africa, and it was great for me to witness his enjoyment as the Yendi way of life unfolded for us during our 3 week stay. We were lucky enough to stay with a family, close to the school. Everyday, we were visited by children who showed us their work, taught us games and sang or danced for us. Wonderful!

We hope that we did some good work at Balogu Primary. Ian sang with the children, who recorded with him their version of the song "Ghana to England" which was written by 2 Stutton boys and recorded here too. That's good sharing. Ian also wrote a song with P6. "African Child" is very simple and provides a real insight into the hopes and aspirations of young Ghanaians today. I taught many children some of our stories and ways of doing maths and science. This visit has not cured me. I need to go back for more Yendi "treatment", the sooner the better.

*Sue Hewlett*

*Teacher at Stutton Primary School, Ipswich, linked with Balogu Primary in Yendi*

## **It isn't every day one becomes an African Chief.**

In the autumn of 2000 I was attending the funeral in Ghana of my friend the Ghanaian actor Christopher Gyeaebuor Asante, who played the African 'eternal student' Matthew in my West Indian barbershop TV sitcom *Desmond's*, when the Chief of his ancestral town Kwahu-Tafo apparently began talking about me. This was on the fourth day of the funeral in Accra – they do things thoroughly there – and I had

got fairly used to letting speech ramble on around me since I do not speak more than a word or two of Twi, and I wasn't at that moment paying a great deal of attention. But..."He's talking about you" hissed a friendly interpreter in my ear: "Oh?" "Yes. He wants to adopt you into the royal family". **"What?"**

Well, you can imagine how moving a proposal that was – a white man to be adopted into the family of his deceased African friend, at his funeral. Tears welled up, as I absorbed the compliment. But they were soon banished. "You have to say something". "Oh, like what?" "Whether you accept, of course". So suddenly I was on my feet, in front of serried ranks of attentive black faces, all dressed in serious black clothes to match, to stammer an improvised speech of appreciation and acceptance. Improvised of course, because I had carelessly forgotten to bring with me my "Yes of course I am very happy to be adopted into an African royal family: thank you so much for asking me" speech which I should have had in my pocket.

That wasn't the end of it though. An African name had to be invented for me – the cause of much voluble chat and hilarity. The first joke was when they started, as they naturally would, with "what day of the week were you born on?" and I didn't know. Well, among the Akan people not to know which day of the week you are born on is unbelievable: everybody has as one of their names 'Monday born' (Kwadwo for a boy or Adwoa for a girl), 'Tuesday born' (Kwabena for a boy or Abena for a girl, and so on), which is often used as your first name (look no further than Kofi, 'Friday born', Annan). I suggested I could be Kwesi (Sunday) because all white people are Kwesi Oburuni ("Sunday Foreigner") because of the missionaries. I thought it was quite a good joke, but I didn't expect a three minute laugh. "OK" said Auntie Comfort, an old school friend of Christopher's, "he can be Kwabena, like Chris". So that was my first name – until I got back to the UK and found out I was actually Kwadwo, so it had to be changed later. Then the Chief gave me his own name, which I thought was a singular complement ("Ameyaw" meaning 'hero' is only given to chiefs): and then they gave me my friend's name Gyearbuor

('unconquerable except by stone' – which presumably would have done rather well for Goliath). It's strange being given your friend's name, after he's gone: a feeling of inappropriateness is mixed with that of a mantle being bestowed on you. And then, with me properly named, the Chief, an avuncular white curly-haired man of stout build and twinkly manner, welcomed me to the family, and said he would give me a plot of land to build on whenever I wished to come to Tafo, and that was that.

Except it wasn't at all. As the meeting broke up, and I tried out my royal walk among the congratulatory crowds, old ladies came up to me, bobbing curtsies as they seized my hand, and calling me "Nana". "Why are they doing that?" I asked my interpreter out of the side of my mouth. "Oh, because you're a Chief", came the answer.

The actual meaning of being a Chief didn't become clear for a few months. Every little town has a Chief (like a squire, rather), and he has a cabinet of sub-Chiefs or Elders who help him govern the town: and each of them has a portfolio – ancient ones like Drums, or Weapons (or even Umbrellas – the sun is very hot and the Chief mustn't be allowed to fry), and more recently Development. So that's what Nana wanted me to be: his Development Chief or Nkosuohene. (In Twi, *nkosuo* means going forward, and *hene* means Chief).

The process of selecting a Chief is an interesting combination of heredity and democratic accountability: you have to be of the blood (which is why I had to be adopted) and then you may be chosen from the eligible bunch by a panel of Kingmakers, and then you are confirmed by the ultimate authority, the Queen Mother. You are subsequently presented to the people, who may veto your appointment, and if they don't, oaths of loyalty and accountability are sworn to and fro, you are 'enstooled' (enthroned) and all is sealed with a gold sword, a lot of drumming, the wearing of some excruciatingly uncomfortable sandals, and the scattering, as a sign of victory, of the contents of several tins of talcum powder. (To 'de-stool' a Chief by the way, should you ever need to do it, is quite simple: you just steal his sandals).



The ceremony took place in August 2001, in the crowded yard of the Chief's house, a thrumming melee of brilliant colours, dark skins, deafening drumming, joyous laughter, disputes over the order of ceremony, the sweet smell of talcum powder, a triumphant procession through town with me carried shoulder high with throngs of people dancing along behind – how strange to see one's sisters twirling around in a sea of laughter and jubilant new friends they couldn't know from Adam – to the repetitive blare of the town's brass band.

Eventually (after I had essayed a dance step or two: tricky because your foot gestures mean particular things – but I don't think I said anything terribly bad) it all calmed down, and thankfully there was food and drink, and a great deal of merriment and disbelief at it all. The next day my retinue of English visitors and I were paraded to other towns to meet neighbouring chiefs, we had to be blessed by the Head Fetish Priest of Kwahu-Tafo (given some metal rings to ward off evil spirits, and obliged to eat some disgusting powdered charcoal substance; and there was a big open 'durbar' in front of the Chief's house in the afternoon, with speeches and dancing and the presentation of gifts.

And now – five years on. Well, I take the job very seriously. My friends started a charity called Friends of Tafo, which so far has raised some £70,000 for things that need doing in the town. I spend one month in every four there, in a house I did build on the plot of land the Chief offered me at the funeral: I have two best friends in the sons of the Chief, Ben and Boot, both in their twenties: I have a most excellent Development Council representing all the groups in the town, run by two remarkable women, and we in Friends of Tafo work at supporting their projects – employment, sanitation, disability, music, craft skills, and particularly education. At one end of the educational scale we are trying to assist children whose parents can't find the necessary £10 a year to send them to Primary School, and at the other we are searching for funds to build classrooms to house a large number of second-hand computers found for us by the Prince of Wales Trust. I have attended an exorcism ceremony; watched a black Jesus struggling

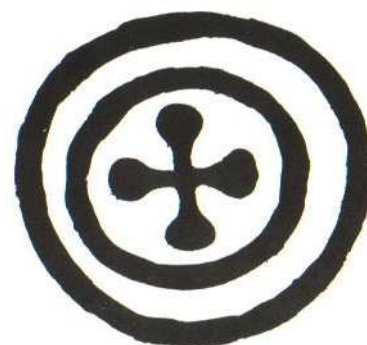
to carry his cross while cardboard helmeted centurions cleared his way; poured libations to the souls of ancestors; drunk far too much Star beer; been on a 14 mile hike with two boys full of experience from the Raleigh International Expedition; and cried buckets as the choir of the Royal Music Academy (funded by none other than Robbie Williams' management ) sang "Arise the youth of Ghana" in hopeless harmony but with magical heart.

There is work to do every day: inventing systems for the better management of projects (my Friends of Tafo Committee are brilliant at bringing their experience to bear); applying for funds; and thinking of how to help individuals and whole generations of people gain confidence in their identity, re-discover the dignity of employment, and build a future that's able to face the technological language and skills of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It's exhausting, quite stressful sometimes, and very rewarding.

