



Daventry & District Friends of Iganga

# LINKING NEWS

www.friendsofiganga.org

Registered charity no. 1100624

Developing links between Daventry District and Iganga in Uganda

October 2010

## Another successful trip to Iganga in 2010 ...

**Chairman Peter Minhinnett led another working group to Uganda this summer and he says ...**

This was my first visit back to Uganda, and our partnership town of Iganga, for more than 12 months, the longest I have been away from Uganda for many years since I first went there in 1998. It was good to return and spend time with our many friends but also to be reminded of the many problems that there still are in Uganda and the difficulties there are in solving what to us seem such trivial problems.



Muzamiru Bidondole was there as always to greet us at Entebbe and looked after us for almost the whole trip. Without his care and attention so much of our time and work would not be so successful. Even though he had a fulltime responsible job to attend to, a young family and sick relatives requiring his extended family responsibilities, he was able to spend time with us almost every day both solving our problems and assisting us to ensure the success of our projects. It has, of course, to be noted that assisting us also assists Muzamiru with his status both within the local Community and his large family but he is a man I greatly respect and without him I am sure both DFOI and our partners WfK would be unable to be so successful in Iganga District.

However not everything was quite as successful as I had hoped and you will see as you read further.  
(see back page)

## Annet Negesa leads the pack in her favourite 800m race



Annet from Iganga's **King of Kings Secondary School**, who most times does not even get an adequate diet, defied odds not only to improve her time by over two seconds with a new national record, but to also beat other seasoned athletes to bronze in her *first global track competition*.

The fact that **Ugandan World Junior Athletics Championships medallist Annet Negesa** has no trainer nor a well documented training programme touched many coaches and managers attending the event. Many of them are betting on her becoming another *Maria Mutola* in the 800m event.



Peter meets Annet

Annet has just competed in the **Commonwealth Games** in Delhi and came 4th in her very fast, 800m heat. Very well done Annet! Watch out for her in London in 2012!

**Can we help Annet to realise her dream?**

**Baby David** was the first baby born in the new Namunsaala clinic



that David Walsh master minded and had built over the last few years. The money was raised in his home village of Rothersthorpe and topped up with funds from Daventry Friends.

With the Nurses home (see right) also now complete, the clinic will soon find a live-in nurse and be able to function 24 hrs a day.



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Friends are finding it increasingly difficult to raise funds in the world's present climate, but we do have many people and schools to thank for their help.

Following another very successful **Jordan's Day** at **William Parker School** where Primary children worked alongside Yr 9 from WPS to learn about the difficulties and solutions for providing food in Africa, a mufti day raised over £400 for Iganga. Many thanks to all who took part.

**Badby Primary School** continue to support Friends and their May Day collection and more recently Harvest collection were all handed over to Friends. Thanks to all children and parents.

**Mark Fyfe** (vice chairman) arranged a 24 hr Walkathon around Daventry and hoped for lots of support but although he was disappointed and walked alone for part of the time, he managed to raise quite a lot of money for Friends. Well done Mark!

**Julia Brown** from London was so touched by her visit to Iganga that she too has been raising funds for Muzamiru Bidondole's home village. Grateful thanks to Julia

**St James Primary School** also donated a sum of money collected by their pupils.

*Thank you all!*

### **The container leaves for Iganga**



Eight hardy folk arrived at the unit early on Sept 14th, to sort the masses of items ready for when the 20ft container arrived at 9.30am. First the hospital beds went in. They were very awkward and heavy but we managed well. It was jolly hard work!

Soon after 3pm some extremely tired Friends watched as an extremely full container of beds, wheel chairs, crutches, zimmer frames, supplies and more for the hospital left to begin the long trip to Africa. There were lots of educational items too for our link schools. Boxes and boxes of books and paper and even chalk that they still use on their blackboards, were all packed in. We think that by now nearly every old heavy Singer sewing machine must have found its way into Africa!. Many more are travelling there in our container right now!

David Walsh is hoping to meet the container when he visits Iganga in November and distribute the goods to the hospital, clinics and schools.

