

One World Link Newsletter

June 2008

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

Registered Charity No. 700714

Our New Chair Visits Bo

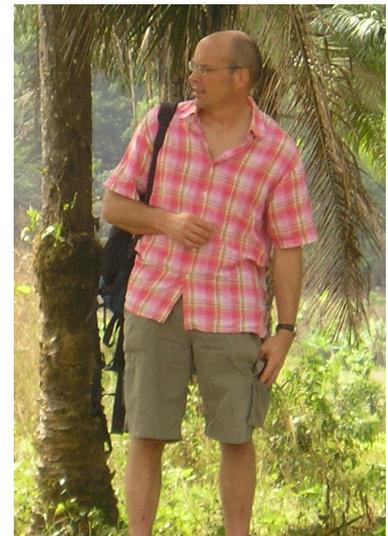
Chris King writes "As newly appointed chair of the Warwick group and never having been to Sierra Leone, to be introduced in Bo to as many members of the link as possible, to gain insight into the workings of their committee and sub-committees, to try and get to know key members, to meet again friends made in Leamington, to lodge at the Community Centre and to see how it is functioning and to appraise the project from the Warwick OWL point of view and to discuss future (business) plans for the centre.



First sight of the Community Centre in daylight was uplifting. I'd heard so much about it, been aware of so much time, effort and money going into it for so long, and there it was, bigger, shinier and prouder than I could have imagined. From the outset it had the feel of a place that was in use and in demand, - it had a vibrancy about it. The accommodation facilities are good; the rooms are well equipped, some with AC, others with fans, some with en-suites and all with mosquito nets. Provision of water and electricity is random; there is no mains water supply or drainage. The on-site well though dug, was not deep enough to supply water in the dry season, which this was. The accommodation is situated on the first floor. On the ground floor the centre has a large meeting room, a workshop space, and the bar and kitchen area. The cooking of food was done outside on a wood fire. The outside at the rear of the centre it

must be said, still had the look of a construction site needing to be cleared. Here there are 8 outside WCs with their own doors for use by those working there or visiting during the day. In this outside space is ample room for the free standing workshop now being built for the Kayoma womens group, and within it, a storage/office space for the youth group. Even with this new building, there will be plenty of space for plantings, and children's activities, and space to air bedding and hang the washing *and* do the cooking! The centre is *the* place to be to meet any of those connected however loosely to OWL. Every evening as the daylight fades, figures appear through the gloom climbing the stairs to the balcony, some coming just to greet and introduce themselves, some to stay until bedtime, often bringing friends and family with them. This is when you get chance to build friendships and to gain an understanding of "our 5 star carers" how their lives are, what their day involves and how they are coming to terms with life after the war. In the daytime, we see the mechanics of their lives, in the evening we hear them describe it. It is my belief that it is through the personal contacts we make in these various projects, - the schools, the LA group, the Kayoma group that makes our link the success that it clearly is. It is as a result of this effort we all put in, rather than through funds that we necessarily raise, that we are measured. Purely being an aid organisation would not gain us the mutual respect and friendship that is in such abundance there. It was a wonderful, inspiring visit. How fortunate I was to be a part of such a caring, warm community. What an achievement it has been by so many people to have built this all. How exciting to be part of a project with such a dynamic future, part of such a fantastic team of people! What a prospect!

Chris's view of the future can be read inside. His full report is available on request.



TEAM WORK

Chris led a team of five people on the visit in February. Jane Knight, Vice Chair, worked on the local authority partnership, Nicola Cumberledge a Finance Officer with the County Council worked with the finance section of Bo Town Council, Judith Ellis worked on oral history in connection with her VSO work in Segwema, and on local history in Bo, John Myers worked on school links.



AGM DECEMBER 2007 ELECTIONS

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|-----------|--|
| CHAIR | Chris King 19 Beauchamp Hill Leamington Spa CV32 5NS Tel: 01926 421093 Chair@oneworldlink.org.uk |
| SECRETARY | Alan Moss 11 Leicester Street Leamington Spa CV32 4TF Tel: 01926 332828 Secretary@oneworldlink.org.uk |
| TREASURER | John McFarlane, 87 Larch Walk, Birmingham B25 8QP Tel: 0121 6280968 finance@oneworldlink.org.uk |
| COMMITTEE | Brian Austin, Ian Bayliss, Val Davis, Richard Edwards, Nan Eells, Maria Franchi, Myf Hodkin, Jane Knight, John Myers, Mota Singh, Andy Smith, Ivana Hughes-Jones, Kip Warr |

PEN FRIENDS

JoAnne Fisher has volunteered to look after the recruiting and support of penfriends, and she waits to hear who her correspondent in Bo will be.

