



Chairman's Report

AKWAABA!

Where has the past year gone? The annual general meeting of 2012 held at the John Adams Hall brought together a group of supporters from different backgrounds who have a passion towards giving the children of Ghana opportunities of enjoying a good education. On that occasion we were fortunate enough to have Lord Paul Boateng, who gave his time to address our meeting. Like all of us, Paul shares our enthusiasm for the work we are doing, especially in the Northern and Upper regions. He is trying to identify a school in the Tamale district which would benefit from our support. Also present was my former colleague Nick Elam who is well known to our members in that he chaired the Caine Prize for African Literature which in the past has been awarded to Ghanaian writers. Both Paul and Nick emphasised how well educated a minority of Ghanaians have become and they are enthusiastic over the way we are creating openings for a few more.

Dr Judith Gillespie Smith, a GSA supporter and committee member, has sadly had to resign recently due to ill health. Judith was with the Ghana Ministry of Agriculture based near to Kumasi and spent a little time in Accra. She specialised in the eradication of pests which affected the crops which were grown in the Ashanti Region, and the programme was to destroy the parasites which caused so much damage to the farms. She was in Ghana from January 1961 to September 1964 and found her experiences most rewarding. She was for twelve years a staunch member of the Ghana

IN THIS ISSUE....

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
PAGE 1

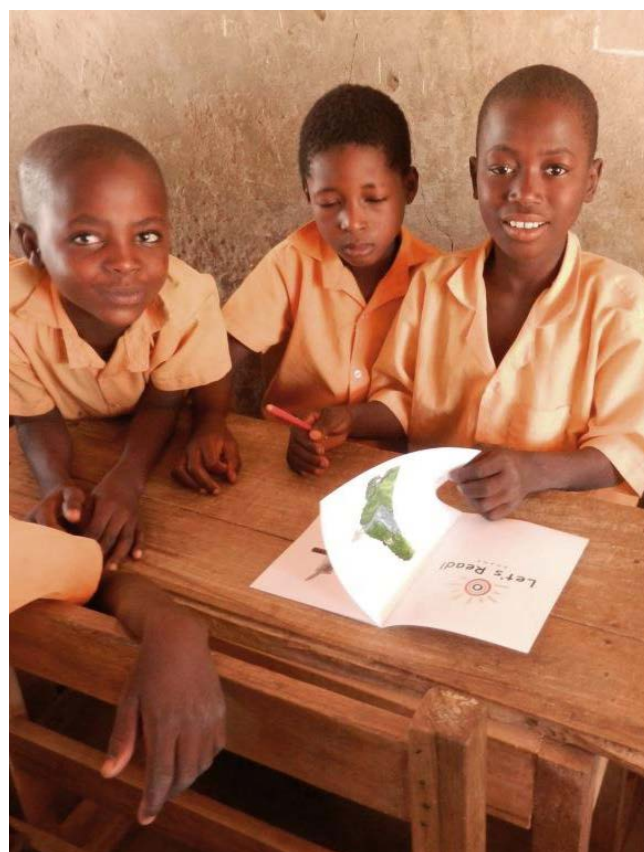
MEMORIES
PAGE 4

NEWS & PROJECTS
PAGE 13

ACCOUNTS
PAGE 22

OBITUARIES
PAGE 23

2013 AGM PHOTOS
PAGE 27



Children from Sirigu reading from one of their new books, as Jo Hallett reports on page 17.

School Aid committee and organised six of our annual re-unions. Her enthusiasm and love for Ghana ensured that the events went off very well. She was particularly pleased to see that Lalage Bown was the guest speaker at our 2013 re-union. Her contributions to our meetings were greatly appreciated and she made a great effort to get to them from her home in Wiltshire.



Lalage Bown, speaking at the 2013 AGM

As a committee we have been very active with our projects and the one which has recently got off the ground is the assistance we are giving to the Bethel Cambridge School at Awodome in the Volta region run by Patience Agbeti. This school is close to the Joe Bedu Primary School at Daffor-Awodume which was started by Penny Sewell as a memorial to her late husband. Penny makes an annual pilgrimage to Daffor-Awodume and it was on one of her

recent visits that she identified this struggling school. We have had lovely letters from the headmistress and the development of the project is being closely monitored by Penny. It was last year that we mourned the passing of one of our founder members, Pam Lewis, and following her death her family set up a memorial fund with the request that it goes towards one of our projects. The committee earmarked the Bethel Cambridge School and, with the approval of Pam's family, the funds raised in her memory will be allocated to this school. We are advised that the fund now stands at over £4000 which will go a long way towards their building project.

As a charity, we have always put much emphasis on linking schools in Ghana with those in the UK. We have continued with our support for the link between the Whitsone School at Shepton Mallet and the Okwapemman School at Akropong in the Volta Region. What has been so encouraging in this case has been the mutual benefit of this project with everyone becoming more aware of each other's needs.

It was around seven years ago that I took over from Eric Earle as chairman. At the time GSA was on a firm foundation and was run with great enthusiasm. Since then we have seen our efforts take root and bear fruits in the Upper Regions. Patrick Heinecke and the Sandema Project is just one example and, more recently, we have supported Jo Hallett with her Ghana Let's Read Project. The way we work in conjunction with the Wuluga Projects shows that two charities can get together to work together for the good of a large community developing their skills in the Upper Regions. These are areas crying out for help, yet sadly neglected by the authorities. The British

Airways School, now expanding even more, has been kept going due to our assistance, and the David Bradshaw memorial block is where sixty extra pupils are getting a good schooling. Exciting days lie ahead.

I could go on a long time reporting on our activities over the year, but will refrain from doing so because everything is recorded on our website [www.ghanaschoolaid.org] and updates also appear in this Newsletter.

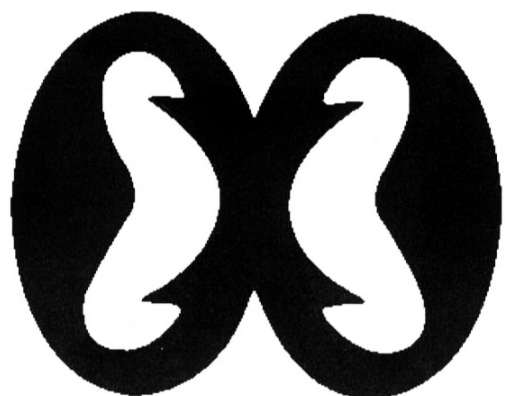
At last year's AGM our long-serving Treasurer and founder member Stanley Anthony announced that he would like to relinquish his duties before long. He added that he is not planning to give up immediately but we feel now is the time to recruit a willing volunteer. I am advised that the work is not too onerous, especially as modern technology has taken over most of the book-keeping work. So I am appealing to you to think about this duty and please let me or Stanley know if you feel able to assist. Stanley has been a loyal supporter for so long. [We have recently welcomed Nigel Dennis to the committee to assist Stanley].

The GSA committee has supported me very well and I would like to express my appreciation to all of them for all they have done over the year. We hold our meetings every three months and there are rarely any apologies for absence, such is the enthusiasm for our work. My reports in recent years have ended with quotes by Clement Atlee, Nelson Mandela and, more recently, Martin Luther King, all related to the importance of education in the lives of the world's citizens. This time I want to quote from an address given by Sir Stafford Cripps, who is well known to all of us. Sir Stafford said, while addressing pupils at Moncton Combe School

in 1948 that "A great deal of confusion in our minds comes from our lack of knowledge. We cannot judge what is right unless we know what the consequences of our actions are likely to be on others. That knowledge we can only gain by education and experience. Education is, or ought to be, designed to make us intelligent and understanding citizens of our country and the world, able to judge what is right or wrong. This can only be achieved through sensible schooling."

Thank you all for your support.

Ted Mayne



MEMORIES

Extra-mural memories

By Lalage Bown, Extra-Mural Tutor, in Trans-Volta Togoland, 1949–55

[This is a summary by Jo Hallett of Lalage Bown's talk for the 2013 AGM of Ghana School Aid. Lalage illustrated her talk with a hand-out explaining the purpose of university extra-mural work and giving some statistics, as well as a sample programme of a course for members of the Legislative Assembly. She also enlivened it with some good jokes.]

