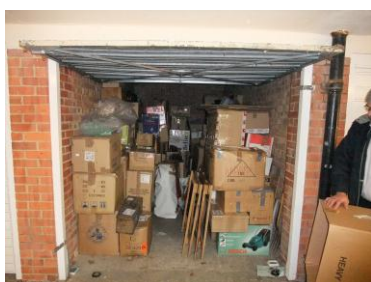


Stevenage – Kadoma Link Association Spring 2010 Newsletter

The consignment to Kadoma – on its way!



After two years of gathering of goods for Kadoma, another consignment has, finally, left on its journey. So many people from Stevenage responded with heart-warming generosity to our requests for goods, and we virtually filled a lock-up garage with them. Schools, churches, youth organisations, and many individuals contributed. The goods included school books, sports kit, computers, clothes, medical equipment, sewing machines, toiletries, toys, games and even wheelchairs.

Thanks to co-operation with the charity Hope for Children, we had already sent some goods eighteen months ago, but there was still nearly a ton and a half in the lockup. Then, early last year, Stevenage Borough Council received a message out of the blue from the British Embassy in Harare offering to take goods to Zimbabwe in a container, at no cost! This meant that everything we had could go.

After some impressive team work by members of the SKLA committee, including local councillors, the goods were all properly packaged and inventoried. On 4th February, a lorry was loaded with over two hundred boxes and taken to a warehouse near Gatwick. There the boxes were palletted and shrink-wrapped ready for the journey. A few days later, the consignment was on its way by sea, and, as this newsletter goes to press,

will be somewhere between the UK and Durban, South Africa. When it reaches Harare, it will be kept at the British Embassy and arrangements are in hand for its gradual transfer to Kadoma. We are really looking forward to hearing about the arrival of the goods in Kadoma – we know from our previous experience that they will be received with joy, not only for the material help they offer but also for the tangible evidence of friendship between the two communities.



A big “THANK YOU” to everyone who contributed in any way. Now that the goods have gone, we are not collecting any more – well, at least for the time being!

Very Important Visitor from Kadoma

We are delighted to say that on April 11th, the current Chairman of Kadoma-Stevenage Link, Mr Gore Dzapasi, will be arriving for a visit to Stevenage. Following last year’s hugely successful visit by Jane Chigumira, Link Secretary, and Howard Cottrell, Treasurer, we had been looking forward to Mr Dzapasi’s visit in November. However, plans were brought to a juddering halt when he was denied a visa – despite every requirement having been met as far as we were concerned. Thanks to intervention by the SKLA chairman, this decision was eventually changed. So now we look forward with great excitement to Mr Dzapasi’s visit.

Plans are already taking shape for his 3-week stay, including visits to a number of Stevenage schools. Mr Dzapasi is the Headteacher of Cotton Research Primary School, which is partnered with Graveley JMI, so his visit there will have special significance.

Another high spot of the visit will be our annual “**Celebrate Zimbabwe**” day, at which Mr Dzapasi will be a guest of honour. Details of this are nearly finalised and it is likely to take place on Saturday April 17th.

Pat Akhurst becomes Honorary Life President

Having been closely associated with SKLA since its inception in 1989, Pat Akhurst has stood down from the committee and from her most recent role as Partnership Schools Co-ordinator. Pat has also been the Association’s Chairman, and has shown her passion for the Link in many ways, and unflagging for 20 years. Pat’s contribution to SKLA as an organisation and to the building up of school partnerships has been enormous. Although she has given up her “official” responsibilities, Pat continues to make her experience and wisdom available to us – we are glad to say!



On 12th February, Pat received the post of Honorary Life President of the Association. The certificate with which she was presented read:

“In recognition of her profound commitment and exceptional contribution to the friendship between the communities of Stevenage and Kadoma, the post of Honorary Life President is hereby bestowed on Pat Akhurst. February 2010”

The photo shows Pat with her much-deserved conferral certificate, together with Cllr Sue Myson, Mayor of Stevenage, and Jan Addison, Chairman of SKLA.