After all, what could be sweeter than what happened when I stopped to talk to a little girl in the street three months ago, who had called out to greet me as they all do with "Oburuni!", and I asked her if she knew who I was. "Yes," she replied in Twi, very shyly: "You are Uncle Development Chief".

*Humphrey Barclay*

*[Humphrey Barclay is an eminent television writer, Development Chief of Kwahu-Tafo and Chair of Friends of Tafo, a UK charity set up to support the sustainable development of this small town in Ghana: [www.friendsoftafo.org/](http://www.friendsoftafo.org/)]*



## GSA FUNDED PROJECTS

### **Borae and Otaakrom Projects – reports from Robert Palmer**

#### ***Borae No 2 School Project, funded by Ghana School Aid in 2003***

A grant of £640 was made from Ghana School Aid (GSA) in 2003 to start the construction of a school block in the village of Borae No. 2 in Northern Volta Region. The construction of this block will promote pre-vocational skills training at the existing Junior Secondary School (JSS). In future the objective is to expand the JSS into offering second-cycle education and training (for JSS leavers).



**Picture 2: Starting work on the Borae school block 2003**

It was decided by the Concerned Citizens Youth Association of Borae No 2 (who are administering the project) that it would be a good idea to expand the structure slightly to make it a two-room block plus office and store. Indeed, it is usual that once a project is started with some initial funding it is much easier to get further funding from the District Assembly Common Fund (see the update on the Otaakrom ICCES workshop project below, also part funded by GSA). In addition to getting support from the Common Fund, the Borae community is discussing the possibility of making a collection from the village households. Currently, the project work is at walling level and the community is in discussion with the Assembly.

The project is still ongoing, and while additional funding is still needed to complete the structure, the GSA grant has enabled the project to get ahead. It is expected that, like the Otaakrom workshop project below, additional funding will come from a portfolio of actors and that this class-room block – while taking a bit longer than would be the case if all project funding was supplied solely by one sponsor – will be a great asset to the community.

I shall keep you updated on events from Borae. I am expecting a report from the community in the next few weeks, though unfortunately getting information from this area of Ghana is very slow.

#### ***Otaakrom ICCES vocational school workshop, part funded by GSA in 2002.***

You will also be interested to hear more about the Otaakrom Integrated Community Centre for Employable Skills (ICCES) vocational school workshop that was funded by GSA in 2002. This follows the update sent to GSA dated 20/09/03.



**Picture 3: Otaakrom vocational school compound**

ICCES is an agency under the Ministry of Manpower, Youth and Employment (MMYE) with a network of, predominantly rural, vocational training institutions offering training in the traditional trades, like carpentry and dressmaking.

I am currently part-based in Otaakrom village doing research fieldwork so have been able to see what is going on. The project has been ongoing since the summer of 2003 but is now finally completed. The overall project cost was some 43 million cedis, with

the GSA component being about 10 million (approximately £1000 then).

The projects committee, using the initial £1000 from GSA was able to solicit additional funding from the British High Commission in Accra, a private local timber company Kumi & Co, the Atwima District Assembly in Nkawie, and the new Atwima Mponua District Assembly in Nyiyinahin (Atwima District split into two in 2004). This enabled them to build a much larger and more useful structure for the vocational school that would have been possible otherwise (large workshop space, and office and store).



**Picture 4: External view of the Otaakrom vocational school workshop**

There were some delays in finishing this project. Those arose primarily from the District dividing into two, which resulted in a delay of the release of counterpart funding. Despite the delays, the workshop was in use all through 2004, but has now received paint and plastering for the walls!

The initial £1000 GSA grant kick-started this large workshop project. Without it, additional support would have less likely materialised. In early 2004 the vocational school also got electricity which was extended to all the buildings, including the school workshop, through support from JICA (the Japanese development agency).

This now opens up the possibility of using power tools to train the students.

*Robert Palmer*

*Kumasi, Ghana. March 2005.*

### **Update, April 2006**

As a result of GSA putting up £1000, the District Assembly, a local timber company and the British High Commission also provided some input to make a much larger building – though GSA remained the largest financier. This was officially opened by the British High Commissioner, Gordon Wetherell, in October 2005. At the opening the Commissioner was very impressed by the vocational school. The management made a request to the British High Commission that they further support the efforts of GSA and others and purchase two heavy duty carpentry machines for the workshop. About a month ago I got an email saying that their application was approved, and the British High Commission is financing two heavy duty machines to the value of about £3000. This, I am sure, is a direct spin off of the High Commissioner being impressed by the workshop that was mainly funded by GSA. The general ICCES structure in Ghana is in a very poor state of affairs: and this is one reason why I am keen to encourage people to support it, even if just one centre out of many!

**Robert Palmer**

*[Robert Palmer is researching for a PhD on education, skills development and enterprise in rural Ghana, and is also undertaking research in Ghana for the Centre for African Studies at the University of Edinburgh with funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID). This is on the contribution of post-basic education and training to poverty reduction in Ghana, India, Rwanda, South Africa, Kenya and Tanzania. Further information and the researchers' reports are available at: [www.cas.ed.ac.uk/research/projects.html](http://www.cas.ed.ac.uk/research/projects.html)]*

*[The full final report from the Otaakrom ICCES project committee is available from Jennifer MacDougall, Tel 020 7588 7520].*

### **Report for Ghana School Aid on progress of Teacher's Resource Centre, Nadowli, UWR**

Thanks to the generous support of Ghana School Aid, the Teachers' Resource Centre (TRC) in Nadowli is going from strength to strength. Funds have



contributed to the renovation and furnishing of the centre as well as books, stationery and other educational resources. The TRC now has a water tank, sink and electricity supply, which will be paid for by the local community, to show their support.



**Picture 5: Children at the Children's Club at the new Nadowli Resource Centre, with Rachel Davis (centre, standing) 2005**

In just six months, the teachers and children of the Nadowli District have a wonderful new Resource Centre. A committee has been established to oversee the centre activities and a coordinator who will be trained in the day-to-day running of the centre. The good news is that the District Director of Education wants to make this a permanent, paid position. Activities already carried out this term have included a children's reading club, Teaching and Learning Materials workshops for primary teachers and a teachers' resource club. In addition, the Ghana Education Service will use the TRC to hold workshops and training.

None of this could have been possible without the help of Ghana School Aid and other donors, which include The Leggatt Trust, The British Women's Association and World Vision. Ghana School Aid has specifically paid for furniture in the centre (wooden tables, shelves, and a cupboard and plastic chairs) as well as contributing to the renovation work which in total cost 33 million cedis (for wiring, plumbing etc). Ghana School Aid has also paid for some stationery and workshops, which are ongoing and require funds to reimburse teachers for transport fares etc.

Thank you again, on behalf of the teachers and community, for your support.

*Rachel Davis*

*VSO Teacher Support Officer, GES Nadowli.*

### **Wamfie Youth Association Library Project**

[The following is an edited version of a report by Andy Lumor. The full report is available from Jennifer MacDougall, 020 7588 7520].

In February 2005 the Executive Secretary of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) made a representation to the London Office [of Ghana Universities] to identify organisations in the UK willing to support the Wamfie Youth Association Library Project. Appeal was made to the Ghana School Aid for support and assistance as this project falls within their educational development and support activities.

In November 2005 the London Office received an amount of £1000 being GSA's contribution towards the project. I was therefore requested to present the amount to the management of Wamfie Youth Association [WAYA] during my working visit to Ghana [in January 2006]. Wamfie is a farming town in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana, located 50 miles from Sunyani, the Regional Capital.



**Picture 6: Managers of the Wamfie Youth Association, with Andy Lumor (front row, 5th from the left)**

In my speech I gave a brief history of the GSA, its objectives and the support it has given to schools in Ghana. WAYA was therefore one of the privileged associations to have benefited from the support of GSA. They must therefore endeavour to use the

donation judiciously. I pointed out that the Management Committee of GSA in London would expect a regular report and updates of the Library Project.

