

# One World Link

The friendship link between Bo District in Sierra Leone and Warwick District, UK

[www.oneworldlink.org.uk](http://www.oneworldlink.org.uk)

Registered Charity No. 700714

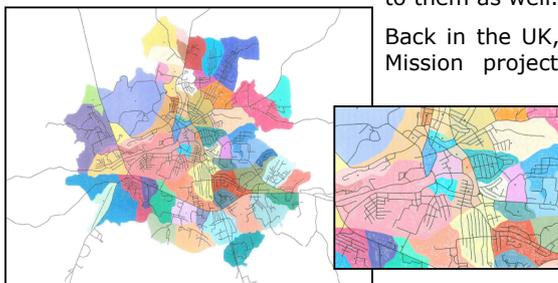
## Putting Bo on the Map

thanks to OWL, the Mercy Mission Hospital and....the US Navy!

**Ever wondered what it would be like in a world without maps?** With our SatNavs and GoogleMaps and Ordnance Survey, we take for granted a whole array of maps - detailed or otherwise - for whatever we might want to do. So for us to imagine a world without reliable maps is next to impossible. But that is exactly the situation in Bo - and that's a huge headache for anyone trying to create a development plan for the City.

This was one of the issues to emerge from discussions John Archer has been having with the City administrators on a planning framework for Bo, as part of the three year action plan agreed between Warwick District and Bo City to help on a range of issues. Lack of up to date maps of the rapidly growing City was proving a major stumbling block - until, that is, William Alpha, Chief Administrator of the City Council, mentioned a project at the Mercy Mission Hospital in Bo which involved producing new maps of the City.

Without further prompting, John set up a meeting with Rashid Ansumana and his team at the hospital to understand their particular project. It turned out that they were engaged in studying disease characteristics and distribution in Bo and, by mapping the occurrence of the various diseases, they hoped to put in place better systems of response to the outbreak of disease.



Maps of Bo generated by the Mercy Mission Project

Because of the lack of available maps, the project was engaged in surveying the whole of the City from scratch, creating a new, electronically based map of all of the built up area. This was a very impressive undertaking in itself and it was clear that such a map could also be a major help for the City's Planning Project. The Mercy Mission project was not yet completed, but Rashid was happy to work with the City Council and record mapping information that could be of use to them as well.

Back in the UK, John's links with Rashid and the Mercy Mission project team were maintained and contact was eventually made with the main funding support - this transpired to be from the US Navy who were interested in developing their body of knowledge on tropical diseases to help in possible future treatment of naval personnel. But it was clear that all the people involved were also genuinely keen to give real support to Sierra Leone in addressing its serious health issues.

The US Navy could not have been more helpful and, after some negotiation and the signing of a joint memorandum of understanding on the use of the material, it was agreed that the Local Government Project with OWL could have access to all the mapping information. This is a tremendous help - it not only means that there is access to an up-to-date mapping base for the Planning Project and for other developmental work, but this is something which will be of lasting benefit to the City and the people of Bo, now and well into the future.

### Rashid remembers OWL

**Rashid Ansumana**, leader of the Mercy Mission Project, visited the UK in early October and, at the end of his visit, he spent his last day in the UK with us in Leamington. He had been to school in Bo where he very clearly remembers reading from books that were sent out by OWL. Since then, he has gone on to study at Njala University, where he gained a Biology degree, followed by time in Freetown, teaching and researching whilst working towards being a research biologist. It was through his own contacts and efforts that he gained the US funding for his present project and he has

learned all the skills needed to deliver it. His commitment to the future of Sierra Leone is not in doubt - he could move to the US and earn more, if he chose, but was very clear in seeing his future as staying in Sierra Leone and using his skills to help his country.



Rashid (right) with Clive Harridge and John Archer in Leamington

### Annual Meeting Coming Up!

Don't miss our Annual get-together, which promises something for everyone!

**Saturday, 4 December, 2010 at 1pm**  
**Dale St Methodist Church Hall**  
**Dale Street, Leamington Spa, CV32 5HL** 

It all kicks off with a free West African-style Lunch followed by a brief formal AGM.

At 2pm, there will be presentations from recent visitors to Bo:

- **Richard Hall** - water availability and sustainability in Bo and the Rotary Project
- **John Archer** - Planning for the Future and the 'Mapping Project'
- **James Rogers** - Reflections on a Visit to his Home Town

There will be plenty of time for open discussion, and although proceedings at Dale Street will need to be wrapped up by around 3.15pm, there is always the opportunity to continue at a local hostelry!

