



GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH

INSIDE THIS ISSUE Page

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Trustees' visit report | 1 |
| End of Year report from Gill | 2 |
| Fundraising News | 3 |
| And Finally | 5 |



Kyabobo girls singing

Report on Trustees' visit to Nkwanta in November 2017

by John Horseman and Julie Robinson

We arrived in Nkwanta on Saturday 11th November and spent Sunday walking the school site and meeting some of the staff. The new building was progressing well, with over 100 parents on site helping to level the floors for screeding. On Monday we were greeted with the usual excitement from the girls and thoroughly enjoyed hearing them sing in Assembly. They lead assembly themselves and always sing the national anthem and make their pledge to Ghana.

We were lucky enough to be at the school for the annual prize giving. We were treated to lovely singing from the choirs, a dancing display (and a lot of formalities), and we were delighted to present the girls with their prizes.

We have many new staff, who all seem very keen and professional. Gill works with our head teachers to identify high calibre teachers for KGS. The new ICT suite that now has internet connection is being well used, but we are currently short of a qualified ICT teacher.

We visited some of the girls in their homes. Within minutes of being home the girls are changed and are drawing water from wells, preparing food, washing, sweeping and so on. This is all before any homework is completed. In the morning they are up at 4 cooking, sweeping and collecting water, before a bucket shower and a 4km walk to school for some girls. It is noticeable that only the girls in the family are expected to do the chores.

The change in Government provides us with some challenges. In theory senior high school is now free to all pupils entering from 2017 onwards. Boarding and food is also free and, although boarding conditions in government schools are very crowded and pastoral care limited, boarding may seem less onerous for the girls than their lives at home that we witnessed.

We lost many of our brighter girls at the transition to SHS and some of the girls we have taken into SHS this year are struggling with basic literacy. We discussed a plan with Gill to get these girls up to a level of literacy that will enable them to benefit from what KGS has to offer.

We very much hope the government can sustain this support for senior education. In the meantime we need to adapt and find ways to encourage girls to stay at KGS for SHS so they can continue to progress as they have been doing in our JHS. We have maintained our position as the fourth highest school in the district for performance at BECE this year.

We have lots to think about but KGS remains a happy and secure learning environment where teachers give of their best to offer the girls an education that will equip them for further education or employment when they leave.

End of Year report from Gill Norris

After our incredible exam results in 2016 (with a BECE pass rate of 100%), we awaited the current results with some trepidation. When the provisional results came out, every school in the district seemed very low, but we finally learned our pass rate was 77.6%, better than we had expected and we had maintained our position in the district.

The new government then introduced a policy of free education, providing accommodation and food for senior schools. As we were not yet registered we did not qualify for any assistance and we feared that girls would not come to us. But they did, in slightly lower numbers than expected, but similar to the previous year. The government placed some students with us with very low scores in BECE and we were concerned when we first started enrolling girls – but once in class, the girls have seemed to perform much better than their grades suggested.

Last term we again won the district drama competition and also the choral section and we were looking forward to the Regional finals, but there was no funding to hold the finals so our expectations have been put on hold for the moment.

Construction on the new classrooms was progressing well and we were planning to open and use the building early in the new year. The masons had started on the floor and plastering only to find that there was no cement to buy anywhere in Nkwanta. They found three bags with friends and managed to finish the design block windows so, luckily, two classrooms are nearly ready... but without ceilings yet!

We have had a lot of support from Stephen Tsuaitorfe, the education director for Nkwanta. He has pushed to make sure we have good teachers and is at the forefront of fighting for our absorption into the central system.

So it has been a strange year and typical of the difficulties of living in rural Africa, where nothing is simple or predictable.



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

Ghana Girls Flying High

By Hannah Billett

Having left TWGGS last summer, I had the opportunity to have one last adventure as a CCF cadet before I started university, and decided that a parachute jump would be a fitting send off!

I wanted to make it a worthwhile challenge by raising money for the Ghana Education Project, a charity that continues to have a place close to my heart. Back in 2014 I was part of the TWGGS Ghana Team and have continued to follow the charity's endeavours and progress. It has been exciting not only to see subsequent teams continue the TWGGS-GEP legacy, but also to see the community of people who have contributed to the development of education in Ghana keep growing. It was also lovely to have some other more recent members of the Ghana teams doing the jump as current members of the CCF.