She would be grateful to hear from anyone who is currently writing to a friend in Bo.

If you would like to correspond with a person in Bo or have a current concern, please let her know. Tel: 07904 351247



joannefisher1982 @ gmail.com

PUBLIC LIBRARY - OWL COLLECTION.

Nan Eells is now looking after the collection.

New Acquisitions:

Toolkit for Linking; Opportunities and Challenges. UKOWLA.

Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone - memoirs of a boy soldier.*

Uzodinma Iweala, *Beasts of No Nation.*

A novel by a 23 year-old Nigerian born in the United States.

The harrowing story of a boy soldier somewhere in Africa

Book Review

How de Body?: "One Man's Terrifying Journey Through an African War." Tuen Voeten

Beginning in 1998 this is a harrowing account of a photojournalist who inadvertently gets caught up in civil war. Voeten set out on what he thought would be an ordinary assignment to document the release of child soldiers, however the cease fire ends just as he arrives and he is caught up in the ensuing chaos. This is a very accessible introduction to the troubles in Sierra Leone. It touches on many of the documented issues surrounding Sierra Leone, however, to me it is much more about the people - what I really took from this book was the endurance of human spirit. Voeten describes the courage and hospitality (despite the circumstances - someone always made sure he had enough to eat!) shown by the amazing people he encountered. Basing the book on his own experience gives the account real depth, these are real people and real experiences. JF

A full list of books is available on request or from our website. If you have any ideas on additions or developments for the library or could write a review please contact Nan Tel: 01926 315955



annaeeells @ gmail.com

A BIG THANK YOU TO TWO GREAT PILLARS OF ONE WORLD LINK

Myf Hodkin writes " My long time friend Ken Hall sadly died just before Christmas last year. I knew Ken both through the local United Nations Association of which he was Chairman for many years, and through OWL., of which he was a founder member. Ken worked very hard to raise awareness of O.W.L. and what we were aiming to do, and he lobbied authorities and individuals on specific issues. Ken and Margaret were wonderful hosts to OWL members both 'locals' and visitors from Bo. Ken became a close friend of Johannes Mallah the current OWL Chairman in Bo. We all missed Ken and Margaret when they moved south to Crewkerne. His failing health was a great sadness to all his friends; but we have many happy memories of barbecues and lunch parties at their Leamington home and at all the other OWL socials and meetings. Thank you Ken"



Jane Knight writes "John Holliday was the second chair person of One World link in 1983 for a few years until he left for his retirement in Stroud. He was a lecturer in Planning at Coventry University. His reputation spread way beyond Coventry. Many eminent planners had worked with or had been taught by John. He came from a family of artists and leaders in international activities. His mother, Eunice, who helped us for many years had gone out to Jerusalem in the 1930s as a new bride to her husband who was the planner for Jerusalem council. John spent some of his childhood there. We were very lucky to have his experience, influence and reputation to raise the profile of OWL when it was starting out. Ben Smith who was the second chair of OWL in Bo and Joseph Cooper, 2 of our first visitors, were made very welcome by John and his family and they remained lifelong friends. John was well loved by Bo friends and they continued to visit him. (Picture is of Johannes Mallah visiting John in 2004). One of the first major Africa evenings was lead by John in the Town Hall in the early 1980s John is sorely missed by all who knew him here and in Sierra Leone." Ben Smith writes "I regret John's passing very much. He was a wonderful friend and father; and we remained in touch until his death. He was very encouraging and helpful. I only hope I could have another friend like him"





Bo OWL have recently completed the construction of this workshop for use by the Women's and Youth Groups. It is situated behind the main building in a secure position

Bo OWL AGM May 2008 ELECTIONS

Chairman - V.V Bockarie

Vice - Teresa N. Bangali

Secretary - David A. Ngombu

Assistant - Anthony K. Kaitibei

Social Secretary - Mary H. James

Assistant - Catherine K. Kamara

Treasurer - Alfred Maada Fobay

Public Relation Officer - Ella L. Freeman

OWL FUTURES

Johannes Mallah, Chair of Bo OWL is pictured addressing an OWL workshop in Leamington on 6 11 07 looking at the way forward .

Exchange visits are core to sustaining and developing the Link. It is a matter of great concern that Maada Fobay Bo OWL Treasurer was refused a visa to travel with Johannes. He would seem to fit all the criteria necessary for a successful application, yet he was turned down because it was believed he would not return. We have to hope that this was a one off perverse decision that will not be repeated.

The discussions started in this workshop were continued on the February visit to Bo.

Chris King writes " As a result of the visit to Bo, I see our tasks here mainly to be focussed via sub groups:

Schools: to re-asses the linking setup, bearing in mind that there are many schools in Bo looking for an individual linking partner, and only a few in the Leamington area.

