

The Bo Fund
Bill Evans, former Mayor of Leamington

I set up the Bo Fund - in co-operation with Bo Owl and Warwick Owl - as one of my mayoral charities (during my year as mayor of Leamington) to provide help for relief and rehabilitation projects with particular emphasis on children and young people damaged by the war.

This led to my civic visit, as mayor of Leamington, in March 2001, accompanied by Jane Knight and with much help from Ron and Liz Fennell. I had also become interested in using a visit to foster the development of civic links with the nascent Bo Town Council, from whom I eventually received a formal invitation. This was not only a "first" for OWL and for a Leamington mayor, it was also the first civic visit of any kind from the UK to Bo since the start of the civil war. For this reason it was very significant that almost our first engagement when we reached Freetown was a visit to President Kabbah, followed by lunch with the British High Commissioner.

We then flew in to a most wonderful welcome from the mayor and people of Bo and spent a week meeting up with friends in Bo Owl, laying the foundations for an effective civic link between Bo Town Council and other aspects of local government with local councils in Warwick District, and agreeing on the use of the Bo Fund.

It is worth mentioning that during this visit we agreed the first formal friendship link between Bo Town Council and Leamington, which was ratified by Mota Singh during his mayoral year 4 years later.