Psyching yourself up to jump out of an airplane isn't easy, especially when you know all that's keeping you in the air is a large bit of fabric and some very thin-looking cord! Obviously, I did manage to jump safely, and had the most exhilarating experience, wanting to do it all over again as soon as I touched the ground. The sensation was like flying! It was unforgettable, but what really made it worth the hours of training and safety drills was the fact that I raised £400 for the charity, and I can continue to make a difference even though I have now left school.



L-R: Alex Davison & Hannah Billett (2014 team), Lily Montague (2016 team)

Music Quiz

Another hilarious night was had by all at the GEP music quiz, organised by trustees Richard Tribe and Julie Robinson on 29th September. The questions were particularly challenging this year, which made it even more competitive than usual. It was neck and neck until the last round, when the Teachers' team was pipped to the post by Club Retro, who were delighted with their win. A delicious Ploughman's supper was provided and many enticing delights were on offer at the now legendary pudding auction. It was great to see the girls from the new TWGGS Ghana 2018 team doing such a brilliant job of waiting tables and collecting scores. Thank you to everyone who supported the event, where a record-breaking £2,700 was raised.



The Great TWGGS Staff Bake off



The TWGGS staff took part in the most amazing Staff Bake Off. Over £500 was raised selling the cakes made by 10 teams of TWGGS teachers. The challenges were tray bakes, biscuits, sponge and showstopper. The showstopper round featured a replica Shakespeare's Globe and a Big Mac and Fries! The staff were extraordinarily generous with their time and we are extremely grateful. The competition was judged by TWGGS Food Technology teacher, Denise Thomas, and Monaz Parry, who is the food editor for Good Housekeeping magazine. The overall winners were Miss Grove and Miss Hefetz, who are leading the TWGGS trip in 2018, but it was a very close call. All teams were presented with a souvenir decorated wooden Bake Off spoon!



BIG Thanks

To the family of **Elise Overd** from the 2016 TWGGS Team, who have continued to fundraise for GEP selling clothes on Ebay, raising £300.

And to everyone who bought Christmas Puddings from the Ultimate Plum Pudding Company this year. The delicious puddings were enjoyed by all and sales raised £458 for GEP.

Achievements of the TWGGS 2018 Team

The TWGGS 2018 Ghana Team have had an extremely busy Charity Term at TWGGS and have raised an impressive £10,000 already. Activities have included the Music Quiz, selling Krispy Kreme Doughnuts and Hot Chocolate, making and selling crafts at Christmas Fairs, Selling Candy Canes, collecting small change and foreign coin at TWGGS resulting in 69kg of coin needing to be banked (thank you Barclays!). They have also been selling refreshments at school events, making and selling pom-pom earrings, holding weekly cake sales, a mini auction of tickets to see filming of TV shows and a theatre trip and many other smaller fundraising events. The girls and their families have worked very hard and we thank them for their commitment and enthusiasm.



Christmas Stockings

Valerie Pulley, Grandma of Lauryn Thomas, one of the 2018 team designed and made Christmas stockings in aid of GEP. Valerie worked in London as a fashion designer and seamstress at a company called Susan Small, who made clothes for the Royal family. Her creativity and talent certainly shone through as around £450 was raised from selling the stockings. We send our thanks to Valerie for the many hours at the sewing machine, creating so many different styles with each stocking being unique.



And Finally

Farewell to Richard Tribe

It is with regret that we announce that Richard Tribe has resigned as GEP Chairman after nearly 10 years as a trustee. He is leaving to pursue personal projects closer to his new home. His leadership over the years has been a positive force within the charity and a great deal has been achieved under his guidance, most notably the building and inauguration of the both the Junior and Senior Kyabobo Girls' Schools in Nkwanta. We would like to thank Rich for many years of service and we wish him well in his future endeavours. We look forward to seeing him at the next music quiz!



We are recruiting!

We are always glad to hear from anyone who is interested in becoming more involved with the work of our charity.

Liz Challis has kindly taken over from Claire Longley as the new Secretary for the Ghana Education Project.

secretary.gep@gmail.com



Thank you to our good friend and website designer Jez Timms for creating our shining new logo from an inspiration of Hannah Billett's.

A Big thank you to our Sponsors

Our work in Ghana would not be possible without the continued support of some fantastic organizations, who have provided significant financial contributions over recent years. The community of Nkwanta and the girls at Kyabobo Girls' School are enormously grateful for their support.



We are delighted that our new look website is now live!

Go and have a look at www.ghanaeducationproject.org.

We would like to thank **Jez Timms at Torpedo Juice** (torpedojuce.co.uk) for creating this brand new site for us, having designed the original one over 10 years ago, and for his ongoing support, guidance and patience