The Chairman of WAYA expressed his appreciation and thanks to GSA for its wonderful support and assistance. He promised that the donation would go a long way to help with the project and .....was of the view that the library project when completed will greatly assist the youth of the town improve their reading skills and learning.

[Thanks were also expressed by the District Chief Executive and the Chief of Wamfie, and an invitation was extended to any member of GSA who is in Ghana to visit Wamfie.]

I take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation to GSA for giving me this opportunity to visit Wamfie on its behalf and to make the presentation of the donation to the WAYA in support of its library project.

*Andy Lumor*

*Overseas Representative, Ghana Universities Office,  
London*

## **SCHOOL LINKS UPDATE**

### **GSA School Link Committee Report**

Ghana School Aid became interested in school links about 3 years ago. Their aim was to facilitate sustainable and equal partnership between Ghanaian and UK schools, and to provide financial support where appropriate.

In September 2003, the UKOWLA (UK One World Linking Association) which supports school links and other community based partnerships, organized a Ghana Linking Conference in York. Alan Mayhew of blessed memory and his wife Elizabeth attended that conference, and that was when I met both of them and subsequently I joined the GSA membership. Alan gave a full report on that conference in the December 2004 News Letter.

Following the decision to become involved in school links the GSA set up a School Link Committee, of

which I am a member, to draw up a Basic Code of Practice to guide the setting up of school links. The code of practice has been provided, and the committee has been working hard to find and originate links ever since. One of our duties is to advise the GSA Executive Committee on how to help sustain the links that we are involved in.

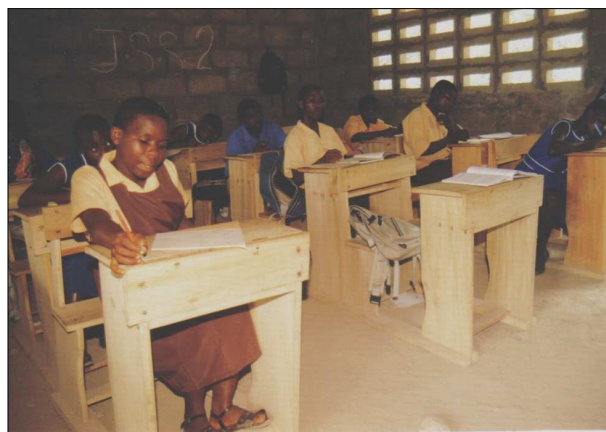
In fact school linking is very much at the forefront of educationalists' thinking at the moment and schools are being encouraged to forge links with schools all around the globe. This was a major theme at the British Council conference in December 2005 where QCA (Quality Curriculum Authority) Director Mick Waters spoke of the value of such links for future understanding of global kinship, interdependence, trade issues and improved tolerance as well as for considerable enrichment of the curriculum. The DFES (Department for Education and Skills)'s International Strategy states that every school in England must have a link by 2010.

The links that GSA is supporting include Stutton Primary School in Ipswich linked with Balogu Primary in Yendi; Southfields Primary School in Coventry linked with Nyogbare Primary school in Bolgatanga; St. Albans Primary School in Wolverhampton and the Methodist School at Nkafoa Cape Coast; Polesworth High School and Pampawie LA. JSS. Polesworth is also linked with the Primary School at Pampawie; Nick O'Neill and Sandema Education Resource Centre in Upper East; John O' Gaunt Community Technical College with a Junior Secondary School at Aseseeso; St. Michael's Church of England Primary School in Figheldean with The Presbyterian Basic School at Abonse, and Salford Infant School linked with the Assin Achease Primary School.

Presently, the link committee has identified 2 potential links. They are John Hanson Community School in Andover to be linked with The Nifa Secondary School at Adukrom and The Cove Secondary School in Farnborough with the Aburi Girls Secondary School. We also know of 3 schools – 2 in the Eastern Region and one in Tamale that are looking for partners here in the UK.

Teachers involved in linking agree that regular and satisfactory communication is both the most important and the most difficult aspect. We're delighted that GSA has agreed to help the Ghana schools financially by providing money for postage and for 'phone cards.

We are also delighted to say that the GSA has recently donated 60 desks and other class room furniture to the Presbyterian Basic School at Abonse, and a grant of £1000 has been agreed for the Dagbon Technical Secondary School in Yendi. There have also been other small grants to most of the link schools mentioned above.



**Picture 7: Pupils of Abonse Basic School at their new desks**

Recently, the Link committee agreed that the Ghana schools may well need support to buy materials for joint projects and possibly for improving the storage facilities in schools for such materials. The policy is always to purchase locally as much as possible and to use local workers, such as carpenters, masons etc. Similarly, with regard to books, we like to buy in Ghana where possible, but we feel that there is a significant role for quality second-hand story books to be shipped out from the UK, and we're looking at ways for more link schools to benefit from Stutton's arrangement with Grimaldi Shipping Lines.

Apart from all this, we hope, at home, to ensure that all link schools are able to keep in touch with each other, and this might be via email or via the website. Ghana School Aid will help to ensure that this kind of communication be available in the Ghana schools that we support, so that the links will be able

to continue and bring mutual benefit to young people of both our countries.

*Letitia Boateng*

*GSA School Link Committee Member*

### **School Links and the 2006 UKOWLA (UK One World Linking Association) Conference**

UKOWLA's annual conference (attended by Letitia Boateng and Elizabeth Mayhew) in Swindon this year was a rewarding experience. A high proportion of those attending were young people (including pupils from Greendown Community School, where it was held) and representatives of ethnic minority groups in the UK. The enthusiasm and commitment of all who took part, especially the teachers and pupils, was inspiring.

The theme this year was "Looking Out to Look In" and the emphasis was on how our own society can be transformed by the personal contact with people of other cultures which linking provides, especially when people from ethnic minority groups here in the UK can be drawn in. One workshop was about using a link to encourage Fair Trade – something that can involve the whole community – and all tea and coffee served was Fairly Traded. Another was on "Inclusion of the Diaspora in Links", and here a GSA supported project was held up by the Director of UKOWLA as a model of how this can be done.

This project, a link between the John O' Gaunt Community School and Aseseeso JSS, works closely with Letitia Boateng's Aseseeso – Abonse Association (a group of Ghanaians living and working here and supporting their home towns in Ghana). In their presentation to the conference, Kate Regan and Letitia spoke of the impact the Ghanaians are making by visiting the school to dance and sing, tell stories and play games with the children and answer the many questions about life in Ghana; and how they are helping with exchanges of teachers and pupils between the two schools, and with discussions of sensitive issues like fund-raising.

Projects like these overturn preconceived ideas, stereotyped attitudes and prejudices and promote real



friendship and understanding – which was the theme of another workshop, “Using Links for Global Citizenship”. A good example of how this is happening is another GSA-supported link: Polesworth – Papawe. The teacher in charge of the link, Sharon Leftwich, spoke with great enthusiasm at GSA’s reunion lunch of how this link is opening pupils’ eyes to the world, creating genuine cross-cultural friendships, and making them look at their own society too, with new eyes\*.

At the conference, the need to train and equip teachers for teaching Global Citizenship, (now part of the National Curriculum) was discussed and we were told that help can be obtained from UKOWLA itself and from the 50 or so Development Education Centres around the UK. The MP for Swindon, Anne Snelgrove, spoke of the government’s commitment to supporting school links with an allocation of £7.5 million a year for three years. This is in line with the International Strategy of DFES (Department for Education and Skills), which is for every school in England to have a link by 2010.

GSA is currently supporting three secondary and six primary school links and helping to set up several more (see Letitia Boateng’s report above). We give encouragement, advice, help with procuring books and materials, and funding where necessary – especially for communications (e.g. postage stamps, phone cards). We are also compiling a list of Ghanaian schools able and willing to become partners; so please contact us if you know of a school interested in establishing a link. As Alan Mayhew wrote in our last Newsletter, school linking is all about people from different cultures meeting face to face and learning from each other, so that they become “part of a process of building a world community”. We are delighted that Ghana School Aid is contributing to this process.