Introduction. The reasons for telling this story were that it was almost unknown, it was in itself a good story, and it contained messages for the present. A striking characteristic of most of the University College staff was how young they were (Lalage was 22 when she went off into Trans-Volta Togoland); perhaps this was as well for extra-mural tutors, since the work entailed rough living, very long car journeys, often camping overnight and make-shift housing. A second important point was the early involvement of Gold Coasters as part-time tutors and senior department members.

The Point of Extra-Mural Studies. When so few people had the chance of entering the College and when there were many able people in the country, the work was a fair use of some higher education resources. Secondly, attendance at classes had a positive effect on people in outlying areas, since it gave them "ideas and encouragement". And thirdly, it met social needs by preparing people for social, political and economic change. Though some Government officers understood and welcomed this, there were suspicions and Lalage described being

pursued by Special Branch. On the other hand, when the UN Togo Mission came to report on British Trusteeship, the Government was pleased to show off the classes as preparing for independence! (It was, however a bit worrying that the Mexican member asked if Lalage was "for rent").

How it Worked. A broad programme of weekly classes, weekend courses, public lectures and residential courses attracted all kinds of people with some formal education, among them inevitably many teachers. Numbers grew rapidly, so that by 1955 there were more than 3,500 class participants.

Outcomes. Extra-mural classes generated a wide spread of social projects, partly through links with the Community Development Department and partly through the extra-mural students' own organisation, the PEA. The democratic approach helped in bringing conflicting groups together, while leadership at all levels was fostered, since many educated chiefs participated, many trade union officials and elected representatives, e.g. almost all the Trans-Volta Togo regional council and 80 out of the 104 Legislative Assembly members.

Projects. Major projects emerged and Lalage underlined her efforts to involve more women; one who went to jail for demonstrating, placed such value on her class that she sent her warder to attend in her place!

Conclusion. This was only a small part of much longer story, since the University of Ghana still has a flourishing Institute of Adult Education. Lalage has happy memories of those early days, not only of the rewarding nature of the work itself, but also of the extraordinary welcome and kindnesses she received from Ghanaians – such

as the village woman who gave her the sole coin she had, a 3d piece, for her to buy eggs for her lunch.

Memories of Ghana

by Eric Cunningham

Our memories are individual: each of us remembers a time, a place, a happening in our own particular way. Some memories we prefer to keep private, and others we are happy to share. The memories of many who have lived and worked in the Gold Coast or Ghana can be shared because they have been published, like those in *Gold Coast and Ghana Memories* (2006), where several GSA supporters recorded significant events in their lives there – to the interest of others and the benefit of GSA funds. Readers of this *Newsletter* may like to be reminded of some other published works that record the experience of living in the Gold Coast or Ghana, and working with the people there. Reading may well enlarge knowledge, trigger memories of things that were once familiar, and promote reflection on what might have been.

A convenient starting point is the 1939-1945 war. This had a profound effect on the Gold Coast in that it not only brought to it a large number of British, American and other Allied troops who would otherwise never have visited West Africa, but also despatched overseas many Gold Coast troops, recruited as volunteers, to serve in East Africa, India and Burma. For them this was a formative experience, for very few had travelled so widely before. Sir Alan Burns, Governor of the Gold Coast 1941-1947, in his memories *Colonial civil servant* (Allen and Unwin 1949) notes some of the effects of war on the Gold

Coast administration, particularly the needs of American troops and the several official bodies that collectively made unparalleled demands on facilities and services. He makes forthright comment on some initial American behaviour, which later ameliorated.

In contrast to the gubernatorial overview, William Reid's *Bush proper 1941-1943* (Scottish Academic Press 1997) tells one man's story of military service in the Gold Coast. Posted as an army medical officer to work with Gold Coast troops, initially in Accra and later in Tamale, he was both surprised and delighted by the experience, and his liking for the Gold Coast and its soldiers is evident. As a medical officer he was in close contact with them, so came to know them well. They were all volunteers, and he gives an entertaining account of a recruitment drive in Southern Togoland, writing very positively of working with the Gold Coast administration. His sadness at having to leave the Gold Coast for his next posting is clear.

One whose war service took him overseas with Gold Coast troops is Allan Leeds, who in *Long ago and far away* (Square One 1998) records his life in the Department of Agriculture, which he joined in May 1939, only to find himself conscripted at the outbreak of war in September to serve in the Gold Coast Regiment. After training in Tamale he was posted to East Africa; he gives a full account of his service there in the Somaliland and Abyssinian campaigns. Demobilised, he resumed his agricultural career, retiring in 1958. He gives an interesting picture of Gold Coast agriculture and its challenges, one of them swollen shoot in the cocoa industry. Though he makes reference to the colonial policy of eventual self-government, surprisingly he says nothing about the often turbulent political

period through which he worked, and makes no reference to any of the effects of it which he must have experienced as an Agricultural Officer, namely Africanisation of the Civil Service, and the need to train subordinates to take over.

Another account of the same period is by Philip Dennis in *Goodbye to pith helmets* (Pentland Press 2000). He was an Administrative Officer serving from 1940 to 1956. A few months after arriving in the Gold Coast he volunteered for the Royal West Africa Frontier Force, which led to postings to Nigeria and Sierra Leone. Unexpectedly released from the army in 1943 to return to the Gold Coast administration, he worked initially in Tarkwa and then in Sekondi, Kpandu, Kumasi and Cape Coast. He writes thoughtfully about his work in civil administration, particularly with reference to the impact of rising political forces during his service. He left shortly before Independence, acknowledging a feeling that political pressure for advancing central government had inevitably cut short the development of local services. The book has very good photographs, and would have benefitted from careful editing to eliminate repetition and irrelevant detail, such as recording the inclusion of dried egg in wartime rations in Britain.

Life in the Gold Coast during the years 1939-1948 from a policeman's perspective is described in the first part of Colin Imray's *Policeman in Africa* (Book Guild 1977). His account is episodic, not narrative, and he acknowledges that he is writing several years after the events he records. He recalls the Accra earthquake (June 1939), the building during the Second World War of the landing strip that has become Accra International Airport, and encounters with a lion near Bawku and a leopard at Wenchi. Much

more fully, he recounts the incident with which he is indelibly associated, the shooting in Accra in 1948 of demonstrators who departed from the agreed demonstration route and began to march on Government House (Christiansborg Castle), the riots that followed, and the Commission of Enquiry into these events. His action was vindicated by the Enquiry, and he took a transfer to Kenya to continue his police career. He tells that story in Part II.

The sunshine land, a fitting name for Ghana, is the title given by David Wedd in his memoir (Author House 2007) on his service there as a young subaltern in the Gold Coast Regiment during his National Service 1956-1958. He found himself enchanted by the country and his work there, making good friends with African fellow officers and acknowledging his good fortune in the opportunity to take responsibility well beyond his years. He arrived a few months before Independence, and gives a lively account of the celebrations of it in Accra, in which the army was fully involved. He writes also of the army's interaction with the civil administration, African/European interaction at officer level, and variously of Ghana's natural history, particularly insect life, juju, and a local leave spent travelling to and from Timbuktu. His enthusiasm and friendships are manifest; they inspired two return visits to Ghana, one in 1968 (post-Nkrumah), and one in 1971 (just pre-Busia). He found that his former fellow officers had necessarily been involved in coups, and had been greatly advanced in rank. One had been killed. This is a fascinating account of one man's experience of Ghana during a period of rapid change.

The sub-title *A happy life in West Africa* illuminates the prosaically titled *From Gold*

Coast to Ghana (Portland Press 1996) by Colin Russell, who served as an Administrative Officer for twenty-eight years, beginning in 1929 as an Administrative Cadet and ending in 1956 with retirement as Chief Regional Officer, Ashanti. He records significant events professional, political, social, domestic and family in a long and successful career, and illuminates two periods in particular, namely pre-war, before roads and road transport were well developed and lengthy treks on foot were often the norm, and post-1951, when the Gold Coast achieved internal self-government and was preparing for independence. The pressures of that time were constant, very demanding of time and energy, and ever-changing. He writes entertainingly, and throughout his affection and regard for the people of the Gold Coast and of Ashanti in particular are evident. In this regard he parallels an illustrious predecessor as Chief Commissioner, Ashanti, Sir Francis Fuller, who recorded his knowledge of Ashanti traditions and history in *A vanished dynasty: Ashanti* (Murray 1921). Happily this work is misleadingly titled; Ashanti continued and continues as a strong and vibrant part of the Gold Coast and Ghana.