### **The highlight of Carlene's visit to Uganda was the involvement with the water source at Obira.**

The site had been recognized as a potential water source where approximately 600 local villagers would be able to obtain clean water. John and I were really pleased at the strong presence of community engagement by the locals; the men were digging the trenches whilst ladies and children carried bricks, stones and sand to help with the construction, even though they were not getting paid for the job.

We were surprised the following day when we arrived at the site; there was hardly anyone to carry on with the construction. I found out that they were awaiting the arrival of the Member of Parliament. It was ironic that residents were anticipating his arrival, although he had not provided them with clean water and sanitation facilities!

However, the source was built in three days and we were really pleased that residents were now able to access safe water. It was a great joy to see their expression when they realised we had actually contributed to improving their health and well-being.



*Carlene Lewis*

## **Fund Raising**

**Daventry Friends welcome your ideas for fund raising. If you are willing to run an event or help to increase our funds, please do contact us. If you see an event advertised, please support us if you can!**

## SCHOOLS FOCUS:

... hear first from Jude Eddon - trustee

The first school I ever visited in Iganga was **Buttville Kindergarten**. Children the world over are inquisitive but I guess the arrival of several 'white' faces added to their curiosity. They were delightful and so welcoming as were the staff.

Inside there were rows of benches for the children to sit at, reminiscent of old Victorian school pictures. They were at least brightly painted, unlike those of schools that we were later to visit. The walls had a scattering of visual aids and although they were brightly coloured, they were all home made, presumably by the teachers.

The children sat in orderly fashion in the small outdoor play area whilst waiting for parents to collect them. There was a surprising amount of play equipment like swings and mini roundabouts. We got the chance to speak to the Director, **Betty Kitakufe**, and to give her some work from their link school, St James Primary, in Daventry. She was a fascinating lady and obviously dedicated to the children in her charge.



Butt Villa Kindergarten, Iganga



St James Primary, Daventry

I remember her telling us that when she was first interviewed for her job, she had to borrow some suitable clothes because she had none. She started the school because she felt that there were no schools in the local area suitable for her own child. She had built the school from practically nothing. Behind her desk was a small scroll with the words 'If you think education is expensive, then try ignorance!'

When Christine and Aggrey, from Iganga High School, came to England earlier this year, they visited the children at St James School. They came bearing gifts from Buttville; St James' link. The children had made small coloured balls from papier mache. I expect they could be used for counting skills, colour differentiation, and any number of educational investigations but the children had different ideas! Jude

## A message from Natasha following her first visit to Iganga

**Natasha Pickup** from **William Parker School** visited Iganga High School in July, loaded with gifts and messages, and aiming to strengthen the links between the partner schools.

During her first few days Natasha was overwhelmed by the cultural differences. She says - 'The school has so little compared to us. It makes me realise how much we take for granted. Whilst both schools are committed to educational excellence, the stark reality of teaching and learning couldn't be more different. With blackboard and chalk teaching and a library with few books, I was amazed at how enthusiastic the students are when learning.'

She commented that another key difference was school food. 'At Iganga High School they have a staple diet of beans served with maize flour and water. This is called *posho*. It is their lunch and dinner and is consumed every single day!'

'Living conditions couldn't be more different to the average student at WPS. Many children walk miles to school on mud roads. Many sleep at school. Their quarters comprise beds three bunks high. The dormitory is tightly packed. Up to thirty children live and sleep in a room. The school helps orphans by allowing them to share the quarters. These are children who have lost parents to HIV or war. Some students don't even have mosquito nets which they need to protect themselves against malaria and other diseases.'

Natasha went on to highlight messages of thanks from Iganga High School and the importance of the link. 'Iganga High school really prides itself on its link with William Parker. They value every single thing from the partnership. They read every letter and appreciate the contact we all have.' On this occasion Iganga High School were pleased to be able to show Natasha the new roof that had been built over their classrooms following the fundraising activities at WPS. 'They have sent WPS an enormous message of thanks. I can see that every little action on our part means the world to them' she commented

'Finally, what amazed me most is that at WPS we have so much 'stuff' and take all that we have so much for granted. Iganga High School students and staff have so little - many students loved seeing their own photo for the first time in the camera.'

'They all work hard and care for each other. Maybe we could learn something from them?'