**See you there!**

## Chairman's Notebook



**With summer now well behind us, there's the definite feeling that the OWL machine is kicking back into action!**

For us on the UK side of the link, the really exciting news is that we've been awarded the funding we applied for in order to take a group of teachers out to Bo. For our friends in Bo, the great news is that they have identified some land that they want to buy, and are now ready to go ahead to purchase, using funds from our legacy. This will mean that they can expand various OWL projects. Ideas already looking for space include a sports area, a crèche, more accommodation, and more sophisticated training facilities, perhaps to allow for specific training of, for example, mechanics.

The teachers' visit to Bo represents the culmination of much dedication by the whole of the teachers group, and it's great to see that there are some new faces becoming involved and demonstrating a considerable commitment by making the trip. The visit will be such a boost for the staff and pupils of the link schools in Bo, and the fact that there will be 6 teachers plus a co-ordinator visiting at one time will make quite an impact.

That trip is planned for February but, before that, John Archer and Richard Hall will have been out for a fortnight to give further support to the environmental health, clean water and sanitation, and planning projects. John's work has resulted in an enormous leap forward for Bo city, with the provision now of up to date maps in hard copy and, with a software version, the facility to overlay different mapping elements.

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we are still investigating building some sort of health link with Bo, and our ideas for developing the 'adult education' angle are also bearing fruit. On January 12th we are hosting a talk from two speakers from DFID who will be telling us about their general plans for the future, and how they are targeting health issues in countries such as Sierra Leone.

Lastly, our Youth group are getting the bit between their teeth, now beginning publicity for a competition between sixth formers from local schools, from which the four winners will be part of a larger youth group trip out to Bo next spring.

We mustn't forget that the most important element of what we do is to encourage and enable exchange visits. To that end, if there's anyone reading this who'd really like to go out and experience the life in Bo, then do get back to me! Also if there's anyone who'd like the experience of hosting a visitor from Bo, then please get in touch. We really need addresses where visitors would be welcome!!

*Chris King*

## HAVE WE GOT NEWS FOR YOU!

OWL runs a **monthly news service** delivering to your desktop all the key news stories from Sierra Leone. It keeps you up to date with articles and features covering a broad cross-section of views and information. OWL Member **John Yates** runs the service and if you would like to receive the service, please email him on **johnyates23@gmail.com**



## OWL legacy opens exciting possibilities

### Jane Knight sees 'the promised land'!

**In June last year, we reported on a generous legacy from Doris Frizzell**, a volunteer in the medical field who had worked at Bo Government Hospital in the late 1970s. Just over a year later, it looks as if that legacy will bear fruit, as preparations are made to purchase some land in Bo. And in a visit this summer, **Jane Knight** was able to see for herself the areas under consideration and to find out more about the decision to use the legacy in this way. Jane takes up the story.....



"The first site we visited was at Kandeh Town extension and close to a new school being built by the City Council (primary and junior secondary).



**The Kandeh Town site**

As there are few facilities there, it was thought that OWL could maybe set up a day care centre there. The land belongs to Jo Kobba, who was one of the founding fathers of BoOWL, a longtime member and a very good friend of the Link. The site consists of about 20 town plots and BoOWL would like to buy 10 of those. The site is a bit sloping but with nice views and, overall, in a very attractive location.

"The second piece of land is on the old Mattru Road, a little further out of the City. Again, the complete site consists of 30 plots, and of that 10 would be available to BoOWL. This land belongs to Theresa Bangali's family - Theresa is also a long serving BoOWL committee member and Women's Group chair. This site is flatter and quite a long way out but there is evidence of other development creeping up this road.



**The Old Mattru Road site**

"Talking with Maada, the BoOWL Treasurer, the rationale for the land purchase became very clear. It seems that there is a mounting trend to buy up land all over Bo and to develop it, so the price is likely to start rocketing - buying now, therefore, would be prudent use of the legacy as the prospect is that BoOWL will at least make a profit on the deal even if development activities fail to materialise. Maada explained that once they have the land, even if they do not have enough resources to develop it themselves, we can go into partnership with NGOs or others who do not have the same local infrastructure as us."

"There is obviously an awful lot of research required now regarding legalities and other criteria, but it is difficult not to be excited by the opportunities the legacy gives to OWL and the people of Bo."