Yet another who writes most affectionately of Ghana and its people is WEF Ward, who in the preface to *My Africa* (Ghana Universities Press 1991) declares “the great respect and affection I found for the Gold Coast people, so many of whom treated me with unforgettable kindness”. The book is a memoir, not an autobiography. Frank Ward writes with humility and sincerity of his experience of working with Africans and of his sustained and successful attempts to get to know them, principally through learning Twi by means of frequent and lengthy stays in villages. Appointed to teach history in Achimota when it first opened in 1924. His motivation was the

belief that Africans should first learn their own history before that of others. *My Africa* ranges widely over Gold Coast customs, beliefs, culture, and interaction with Europeans both officially and socially; records something of his own remarkable initiatives, such as an extended trek into the Ivory Coast to explore how widely Twi is spoken; and reflects on colonialism not only in the Gold Coast but elsewhere in Africa.

This is a book not only to stimulate memories but also to inform and inspire anyone going to work in Africa; I wish I had had it to read when I first went to the Gold Coast. GSA is fortunate to have had Frank Ward as one of its first Presidents. He came to the 1986 re-union, and actively encouraged the charity’s formation.

GSA visit to Ghana 1995

by David Barnard

[This is a much reduced version of a full account of the GSA visit to Ghana in 1995 by David Barnard with some help from Eric Earle. If anyone would like a copy of the full article please contact the editor. Some of the people referred to include David and Joan Barnard (met in Ghana, 1962-5, both taught at Ebenezer Secondary School, Mamprobi, Accra where William Dadzie was head boy); David Aldridge, involved in the foundation of the university at Legon; Eric Earle, Education Officer 1950s and 60s and daughter Wendy; Karola wife of Ken Strong, in the education service there, taught in Tamale, & helped determine the Ghana/Togo border by polling of individual villages, and daughter Clare Strong; Pam Lewis (former secretary of Ghana School Aid); Mark Tregidgo, son of Vera, wife of Philip Tregidgo who taught in Ghana in the

1950s]

Wed March 1. Arrived Accra Kotoka airport just before 1800, and took an hour or so having our bags collected, cleared en mass, and taken to bus. Various welcomes and lots of confusion, for maybe two hours before bus could leave for the hotel. Met Stella, representing Apstar Tours (acting for Africa Travel Shop in Ghana) and their guide Herbert who was to accompany us throughout. Contrary to the Rough Guide to West Africa's opinion, the airport exchange rate was reasonable (much better than the hotel's). Half an hour to the North Ridge Hotel, into rooms, and a late supper in the restaurant. Introduced to Robert & Evelyn Asiedu, Robert being Ghana School Aid's representative in Ghana.

Thur March 2. Much of down-town was unrecognisable, very jammed with traffic and sellers. The old Makola market had been destroyed, because, we gathered, the traders were supposed to have been hoarding, for higher prices. From the centre we took a taxi to the Avenida Hotel where Karola & Ken had spent their first few weeks in Ghana, then walked rather a long way to the museum, where we ate red-red (beans & fried plantain) at their restaurant.

At 15.00 we all went to the Ministry of Education to be welcomed by numerous officials of the Ghana Education Service (with apologies from minister and deputy minister), and to be told of their needs. These included simple weighing machines and sets of accurate weights, and means for producing two-colour (or more) teaching materials, as well as the more obvious library books (target of 30(?) books per primary school, 50(?) per secondary). From there we

went back to hotel to collect swimming gear, then on to Labadi Beach.

Fri March 3. A fairly early start by bus to the Legon University primary and junior secondary schools, where our visit began by watching the start of the second day of their school sports, including JSS boys and girls 800 metre finals, before visiting the classrooms. Others went on to visit West Africa Secondary Schools, Abokobi JSS, Larteh, and Dodowa Presbyterian JSS, but David Aldridge separated to meet Legon administration people, and J&D, K&C, and John split off to look around the university and particularly the bookshop, and then returned to the hotel.

As arranged the previous evening, William [Dadzie, former student of the Barnard's] came at 1400 and collected us (D&J + K&C), and we drove out along the Old Winneba Road (James Town and beach) to Mamprobi (2 miles W of central Accra) and the old school site (Ebenezer Government-Assisted Secondary School; D&J left in 1965 after 3 & 2 years contract teaching respectively). It would have been hard to find on our own, because of new roads and buildings, but most of the school buildings and both houses were as they had been, the two-storey school block now a combined church-cum-secretarial school, and the two-storey house now a Beauty Salon! The old lab still had its water tank on stilts, the mango trees had grown a bit, but the football field was now mostly occupied by a health clinic. The old primary school was still there next door, just as one approached the school. Then we went on to find the new school, much hindered and confused by a road closed for tarmacking, but finally reached after much scraping of the car bottom, about a mile west of Mamprobi, once again at the edge of town (in

Dansoman) but now enclosed in a huge walled compound (20 or 30 hectares). Scattered within were an admin. block (as big as the whole of the original school), and two very large two-storey blocks of classrooms, well-proportioned but still in the raw concrete, with doors and some window slats; no stair-rails, but equipped with desks and (cement) blackboards and obviously in use. There were also one properly finished small block, provided by the Municipal Authority, William said, and the foundations and upright frame for an assembly hall. The rest was mostly uncultivated bush or bare earth, very dispiriting. Quite a shock! It seemed the government had stopped paying so the contractor had stopped work, some 7 or 8 years ago. The hall was being done by the Parent-Teacher Association and the Old Boys Association (William Dadzie being heavily involved in both).

Sat March 4. Nominal 0800 start in our air-conditioned bus (owned we thought and maintained by driver Tete, for about 10 years) out along the motorway to Tema junction, then a narrow main road past the Shai Hills and below Akropong ridge through Kpong to Adomi bridge, some 5 km below the Akosombo dam. We then drove up to the dam, admired and photographed it, drove across and back. Masses of birds swooping around the dam and through the gaps above the spill-ways etc. (NB the 1990 party had done this tour of the dam internals - v. interesting.) Then on via Frankadua and Peki (past Anum, where D had once spent the New Year with Kwame Anim, and looked down at the confluence of the Afram and the Volta), to Kpandu around lunch-time. Here Guy Jackson struggled to identify recognisable buildings in the Technical Institute, with some eventual success, while others wandered round church, hardware stores, and Rose's Restaurant, well hidden off a

little alley.

We diverted a few km to a most interesting Kpandu water front on the Volta lake (water level surprisingly far below some large stranded boats and concrete quay/jetty) and market, before setting out for Ho (Wendy and Eric's territory). However a side trip to Amedzofe was slipped in (at Karola and Pam Lewis' request) which involved much dirt and some very steep roads, which the bus driver handled with great aplomb - his passengers had more doubts. We arrived towards sunset at Amedzofe E.P. Training College on a hill about 3000 or 3500 feet above sea level, with magnificent views extending over various skylines to the Volta Lake. There were two colleges, the original Amedzofe E.P. & the new one, where they were training Ghanaians to be teachers & (a new departure) missionaries. (E.P. was once Ewe Presbyterian, now Evangelical P.)

Sun March 5. [Excursion] to the National Theatre (John the driving force) to see the Ghana National Dance Company perform the King's Dilemma (he failed to solve it!), and Semba. Two 45' sessions of beautiful and very clever dancing with extremely energetic and continuous drummers, the first telling the story, the second a portrayal of many aspects of life in Ghana. Then to the Afrikiko for a late meal, walking back home just after midnight.

Mon 6th. Early start for Kumasi. ...Through Nsawam and Nkawkaw below the Mpraeso scarp (where J&D had got stuck 30-odd years before), and Juaso. After a brief palm wine stop, we broke the journey for snacks at the SOS Children's Village at Asiakwa, then arrived for a late lunch at the Kentish Kitchen (the proprietor had lived in Kent a while) in the National Cultural Centre.

The Centre was closed (apart from some carving workshops and a herbalist) for Independence Day celebrations. These involved cultural dancing and drumming in a large auditorium which we watched awhile, another almost pitch dark enclosed hall full of very hot dancers and loud music, and enormous throngs of people milling about everywhere, beautifully dressed in a great variety of styles.