### Examples of our many current partnership curriculum projects:

**Sport** - Compare the sports programme / to share warm up examples.

**Weather** - Compare weather data

**Rights and responsibilities** - To run an activity where students investigate perceptions, exchange these perceptions between countries and use the variety of information to inform their debating abilities.

**Penfriend letters**

**Three way letter exchange** - A 3 way exchange of letters that will respond to questions raised by students and also raise new questions between students. This exchange is between Iganga High School and The Globe Academy, Japan, and will seek to include William Parker School.

**U/UK newsflash** - a sixth form current affairs partnership activity

**Poetry** - Using hands of friendship as a means of communication. A poster production of Iganga and Daventry and poem exchanges.

**Our life** - To set up a location in the school library to house all shared documents between students. Then to put together a book about Daventry and William Parker School along the same lines as the booklet provided by the students at Iganga high School.

**Art** - exchange of art work completed in lessons.

**Geography** - exchange of schemes of work to help learning about the two towns

Natasha

# **Hands-On**

**on Saturday December 4th from 7pm**

**in St Augustine's Church Hall,**

**London Rd, Daventry, NN11 4BZ**

**Come along and hear about our latest  
projects and news**

*Contact Peter Minhinnett for more information*



**Mbaha Emmery** is our 7<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Fellow from Uganda. He works for the Ministry of Health Kampala as Senior Environmental Health Officer. Emmy says, 'Coming to the UK has been a lovely and exciting experience. I am interacting mainly with Government departments both Central and Local to learn more about UK Environmental Practices, concentrating on areas that are implemental in my Country and also to share my own experience with people here.

I have also met with Daventry Friends of Iganga. Just before I came over, I visited their projects in Iganga; they are doing great work and offering the much needed help to many underprivileged people in our Country. I have had great and unforgettable moments since coming to England.'

## **Valentina made her first trip to Iganga and the orphanage this summer ...**

As my first time in a developing country the meeting with the children of the orphanage has represented one of the most emotional moments of the trip. The first time we arrived there it was after a day of travelling from Kampala and we were all very tired. However the enthusiasm and the joy of the kids recognising Peter and the team, was too enthralling not to be involved and I found myself fighting against tears. So many children coming from all around the neighbourhood were trying to capture our attention and affection.

My tendency to be swept away by my own emotions had to change during the following visits we made to the orphanage but remembering back to that very first time backtrack myself into the "African blues". I still really miss it all.

*Valentina Basso*

## **On a more disappointing note ...**

Peter had to tell us that copper piping in the hospital had been stolen! The piping had made running water possible in the Children's ward and had been provided by money from Water for Kids via Friends who oversaw the work done on a previous visit. Most disappointing!

When David Walsh visits in November he will find out the total loss and hopefully decide what can be done about it if anything.

Another disappointment is the state of the Centre for the Blind. Paul, our blind friend and teacher at the school, lives in at the centre. He was very pleased to have his room decorated and a new pit latrine constructed by the team who went out in the summer.

What is sad is the fact that, following the untimely death of the matron, nobody has really taken her place and numbers living at the centre have fallen.

However, as in England, it has been decided that children with low or no sight are better educated nowadays in normal school classrooms. With such large classes in Uganda, this could be difficult for them but only time will tell.

Following a very successful AGM in May, your new committee includes:

**Peter Minhinnett (Chairman), Mark Fyfe ( Vice-Chairman), Richard Scott-Herridge (Secretary), Pam Eastaff (Treasurer), Carey Minhinnett (Membership Secretary), Dave Walsh, Nick Ravine, Jan Morrott (newsletter editor), Annette Dunn, Phil Edwards, Jude Eddon, Barbara Campbell and Paula Raynham**

The trustees meet regularly, around every 6weeks, and anyone interested is welcome to attend meetings. For more information about the work of the Friends, please look on our website [www.friendsofiganga.org](http://www.friendsofiganga.org)

or contact Richard Scott-Herridge on 01788 814686 or [herridgers@hotmail.com](mailto:herridgers@hotmail.com)

If you are interested in joining us contact Peter Minhinnett tel: 0116 2393061 [peter@minhinnett.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:peter@minhinnett.fsnet.co.uk). mobile 07876 475713 or Richard Scott-Herridge as above