



CHRISTMAS SPECIAL: BEST WISHES FOR 2016



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A Message about Dreaming *from Gill Norris, Founder of the Ghana Education Project*

The following message is an extract from Gill's speech at the opening of our new Science Block in Nov 2015...

“ We all dream. Sometimes our dreams are simple: we wish simply for happiness or for some immediate success. At other times we visualise our future: how we see change and what it will be like for us.

After living in Ghana for a few years and observing the girls in school, I was very puzzled. These wonderful young women were so quiet in class and seemed uninterested in their lessons. Their exam results reflected this: girls were not expected to achieve, so they did not.

We took groups of girls to the National Park to camp and climb the Breast Mountain and many parents and teachers told the girls they would not be able to do it. But we never doubted. We expected all would reach the summit. And they did.

That is how my vision started: these girls were failing not because of their ability but because of their lack of self-esteem. I had no trouble at all convincing my trustees in England to help the girls and bring about change for even a few in Nkwanta.

Now my dream has come true. This school has over 200 students, girls brimming with confidence and a real zest for learning. They stay after class to ask question after question about what they have learned. They have developed so many talents and are not afraid of new challenges.

I hope our staff, the girls' parents and the local community are also amazed at what these girls can do. But a vision only comes to life if all involved believe it is possible, so:

Parents – Recognise your daughter's ability. Show that you are proud of her and share in her success.

Teachers – Have high expectations of your pupils. Keep in mind that they are individuals with different challenges and encourage them to express their ideas freely.

Girls – Believe in yourself and challenge yourself. Now you are running but tomorrow you must fly. But success does not come without effort, so never give up.

I thank all of you that have helped GEP to get this far: from dreaming of a Junior High School to getting ready for a Senior High School in 2016. This is no longer just our dream - but now belongs to the people of Nkwanta. ”

KYABOBO GIRLS SCHOOL



POEM

A New Ghanaian Woman

I want to understand
The mysteries of the Universe
The wonders of nature
The secrets of life itself.
But I am told that
I am only a girl
Why do I need to know anything?

I must learn to cook.
I must learn to wash.
I must learn to clean.
So I can take care of my family.

But I do not understand
Why learning in school
Will stop me caring for my family.
Stop me caring for my children.
Surely it will help my children to learn
If I can know more about the world.

Why is society so frightened
By the educated woman?
Do men fear they will no longer be respected?
If women can work beside them as equals.

But I am tired of living in ignorance
I want to study
I want to learn
I want to understand
The world we live in.
I want to be part of this developing world
To understand changes in science and technology.
In this way I can be a better mother
Guiding my children to grow in knowledge
Into the 21st Century.
A new Ghanaian Woman.

Read by Blagodzi Rosemary at the official opening of the new Science Block at KGS

Trustees' Visit to Nkwanta

Two of GEP's trustees, Julie Robinson and John Horseman, have just returned from visiting Nkwanta, where they were able to see for themselves the incredible progress being made by Kyabobo Girls School, including the official opening of our new Science & Technology block, which is now ready for our first Senior High School classes in 2016.

They will be reporting back in full in the next edition of this newsletter but in the meantime here is a photo of our girls hard at work in our well-equipped ICT suite...



Kyabobo Girls School welcomes new teachers

KGS is very pleased to welcome five enthusiastic new teachers (Helen, Delight, Devine, Bright and Mayi) who joined the team this term as the school goes from strength to strength. GEP also welcomed two new German youth volunteers, Yannick and Francine, who help out at KGS and at the basic school in the neighbouring village.



Left to right: Helen (Social Studies), Delight (ICT, Maths and PE), Yannick (Volunteer), Bless (BDT and PE), Divine (ICT and RME), Ben (Headteacher, English), Bright (Maths), Mayi (RME), Evans (French), Emmanuel (English), Francine (Volunteer), Bob (Facilities Manager), Naomi (Ghanaian language), Gill (GEP Director, Science), Christopher (Science & Maths)

TWGGS GHANA 2016 TEAM

New TWGGS team get off to a flying start



In July, sixteen lucky students from Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School were chosen to form the next TWGGS Ghana team and spend the next 15 months planning for life-changing trip to Nkwanta in October 2016, whilst also raising funds for the charity.

The team has already packed in an impressive amount of fundraising, starting the school year with a sold-out Music Quiz, where ticket sales, raffles and the popular pudding auction all contributed to raising nearly £2,000. The very next weekend, twelve of the team (including a couple of girls from the 2014 team) waitressed at the TWGGS PTA Butterfly Ball and received a £440 donation, as well as gaining valuable waitressing skills for future fundraising events!

Several of the team have taken part in various physical challenges (such as climbing mountains and doing long distance walks), raising over £3,000 as well as spreading awareness of GEP.

They had a very prosperous three-day henna event, where TWGGS girls supported GEP by queuing up all lunch to get a (temporary) tattoo! And the TWGGS music department recently started running music lessons for teachers (taught by musical pupils), which raised £130 in the first week.

A number of the team helped sell tickets for this year's Round Table Dunorlan Fireworks in November and money raised through cake sales, leaf sweeping, and selling plum puddings is rapidly adding up.

After a very busy few months, the team are now gearing up for the exciting festive season – with GEP Christmas cards designed & printed and gift items being made to sell at gift fairs.

Thank you to everyone who has donated or sponsored already. The team are optimistic that this term was just a warm-up, and are now feeling prepared and experienced enough to raise much more in the months to come!

REMEMBER!

**You can fund a
girl's education at
Kyabobo Girls School
for just
£10 per month**

Sign up now at:

www.gep300.org.uk



UK NEWS: MUSIC & FRIENDSHIP



GEP Music Quiz Raises £2,000

On Friday 9th October, the renowned biannual GEP Music Quiz took place at TWGGS, raising nearly £2000 for the charity. A fantastic evening of fun and rivalry, not to mention a raucous sing-a-long, was had by all.

The teachers' tables were beaten for the second time, this time by team Southern Comfort, which won with 176 points. A spokesperson from the team said they were "extremely happy and overwhelmed" to have won and pointed out the healthy margin of 9 points between them and the team who came second.

Meanwhile, The Eclectic Mix said "Well done and thank you for organising an excellent evening of entertainment and a bit of rivalry. We enjoyed the quiz and lovely fun, all raising money for a very good cause."

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the evening such a success.



DONATE WHILE YOU SHOP ONLINE

easyfundraising
.org.uk

GEP has received more than £250 simply from our supporters shopping online, as part of over £5m raised by good cause shopping website easyfundraising.org.uk.

GEP earns the donations when people register to support us and shop online through the site. It's a really simple process, all you have to do is:

- 1) Register at www.easyfundraising.org.uk
- 2) When you're asked to choose your cause, select Ghana Education Project
- 3) Get shopping - it couldn't be easier!

There are over 2,700 online retailers participating, including Amazon, John Lewis, eBay and Tesco, who all donate a small percentage of what's been spent with them to say thanks.

TWGGS 2014 Team Reunion

The TWGGS Ghana 2014 team had a special anniversary reunion on 19th October, the same day as they flew to Ghana last year.

This proves the legacy of getting involved is not only having an extraordinary journey – both before the trip through fundraising and during the trip by experiencing a completely different way of life in Nkwanta – but lasts long after the trip is officially over by making firm friendships for the future.