*Elizabeth Mayhew*

*GSA Secretary*

[\*For further information Tel. 01827 702205; email [yellowhammeruk@yahoo.com](mailto:yellowhammeruk@yahoo.com) or go to the website [www.ukowla.org.uk](http://www.ukowla.org.uk)]

### ***Nyogbare and Sekoti Primary Schools, Bolgatanga District***

Jo Hallett (Southfields Primary School, Coventry), working with Link Community Development, applied for grants for specific projects in these remote schools in 2004. Part of Jo’s application is included here followed by the subsequent reports from the schools themselves.

“Nyogbare Primary School is a small, very remote school some 20 miles east of Bolgatanga in UER. I have been visiting the school since 2001, and have seen considerable improvements and developments during that time. The community consists largely of subsistence farmers, who are struggling to maintain their families. The school is not far from the small village of Nyogbare, but takes pupils from the whole area. The needs are VERY great! For example, there are only four teachers for six year groups (190 pupils) and there is no water source on site – the nearest bore hole is over 3 miles away!

My own school in UK is linked through Link Community Development, and we raise at least £250 pa to support the priorities of the School Development Plan. We also maintain regular links with exchanges of letters, photographs and other materials.

I would like to ask for a grant from Ghana School Aid for Nyogbare Primary School to help with one particular priority – the provision of two rooms for teacher accommodation, to help to attract more teachers to the school. The total cost would be approximately £225.

The Headteacher and School Management Committee are extremely grateful for any support that can be given, and are working very hard with their community to support the improvements at the school that are so badly needed. The grant would be channelled to the school through Link Community Development to ensure that it is used for the stated purpose.”

Sekoti Primary School was in a very similar situation and in great need of textbooks and English readers for all classes. GSA allocated £500 to Nyogbare and Sekoti Primary schools and subsequently received the following reports.

### **Nyogbare Primary School - Ghana School Aid Report, December 2004**

Nyogbare Primary School in Bolgatanga District is very grateful to Ghana School Aid in the UK for donating an amount of €3,930,000 towards their school development. The donation was specifically for target one on Nyogbare Primary's school development plan, namely to provide two rooms for teachers accommodation.



**Picture 8: The completed additional new teachers' accommodation at Nyogbare Primary School 2005**

It is hoped that this will go a long way towards improving teacher attendance and punctuality at the school. The school development plan has been approved Link Community Development (LCD) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) and a copy has been forwarded to Ghana School Aid.

A cheque was released to Nyogbare Primary on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2004. The school community came out in force to receive the gift. The head teacher, SMC Chairman, PTA Treasurer and Chief all took it in turns to give a speech thanking Ghana Schools Aid in the UK for their support to the development of their school.



LCD congratulated Nyogbare on completing their school development plan and wished them good luck with improving the school environment and creating a more conducive site for effective teaching and learning.

### **Sekoti Primary School Report**

Sekoti Primary School in Bolgatanga District is very grateful to Ghana School Aid in the UK for donating an amount of €3,580,000 towards their school development. The donation was specifically for target one on Sekoti Primary School's development plan, namely to provide English readers for pupils from P1-P6. It is hoped that this will go a long way towards pupils' literacy levels at the school. The school development plan has been approved [by] Link Community Development and the Ghana Education Service and a copy has been forwarded to Ghana School Aid.

*Link Community Development Ghana*

*PO Box BG703, Bolgatanga, Upper East Region, Ghana*

### **More school link news**

In the list of GSA school links is the link between John O'Gaunt Community and Technology College at Hungerford, and the Presbyterian Primary and Junior Secondary School at Aseseeso in the eastern region of Ghana.

The link is progressing sturdily. Since the first reciprocal visit in February 2004 by Mrs Kate Regan, a Librarian of John O'Gaunt College, there have been a lot of developments. The UK school has equipped the Aseseeso school library with books, the entire school has been supplied with electricity and there has been a teacher exchange from both schools.

During their visit to Aseseeso, Mrs Anne Dibble, a science teacher at John O'Gaunt and Kate were happy to see that the community was involved in the link. Here I quote from Mrs Dibble's first memories of Ghana: "I have never known 14 days to pass so rapidly. Mrs Regan and I went to Ghana with a few particular goals and we arrived to find a well-

prepared programme that included our wishes and some others suggested by the Ghanaian community”.

The visits have given the teachers new and positive perspectives of each other’s culture which will, no doubt, help to enhance and sustain the link. According to the Head Teacher from Aseseeso, Mr John Ofori, who was here on a school link visit to John O’Gaunt School, he had acquired a lot of ideas that he would introduce in his school to the benefit of both teachers and students.

John O’Gaunt College invited the citizens of Abonse and Aseseeso to a well organized reception for the visiting teacher at the Hungerford Town Hall and to the Houses of Parliament.



**Picture 10: John Ofori, head teacher of Aseseeso School, teachers and pupils of John O’Gaunt College, and GSA’s Letitia Boateng on their visit to Westminster 2005**

Both schools are planning a video conference in the next couple of months when children of the two schools will be able to exchange ideas and programmes. Kate has told me that there is a plan to exchange students next year.

The link between St Michael Church of England Primary School at Figcheldean near Salisbury and the Presbyterian Basic School at Abonse in Ghana is also progressing. Although there has not yet been a reciprocal visit, children of both schools have started exchanging letters. The Abonse school has received some financial assistance from their friends. The funds have been used to equip the school with much needed text books, exercise books, pens, pencils and other basic teaching resources. GSA has kindly

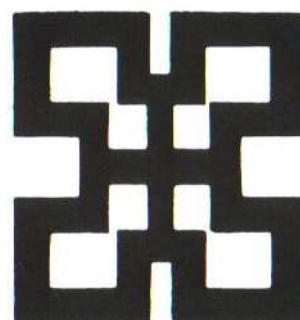
donated ONE THOUSAND POUNDS for the roofing of an uncompleted school block. The chief Nana Okro Kotoko and the entire community are very grateful for these donations.



**Picture 9: Judith Smith (left) and Letitia Boateng at the inauguration of the link between Figcheldean Primary School and Abonse School in 2005**

Figcheldean School inaugurated the link between their school and the school of Abonse in June this year. Present at the ceremony were governors, teachers, parents and some members of the community. A group of Ghanaians from the Aseseeso-Abonse Association were there to introduce the children to some Ghanaian culture. Children were dressed in Ghanaian traditional clothes and Ananse stories (folk stories) were told. Everybody enjoyed joining in the folk dances and plays. GSA committee member Dr Judith Smith was there to support the Ghanaian group and she helped to make the occasion a grand and memorable one.

*Letitia Boateng*





## GOLD COAST AND GHANA MEMORIES

Publication of the *Memories* (May 2006) comes from a team effort. In particular, Jennifer MacDougall produced the text from the original contributions; Alan Mayhew provided the cover photograph and gave helpful advice; and Michael Hammer wrote the historical background chapter and prepared the format for publication. We had the good fortune to find our own printers through Florence Lartey, a Ghanaian living in London, who, making an inquiry of **Ghana School Aid** after finding the website, told us that she worked for a printing firm and would find us their quotation. We had excellent attention!