Tues March 7. After breakfast with a good glass of orange juice, we drove back to Ejisu, NE up to Efiduasi where we called in on the Ghana Education Service office, and into Asokere (home of Kofi Ohene's mother-in-law Madam Grace Adjekum). We were received by a procession with music, followed it for half-a-mile in the bus, and were then sung (by Holy Trinity Healing Church choristers) into a temporary square of shaded benches and chairs for a grand reception by Asokere Primary School, with four drummers, and a sequence of proper speeches leading to a presentation of charts, books, and some money (for Asokere L.A., Holy Trinity and Ahmaddiyya PSs), followed by dancing to the drums. This included a kindergarten group led by their teacher!

After return to the City Hotel, J&D, K&C took a taxi to Lake Bosumtwi. A grand wide new road was almost complete, a far cry from 30 years ago, and the old hill-top resthouse with path down to the water has gone. Instead the road curves broadly down, admittedly with spectacular views, but ending in a small fishing and farming village full of besieging children, a coachload of other (Ghanaian child) tourists, and a modest restaurant which we did not visit. We tried to find a lakeside path to another village, but the road having taken a major valley down, all paths seemed to disappear up long tributary streams

and we failed. There were motorised boat trips on the lake, and we only saw one traditional fisherman on the solid log craft (though there were a dozen of the shaped logs on the beach). The hills are still modestly treed, but not the rainforest of last time (i.e. 1964 or 5). Indeed nowhere on the entire trip did we see the sort of rainforest that used to cover half of Ghana, only relic trees standing above cleared farms or small natural growth.

Wed March 8. [John left on his own to Cape Coast – the rest headed north to Tamale]. From Techiman we crossed to Nkoranza, and shortly after diverted east of the tarmac road to the Fiema monkey sanctuary, where black-and-white colobus monkeys come into the village for breakfast. We got there about midday, so the colobus monkeys were taking their siesta on high, and we saw mostly long white tails dangling from the branches they sprawled over (and a few livelier moaner monkeys). A few hundred hectares have been set aside as a reserve of protected rainforest, stimulated by a church that arrived some years ago, which regarded the monkey traditions as idolatrous and started killing the monkeys (this has now been stopped).

Thur March 9. After regrouping we went to the Regional Offices to meet and be welcomed by A B Fuseni, Regional Minister Northern Region (once a pupil of Ken Strong and Philip Tregidgo, later an Education Officer, & at the date of the 1990 visit the Municipal Director of Education), and other ex-students (hearing interesting tales of Ken's and Philip's teaching styles - "... I am about to lose my temper, ..."). Then we travelled on to Tamale Secondary School (SSS + 6th form I think), where we had speeches and presentations before the whole school in a large hall, to them and also to Bagabaga and

Sakasaka JSSs (the last two represented just by their head-teachers). Some very sensible short speeches. K&C stayed here to look for their former accommodation, while the rest went on to the University for Development Studies in its current Admin. site - other campuses are being built, nearby at Nyankpala, with lesser campuses at Wa, Kintampo, and Navrongo. We were again welcomed by a Professor & other University staff, and the President of the local Rotary Group

Fri March 10. Off to Kumasi. Mostly good road, with occasional roadwork where they were still widening/upgrading it. Our driver Peter (who had replaced Tete earlier) had some problems finding gears, and then at about 0945 we pulled in to the side in a small unnamed village to attempt mechanical repair. Thirty metres further off the road were an old and very dead tractor and an old and very dead bus. We speculated whether the village was collecting them. Children gathered; and gathered. People got off to stroll and photograph. After an hour or so we sent an expeditionary force to seek spare parts from the road-builders (successfully, but not an immediate cure). The problem could well have been the result of the haul up to Amedzofe! A little longer, and Herbert proposed to arrange a tour of the village, gratefully accepted. We set off, across the road and along some 4 or 500 metres, and went to see the chief (wearing a T-shirt from an Ibiza club or suchlike) and his elders. We exchanged greetings etc., and then went on to inspect the village school (PSS). There seemed to be 6 classrooms and three teachers, perhaps plus headmaster (whom we met), and there were all sorts of industrious study going on (presumably the less industrious had been those gathered by the bus in the other half of town). The walls were mud, the roof thatch (sun- but not water-proof), but there were blackboards,

books, marked exercises, etc. We also discovered the village's name, Kurawura. We returned to the coach, assembled materials, and then made an impromptu presentation of wall-charts and money (half from a whip-round, half from the trust) to the head-teacher and chief. Meanwhile the mechanics were losing confidence and we sent Chris off on one of the infrequent passing buses to secure alternative transport. While they arranged this (two minibuses) there was final partial success, a push start, and we drove off and met them as they drove the 15 km out from Kintampo. After some renegotiations and payoffs in Kintampo, and to the worry of some of the group, we used the bus for the remaining 80 or 90 miles to Kumasi, back to the City Hotel, and another meal at the Sweet Gardens. The driver/mechanic team went off to spend the evening trying to perform a proper repair. Another evening rainstorm.

Sat March 11. 0900 new bus set off for Cape Coast. A very bad road as far as Bekwai junction to Assin Nyankumase, where at the request of Naomi Roberts who had worked at the health centre, the trust had given £500 towards a nursery school now named after her. Our representatives therefore went in (others feeling exhausted) to see the result; indeed it was there, and functioning. Then on to Assin Manso (on map) and just beyond, Assin Achiase, where Michael Asiedu (the village chief, former education officer, now Deputy CEO in GES Accra, & Permanent Secretary), had told them we would arrive about 0900! We first called at the chief's house (and discovered our lateness), then went to the school, where there was drumming, some dancing, a presentation, and Chris played a little football with a few hundred children - very popular. We returned to the chief's house for a formal reception by his deputy and elders, with

(once more) Sprite and beer and some powerful drumming and some elegant dancing.

Sun March 12. Into Cape Coast for tour of castle. Tour included walk in the dark through to the end of the male slaves dungeon, and back. Impressive! Very interesting to think UK is still heavily involved in the arms trade, though no longer bartering guns for slaves. This and Elmina castles are now world heritage sites, supported by UNESCO. We then rejoined the bus to go westward along the coast some 20 km to Elmina for another tour, this time preceded by a video and museum display on the history of Ghana and the slave trade. Along to Oyster Bay Hotel and Restaurant for a very long wait for lunch (despite forewarning them), but with good view of the castle across the bay, and sound of the beach and breakers below to prevent revolt. Eventually fed, we dropped off Eric, Pam, Madge, Karola, and Clare to visit University of Cape Coast and Philip Quaque Primary School (PQ's grave is in Cape Coast castle), and then proceeded to Biriwa Beach, 8 miles out of Cape Coast*, for swimming, inspection of shells, etc.There was also a very competent coconut palm climber, who simply walked up (and down) the trunk to reach the nuts, putting his feet on the front and his hands curving round the sides!

Mon March 13. Back into Cape Coast, for some to tour markets while Eric and Madge & Pam visited a local notable, Mrs Madge Sampson. Reunion at 1030 for a quick bus tour of the extensive University of Cape Coast (former College of Education) campus, needing a bus link between distant parts; another rendezvous at 1130 and off to Winneba, stopping at the Hut de Eric restaurant for lunch (by the Winneba turn off the main road) before going into town and to beach, not good for swimming but good for shell-

collecting, mixed sand and spurs of very coarse granite, and of shale with quartz intrusions. Met Paul Yemeh near the beach. Vera & Mark visited the college where Philip Tredidgo had taught (then Winneba Training College, now Winneba U of Education), & identified their old bungalow. Finally on to Accra, now with John again (who had been ill for several days, with high fever).

Tue March 14. At 1900, off to Advanced Technical and Training Centre for (D&J first part only) buffet dinner with Deputy Minister of Education. J&D had to leave at 20.00 to be picked up by W for rendezvous with ex-students at the Golden Lily at Osu. There were also there Francis Akoto, Henry Addo, Lamptey Thompson, and Nee Molai, plus Henry's wife.

Wed March 15. 0900 J&D with F's driver to shop at Arts Centre, post cards, and buy another cutlass (one bought in Kpandu being still on original bus in Kumasi). Then join 1230 bus at hotel for trip via Aburi Botanical Garden to James Moxon's party/durbar at Nsuasi, which we had great difficulty in finding! Major diversion down road. Finally located it, on a spur above dirt road, with brass (mainly) band, drums, barbecue, palm wine table (and other drinks), and lots of people. The BBC were filming part of it, for a programme called "Here and Now", to be shown in May. (A look at 1:125,000 map, later, showed Nsuasi quite clearly!)



