



Charity Week

County School and Mukono High

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Kids League

450 children now involved

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Linking the people of Guildford and Mukono, Uganda

LINK news

June 2013

Note from the chairman

Tamsy Baker

Our constitution allows the Chairman to hold office for six years so it is time for me to step down. I have had the most rewarding six years and would like to thank the many wonderful people who have worked along-side me, here and in Mukono. Together we have done some amazing things and I'm off to Mukono to attend my second wedding later this year!

When Sallie Thornberry established the Link, with friendship at its heart I am sure she never thought that so many diverse activities would be established in Mukono. Many school Links have flourished embedding the Link into their school plan with shared projects, fund-raising and reciprocal visits. St Thomas has raised a staggering £15,000 for its Link School, Busenya to build classroom blocks replacing a dangerous structure.

For many Guildford supporters, a visit to Mukono has also been their first trip to Africa and has been an exciting and life-changing adventure. And for the many visitors from Mukono to Guildford the visits are the fulfilment of a dream! We have enjoyed being part of that dream.

Life is tough for young people in Mukono with endless duties, from collecting water, helping on the smallholding and long days at school in classes of 100. For some, a little relief from this routine is provided by the Link which now sponsors 450 boys and girls to play football every week and 50 young people are learning to play

brass instruments brought from Guildford. They are now playing at events in Mukono to raise money for their Keenotes Music School.

The five young people we sponsored through university are establishing their careers and are now involved in the Link as Mukono committee members and mentors to the three students still at university.

We have a sound financial system where all money sent to Mukono is deposited in a dedicated account. All works are monitored by our colleagues in Mukono with photos sent to Guildford for large projects, as each stage is completed.

Every problem in Mukono is seen as a challenge and with this positive attitude many things are changing for the better. It is really exciting to see how the younger generation is contributing to the future of Uganda.

The Guildford Committee members have concentrated their efforts over the past ten years on setting up projects in Mukono. Many thousands of lives are touched by these projects but the Link will only truly flourish if more people in Guildford become involved, sharing community projects. So this year we want to involve more Guildfordians, raising awareness of what is happening in Mukono and how they can participate.

Find us at www.guildford-mukono.org.uk and on Facebook ●



Foundations for new classrooms at Busenya school



Kids League Mukono

County School Charity Week

In February 2013 Guildford County School's Senior Team – (Emily, Gina, Jack and Jez) organised a Charity Week to raise funds for its Link – Mukono High School – with great success!

Ailis and Calum Parsons, pupils at Guildford County, who had recently visited Mukono High School, were invited to introduce and enthuse the school with what's happening in Mukono, and to highlight areas suggested by Mukono High School where the money could be spent. Suggestions included sponsoring students to enable them to take 'A' levels, support a student through university, build a hostel for sixth formers, build a teacher's house or resources for their dynamic music department.

Guildford County pupils were able to see photographs, not only of the students at Mukono High School, but of some facilities that might be improved – adding a more personal touch to the Link.

After weeks of organisation, culminating in five days of crazy activities, the school managed to raise nearly £3,000 – a brilliant total thanks to the efforts and the generosity of Guildford County school.

How was this done? The Senior Team went for crowd pleasers:—a fair at lunchtime, a chance to “gunge” teachers, and a staff vs pupils basketball tournament, as well as retail outlets for ice cream, cakes and doughnuts. They also sold a basket full of colourful earrings, bracelets and necklaces made by women in Mukono.

The Senior Team has now to decide which of the suggested projects they wish to support. ●



Fun and fund-raising by pupils at Guildford County School

Update on Bridget, our sponsored student

We first met Bridget Namagambe in 2007 as a sixth former at Lutengo United School. She had definite ideas for the future, was willing to work hard and wanted to give something back to her community. Her Head Teacher, Edward, (now treasurer of the local committee) recommended her and two others for university education.

In 2008 Bridget started an Economics degree supported by funding from Guildford, with the intention of becoming a teacher.

After teaching practice back at her former school, Edward offered her a post teaching

economics on qualification.

Meeting Bridget again in February 2013, we learnt that she had secured an A Level teaching post outside Kampala but had left to establish her own kindergarten in Kampala, where 15% of her intake would attend free of charge. Starting a business is a common aspiration in Uganda, and as a supplementary source of income is useful security. We wish her success. ●



Bridget with children at her kindergarten

Guildford Fairtrade

You can find us on the High Street every first Tuesday of the month as part of the Guildford Farmers' Market. We are happy to talk about the Link and how you can participate. Fairtrade sales support producers worldwide and profits have financed projects we have decided to support in Mukono, such as roofing classrooms,

providing two dormitories, buying an eco-stove and helping provide a bore hole to access fresh water. ●

Become a member

Many members of the Link have come with us to experience a different way of life in this beautiful country, meeting the people who work in schools and health centres and run music and sports activities. Some younger members have spent part of their gap year in Mukono, some have shared their expertise and others have enjoyed bird watching and escaping from our February weather! ●

New Website

The Guildford Mukono Link has taken some important steps this year to involve more people, both in Guildford and Mukono. We have a new web page, www.guildford-mukono.org.uk, a Facebook page and use twitter. This has only been possible with the help of new young Trustees and supporters with a fluency in 21st century methods of communication which give the people in Mukono easy access to what is happening.