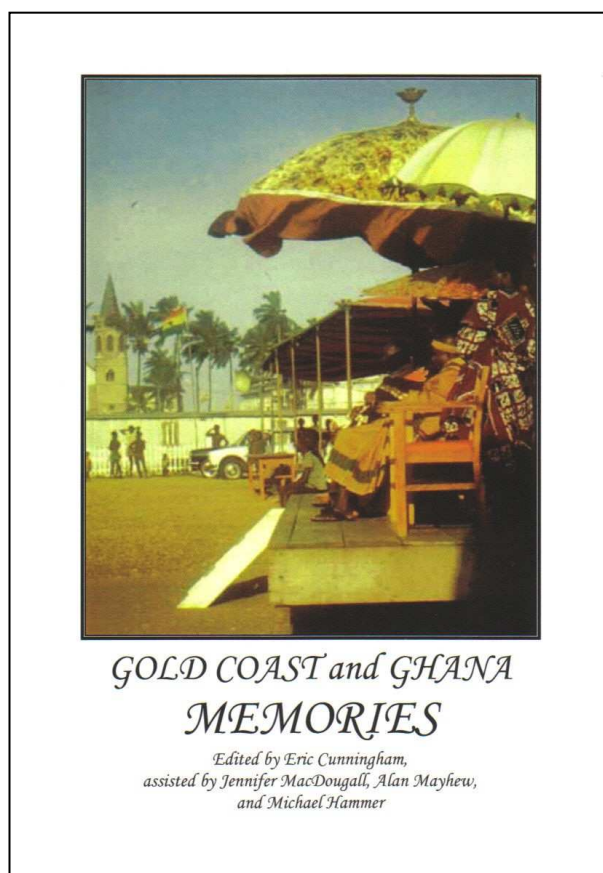
It has been a long haul. I first suggested the idea in 1995, but initial response to requests for contributions was insufficient to merit publication. Then illness caused me to put the project on hold. As further contributions came in and desk-top publication techniques advanced we were able to go ahead. [Commercial publication was not an option because of costs]. Sadly, some contributors are no longer with us, but their families have said that are glad there is a published record of their loved one's memories.

Thanks to the generosity of supporters production costs were met within the first six weeks of distribution, and so every donation now received in return for a copy is a full contribution to the funds of **Ghana School Aid**. My hope when I initiated the project was that it would become a fund-raiser; in fact this has been achieved more speedily than expected.

The *Memories* have been generally well received, with several favourable comments on the range of contributions and the quality of printing and format. We have endeavoured to offer copies not only to current supporters but also to those who had previously been supporters but who for various reasons – moving home, new interests, declining years – had not been in touch for a while. It is gratifying that many of these have responded very positively and very generously, and expressed

pleasure in being reminded of their experience and knowledge of Ghana, of the life they once lived there, and of people they used to know. One consequence has been to put people in touch again after several years of non-communication; another has been to increase the number of supporters donating by bankers' order and Gift Aid.

Thus the *Memories* serve to remind an enlarged network of people of **Ghana School Aid** and its activities. One example: we have had a very positive acknowledgement of the charity's work from that distinguished Ghanaian Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations [see letter below]. Readers of the *Memories* will recall that among them are recorded both a reference to his schooldays at Mfantshipim and the United Nations' monitoring of the Togoland Plebiscite.



Complimentary copies are being sent to those who in various ways have facilitated the charity's work, among them our Patrons, past and present High Commissioners for Ghana in the UK, the staff of Ghana Universities' Office in London (where for

several years the committee has been welcomed to meet), and the Morel and Paragon charitable trusts, both contributors to **Ghana School Aid** funds.

Also, because many contributions in the *Memories* have historical interest in that they record personal experience of political events and professional and daily life during a significant period of Ghana's development, complimentary copies are being offered to academic libraries in Ghana (the Institute of African Studies, Legon; Cape Coast University; Kumasi University of Science and Technology; the British Council Library, Accra) and Britain (Rhodes House, Oxford, the major repository for colonial archives; the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum Library, Bristol).

The committee agreed a printing of 250 copies, and we have made a good start in using them for fund-raising. Please publicise the *Memories* to raise more funds. Further copies are available direct from me (at 26 Somerstown, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 6AG) in return for a minimum donation of £12 (which includes post and packing) by cheque payable to **Ghana School Aid**.

*Eric Cunningham*

### **Letter from Kofi Annan to Jennifer MacDougall (GSA Committee member)**

*"I would like to thank you for your kind letter of 6 June and for sending me a copy of the book, The Gold Coast and Ghana Memories. It was very thoughtful of you and I will read it with great pleasure. I have often talked of the years I spent at Mfantshipim School and how I learnt there the value of knowledge infused with a moral purpose. Your mother's chapter, therefore, will certainly bring back fond memories of my youth[\*].*

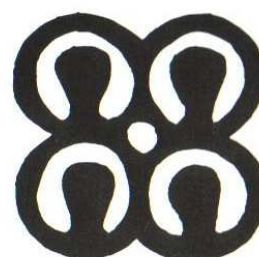
*Recent years have strengthened my conviction that human development is first and foremost about empowering people through education and opportunity. I am also very grateful, therefore, for the efforts undertaken by Ghana School Aid to provide grants and supplies to educational institutions in rural areas in the country.*

*I send you my best wishes for success. Please convey to your mother and the rest of your family my warm regards.*

*Yours sincerely*

*Kofi A Annan"*

[\* Barbara Roddick, in: Gold Coast and Ghana Memories, p. 63: *The legacy of Africa*]



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Bill Peters**

Members will be delighted to hear that Bill Peters, a friend and supporter of GSA, has been listed by *The Independent* newspaper (1/9/06) in their Good List 2006. The list celebrates 50 people who contribute to society in a deeply beneficial way, some of whom are household names such as Lionel Blue and Philip Pullman. They all share "a commitment to improving lives and changing attitudes". Bill is listed for his work as co-founder with Martin Dent of the Jubilee 2000 movement, which, in Gordon Brown's opinion is the most important since Wilberforce's anti-slave trade campaign. "The pair worked tirelessly to create a mass movement, and their idea caught the imagination of hundreds of thousands of people, forcing the Third World up the political agenda and persuading rich world governments to write off more than \$100bn in debts. They show that ordinary people can achieve extraordinary results."

Bill's article on Third World Debt appeared in the GSA Newsletter Dec 2004. We offer Bill our sincere congratulations.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Independence Anniversary Trip To Ghana**

Some members of GSA are considering making a trip to Ghana to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Independence in 2007. Wilfred Court went on a 14 day tour with the company Explore Worldwide Ltd [www.explore.co.uk, Tel 0870 333 4001] in 1999 and has suggested making a mini-bus tour (if sufficient interest) organised to meet our own requirements. The company are happy to “tailor and tweak itineraries” to suit our needs and interests (visiting GSA projects etc). Options include a visit of 10 – 14 days and tours to include the coast and Kumasi, or the coast and the north. Single rooms are available and estimated costs would be approx. £1300 - £1400.

Please indicate your preferences:

- A tour of the coast and Kumasi
- An extended tour including the coast and the north (e.g. Tamale and Bolgatanga)

Possible dates

- Early March, to include Independence Day  
March 6<sup>th</sup>
- Second half of April
- Other dates

Anyone interested should contact, as soon as possible, please:

→ Eric Cunningham, 26 Somerstown, Chichester, W. Sussex, PO19 6AG. Tel: 01243 537061, email: [kate.castle@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:kate.castle@tiscali.co.uk).

## **Libraries And Bookshops That Specialise In Books On Africa**

[David Bradshaw has suggested that members might like to have information of possible action to take if they wish to source or dispose of material on Ghana or Africa generally. In particular, the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum is anxious to acquire all types of archive material, including documentary records of work and life in the Gold Coast/Ghana.]

## **Libraries and museums**

Bodleian Library of Commonwealth and African Studies\*, at Rhodes House, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3RG, Tel: Reception 01865 270 908, → Lucy McCann 01865 270 971

## **SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies)\***

Thornhill Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG, Tel: 020 7898 4163

## **The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum\***

Clock Tower, Temple Meads Road, Bristol BS1 6QH  
Tel: 0117 925 4980, [staff@empiremuseum.co.uk](mailto:staff@empiremuseum.co.uk), or [photo@empiremuseum.co.uk](mailto:photo@empiremuseum.co.uk)

The British collection was begun by the acquisition of the library of the Commonwealth Institute in London. There has been a hiatus in their acquisitions programme so that there are gaps to fill, but all libraries have some gaps. We cannot know what is required unless we ask.