## Cat takes up the Youth Group Challenge.....

**Hi! I'm Catherine (Cat) Moody** and I took over the role of Youth Co-ordinator from Ben Wesson earlier this year. Ben and I have been good friends for many years and I have been involved with OWL now for nearly two. Ben has been a tough act to follow, so it's great to report that the momentum he has built up is continuing apace. The Youth Group has started some exciting things; we have helped Aylesford school set up an OWL group for sixth formers, we are planning a competition for local year 12's to go to Bo in April; we are planning to raise money so that Scouts in Bo can attend the World Scout Jamboree in Sweden next summer, and we have met as a new group and gained new members since our meeting. I look forward to all of these things, and to all of my time as co-ordinator because the Youth Group is so engaged and passionate. I'm sure it can and will achieve great things here in our community and in Bo.

## ...while Ben keeps in touch

**Many congratulations** to Ben Wesson, our Youth Group co-ordinator for the last few years, who has moved on to Northampton University this term to study English and Journalism.

But Ben being Ben, he still wants to be involved with OWL as much as he can. While at University, he still plans to keep in close contact with Cat and the Youth Group, as well as using his skills in the PR arena by becoming our press and publicity man. Now that's commitment!



Ben 'stars' in the You-Tube Video

One example of Ben's new

PR role is already on **YouTube** - a video made at this summer's Leamington Peace Festival, featuring Ben himself and some other familiar OWL faces. To see the video, just type "One World Link" into the Search box, and you will easily find it. Enjoy!

## Introducing Liz Garrett

**Liz Garrett has joined the OWL team as Joint Schools Co-ordinator, helping Brian Austin with the ever expanding school links programme. Here, she tells us a little about her background, and what she hopes for the future.**

"My involvement with OWL began in 2004 when, as teacher-coordinator for Multicultural Learning, I set up the link between Clapham Terrace Primary School in Leamington and BDEC Sewa Rd School in Bo. Earlier I had lived and taught in Tanzania where I gained a love and enthusiasm for Africa.

"I'm passionate about preparing children to be equipped for life as citizens in our increasingly global community, by opening their eyes to different cultures, helping them explore similarities and differences and enjoy celebrating diversity - as well as exploring more complex issues through areas such as FairTrade, Trade Justice and Black History Month.

"School partnerships make learning real, which is why I am very excited about the opportunity to visit Bo in February

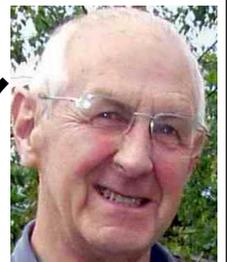
2011. As Coordinator I hope to encourage even more schools to benefit from OWL's long standing link and experience. I aim to build a strong relationship with my counterpart in Bo to enable teachers and pupils to make the most of their partnerships and benefit children's learning on both sides of the Link."



Liz looking forward to her new role with OWL

## School Report

from **Brian Austin**  
Schools Group Leader



### Day of the African Child

A summer afternoon of singing by individual schools' groups out in the open at St Anthony's School marked this Day in fine style, with Brookhurst, Clapham Terrace, St Mary's, St Peter's and Telford Infants all joining in. And with the World Cup in full swing, it ended with a football match between St Anthony's and Clapham Terrace as part of the ONE GOAL campaign for universal free primary education in Africa. At the same time, schools in Bo were celebrating at the OWL Centre with the emphasis on storytelling and a football competition too. This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> Day of the African Child and the second outdoor interschool event - it gets better each year!

The very next evening a new venture hosted by Kingsway School took place with Kingsway, St Anthony's and Clapham Terrace giving everyone a taste of the previous day's celebration, supported by Afrikan Kultural Kontrators entertaining everyone with rhythm, story and dance, along with the Songlines Community Choir. All performed to a packed audience with many parents having their first taste of the Link.



### Successful Grant Application for Bo Visit

As a result of some very intense activity over the summer, we have secured £7,000 funding for representatives of six schools, plus a Co-ordinator, to go to Bo next February. This is a British Council Area Linking Visit Grant (funded by DfE) for establishing new strategic area educational partnerships. The visit is due to take place from **February 11-20, 2011**. We are grateful for the support and encouragement of Judith Walker, Warwickshire Schools' International Development Officer in helping us with the bid. **As a direct result of this initiative we have three new schools joining the Link: All Saint's, Budbrooke and St Patrick's.** A warm welcome to all three schools!

### Primary Teachers' Group

Seven schools made it for the termly meeting, held this time at Clapham Terrace, where Liz Garrett, who is now sharing the schools coordination role with me, put on an impressive display of resources. The meeting enables teachers to share experiences, successes and setbacks! It was evident that there is a wealth of knowledge and expertise in our linked schools in providing the children with a unique opportunity to learn about life in a very different part of the world, an essential part of their whole education. This is 'connecting communities' in a very real way! They meet next on Thursday, January 20 at Brookhurst, 4 p.m.

