

One World Week is proudly hosted at the University of Warwick annually, this year. It is exceptional in terms of content, passion and commitment and is unmistakably the highlight of the University's calendar. The week aims to be a celebration of the international mix of

students present at the University of Warwick and aims to stimulate personal development and inspire a view based on acceptance and appreciation of the world's mosaic of cultures. This year's One World Week, from 19-27 January, will feature at least two Nobel laureates, **Professor John Hume** and **Archbishop Desmond Tutu**, (Archbishop Tutu will speak via a video recording), amongst a stellar line up of intellectual and political heavyweights. For further information see: <http://www.oneworldweek.net/>

Michael Samai, a Community Development Worker from Bo, is currently on a very successful three month community development secondment, learning, exchanging, and meeting many people. He will be reflecting on his experiences at his farewell event at Bath Place on 8th December at 4-30. All are welcome to come along and hear his evaluation of the visit. A full report with photos will be in next newsletter edition.



Kayoma Women's Group Report - Janet Alty

Responding to the earnest pleadings from our friends in Bo, we decided to get sewing machines for the member groups of the Kayoma Women's Microcredit Association. Sybil Robertson suggested to Jane Shakespeare that she put out a request for hand sewing machines in the local press. Jane contacted the Observer who kindly did an article, and she thought her mobile would never stop ringing! Janet Alty had said we ought to be able to send at least as many sewing machines as computers, and we'd been given 40 of those. In the end, Jane reckons she must've fetched in over 150! These are mostly hand machines, mostly long treasured by their owners, often still sitting on the table in the window where their owner used to use them and nearly all of them with a tale to tell. Some are treadles, of varying shapes and sizes and Jane has even been given two large industrial sewing machines: amazing pieces of equipment which will give the opportunity to a whole group of women to make up dresses complete with embroidery instead of having to get them made up by the local tailors (all men, we think!). They might even start a small factory!

This has been a big effort, and will take a lot of packing up, but anyone willing to help should please contact Alan Moss on 01926 332828, or ALAN MOSS <alan.j.moss1@bopenworld.com>. The job will all have to be done in the next week or so.

Our books donated to the care of Leamington Library are not being used very much. The Library are not quibbling yet, but don't forget they are there and don't forget to tell others.

Phoning Sierra Leone? – the cheapest at the moment is - Dial 'DialAround' on **0871 343 4141** followed by **00 232 76 nnn nnn #** at 9p per minute



IMPORTANT AND URGENT NOTICE

In 2001/02 we initiated our appeal for funds to build the community centre. A substantial amount was raised initially in the form of loans. Most of this amount has now been repaid or converted into gifts; but two loans of £500 remain outstanding according to our accounts, but we do not have a record of who they are due to. If you remember making a loan which has not been repaid please let us know as soon as possible by contacting our current Treasurer, John Macfarlane, 87 Larch Walk, Yardley, Birmingham B25 8QP Tel: 0121 6280968. Thank you

YOUR COMMITTEE 2005-2006

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SECRETARY	John Myers, 44 St Mary's Rd. Leamington Tel: 425403	secretary@oneworldlink.org.uk
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One World Link

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Registered charity no. 700714

www.oneworldlink.org.uk

Congratulations!



One World Link members celebrated the 25 year old link between Warwick District and Bo District in Sierra Leone with a highly successful party on Saturday 28th October. The past was looked on with pride and affection and the future contemplated with optimism. One World Link members in Bo celebrated on the same night, with a member of each community present both in Bo and in Leamington. One of the highlights of the evening was a video link between the two parties. John Myers, Secretary of One World Link said "communication with Bo, 150 miles inland in a very under developed and war torn country is never easy. To get an internet video link set up specially for the night so we could see each other and chat was a major achievement and a major dollop of icing on the cake." The event took place at Bath Place Community Venture Leamington matching the Bo event taking place in the newly opened One World Link Community Centre in Bo built with fund given by the people of Warwick district.

Alongside the party atmosphere, there was a serious part to the evening, attended by the Deputy High Commissioner for Sierra Leone James Allies, James Plaskitt MP, the Chairs of the County and District Council, and the mayors of Warwick and Leamington and Deputy mayor of Kenilworth. A panel of four speakers helped us to look back and look forward. Sumaila Tarawally a Sierra Leonean living in London, remembered the early days of the link and his early scepticism about how there could be real friendship between two places so different in their comparative wealth and poverty.

Verity Smith recalled being asked to accompany a group of

venture scouts to Bo in 1985 to help roof a school. This was life changing for her, and she went on to study and teach Rural Social Development at Reading University and in Africa. Peter Penfold OBE, former British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone delivered a positive message suggesting that Sierra Leone is coming through its time of suffering and will develop into a viable state as its agriculture recovers, its mineral resources are well managed, and its institutions established. Martin Tarawally, President of the Bo District Descendants Association in UK, looked forward to a positive future of Bo in particular. He praised the contribution that One World Link has made in supporting the citizens of Bo over the years, culminating in the building of a multi purpose community centre.

James Allie Deputy High Commissioner also paid tribute to the Warwick District Community's bond with the Bo community. He said that it is very important that local communities and local government become strong and hopes the One World Link relationship will grow even stronger in future.



A time line with entries for every year of the link was displayed around the room, and many people took the opportunity to add their own entries to this.

The staff and volunteers of the Bath Place Café were challenged to provide an authentic West African banquet which was widely acknowledged to be a success and eaten with relish. The evening finished with West African style music provided by Tallawah Sounds DJ and by live music from UK/Sierra Leonean duo Two Man Ting, whilst the party goes relaxed, mingled, danced, and chatted to friends 3000 miles away in Bo.