NEWS AND PROJECTS

School link news from two UK partners

by Kate Regan and Letitia Boateng

GSA has given grants to both Abonse Basic Schools and to Aseseeso Junior High School, two neighbouring schools in the Eastern Region, each of which has a partner in the UK. The progress of both links is monitored by GSA trustee and committee member Letitia Boateng. Letitia is also a member of the Abonse-Aseseeso Citizens' Association, a diaspora group which gives active and valuable support to schools partnered with their communities of origin.



John O'Gaunt Year 7 students with rows of blocks about to be combined to form the quilt

During a visit to the UK this summer, Letitia has not only been able to attend GSA's AGM but has also been a guest of John O'Gaunt Community Technology College, Hungerford, Aseseeso Junior High's partner, as well as Figheldean Primary School, nr Salisbury, partnered with Abonse Schools. Figheldean welcomed her to their end-of-year church service when she helped to present bibles to year 6 leavers. News was brought from Abonse. John O'Gaunt welcomed her, together with diaspora colleague Grace Amissah, to their 50th Anniversary

celebrations on 12th July. A part of the school's history exhibition was a display of their link with Aseseeso. Around the school signs of the link's influence could be seen from wall art and drums to recipes and a celebratory quilt made for the occasion in the Textiles Department. The Ghanaian flag is much in evidence along the constituent rows!

Such shared proof of the mutual benefits of linking gives pride and confidence to students and staff in both countries.



Abonse Junior High School block painted in and out with last year's grant

Summary of schools & projects supported by GSA 2011 – 2013

[Includes material from the GSA website plus updates]

Arigu Village School, near Tamale

This project involved a young woman called Jessica Brown who had been a volunteer living in Arigu village for several months. When she returned to UK, she ran the Brighton Half Marathon to raise funds for the school, which is much in need of support. Ghana School Aid was able to add to the sum that Jessica had raised and £1000 was sent to help the village school, via a German company who have taken the village on as “their charity”.

Cambridge-Bethel Primary School

On 2nd August 2012, Patience wrote: “Our school vacates today and will reopen on 11th September 2012. The Headmaster, teachers and some of the students and I went on an educational tour in nearby villages, talking to parents about their girls. Many girls get pregnant at school-going age. We encourage parents to care for the babies in order to enable their daughters to continue with their education. In fact, this was door-to-door talking. It was very



Staff and pupils from Cambridge-Bethel School

tiring but I enjoyed it for it was worth it. People told us their worries and were happy we came to educate them. Please, one thing we request from you with humility, that you help us with furniture in the JSS. Next academic term we'll have JSS2 and JSS3. Thank you very much. We wish you all the best in your work. Please, our regards to GSA and all the family”. [See also the article below on the Pamela Lewis Trust.]

Paga Community Secondary School, UER

Impressively, the community has built a senior secondary school just outside Paga, the border town on the road to Burkina Faso. They have finished the first teaching block, which is in use for SHS 1 and 2 classes, and are in the process of building another block. The hope is to construct a girls' dormitory block so that girls can be resident and do not have to walk the 2K to and from the town each day. The money we have given them will go to build a well for clean water for the school.



A full classroom at Paga Community School

Yendi Girls High School

The school recently requested via Baako for the electrification of the new classroom block (We paid for electrification of the main school earlier) - £1000 grant has been agreed.

Kanvilli Tawfikiya Primary and JHS schools

Our representative, Baako, is Headteacher of the JHS. They suffered much damage in storms earlier this year. £1,000 has been allocated towards rebuilding.

Tampei and Kukou villages near Tamale

The organization involved in the application is Cooperation for Integrated Development Ghana. (CID-Ghana) located in Tamale. They are assisting the local community in building a primary school block for the two rural communities near Tamale - Tampei Kukuo and Kukuo Yapalsi.

In the application, Frank Dugasseh said the work already completed [was]:

1. Built the foundation to the floor level concreted.
2. Over 6000 Blocks for the super structure moulded.
3. 2 trips of Aggregate sand (material at site)

The work still needing to be done:

1. Building of the superstructure walls and roofing.
2. Plastering and painting.

Baako has visited the project and given a very positive report of progress. The report has triggered the release of the second grant installment of £500 from GSA. Two further amounts of £500 have been allocated, one now and one subject to a satisfactory visit report from Baako.



Ongoing building work on the Tampei Kukou and Kukuo Yapalsi Primary School

The Sabre Trust

The Sabre Trust is working in rural areas of Ghana to improve education. This part of their project involves an intensive one-year teacher training programme for Kindergarten teachers. GSA has given them a grant of £500 to provide Kindergarten resource boxes:

“Sabre has developed a design for a resource box, made from locally sourced and recycled materials that can complement teaching and small group activities. The boxes will be prototyped and piloted by the teachers on the training course, with the boxes distributed at the second workshop in October 2012. The boxes contain building blocks, connecting toys, play mats, and musical instruments, and the teachers will be

supported to supplement them with resources that they can make themselves from recycled and reclaimed materials”. Their website provides interesting reading too – www.sabretrust.org

Wechiau Community Library

This small community near Wa in the Upper West region had an imaginative plan to start a rural mobile library service using a box for the books mounted on the back of a motorbike. This plan proved too costly, but GSA has provided money for books for their library. The books purchased include a wide range of fiction, some classical, some modern, including many by Ghanaian authors. The Community Library is clearly a vibrant organisation. They had organised a regional spelling bee for schools, which include a partially-sighted contestant who came in 8th!

In 2012 GSA sent a grant of £500 for the purchase of books for the Wechiau mobile library project. Frank Dugasseh sent his thanks and greetings for 2013 with an update on the project and a picture. Wechiau is in the Upper West Region, on the border with Ivory Coast. The Black Volta River runs nearby and Wechiau is well-known for its Hippo sanctuary and its many bird species.

[A further grant of £500 has since been made towards the purchase of solar panels to provide electricity to light the library.]



Just some of the new books at the Wechiau Community Library

Horizon Children's Centre, Sandema

This Children's Centre provides food, shelter, clothing and medical care to orphans and needy children in Sandema and its surrounding villages. They also cover all education costs (fees, uniforms, books, school supplies) for the children at our Centre. GSA has awarded them a grant to fund scholarships for girls to enable them to continue their education through secondary school, covering the cost of admission and school fees for one year.

Other news from Sandema

Patrick Heinecke reports that work continues to try and counteract the custom of female genital mutilation in the district. They have been using the community radio in various ways with a programme of community sensitisation.

GSA received a request for funding for a play area adjacent to the radio station, which is in need of renovation. The staff at the radio station use it as a base for various educational activities. A grant of £750 was agreed, to be used for educational purposes at Patrick's discretion.

Let's Read

by Jo Hallett

For the last two years, the Let's Read team has been working with 11 primary schools in Sirigu circuit – a very remote and poor area in the far north of Ghana, not far from Paga, the border post with Burkina Faso. We are building on our ten-year experience of supporting over 40 primary schools across the Upper East region. We are now partnered by child-rights NGO, AFRIKIDS. The focus of our work is to improve the effectiveness of the teaching and learning of English in the early years at school.

Schools and teachers face enormous challenges every single day. School buildings are sometimes poor and sometimes non-existent; some teachers are working as volunteers; resources such as books are scarce; pupil and teacher absence rates are sometimes high – a myriad of problems. Despite this, schools are working; most teachers turn up and do their valiant best to teach their pupils with enthusiasm and good humour. We are constantly impressed by the high level of commitment of some of the teachers. The government is building new schools in this area and more and more children are attending school. Two major challenges remain – providing an adequate number of trained teachers, and the provision of books and resources.