Local Government: Keeping the momentum going; focus on the 3year plan and it's funding and building on the considerable work put into the report by the visiting officers.

Kayoma: having rearranged the priorities now, (with the new workshop) to focus on supporting their emerging initiatives and assessing the future for the Women's group here.

Resource Centre. this has now for us become the core of the Community Centre. We will be channelling much of our efforts to children, schools, young and older adults through the resource centre. We will be hoping to see a dedicated person to help develop the RC in place as soon as possible; from a historical, geographical, political, social, anthropological, and developmental perspective we want this centre to be a resource for all the community. We expect to see an internet link-up soon

Youth. Sitting with the Bo Youth Committee was a wonderful experience, and made me realise the immediate need for a similar group here. Jane and I have made it our goal on our return to Leamington to seek out some key people and try and get a group started as soon as possible.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICER VISIT TO BO

Exchange visits between council personnel have developed slowly since 2001, but in 2006 the idea was accelerated into action when Clive Harridge, President of the Royal Town Planning Institute offered to travel to Bo. After funding was found, it was agreed that a party of 4, led by Councillor J. Knight (WDC) would travel to Bo in November 2007.

Prior to the THIS visit Melvin Caulker, the Chief Administrator of Bo City Council came to Warwick in October to give him exposure to UK local government practice and to enable him to understand the background of the officers visiting his council. The officers in addition to Clive Harridge, were: Richard Hall – Head of Environmental Health at WDC; Glenn Fleet – Sustainable Waste Manager WCC; and Phil Triggs – Group Financial Manager WCC. A full report is about to be published. Copies can be obtained by emailing info@oneworldlink.org.uk

OWL EDUCATION GOES INTO THE DIGITAL AGE

We now have an excellent range of classroom resources on line available to any teachers and students who go to our website and click on to the [Education Pages](#) link. This will be linked to the new The Warwickshire e-Learning Community Web Site <http://www.we-learn.com>

See below for a portion of our education homepage. It is well worth a visit. Thanks to our hard working and creative teaching materials sub-group, to Brian Austin our schools coordinator, and to Kip Warr our website manager. These materials are also available on DVD and in hard copy please contact Brian for more details on education@oneworldlink.org.uk or 01926 428635

Schools Sub-Group Home Page

News April 2008

John Myers has recently returned from a three week visit to Bo where he visited many of the linked schools there. He is more than happy to visit schools to talk about his experiences there.

He also met with our friends in the Link and had many discussion with them about sustaining and enhancing the school links for the future, including the future of the Schools Resource Room at the One World Link Community Centre.

The Primary Teachers' Group

is meeting next on:

Tuesday, 14th October at 4 p.m.

St Anthony's School,

Sydenham Drive Leamington Spa

The Brookhurst Experience

- At our last Primary Teachers' meeting Jenufa Wood gave us a detailed presentation of the way in which the experience of their link had been incorporated into the **Geography Teaching Scheme for Year 5** and other aspects of the curriculum.
- This was also supported by an extensive **display of their resources** that they had collected together over the years, together with examples of **work done by the children** (such as the washing line of tie-dyed materials!)
- The OWL teaching resources, now available on our website had been found invaluable and we looked at how this could be accessed.
- One of the resources that had been found particularly valuable was the interactive DVD '**Reel Lives Sierra Leone**' and we looked at some of the activities. It was suggested OWL collect orders from schools and obtain them. **If you want one, email education@oneworldlink.org.uk** or buy online at www.musicforchange.org/pages/shop.htm @ **£25** (+ 1.40 pp for one)
- They also used the **video of their linked school at UBC** that Alison Bryan had made on her visit in 2006, which might be useful for other schools to use.
- Liz Garrett at Clapham Terrace said that they had the link incorporated in their **Year 4 PHSE Scheme of Work**: Multi-cultural awareness, which she has made available to us. Obtainable from Liz or education@oneworldlink.org.uk

Day of the African Child Monday June 16th.

This is considered a good opportunity to do something together to celebrate the Link, Monday is not necessarily the best day - but we can think in terms of promoting a **joint celebration** of the Day of the African Child between our linked schools and Bo on one day **during the week commencing June 16th**. This year's theme is: **"Right to participation: let children be seen and heard"**

CAN YOU LEND A HAND?

We feel we are doing a good and worthwhile job. There is always more to be done, and what we do would be done better with more members to help. Some jobs are one offs, others are longer lasting, and are varied in nature. Whatever your talents or interests, there is likely to be something you can do.

Contact John Myers on 01926 425403 or info@oneworldlink.org.uk

www.oneworldlink.org.uk is our website address. Please pay us a visit