If this Newsletter is no longer required please inform:

OWL POSTBOX c/o 31 The Greswoldes, Radford Semele, Leamington Spa, CV31 1TP or e-mail owl@31cv311tp.freereserve.co.uk

“Return to Bo - November 2006”

By Jane Knight (acting Chairperson of One World Link, Warwick)

I set off on this trip with some trepidation as it was 2 years since I last went to Sierra Leone and few of our recent visitors had returned with malaria and I felt I was getting a bit old!

I stopped worrying as soon as I was greeted by Bishop Koroma at Gatwick Airport and stepped out with him at Lungi airport into the familiar sounds and hot humid environment of lovely Sierra Leone. I was back “home”.

The 25th Anniversary Celebrations:



We attended an anniversary cultural show with very young performers doing drama about travelling to Leamington Spa and dancing what I think they thought was our cultural style

(some kind of jive!) and then very professionally their own dancing.



On Saturday morning the OWL membership gathered for an anniversary meeting to review the last 25 years. Johannes, Joe Taylor, Mussa Conteh, Joe Kobbah, Ben Smith, David Ngombu, Theresa Bangali and many others made very

moving speeches. People who had died were also remembered.

That evening everyone turned up again and before the dancing started awards for “passionate commitment to OWL’s aspirations” were handed out to 12 Sierra Leoneans and 12 Warwick members.

On Sunday hundreds of people turned up for a One World Link Jubilee Mass and we all wore our One World Link blue tops and black bottoms. After the Mass we marched from St. Francis church through Bo all the way to the Community Centre where the ladies fed the 500 school children who joined us in the march led by 3 brass bands.



Community Centre: What a moving moment, arriving at the Community Centre (known all over Bo as OWL) on the first evening in Bo. It was only a one-floor shell when I

last saw it. It is so smart and well designed and a tremendous credit to Jo Kobbah, Johannes and the committee in Bo as well as our many contributors to the building funds. As you can see we are on the final stages now and meanwhile the bottom floor is functioning - hiring out rooms and with a bar from 4 to 9pm most nights.

Freetown: Bishop Koroma generously conveyed me to Freetown and asked Father Kailie of the Catholic Mission to host me for 3 nights. I am so grateful for all this generosity, which made it possible for me to do a lot of work in the short time I was there. I visited Emmanuel Gaima, Director of the Decentralisation Secretariat, DFID, the Deputy British High Commissioner, Irish Aid, VSO, the Country Rep. of the World Bank, Samuel Harbor the Deputy Resident Representative for UNDP, and the British Council and the House of Parliament. Everyone was very impressed with OWL’s achievements. It was a very heartening tour.

The way forward: OWL is alive and kicking and at each end of this remarkable partnership there are a few very impressive young people coming on board. I was asked to meet the youth group on the Saturday before I left but the chairman was watching Manchester United and Jane N. had bereavement, and nobody else turned up except the secretary. However Alpha Braima Bah is an excellent secretary and vowed he would have a general meeting of youth and would get new officers etc. We talked for nearly 2 hours about the young people’s responsibility for taking the link forward. He was keen to spearhead that and to use the Centre for enhancing the lives of young people.

Having been privileged to join in the Silver Jubilee celebrations in Bo, I hope our young successors will have the joy of celebrating the Golden Anniversary and I hope I am alive to see it!

Schools Sub-Group

It has been an exciting year for our School links!

The most significant development during the year was the **reciprocal exchange** between Brookhurst/UBC, Ferncumbe/Kakua and St Anthony's/St Francis, when **V.V. Bockarie, Josephine Komeh and Joe Pyne** came over here and **Alison Bryan, Sarah Davies and Joe Cannon** returned to their linked schools in Bo. This was funded by the British Council under their **Global Partnership** scheme, culminating in these schools signing **long-term partnership agreements**.

We currently have nine Primary schools (Brookhurst, Clapham Terrace, Emscote Infants, Ferncumbe, Shrubland Street, St Anthony's, St Mary's, St Peter's, Telford Infants) and one Secondary school (North Leamington) linked to Bo schools. To support these links we hold a Primary Teachers' Group meeting every half term to share experiences and resources. The Bo Teachers also have their own Group and we are looking forward to a closer relationship with them during the coming year.

North Leamington has just started its link with the **Ahmadiyya Muslim Secondary School** and their efforts this year culminated in them hosting the **Sierra Entertainers from Bo**. Those of us that attended their evening performance enjoyed genuine Sierra Leonean entertainment and were impressed with the North Leamington students' participation with them!



The group that is working on teaching materials have completed 'Myths and Legends' and 'Water' and is currently looking at 'Food'. All our resources have been made available on a CD-ROM, including plenty of pictures from our visit in February, so that schools can transfer them to their school computer networks for all staff to use. The next step is to put them on our website, so that they are easier to update and also become available to a much wider audience.

Ruth Davies produced an **audio CD** for us, based on interviews with children, parents, teachers, governors and so on, about the effect that the link at **Ferncumbe School** at Hatton Green has had on all concerned. This 15 minute '**radio programme**', which we have called '**African Friends**' is well worth listening too - please ask for a copy (01926 428635 or education@oneworldlink.org.uk).

It is one thing to set up as link. It is quite enough to sustain it over the long-term. The schools sub-group is trying to help our schools to do this and have recently proposed a set of 'minimum standards' that hopefully will help them maintain their links for the next generation!

Brian Austin, Schools Coordinator

Are you interested in speaking about African issues to local community groups as part of our raising awareness campaign? If so we're looking for your help. Please contact Mary Weir at maryweir@gmail.com.