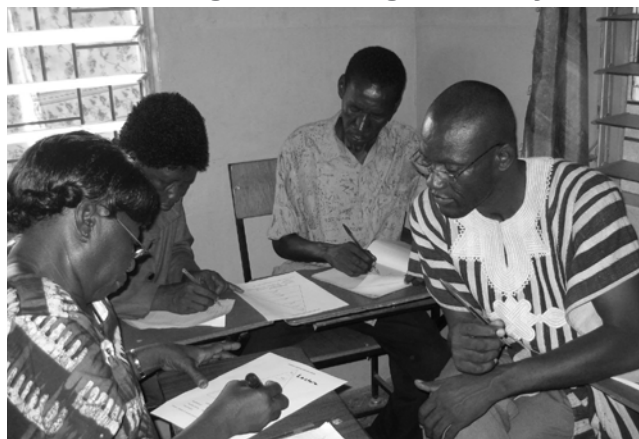
Let's Read provides teaching resources, training for teachers and on-going support for both class teachers and headteachers. We have now written and published our own early reading books, as there are no appropriate books on the market. We make 2 or 3 visits a year. On each visit we run workshops for all the teachers in the circuit, but spend most of our time visiting schools and



Enthusiastic pupils despite the very basic building



P3 class working outside, Sirigu A Primary School



Teachers working together at a workshop



A new school building and a teacher with vision!

working with teachers individually. We also assess the children's phonic knowledge – and the results of these show excellent progress in many schools.

On our visit in June 2013 we were able to set up a “mobile library” for these 11 schools. There are two boxes of appropriate books – some bought, most donated – which are taken from school to school on the back of the Circuit Supervisor's motorbike! In July, one of our team, Lyn, took a group of nine – fellow heads, teachers, TAs, governors – to run a summer school for the Sirigu teachers – to help them to improve their own English. Around 30 teachers came along each day, enthusiastically joining in group reading, quizzes, discussions, games and songs. Their feedback was glowing – and we hope that this will have a positive effect on their teaching in school.

Sustainability is obviously a key issue for us. We are working to embed the Let's Read ethos and practice in such a way that the responsibility for continuing the work is with local Ghanaians. To this end, we are bringing five of the most promising of the teachers over to UK next year, to see the way that English schools teach early literacy and consider how they can take some of this experience back to Sirigu.

The children are now starting in their new classes at a much higher level of competency in early reading than last year. We can see the improvements – and are hopeful that Let's Read can make a real difference to the children in this little remote community.

Archives, artefacts and memorabilia

by Jennifer MacDougall

In response to a number of enquiries relating to the donation of papers and other materials relating to the Gold Coast/Ghana and other parts of Africa we have been investigating the situation in the light of the closure of the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum (BECM) in Bristol. Eric Earle and James Gibbs have been following up events and contacting, amongst others, the Bristol Record Office, the Royal African Society and SCOLMA (the UK Libraries and Archives Group on Africa). (See also the article in the previous Newsletter 2012-13 on page 17). SCOLMA's web site (www.scolma.org) includes a list and description of participating libraries plus links. There is also an interesting archive of photographs at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/africa/>

The BECM collections have now been transferred to the Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives and conservation work on these is continuing. However, the collections were not fully listed or catalogued and until this work is completed the material will not be available to researchers. A policy on the management and expansion of the collections will be developed but there appears to be no idea of timing as yet.

A number of institutions do collect African material but all are very circumspect about what exactly they will accept. The Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, is collecting in this area and Rhodes House Library, Oxford University, are also interested, especially in the papers of colonial officers and those working in development immediately after independence, but donations are always accepted

on a “case by case basis”. It seems they must be approached on an individual basis depending on the exact type and range of materials offered.

The Pamela Lewis Trust

by Penny Sewell

Pamela was a founding member of Ghana School Aid, who sadly departed this life in 2011. Her family suggested setting up a trust fund in her name, to be administered by Ghana School Aid. As Pamela was particularly supportive of rural schools, the committee has decided to award funding to the Cambridge-Bethel School, Bethel-Awudome, in the Volta Region. The school was founded by Patience Agbeti as a gesture of gratitude to the village where her terminally ill sister was cared for in its healing centre. This is what Patience says about the school: “From Accra, the road that leads to Peki and gets you into Tsibu is about 105 miles and at Tsibu there is a 2km rough road that leads to Bethel. The school is built with cement blocks and roofed with iron sheets. It has a kindergarten, a primary and a junior high school. It has 13 teachers and 131 school children. Some of the children live in Bethel, but many come from far away. Many of the latter stay with other people in Bethel in order to attend school. Those who live in nearby villages walk 3km and 8km each and every day to school. Our teachers are mainly student teachers who work for salaries as low as £350 a year. They gain valuable experience but we would love to be able to pay them more in order to encourage them to stay with us and steadily improve their teaching skills. Our headteacher is a professional. ... The school was founded as a private initiative and does not benefit from government funding, although its students sit the Ghana State and the WAEC examinations.”

The school gave GSA a list of its priorities. Top of that list was a computer lab properly wired and entirely secure. Lower down the list was the need for a third classroom for the junior high students. At the GSA AGM we had a discussion about whether we should fund a computer lab or a third classroom. Many of those present expressed an opinion: the younger set, among which several from Ghana, said that IT and familiarity with computers was absolutely vital to a child’s prospects; the senior generation felt that books, or bricks and mortar, would be a more reliable investment. The GSA committee decided on the latter, given that we must be sure that our funds are used in the most efficient way possible. The present writer will visit Bethel in November 2013 and will discuss computer provision and computer security with Patience.

We think the funds available will enable completion of the new classroom, which will be dedicated to the memory of Pamela Lewis. It will be important to explain to the children who she was and why she is being remembered in this way. We, Ghana School Aid and the Cambridge-Bethel School, are extremely happy that Pamela’s family have made this project possible. It is a fitting way to ensure that Pamela’s strong educational values, her sharp mind and generous spirit will be perpetuated in a place where schooling is such a top priority.

[£4000 has been donated for the new classroom and Penny Sewell is also arranging for a picture of Pam to be put on permanent display in the school.]

Edna Mason is 100 years old!

by Penny Sewell

We think Edna is Ghana School Aid's oldest supporter – correct us if we're wrong! Edna has been in correspondence with GSA about very old and very interesting objects and memorabilia from pre-independence Ghana and about the AGM. She sent a copy of the article which appeared in the Herald Express in February 2013, and the text of which is reproduced below (abbreviated).

“Edna Mason has celebrated her 100th birthday at her Paignton care home. [...] Born Edna Howard Moat in 1913, in Southport, her first memories were of going to London and being shown craters in the road made by German bombers the night before. Her family moved to Nottingham in 1924 and Edna obtained an art

teacher's degree. Her first post was in Liverpool in 1937. She was evacuated to North Wales at the start of the Second World War.

Edna then taught in Derby and studied for qualifications in needlework and dressmaking before being appointed lecturer at Brighton Teacher Training College. [...] In 1949 Edna was appointed by the colonial service as education officer in the Gold Coast. Her duties were to visit small villages and explain what freedom and election were, inspect schools, set and mark exam papers and write a needlework syllabus. In 1952, she met agricultural officer Wilfred Mason and they married in Kumasi, Ashanti. They were stationed in Cape Coast until they left in 1958, when the Gold Coast became Ghana. [...]

Edna still enjoys a game of bridge, but when asked what she had enjoyed doing the most during her 100 years, she replied, “Gardening”.



Edna Mason celebrating her birthday

A Decade of Publishing

by James Gibbs

This year Ayebia – African and Caribbean Publishing Specialists – are celebrating their 10th Anniversary. From early on, and led by Nana Ayebia Becky Clarke, from Larteh, the publishers have mined a rich Ghanaian vein. Since they have moved confidently between fiction, poetry and academic titles their Ghana titles offer a rich variety of books that may be of interest to supporters of Ghana School Aid.