Our web page was kindly designed by Oli Rice. ●



Sue manning the Fairtrade stall in Guildford High Street

Sunshine, Sport and Exuberance

The Kids League Mukono

The shade beneath the huge avocado tree was a magnet for some of the Trustees who visited the playing fields at Mukono Boarding and Namawojjolo schools during their recent visit. But not for the hundreds of girls and boys who were joining in with games, fun and sport led by Mark Twinamatsiko and his team of volunteer coaches from the Ugandan Christian University.

Each week young undergraduates and postgraduates visit three locations in the Mukono district and provide inspired sports and exercise sessions for over 450 children to enjoy. This is known as The Kids League Mukono. Douglas Kisauzi, who is a founding



Sport and exercise session with Kids League Mukono

member of the local Guildford Mukono Link committee has been instrumental in the success of the programme and identifies any children who are especially deprived to join the after school sessions – together with school children from Link and other community schools.

Despite the large numbers, lack of footwear and the hot sun, the children were motivated by their coach role-models and of course loved having their photographs taken.

The sessions finished with a presentation of footballs, medals and trophies to be

awarded during the final season, together with T-shirts for the new holiday programme initiated by Moses and Kalule and all this in addition to sportswear provided by GB Paralympian Tom Aggar who donated much of his Olympic wardrobe for the programme!

An appreciation was also made to The Casey Trust which has provided funding to Guildford Mukono Link and to The Kids League Kampala, who administers the programme. We hope that our bid will be successful again next year.

Further thanks to Keith Henderson Sports Knaphill, Bagshot FC and Surrey University for donations and equipment. ●



Funding provided by Casey Trust

Head's family visit

In October 2012 the Parsons family visited Mukono. My wife, a teacher at Worplesdon Primary and myself, the Headteacher, were part funded by a grant from the British Council Global Schools Partnership. We also took with us two of our children, Ailis and Calum, who both attend Guildford County School. Over the past three years, thirteen teachers from the two schools have been involved in exchange visits.

The main purpose of the trip was to visit our Link school. It was amazing and inspiring to see Mukono Boarding School first hand rather than in photos, it was even better to meet up again with teachers we had hosted in Guildford.

Ailis and Calum were also on a mission. They visited Mukono High School and spent time with Julius the Headteacher. Their job was to re-invigorate Guildford County



Visiting Mukono High School

School's Link and find out how best Guildford County School can support Mukono High School. On their return they have made presentations to the whole school and the senior team.

Susan and her staff were wonderful and generous hosts, enabling us all to get to know the schools better, experience the culture, and gain an insight into everyday life in Uganda. We are looking forward to hosting Susan and three of her staff when they visit Guildford and Worplesdon in May.

Alistair Parsons.

Headteacher, Worplesdon Primary School.

50th Anniversary of Uganda's Independence

Uganda celebrated its 50th Anniversary of Independence in 2012. In recent years it has had a stable Government and the economy has grown. To mark the occasion, The Mayor of Guildford, in partnership with Surrey University, planted a tree in the university grounds. This was a happy event accompanied by drumming and speeches. ●



Music in Mukono

William Bulega is a professional musician who runs the Mukono Arts Centre in his Keenote building in the middle of Mukono town. An important function of the Centre is to train and develop the musical skills of young people. The relationship between The Guildford Mukono Link and the Mukono Arts Centre has developed well over the past three years. Musical instruments beyond economic repair and retired by Surrey Arts, have been given a new lease of life thanks to Simon Balch and brass specialist Will Spencer. During this period over 30 instruments have been donated to Keenotes from Guildford – consisting largely of brass instruments but also including violins,

clarinets and flutes. The results have been impressive. Visitors to Mukono in 2013 were welcomed with a brass band performance by young people – followed by magnificent African drumming and dancing.

There is another Brass Band in Mukono – the FDF Band (Friends Development Foundation) run by Davis Niwamanya. This band played at the opening ceremony of the Sallie Thornberry Library and is eager to develop a music link with Guildford. This band would also much appreciate more brass instruments. If you can help please let us know. Both bands enrich the lives of young people with very limited resources. ●



**Surrey
instruments
given a new
lease of life by
Keenotes**



Drumming performance for Guildford Mukono Link visitors



Thank you to original Mukono Committee

Tamsy, went to Mukono in September to visit informally our friends and meet as many people involved in our projects as possible. The Link has grown so much in the last 10 years that it was recognised both in Guildford and Mukono that we had to find a more stream-lined way of working together. The discussions led to the new committee being formed in February 2013. The Guildford committee would like to thank the members of the Mukono committee who have worked with us so well for the last 10 years and helped establish such a strong link between our two communities. We also welcome the people in Mukono who have joined the new Mukono Link committee and will help us strengthen our partnership.

How to tackle poor nutrition

There are now five school farms that help provide an enriched midday meal for the children in our Link Schools. However, there are still over 50% of children in some schools not having lunch. We are sponsoring a workshop to be run by Susan Wamala, Head of Mukono Boarding, for all the Heads of our Link Schools to raise awareness of the importance of lunch and the effect of good nutrition on pupils' ability to concentrate in lessons. Change will come when Head Teachers are able to persuade parents to prioritise the 3 pence daily for lunch. ●

Sponsored student becomes a journalist

Our fourth sponsored student Norah, graduated in journalism this year after being Women's President of her

university. She gained one of three places offered to undergraduates as an intern on Uganda's national newspaper *New Vision* and is now one of their journalists. She is enjoying the demands of her job and is getting married later this year. ●



Norah now working for national newspaper