### Teaching Resources Group

Janice Austin, Gayle Farr, Georgina Harkness and Myf Hodkin, all ex-teachers, have been putting their experience to good use by developing start-up materials for teachers to use in the classroom. A number of units of work have already been completed and they are currently working on 'dress and materials'. If you want to see what they have done, go to the [Teaching Resources page](http://www.oneworldlink.org.uk) on the 'Education Pages' at [www.oneworldlink.org.uk](http://www.oneworldlink.org.uk).

# Good news comes in threes!

as Bo Waste Management Pilot enters its final phase

**Andy Smith, European Officer in Warwickshire County Council's Regeneration Projects and Funding Team, reports.....**

Until November things had been looking a little bleak for the OWL inspired solid waste management project in Bo. We'd been struggling with twin problems of continued procurement delays on skips and electrical / mechanical problems with the JCB back hoe excavator (that's a digger to you and me) which meant it couldn't fulfil its role of preparing the landfill site to receive the waste from Bo. The lack of skips there also means that the segregation of green waste from non-biodegradable waste isn't happening at present.



The JCB with faulty 'digger' (inset)

However, three pieces of good news now give cause for optimism:

★ DFID has just given all the Commonwealth Local Government Good Practice Scheme projects a welcome extension to the end of September 2011, giving us 10 months to complete and evaluate our pilot scheme in Bo.

★ JCB's support systems in West Africa are limited but, thanks in part to lobbying by the project partners, they now intend to set up local service support for JCB products in Sierra Leone. In the short term, Bo City Council are paying to bring in a JCB trained engineer from Ghana to diagnose and then fix the current problem, and JCB are also planning to offer free training to two Bo staff in the UK early next year. This should put the pilot on a more sustainable footing for the future.

★ Key UNDP personnel in Freetown are also back at work and things are moving again on enabling OWL to procure the extra skips that will mean we can hopefully have the pilot running properly by January.

All this means that, come April or May next year, we could be in a position to have a meaningful joint evaluation with all partners prior to sharing the learning points from the whole experience with partners in Sierra Leone, the UK and the wider Commonwealth.

Fingers crossed!

**If you want to know more about any of the projects or topics covered in this issue, you can always visit:**

**[www.oneworldlink.org.uk](http://www.oneworldlink.org.uk)**

## Off the Shelf.....

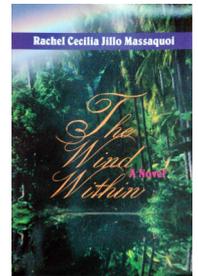
**OWL has a library of books** on a range of relevant subjects which members can borrow. **Nan Ells** is our librarian, and she is in charge of the collection which, at present, contains just over 20 books. The OWL collection is located in the Leamington Library in the World History section. They can be borrowed from the Library in the usual way.

In each issue of the Newsletter, we carry a short book review. For this issue, OWL member **John Myers** recommends.....

## The Wind Within

By Rachel Massaquoi

(OUP 2008)



The Wind Within portrays some African traditions and cultural practices, particularly among the Mende of Sierra Leone, who live in the Southern Province around Bo. It is an intriguing and exciting story told through the eyes of Kenyeh, a girl from the Mende region. It also touches on the brutal rebel war that engulfed Sierra Leone for ten years.

The author says "My name is Rachel Cecilia Jillo Massaquoi. I was born in Sierra Leone. I lived in Sierra Leone for many years but I also had the opportunity to live and work across many continents. It is perhaps because of these travels that I have developed a strong urge to capture the Sierra Leone that I remember through my writing. I therefore attempt to weave in Sierra Leonean culture into my work and I hope that through my books you will understand the people from whom this culture emanates"



Not only did I (John Myers) find this a very readable book, but it has helped me become better informed, especially about rural life in Mendeland. I will be offering it to the OWL library collection.

**If you have a book you would like to recommend or wish to write a review, please email Nan Ells at [annaellsgooglemail.com](mailto:annaellsgooglemail.com)**

## Money for Nothing!

Don't forget that you can raise money for OWL with a click of your mouse - and it will cost you absolutely NOTHING!

By registering with [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), and choosing OWL as your beneficiary, you can shop online with all your favorite retailers and they will donate a percentage of everything you spend to OWL. So why not check it out and register today!

**Every little counts!**