2006

African Love Stories, edited by Ama Ata Aidoo

Between Faith and History: A Biography of J A Kufuor by Ivor Agyeman-Duah

2007

Bu Me Be, Proverbs of the Akans by Peggy Appiah, Kwame Anthony Appiah and Ivor Agyeman-Duah (An Akan/ English Bilingual Dictionary)

Broadening the Horizon: Critical Introductions to Amma Darko, edited by Vincent O. Odamtten

The Legacy of Efua Sutherland: Pan African Cultural Activism, Co-edited by Anne V Adams and Esi Sutherland-Addy

2008

An Economic History of Ghana by Ivor Agyeman-Duah

Traces of a Life: A Collection of Elegies and Praise Poems by Abena P A Busia

Fathers & Daughters: An Anthology of Exploration, edited by Ato Quayson

2010

The Other Crucifix by Benjamin Kwakye

Pilgrims of the Night: Development Challenges and Opportunities in Africa edited by Ivor Agyeman-Duah

2011

The Place We Call Home and Other Poems by Kofi Anyidoho

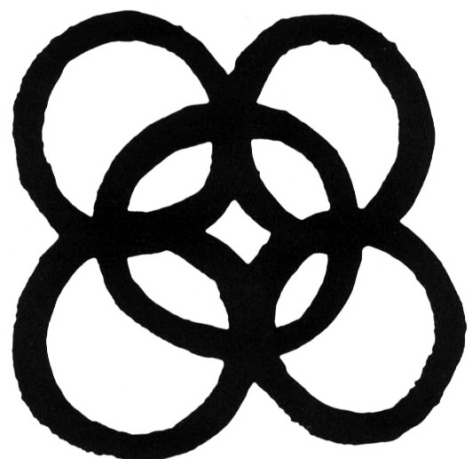
2012

Essays in Honour of Ama Ata Aidoo, edited by Anne V Adams

Diplomatic Pounds and Other Stories by Ama Ata Aidoo

Mr Happy and the Hammer of God and Other Stories by Martin Eblewogbe

Congratulations on a decade of achievement. For full publishing details of all Ayebia books see www.ayebia.co.uk



ACCOUNTS 01/04/2013 - 18/10/2013

Treasurer's Provisional Report

Stanley E. G. Anthony, Treasurer. Tel: 01926 424702 Email: anthony@talktalk.net

INCOME:	2013/2014	1986 – 2013
Regular Donations (mainly standing orders):	£2,183.17	
"Memories" donations:	£13.00	£2,205.74
Family Legacy in memory of Pamela Lewis:	£3,000.00	£3,718.00
Donations in memory of G. Pitchford:	£370.00	£370.00
Donations in memory of M. McMullen:	£248.55	
Donation in memory of David Bradshaw from Mrs G.A. James' donors:	£1,000.00	£1,692.00
Donations via JustGiving (inc. £475.00 for Jo Hallett's Let's Read Swim):	£687.01	£2,331.58
Donations for Jo Hallett's Let's Read Swim:	£50.00	
Donations from the Morel Trust for the FOYS Project:	£500.00	
COIF Interest (for two quarters @ 0.454%):	£16.54	
Lunch bookings and donations in March 2013: £785.00		
Less room booking fees: £62.50 = £722.50 (See last year's accounts)		
Lunch bookings & donations since April 2013: £1661.00:		
Sale of wine at lunch: £24.00		
Lunch Raffle: £109.00	£1,794.00	
Less cost of rooms and food: £898.60		
and postage: £89.42	£988.02	
	£805.98	
TOTAL INCOME (01/04/2013 – 03/09/2013):	£8,542.41	£199,834.01

EXPENDITURE:		
Cambridge-Bethel School (Pamela Lewis Memorial):	£4,000.00	
Sabre Trust, Cape Coast:	£500.00	
Abonse Presb. Basic School:	£1,100.00	
Tuskegee School, Accra:	£500.00	
Focus On Your Skills Project (Morel Trust – Abiriw, Akwapem Ridge):	£500.00	
Sandema Educational Resource Centre:	£750.00	
Vakpo (Volta Reg) Community Library:	£750.00	
Wulugu Project (desks - rural Tamale area):	£350.00	
Wechiau Community Library (near Wa, Upper West Reg):	£500.00	
Yendi Girls JHSch (electrification):	£1,000.00	
Cooperation for Integrated Development (rural prim sch near Tamale)	£500.00	
Bank Transfer Charges:	£75.00	
JustGiving fees 6 months @ £18.00:	£108.00	£468.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (01/04/2012 – 03/09/2013):	£10,633.00	£190,379.55
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE:	£2,090.59	£9,454.46
BALANCE OF FUNDS at 18/10/2013:		
COIF Deposit Fund:	£7,287.87	
NatWest Current Account	£2,166.59	£9,454.46



OBITUARIES

Mrs Clarice Howorth (nee Garnett) MBE 1927-2013

**Methodist Missionary, teacher and Head
Teacher at Wesley Girls' High School for
30 years.**

***by Sally Baffour (former pupil at Wesley
Girls' High School)***



This woman was extraordinary!

Science was not wasted on her because she combined it with technology, art, even engineering and all the other fields in between. When the carburettor won't 'carb' and the generator won't 'gen', Garnie would be found under the School bus, fixing it... and with super human prowess, she'd attempt to push the bus single-handedly when it started, but for the gentlemen we had in our faithful watchmen and School driver, who'd rush in to the rescue and take over pushing the bus.

When the buckle broke on our playdeck (sandals) as they often did, she would take it upon herself to fix them and always did an excellent job of it. When students' spectacles broke she was on it, fixing them. On the rare occasion that a teacher was absent, she was in the Class, right on time, taking that lesson, never mind the subject.

Imagine what great savings this would have had on the School's budget. No wonder the School was always in such pristine condition and never lacked for anything. When the School organ and pianos needed tuning, Garnie was seen sorting it out herself. When our very capable organist was unavailable, Garnie quietly took charge and without any song, dance or drama, was there playing the organ, like a maestro.

When everyone was fast asleep in the dead of night, she was still lurking around in the dark, on the watch, to catch any unsuspecting midnight chatterbox, the bookworms who were 'mining' or indeed the notorious persistent 'midnight-feasters' she loved so dearly, to catch. Did she ever sleep? Because I remember her coming back in the wee hours of the morning, or so it seemed at the time, to relieve the mosquito-bitten, angry and frustrated sleepy girls who had finished their nocturnal rounds of punishment, doing pillar.

When you made snide remarks in Fante, sure she would not have a clue what you saying, she made sure you knew she'd heard and understood it. Obroni understood Fante and was often heard speaking to the Kakumdu villagers, quite comfortably. Multi-tasking was her middle name. Everything was organised with such effortless precision, that students just glided from one major event, like Speech day to another ('InterCo') without even realizing what a mammoth task it would have been to organize them all.

Never one to blow her own horn Garnie just quietly got the job done, whatever it was. Never seeking favour, bribes or publicity, Garnie stood firm as a woman of integrity and dignity. She was reliable, capable and stern. Although she was not

one to readily bare her teeth in a smile, she had a pleasant baby face, that had a permanent hint of a smile, etched into it. I guess the only thing I never saw Garnie do, was dance the Bugaloo.. But who cares if she could not dance any of our soul dances, when she could do everything else. She was a real trooper.

Garnie, you have been a very precious gift to every one of us and it has been a privilege to have had you, as my Headmistress. Mischievous some of us would have been, but I am sure that even you, secretly enjoyed that too. I pray that when you get to our Lord in heaven, where you now belong, there will be a feast awaiting your arrival and an eternity of celebrations to honour your accomplishments. Angels will be excused and everyone else will just have wait because God's session with you will be a very, very long one indeed, as you account for your deeds; deeds that cover the lifetimes of all the Girls that you have impacted so positively. Ayikoooo! You have really fought a great fight, run an amazing race and kept the faith. May you now rest peacefully in the gentle arms of our Lord, Garnie. Yaa wo Ojogbaa, Garnie, Yaa wo Ojogbaa.

Joan Buchanan (nee Mellor) 1920-2012

by Eric Cunningham

With a London University Teacher's Certificate and a BA in Administration from Manchester University, Joan Mellor (as she was then) was appointed Education Officer in 1948, one of a very small band of women Education Officers at that time. Her first posting, after a brief stay in Accra, was Tamale, where she spent much time and energy persuading chiefs to send girls to school – with some success. Several later became

midwives, and one the first woman teacher from the Northern Region, a tribute to Joan's perseverance.

A posting to Koforidua followed, and then one to headquarters in Accra, where she took over Tom Buchanan's schedule. This lasted only briefly, for Tom asked her to marry him. The wedding took place in 1951 in Kumasi, where Tom was temporarily in charge before moving to Berekum to start one of the new government teacher training colleges proposed in the Accelerated Development Plan for Education.