## **Reading University Library**

PO Box 223, 1 Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6AE

→ Contact: Michael Bott, Tel: 0118 931 8776, email: [g.m.c.bott@Reading.ac.uk](mailto:g.m.c.bott@Reading.ac.uk)

The University of Reading Library has a special interest in building up a collection of Heinemann's books on education including its series on African writers.

## **Bookshops**

Oriental and African Books\*, 33 Whitehall Street, Shrewsbury SY2 3DY, Tel: 01743 352575, Email [paul@africana.co.uk](mailto:paul@africana.co.uk)

Ten thousand books in stock with a huge range of titles – from serious scholarship to general interest. Publishes very good catalogues.

[The Africa Book Centre, 36 Robertson Road, Brighton, BN15NL; tel. 01273 560474; [www.africabookcentre.com](http://www.africabookcentre.com); previously in Covent Garden, London, stocks a large selection of non-fiction and fiction books.]



### Charity shops?

Oxfam in Oxford\* suggested by a member of the Bodleian staff. No doubt that is alright in Oxford, but it may be sensible to be sure that those who price and shelve books are knowledgeable.

[\*These institutions would also welcome books on Africa]

### The GSA Membership List

Please let Pamela Lewis have your details if you would like them to be added to or amended in the membership list. The Data Protection Act requires written permission for names and addresses to be distributed. If possible, email addresses should also be included please.

→ Contact: Pamela Lewis at 01591 610479

### Letter to the Editor

Helen Kimble wrote recently to Eric Earle:

“The reviewer of *Colonial Educators* [see Newsletter, Dec 2004, p. 8] mentioned so many familiar names, not only David’s [Kimble]. But I’m a little regretful that there the stress is on the PEA [People’s Educational Association] as the main achievement of extra mural studies. He did inspire and encourage it, as the demand side of the equation, with the university providing the supply of funds and many of the qualified part-time tutors. (I expect Christopher Cox secured some Colonial Office funding, as well as his personal support.) The collaboration between university and voluntary org. was very much modelled on Oxford’s set up, of course, in the footsteps of Albert Mansfield and Tawney.

David took four Ghanaians to UK with him on his first leave, to give them some background as organisers, and on return he put them on the university payroll. But the PEA became largely their responsibility. (Kwa Hagan, one of them, was national Secretary of the PEA for many years.) David persuaded David Balme to keep extra-mural education as part of the university (then UC of the Gold Coast) and as Director of Extra-Mural Studies he played an important part on several university

committees, becoming Master of Akuafio Hall when it was built. He employed four or five full-time graduate tutors, and always emphasised the academic quality of the tutorial classes, refusing to prepare people for vocational exams. (Now, I think, they teach for the GCSE.) And his concern for residential adult education led to the foundation of the College of Tsito.

I was also interested to read about Francis Bartels [See Newsletter, Dec 2004, p 8 \*]. When he was a young teacher – and probably a part-time tutor – he came to England and David put him in touch with me. (I was in UK while David did his first year in Ghana, on secondment from Oxford; we got married on his first leave.) We used to see Francis when he was at Mfantshipim and later I bumped into him at UNESCO. Its wonderful he is still going strong.”

[\* The second edition of FL Bartels’ memoirs “The Persistence of Paradox” is now available online and in printed form from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com) , Lulu Enterprises Inc, 860 Aviation Pkwy, Suite 300, Morrisville, NC27560, USA]

## BOOKS

***Boahen, Albert Adu \* Mfantshipim and the Making of Ghana. A centenary history 1876-1976. Sankofa Educational Publishers, Accra. 1996. Pb. 541pp. £36.95. ISBN: 9988 7631 15***

This volume charts the history and development of Ghana through the story of one school. The author illustrates the contribution of western education to the making of modern Ghana through the success of its pupils. Mfantshipim, the oldest secondary school in Ghana, was opened in 1876 as the Wesleyan High School in Cape Coast with 17 pupils. The book details the progress of the school, its pupils and staff with constant reference to national and local events, enlivened with anecdotes and fascinating details of school life. Chapters of particular interest include those concerning Balmer and the Faithful Eight, and the Headmasters Lockart and Bartels.

This book won the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa.

\*See page 21 for the obituary of Albert Adu Boahen

**Boyd, William. *Bamboo*. Penguin Books, 2005. £10.99. Pb. 650 pp. ISBN: 0 1410 19964**

William Boyd, born in Accra in 1952, is a supporter of GSA and this collection of his non fiction writing will be of interest to many members. In particular, the first section is devoted to his African childhood (in Ghana and Nigeria) and boarding school in Scotland. This wide-ranging, eclectic collection of writing includes sections of reviews and introductions to writers from Toni Morrison to Charles Dickens; films and film making; art; television; and people and places. There is also a section on books on Africa including exploring the Sahara, Liberia, African wars and Cecil Rhodes. There are also three pieces on Boyd's good friend the Nigerian writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, who was hanged by the military regime in 1995.

William Boyd's latest novel *Restless*, 2006, is published by Bloomsbury at £17.94.

**Meredith, Martin. *The State of Africa. A history of fifty years of independence*. The Free Press, 2006. £9.99. Pb. 752pp. ISBN: 0 7432 32224**

Written chronologically, this book describes the history and development of each of the larger African countries over the last 50 years. The author vividly details the rise and fall of Africa's leaders including Nkrumah, Nasser and Haile Selassie, in a dispassionate but very readable style. The book explores the times from the enthusiasm of the 1960s to the corruption of power in the 1970s and 80s, and the decline into despair and poverty of so much of present day Africa. As the quote from Bob Geldof on the cover reveals "You cannot even begin to understand contemporary African politics if you have not read this fascinating book".

**St Clair, William. *The Grand Slave Emporium. Cape Coast Castle and the British Slave Trade*. Profile Books, 2006. £16.99 Hb. 286pp. ISBN: 10 186197 9045.**

Cape Coast Castle served as the African headquarters of the British transatlantic slave trade, part of the greatest forced migration in history. Eleven million

people were taken from Africa to North America and the West Indies between the mid fifteenth and the late nineteenth century, 3 million of whom were transported in British ships. Drawing on an enormous range of primary resources, records, letters, receipts and other documentary evidence, the author describes the lives of some of those who lived, worked and were imprisoned in the castle throughout its long and dramatic history. He has also taken advantage of the electronic database comprising the details of 27,000 transatlantic slave voyages, approximately 75% of the total number, compiled from the archives of many countries and available since 1998. This painstaking research has provided us with a fascinating account, not only of a vast panorama of history, but with the minutiae of the lives of some of those, from all sides, who were involved in the trade.

## OBITUARIES AND TRIBUTES

**Tributes to Alan Harding Mayhew, former Honorary Secretary of GSA, 13 December 1934 – 1 October 2005**

**by Anthony DC Hyland**

The premature death from cancer on 1 October 2005 of Alan Mayhew deprived the various communities to which he belonged – local, national, international – of an architect with a high sense of public service, a rare quality these days. His career was spent predominantly working in or for developing countries, and so did not fully receive the recognition, in Britain, that his achievements deserved. He was one of that generation of architects whose architectural philosophy and aspirations were formed in the decade or so after World War II, who were inspired by the founders and the achievements of the Modern Movement in architecture, and were attracted by the rapidly expanding opportunities for architectural practice in the developing world, especially in the newly independent or about-to-become-independent countries of Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

After graduating from The Polytechnic (in Regent Street, London) in 1958, Alan joined the Architects' Co-Partnership (ACP) in London as an architectural

assistant, with a view to working in the tropics (then a rich field for British architectural practices willing to escape the post-war restrictions on architectural development in Britain, as the project list of such firms as Fry & Drew, Drake & Lasdun, Harrison Barnes & Hubbard, Max Lock & Partners, and others will testify.) He soon transferred to the practice's office in Lagos, Nigeria, and spent three years there, and as a site architect in Ghana, working on projects in both countries, and acquiring his enduring love of Africa.

