



Daventry and District Friends of Iganga

# LINKING NEWS

Registered charity no. 1100624

Developing links between Daventry District and Iganga in Uganda

February, 2008



## Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

After receiving an invitation from BUILD (Building Understanding through International Links for Development) Peter visited Uganda in November. He attended a workshop at the Commonwealth Peoples Forum in Kampala where they were trumpeting the good work of partnerships, like ours in Daventry, with the members of the Commonwealth.

Representing Daventry and District Friends of Iganga, Peter was being sponsored by his professional body the CIEH. Peter worked with our Ugandan Environmental Health colleagues to discuss our work in Preventative Health, Commonwealth Fellowships and the work we have done with Capacity Building of Commonwealth Citizens.

Before people arrived for CHoGM, Iganga had an important visitor in Chris Heaton-Harris, Member of the European Parliament. Chris was to be in Uganda with a trade mission and had been encouraged to contact Iganga by our own Annette Dunn. We put him in touch with David Balaba and Muzamiru who at first were intending to meet Chris in Kampala. However an invitation to visit Iganga led to Chris and 2 colleagues arriving in town and being given the full welcome treatment by members of Iganga Friends of Daventry (IFoD) along with a big programme of visits around all our projects followed by meetings at Iganga Town Council and lunch at the Mwaana. Thanks to our friends at IFoD for all their hard work in making Chris so welcome. We have now heard form Chris, who is the prospective Conservative Candidate for the Daventry Constituency, that he had the most wonderful time in Iganga. He was thrilled to see the projects we have been involved with and hopes to help us with further developments. He is also hopefully going to be a speaker at our AGM in May.

Picture: Queen Elizabeth II at the opening of CHoGM with Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni

## Mwaana Highway Hotel

Greetings from Thomas the manager, Margaret and Michael who serve at tables ably assisted by Viola and many others and of course Jimmy doing the washing. Thomas is developing the better rooms to suites, making them larger and better equipped. So we are hoping for clothes hangers and toilet seats when we return in summer!

**NEW!! Friends of Iganga website NEW!!**

Don't forget to check out our great new website

<http://www.friendsofiganga.org>

Become a member online (just £10.00 per year); keep up to date with the latest news from Iganga; check the progress of all our projects; learn about Iganga and the history of Daventry and District Friends of Iganga; why not plan to travel to Iganga this summer? See you there!!

## MEMBERS!

Please tell us if you have an email address and would be happy to read Linking News on the web.

Email Richard at [herridgers@hotmail.com](mailto:herridgers@hotmail.com)

We will send you a reminder and a link to direct you to our website and to the latest newsletter.

We want you all to read our news but are keen to reduce our postage costs.



## **Iganga Health Centre**

(Old Council Offices, opposite Mwaana)

Dr Lubega Muhamedi the Medical Superintendent is so thankful for this newly created Health Centre III that now takes so much pressure off his hospital. He is full of praise for the facility, the staff and their attitude. The health centre, now used by 3000 people a month, up from less than 400 12 months ago, has gone from a 22% quality standard inspected by an outside agency to 79%.

What a result! This improvement has helped Iganga

District Hospital to win the *District Hospital Award of the Year!* The completed covered way we funded and helped construct back in June is now being well used and the staff say it makes their work so much better when it rains. It also gives shelter to patients relaxing outside their rooms and shades the rooms from getting too hot. Peter witnessed the birth of more babies, smiling faces on the staff and the place was so clean. Considering there have been mains water problems the staff have been great.

*We have recently heard that one baby was born here on Christmas Day and no less than 4 babies were born on New Year's Day. Love to them all!*

## **UKOWLA AGM - United Kingdom One World Linking Association**

Another very interesting AGM was held in Birmingham this year.

Nick Maurice and Pepi are now moving from UKOWLA to further develop BUILD which is a much more International Strategic organisation involving larger organisations and working with Government to develop partnerships and linking. GLADE will continue the administration of UKOWLA. This is an organisation which is very much involved in partnerships, linking and education.

## **Iganga Centre for the Blind**

Iganga Centre for the Blind continues to progress and Peter found it in a good condition during his November visit. The whole facility was still in a good and similar condition to that we left it in last year in June and works were still continuing as the local district office had handed over half of their 1 million Uganda shillings (£300) that they had agreed to add to the project. This was being spent on rendering the external walls of the girls' dormitories and also painting the roof. Both looked very good. A meeting was held to discuss how to spend the remaining half a million shillings, in cooperation with the *Iganga Friends* led by Muzamiru and David Balaba.

Peter met some of the children and also Matron and Paul. Sadly, Paul is still not being paid for his work as a teacher but we have an assurance from the new headmaster of the Demonstration School where the children go and who is supervising the Blind centre that he was doing all he could with the local CEO to ensure Paul would be paid soon.

Peter also called on Margaret the blind girl from Gulu. Some of you will recall that Margaret has become a great friend of many of us, especially Paula. Peter handed over some badly needed funds donated to assist Margaret to take her exams, visit her sister in Gulu and enjoy Christmas! Peter also managed to buy 2 very cheap hand held tape recorders in Iganga for both Margaret and Paul.