Regulations at the time required women officers to resign on marriage, and despite the best efforts of the Director, S.J. Hogben, Joan had to do so. However, as the Principal's wife she was just as busy, working hard to develop positive links between the college and the community and to support college staff in their challenging labours in temporary accommodation, while buildings were put up in virgin forest land that had first to be cleared. She charmed the Berekumhene, who had given land for the college site, and on Tom's departure in 1955 she was presented with a Queen Mother stool. Joan also found time to produce two sons, one born in Accra and one in Berekum, to College staff and students' great delight.

The Buchanans returned to Britain, where a third son was born, and then Tom taught in Scotland until his retirement, but Joan always remained intensely proud of her Mancunian roots. Both Tom and Joan attended the 1986 re-union, and subsequently Joan occasionally attended GSA annual lunches. Distance prevented more frequent contact, but she welcomed the Newsletter and the links GSA provided. In later years she and I enjoyed corresponding, and from

her I learned much of Education Department activity in the years 1948-52, before I took up my appointment.

Joan will be remembered for her friendliness, her sense of humour, a lively mind, and many acts of kindness. She made and kept friendships, and spoke warmly of that of Ruby Quartey – Papafo, who had given the newcomer sound advice on school inspections: “Always inspect the latrines first – if they are in good order the school will be!”

Something of Joan’s life is recorded in Heather Dalton’s *The Gold Coast: the wives’ experience* (1953), and her entertaining account of moving into the newly-built Principal’s bungalow in Berekum is included in GSA’s *Gold Coast and Ghana memories* (2006). She had very fond memories of her life in the Gold Coast, and told me that if she could ever see Ghana again Berekum would be the place she could not miss going to. She was delighted to discover quite recently that one of the College’s houses is named Buchanan, after its founding Principal, a demonstration of Ghanaians’ appreciation of those who have helped their country’s development.

Geoff Pitchford 1913-2013

by Eric Earle

Geoff was referred to as “Dai” by his senior colleagues in the Gold Coast Education Department when I first encountered him in August 1952. When Eric Cunningham and I and 4 other new education officers arrived, Geoff had been in post for 3 years and was in charge of the “P Schedule” (Personnel = “HR”!),

responsible for our postings to various stations. In 1955 when I was District Education Officer, Sekondi he became the Ag. Asst. Director of Education for Western Region in Cape Coast and thus my boss. My recollection of him is of a kindly and supportive colleague with much good advice to an inexperienced DEO; he was very good company when we went on inspection tours of schools together. A few years later, I encountered him when he was Principal of Peki Training College in Volta Region and I was in Ho as the Regional EO. He was notable for his good relations with our African colleagues both senior and junior - not always easy at those exciting times leading up to and after Independence in 1957.

The eleven years (1949-1960) which Geoff spent in GC / Ghana were significant ones not only in career terms but for his future life because it was there that he met Myrtle, an Education Department colleague specialising in the education of Women and Girls, as Domestic Science Organiser. They were married in Cape Coast in 1957, the start of a long and happy (and productive!) life together in Ghana, Wales and England. Those years too were significant on the world stage in a way which radically affected the lives and careers of Geoff and all his expatriate colleagues - they were the years leading up to the “End of Empire” at a speed which had not been anticipated, certainly not by the Colonial Office which continued to appoint officers to serve until retirement in c.30 years (i.e. c.1980 !) - the GC became independent in 1957. The “trigger” for this rapid development was the Accra Riots of 1948 which led up to the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah who demanded “Self Government NOW”. This then became the era of “Compensation for Loss of Career” and resettlement for most of these pensionable

officers.

So, in 1960, to fresh fields & pastures new for Geoff and Myrtle. It so happened that the End of Empire period coincided with the rapid expansion of UK universities in the 1960s, leading to the need for experienced administrators. So it was that Geoff fetched up, back home in Wales, as an administrator at the University College of North Wales with a nice family house close to Bangor - where we used to visit his growing family on our way to holidays in Ireland. After a few years Geoff was appointed Secretary of the Institute of Education at the University of Hull and the family moved from west to east. In that final stage of his career, Geoff and I had regular encounters at the annual Conference of Institute Secretaries (I had become Secretary of the U of London I of E), convivial and enjoyable events in which Geoff used to play a leading role.

And finally, back to Ghana: all of us who had worked in Ghana early in our careers retained very happy memories of it and a few of us organised a Reunion in 1986 which Geoff and Myrtle attended and old friendships were renewed. This led to the setting up of the Ghana School Aid trust to provide help to needy schools; the Pitchfords became founder supporters and attended the Annual Lunch until very recent years. It is a tribute to Geoff's regular support of GSA that the family have designated the retiring collection to its support and I hope that the Committee may be able to support a school project near Peki in memory of Geoff's years as Principal of the College. We shall long remember with affection our old friend and colleague, Geoff.

Ellen Bates (previously Stronge) 1926-2007

by Heather Brewer

Ellen Booker trained at Whitelands College, London, and qualified as a Primary School Teacher in 1946. She had married David Stronge in 1947 and in 1950 accompanied him to Accra where he was employed by United Africa Company (a subsidiary of Unilever), and she set up a home-based private school. The family moved to Takoradi in 1952, and Sekondi in 1954 and each time Ellen set up a small nursery/infants school.

On returning to Accra, Ellen expanded her experience to the full Primary range, undertaking the role of first Acting Headmistress of the Gold Coast International School from 1955-1956. She was then recruited to the planning of the Ridge Church School and was Head teacher when it opened in January 1957. On the first day there were 33 pupils in 2 classes, but by the end of the first year there were 100 pupils filling all four original classrooms, and its rapid expansion continued.

In an article written for "The Ghana Teacher" Christmas 1960, Mrs Stronge described the aim of the school to cater for the needs of children "from more than 15 different countries", using English as a common language for study, but retaining a balance between "permanents" and "transients" i.e. Ghanaian and Expatriate pupils. She attributed the success of the school to its "endeavours to treat each child as an individual needing sympathetic personal tuition", and was particularly proud that all teaching staff had good qualifications.

In 1962 Mrs Stronge was a delegate at the ISF

sponsored conference of overseas schools in Beirut , Lebanon, and was able to share her experience and beliefs on a wider platform. She was also acknowledged in the New Year Honours list that year, and was awarded the MBE. (I believe the late Rodney Bennett, who was active in the development of the school & for a period chairman of the Management Committee was responsible for her recommendation). Investiture at the palace followed, and Ellen was delighted that the Queen remarked on having seen the Ridge pupils “dressed in blue” standing roadside to welcome her on her 1961 tour of Ghana. She also took pleasure in being the same age as the Queen- whilst others gaining the award were definitely a lot older and at the end of their careers!

In 1963, for family reasons, Ellen took the decision to return to England. She taught at Priory Junior School, Taunton, then Puriton and finally Curry Mallet village schools, all in Somerset. She enjoyed taking an active role in a close community, but also kept her links with Ghana through personal contacts and groups such as GSA and the International Friendship League. Widowed in 1974, she was remarried in 1985, to Gordon Bates whom she had first met in Durham when Whitelands college was evacuated there during the war! They enjoyed travelling in Britain and abroad, including a visit to Ghana in 1997 and a wonderful welcome at the Ridge Church School. They spent time in both Newcastle (Gordon’s home) and Taunton, until Ellen became ill with MND, at which point they settled in Ellen’s family home where her care could be shared with her daughters Margaret and Heather. They are both extremely proud of their mother and enjoy remembering their early forward-thinking education in Ghana.

PHOTOS FROM THE 2013 AGM



Ghana School Aid

December 2013



PATRONS

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

The Rt Hon The Baroness
Chalker of Wallasey PC,
CH

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

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair: Edward Mayne

Secretary: Jo Hallett

Treasurer: Stanley Anthony

AGM organisation & website

administrator: Penny Sewell

Newsletter: Jennifer MacDougall

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

Other Committee Members:

Letitia Boateng, Nigel Dennis, Eric Earle,
Patrick Heinecke, Sue Hewlett, Susannah
Mayhew, Kate Regan, Margaret Turner

ENQUIRIES

Ghana School Aid

Edward Mayne
1 Gatley Drive, Burpham
Guildford, GU4 7JJ

Tel:

+44 (0)1483 565296

Email:

EPMayne@globalnet.
co.uk

Website:

www.ghanaschoolaid.org

***The next GSA Annual General Meeting and lunch will be on
Thursday June 12th 2014 at John Adams Hall, Endsleigh Street, London.***



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