In 1963, Alan was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), and left ACP to join the then flourishing Department of Tropical Studies, founded a decade earlier by Maxwell Fry, at the Architectural Association School in London. He joined a team of dedicated enthusiasts for tropical architecture, under the vigorous direction of Dr Otto Koenigsberger. Alan actively engaged in teaching, research and overseas consultancy, gaining his AA Diploma in tropical Studies in 1965, and becoming one of the "als" researching, compiling and writing Koenigsberger & als' textbook, that was to become one of the most widely read and sought after textbooks in architectural schools throughout the developing world. Koenigsberger, Mayhew, Ingersoll and Szokolay's *Manual of Tropical Housing and Building: Part 1, Climatic design* was eventually published by Longmans in 1974, and subsequently translated into Spanish, Arabic and Malay.

In 1969, Alan was recruited by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) for appointment by the University of Cape Coast (UCC) in Ghana as Director of Development, with responsibility for initiating, preparing and implementing the new Master Plan for the University campus. The six years he spent then in Ghana was perhaps the most significant period of his career, consolidating his reputation as an architect and planner for developing countries, with particular experience in educational planning, campus planning and the design of educational buildings. The then President of Ghana, Dr Busia, profoundly, though unknowingly, influenced the direction of Alan's future life, for it was he who persuaded a young English teacher,

Elizabeth Harding, who had previously taught on a link exchange programme in Ghana, to apply for and accept appointment to the academic staff of UCC. She and Alan first met when they were fellow employees of the University, and were married in 1970. Alan, with his habitual courtesy and gallantry, added her maiden name to his; and to his loving and caring and supportive partnership with Elizabeth, and to their three charming daughters, he owed the flowering that enriched the second half of his life.

From Cape Coast, Alan and his family moved to Lagos in 1975, to take up an appointment as Advisor to the National Universities Commission of Nigeria, a post for which he had been recruited by ODA. There he was responsible for the setting-up and monitoring of the master planning, design and construction of seven new universities in Nigeria, for advising on the allocation and expenditure of all funds for capital projects in Nigerian Universities, and for establishing a permanent physical planning and building division for the Commission.

By 1980, when Alan returned to the UK with his family, his influence on the planning and implementation of Nigeria's university expansion programme was profound, and his reputation as an expert in national educational planning and campus planning and design was secure. From the new family home in Bath, and in association (over different periods of time) with the practices of Sheppard Robson & Partners, Robert Matthew Johnson-Marshall & Partners, and Makiya & Partners, he served as consultant for campus master plan development to universities in China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and Nigeria. In 1998, he visited India as a consultant member of the DfID Development Education Sector Group in New Delhi, to review the Andhra Pradesh Primary Education programme. But his professional activities were not entirely focussed on overseas projects. Even before he established his associations (in 1987) and subsequent partnership with the practice of Lewis & Hickey, he undertook commissions for local projects, and in the 1990s, he was instrumental in developing and consolidating the planning, design and construction procedures of such

companies as Marks and Spencer, BHS, and Hilton International.

Even before the cancer, from which he eventually died, was first diagnosed in December 2002, Alan had begun to wind down his professional activities, to move into a semi-retirement mode, and to take on new responsibilities of service in a voluntary capacity. He became a steward of Bath Abbey, taking delight in revealing the historic and architectural treasures of the Abbey Church to visitors, and a committee member, and subsequently Honorary Secretary, of Ghana School Aid. His final overseas mission, in 2002, on behalf of the Max Lock Centre of the University of Westminster (as his 'alma mater', The Polytechnic, had become), was to Nigeria, to review the physical planning process and technical assistance inputs for the Delta State Higher Education Programme.

His funeral and thanksgiving service in Bath Abbey on 12 October 2005 demonstrated the extent to which his professional and social life had touched creatively so many and diverse institutions, organisations, companies and individuals, and was a celebration of his life in its fullness, in his love for his family, his strong sense of professional and social responsibility, his service to the community at so many levels and in so many places, his courtesy, his compassion, his Christian spirituality. He will be greatly missed.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth and his three daughters, Susannah, Lucy and Katharine.

***by Michael Asiedu (Nana Atta Nuamah III),  
GSA Representative in Ghana***

I pay this special tribute to the memory of my British friend and colleague Alan who passed away on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005, in his hometown Bath, UK.

He was during his lifetime the Secretary of the GSA Committee which office he took over in succession to Pamela Lewis when she moved to her village in Wales.

In the first place I wish to thank the GSA colleagues and allied friends for representing us all at the funeral service in Alan's favourite place of worship, Bath Abbey. I know that Alan has served the Abbey

faithfully for a number of years and he deserves their last commendation and final blessing. I missed the simultaneous opportunity to add my own personal prayers in my own church at the Holy Spirit Cathedral, Accra, on that day, but that was not possible as I had been away from Accra to my hometown. After all, it is never too late to pray for the soul of a dead friend and colleague, and that is what I have decided to do.

Regrettably, I could not meet the late Alan in Accra in the 60s. My first contact with him and his lovely wife, Elizabeth, was during my visit to the UK from 24<sup>th</sup> May to 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2003, on the invitation of the GSA. The exact occasion was Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2003, when Eric and Auriol Earle drove me on a rainy day to Alan's home in Bath for a weekend stay ending on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June. My impressions and experiences during that short stay were unique and unforgettable. I cannot help re-visiting the scene of their splendid and quiet residence overlooking an expansive woodland in the midst of well-kept lawns, hedges and a pond in which the ducks felt at home. Their environment was thriving with numerous types of animals including the deer, rodents, squirrels and several types of birds including my own favourite friends, the PIED CROWS, who represent my Asona clan and chieftaincy ancestral lineage in Ghana. I was excited with the amount of care and concern which Alan and Elizabeth offered food and drink to the animals and birds. It was a happy surprise to observe the kind of close relationship which Alan and Elizabeth had forged between themselves and the animal kingdom in the vicinity, in the tradition of St Francis of Assisi. The animals, including the birds, knew when to troop home everyday to feed themselves on food and water so meticulously procured and served by Sister Elizabeth under the watchful eyes of Alan. And surely those animals and birds in the area will miss the kind father, grandfather and benefactor Alan, a great deal. And so will the British Trust for Ornithology to which Alan belonged and served with characteristic zeal. I hope another enthusiastic person will take over Alan's remarkable passion for trailing the movement of over twenty British birds in the area.

The Good Book says “The death of a good person is pleasing to God for his good deeds will follow him”. There is no doubt in my mind that Alan achieved several good deeds which will follow him to cheer his dear wife Elizabeth and friends while he rests peacefully in his village. I have mentioned his care and concern for the animal kingdom and the GSA knows the amount of zeal and tenacity of purpose which Alan brought to bear on his work as the secretary of the organization. His place will not be easy to fill. It is hoped that someone will complete the exercise which Alan mounted to plot the centres of activity of GSA operations on the map of Ghana. Here in Ghana, everybody who knows the location of Cape Coast University (CAPE VAS) will not help admiring the splendid layout of the roads, the lawns and houses interspaced with the woody hills and streams. No one will hesitate to commend the architectural and development planners who designed the campus, and this should necessarily include Alan, who had the responsibility of directing the planning and physical development of the University Campus during the formative years of 1969-1974. Earlier in the 1960s Alan had joined a team of architects and planners in Tema, who gave life and shape to the beautiful scenery and landscape surrounding the Akosombo Dam site which today serves as a key tourist attraction and a retreat centre for Ministers of State and business executives.

Surely Alan’s service regarding the Cape Coast University campus as well as the Akosombo Dam site project, together with his enthusiastic contribution to the work of GSA, will follow him long beyond to his grave.

It is now left for me to express on behalf of my wife Victoria and children in Ghana, also on the behalf of school children and staff in Ghana who participated in the kind donations of the GSA, and on my own behalf: our heart felt sympathy and deep condolence to Sister Elizabeth, Alan’s widow, and the bereaved family, especially the children. My libation is that the good Lord will wipe away their tears quickly and give them the much needed courage, confidence and peace of mind to continue with their lives in absence of Alan.