Paul and Anna - teachers



***If you have an old but still in good working order, battery powered, small tape recorder taking up space somewhere in your house, we know where to find it a good new home!***

## Emily's Visit to the UK



**Emily Atuheire**, an Environmental Health Officer based at Kamapala, spent 3 months in the UK on a Commonwealth Scholarship, based in Daventry, Leicester and Nottingham. She was very sad to leave her two tiny children, Jessica and Jemima, behind at home with husband Ivan, but Emily could not miss out on this golden opportunity, and Ivan might learn some new skills at the same time!

Emily's time flew by and she is now home again having thanked everyone who was able to help her to have such a successful opportunity in the East Midlands.

The Commonwealth Fellowship Commission continue to be pleased with the quality of the fellowships and a big thank you to all and anyone involved however small your input may be. We are hoping to welcome a 6th Fellow later in the autumn of 2008

Emily is the fifth Commonwealth Fellow that Daventry has hosted and we are still in touch with all those who came before her.

**Muzamiru Bidondole** was our first Fellow in 2003. He remains a great friend to many of us and he helps to sort the projects that D&DFoI finance when nobody from the UK is in Africa. He works for Iganga Town Council.

Whilst Peter was in Uganda in November, Muz and Peter visited the new hotel in Iganga, which certainly looks promising. It is in a beautiful and isolated position and may be quieter than the Mwaana Hotel!



**John Lule** followed Muz and spent the autumn of 2004 mainly based with Daventry District Council. He was excited to see snow fall for the very first time in his life! John works as an Environmental Health Officer in Kampala and lives with his wife and family.

Our Fellow in 2005 was **David**. He regularly keeps in touch with many of us and was great at Christmas as he took a branch of matoke and other gifts to the children in the orphanage. David is an Environmental Health Officer in Mukono but he came originally from Iganga.



Many thanks to David for his generosity.



**Robert** was here as our 2006 Commonwealth Fellow. He is to be married in February this year to his newly qualified lawyer girlfriend Joan. Our congratulations go to Robert and Joan! Hopefully we will have photos in our next newsletter. Joan selected her wedding gown from the ones that Ruth, at the Orphanage, hires out.

The *Friends* sent all of those wedding gowns out from England in a container - with much appreciation to 'H & M Bridalwear' in Hillmorton, Rugby. The money raised by Ruth goes towards the upkeep of the children and their education.

We send our best wishes to **John Campling** as he struggles back to health after a prolonged spell in hospital last year. The following note has been taken from the minutes of Iganga Friends of Daventry executive meeting held in January at Iganga Town Council Offices. Like us, they are also thinking about both John and his wife Angela:

☺ *Special concern for John's sickness - A special message also needs to be sent to Angela in recognition for the hard times she is going through.* ☺ David Balaba

*Best wishes also go to treasurer **Pam Eastaff**. Pam has also been in hospital, but is now recovering at home again*



## Water projects

Water for Kids Charity (WFK) still continue to support the *Friends* with our work in and around Iganga, especially when it comes to protecting water sources and providing clean water for the first time.

Check their newly launched and updated web site [www.waterforkids.org.uk](http://www.waterforkids.org.uk)

Peter was able to take more funds over during November and with this Muzamiru organised the protection of 2 more rural water sources. One at Luuka, 30 miles North of Iganga, was visited after completion and the whole village were there singing and dancing. Peter met a blind lady who had been drinking the water from the dirty and unprotected water source for all her life; she was thrilled, like the others, to now have clean water. She did a superb solo dance!

The second one south of Iganga along a very bumpy road was another big project where Peter was involved in village meetings before the work started. Again the local people were thrilled to get a clean protected water source for the first time ever.

WFK are thrilled with the success of these projects and they have decided to ask Muzamiru to continue to organise more protected sources even if there is nobody visiting from the UK. Funds can now be transferred and, as you read this newsletter, Muz is leading the protection of another water source.

You will recall the success of Bugamba, the first source we protected in 2005. This has attracted people from long distances to get the clean and plentiful water. Hopefully protecting the latest source will take the pressure off these queues at Bugamba

!!! Not everything is a total success as we have had some problems with our first and only pump installation at Naitandu - Muz's own village. Muz is on the job to try and get this sorted and although this is costing WFK more money it is a learning curve for all of us in the installation of a borehole, which should help in future projects.



## Wilbert is coming!

Many of you are aware of the *Friends'* dream/suggestion/wish that Wilbert should be given the chance to visit England. Some will recall Wilbert Openthyo as the kind, friendly, funny and hard working driver for the Ministry of Health in Kampala. Many of you will have met him on your arrival in Uganda as he was always around helping load vehicles and providing extra transport when required. He always manages to find the time to help out. Wilbert is a great guy!

Not long ago Wilbert said he fancied a visit to England, just to see what it was really like - but he would only need a couple of days for that! Since he would never get the chance of travelling professionally like some of his senior work colleagues and could never afford it himself, *Friends* have decided to help to bring Wilbert to England (private individual donation - no money taken from funds!)

Progress is being made. With Peter's help Wilbert is applying for his visa and, if he can get clearance from Paul Luyima the CEHO at the Ministry of Health, he should be able to get 4 weeks leave around April/May this year. (<http://wilbertscoming.blogspot.com> will keep you in touch)

**For more information about the work of the Friends please contact Richard Scott-Herridge on 01788 814686 or at [herridgers@hotmail.com](mailto:herridgers@hotmail.com)**