Dear Alan, you have rendered a sterling service to Ghana and your country, Britain, and I wish you farewell. May the Lord keep you safely in paradise. ALAN DA YIE. DEMIRIFA DUE.RIP. From your good friend, Michael Asiedu.

## **Roger Ashworth, 18 November 1922 – 29 January 2006**

*by Dr Lyn Skinner*

In 1950 Roger was the Headmaster of the Trade School in Tamale and in charge of the teaching of mechanics and metalwork. It was the only school of its kind in the Northern Territories. Every year he and the Assistant Director of Education, Dick Bryant, toured the Northern Territories, visiting the schools in the larger towns to select pupils for the next year’s intake to the Trade School.

He used to drive at great speed from the Education Ridge to the club in the middle of Tamale in his open two-seater MG – often with his close friend Henry McWilliam.

In 1952 he was posted to Tarkwa Technical Institute as Principal. He told me that when he left he invited the managers of the nearby manganese mine at Nsuta to his farewell party. In a speech he berated them for their failure to give the students he had trained more responsibilities – this speech so impressed the managers that they invited him to join the staff of Consolidated African Selection Trust. Shortly afterwards he was appointed to the board of Directors as their personnel manager.

*by Stanley Anthony*

Ann and I were very sad to hear of Roger Ashworth’s death. We remember him so well from the 1990 [GSA] visit to Ghana. One particular episode was when we stopped for lunch at a restaurant just south of Kumasi on our way north. When the time came for paying Roger volunteered to collect our cash, and so we all handed over bundles of Cedi notes which he assembled into piles according to denomination and matched them to the bill. The problem was the breeze through the open-sided building which kept blowing the notes around, so that we and the waiters were kept busy trying to catch them – not easy as we were

all in fits of laughter. This is recorded, I think, on the video. The other memory from that trip is of Roger being dressed in the smock and hat that he was given when we visited the Tamale Technical College that he had been Principal of – also collected on the video.

## **Sir George Sinclair, 1912-2005**

### ***By Jennifer MacDougall***

George Evelyn Sinclair was a colonial civil servant and a politician who served as Conservative MP for Dorking from 1964 to 1979. On leaving Oxford University he joined the colonial service in 1936. His first post was as Assistant District Commissioner in the Gold Coast, for which he studied the Ashanti culture and history. On the outbreak of the Second World War he joined the Royal West African Frontier Force. In 1943 he became secretary to Sir Walter Elliott's Commission on Higher Education in West Africa, which originally aimed to provide one university for the whole of West Africa. African nationalists argued for a university for each country which Sinclair later supported and actively campaigned for. He was Regional Officer for the Trans-Volta Togoland Region involved in irrigation and sustainable development, and later preparing Togoland for the UN plebiscite to join the newly independent Ghana.

As Assistant Colonial Secretary, and subsequently Principal Assistant Colonial Secretary in 1950, he was one of the first to be aware that the Gold Coast would soon be independent. He first met Kwame Nkrumah when he had him arrested for an illegal general strike. He later wrote speeches for the nationalist turned statesman.

Following his service in the Gold Coast/Ghana Sinclair went on to become Deputy Governor of Cyprus dealing with the Greek and Turkish Cypriot nationalist crisis. He was knighted in 1960 and retired from the Colonial Office in 1961 entering Parliament in 1964.

Sir George was a supporter of GSA from the beginning and attended a number of annual reunions, at one of which he was the guest speaker. He gave an interesting account of his period as secretary of the Elliot Commission on Higher Education in West Africa which resulted in the founding of Ibadan University, Nigeria, and the University of Ghana, Legon.

On a return visit to Ghana in 1998 Sir George was received at a special reception by the then President, Jerry Rawlings, and amazed the audience with a speech in fluent Twi!

## **Professor Albert Adu Boahen 1932-2006**

### ***By Jennifer MacDougall***

Albert Adu Boahen, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Ghana, Legon, was a distinguished researcher and prolific writer known as the foremost historian of Africa. He was president of the UNESCO International Scientific Committee for the Drafting of a General History of Africa and edited the 7th volume of the *General History of Africa*.

He attended Mfantshipim School, Cape Coast, in 1947 and went on to the University of the Gold Coast in 1951, and the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, where he obtained his PhD in 1959. He returned to the staff at Legon, becoming a Professor in 1971.

As a part of the Movement for Freedom and Justice he opposed the regime of General IK Acheampong (for which he was imprisoned) and stood against Flt Lt Jerry Rawlings in the Presidential election of 1992.

Professor Boahen wrote nine books including *Topics in West African History* (1966), *West Africa since 1800* (1967), *The Ghanaian Sphinx* (1989), *Mfantshipim and the making of Ghana* \*(1996), and *Yaa Asantewaa and the Asante-British War of 1900-1* (2003). He specialised in the history of Africa before and after European colonisation.

[\*See review in Books above]



## Peggy Cripps Appiah 1921 - 2006

**By Jennifer MacDougall**

Born Enid Margaret, “Peggy” was the daughter of former Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Stafford Cripps, and grew up in Oxfordshire. As a young woman she travelled extensively with her father for whom she worked as a secretary and with her mother in China and the Far East. She had given up a university place because of the war and subsequently suffered a nervous breakdown. Recovering in Switzerland, she took up painting and continued studying art in London.

It was through her work for Racial Unity that she met Joseph Emmanuel Appiah, and when their engagement was announced in 1953 a storm of comment was unleashed in the international press. The wedding was front page news in Britain. After Joe completed his legal training in London they returned to live in Ghana with their baby son Kwame. Three daughters, Ama, Adwoa and Abena followed, and Peggy also supported her husband in his work in law and politics as she had her father. Joe was imprisoned by Nkrumah in 1961.

Peggy maintained a strong home and family life in Kumasi while Joe travelled widely; she built up an extensive library which she opened to local children and adults. Peggy was involved in a wide range of social work and developed a great interest in Akan art and folklore, collecting art of the Ashanti region.

Peggy Appiah published many volumes of Ghanaian children’s stories, particularly the Ananse tales to which Joe had introduced her, which became very popular throughout the English speaking world. She produced readers to help Ghanaian children to learn English, and a series of novels for children and adults, as well as two books of poetry. In 2002 she completed *Bu Me Be: Proverbs of the Akan*, a collection of over 7000 Twi proverbs which took almost 50 years to compile, (Africa World Press, 2006).

Peggy never considered leaving Ghana, even after Joe’s death in 1990, and told everyone who asked when she was going home that she was “home already”. A lifelong committed Christian, she was awarded the MBE for services to Ghanaian relations and community welfare in 1996. She was loved by a wide circle of family and friends, and known by all in Kumasi as “Auntie Peggy”.

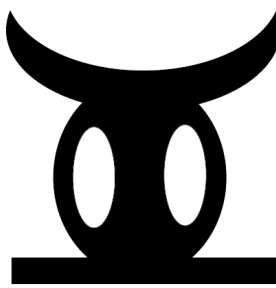
### **Stop Press – Stop Press – Stop Press – Stop Press – Stop Press**

**Congratulations to Polesworth High School / International Language College which has just won the Times Educational Supplement International Secondary School of the Year Award.** This is a great honour for the school and the award includes a prize of £5000 which they will spend on resources and visits to their link schools including Pampawie (which GSA has supported). The judges commented on the range of international work that Polesworth has skilfully used to enrich the curriculum across the school, giving staff invaluable professional development and inspiring pupils' belief in their ability to make positive changes in the wider world. The award was announced in the Times Educational Supplement on 6th October and presented in London on 11th October at the ISA ceremony.

Ghana School Aid continues to consider its **plans for one or several projects to mark the 50th anniversary / Jubilee of Ghana Independence next March.** Various projects under consideration. If you would like to contribute any suggestions ? Please write to the Chairman / Secretary.

The **next AGM 2007 will be held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> or Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> of June 2006.** The committee is finalising details for the venue, but please do keep these dates free in your diary.

# Ghana School Aid



October 2006



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