Who needs the World Cup?? FC Cornerstone to play return leg – in Kadoma!

Last summer, as part of SKLA’s 20th Anniversary celebrations, a football match took place between FC Cornerstone and Stevenage United FC, unofficially representing Zimbabwe. FC Cornerstone is supported by a number of local churches, and has built up a special relationship with Kadoma.

The actual result of the game in terms of goals scored was less important than the expression of friendship, and this is now going one huge step further... In July this year, FC Cornerstone will be travelling to Kadoma!

The climax of the visit will be the return match between FC Cornerstone and Kadoma, which will take place on the same day as the World Cup final. However, there are several other key aspects of the visit. Andy Hills, the organiser of the trip, writes:-

Things are continuing to progress well for the Kadoma visit and developing in ways I couldn't have imagined! Having now established clear links with Langton of the YMCA, Friday of their Churches' League, and Marionette of Sungano and of course Howard of the Kadoma-Stevenage Link, Jane at the Council and Shelley of Lasting Impressions, the programme details are firming up very nicely!

The stadium where the match is to take place had to be used as a makeshift emergency medical centre during the cholera outbreak. FC Cornerstone raised significant funds to help in this, and will be raising money for orphans at the coming match. Some of the children who are being supported by this will have been orphaned as a result of the cholera outbreak.



During their visit the FC Cornerstone team members will also be visiting schools in the town, and spending time at Lasting Impressions, an outdoor centre where team building activities are provided. Langton, who is now in a senior leadership role in the YMCA in Zimbabwe, is an old friend, having led the Sungano youth group visit to Stevenage in 1998. With the close involvement of Kadoma Town Council and the Kadoma-Stevenage Link, this is a hugely important event.

It is impossible not to be struck by the poignant aspects of the visit, as Andy writes:-

So, apart from the initial football tournaments and going into schools, the opportunity to play a 'big' match again at the stadium where lives were lost and bring 'life' seems opportune and also to have the return Zimbabwe v England match as a fund raiser for the orphans makes it very practical and poignant. Even more poignant to do that on the actual day the World Cup final being played in Johannesburg South Africa, the most pivotal event on that day in the world, is in my eyes an act of showing the people of Rimuka they are not forgotten and by our coming and playing this 'international' match, that in a much smaller sense they become a focus of the world - our world & God's world. That's very symbolic for me and a real reason for playing football.

There are 14 people booked on the flight (9 footballers & 5 non-footballers). It is hoped that two more players will come to make a full team, though for this to happen more funds will be needed. Funds for the trip are being raised at the following planned events:-

- **Sundays 28th March, 25th April, 30th May, 27th June** – curry nights at the Mohan Tandoori, High Street, Stevenage
- **Saturday 29th May** - Roller skating at Campus West (8:00 - 9:00 families & U16 / 9:00 - 11:00 over 16)
- **Saturday 5th June** - Five a side football tournament

Contact Andy Hills for details andrew.hills@ntlworld.com 01438 361798

SKLA books

SKLA has undertaken the publication of two books. The first is “**Chipo and Tawanda**”, written by Godwill Masiwa, who used to be an SKLA Committee member and has recently returned to Zimbabwe. The book describes the life of two children in Kadoma, each from very different backgrounds. It is a very vivid portrayal, and conveys what life is like in Kadoma in an original way. The book is aimed at older children in primary schools, and those in the early years of secondary schools. Copies are being distributed to all the Partnership schools in Stevenage, and we hope they will prove a fruitful resource.

Nearing completion is a small book called “**A Celebration of Partnership**”, which marks the 20th Anniversary of school partnerships between Stevenage and Kadoma. It will tell the story of how the partnerships began, how SKLA has supported them, and provide some examples of their impact. An important additional section will cover the School Fees scheme, which has assumed much greater urgency in the light of recent developments. The book should be published by April.

Fundraising Curry Night

On Monday 1st March, the Mohan Tandoori Restaurant in Stevenage hosted a fundraising evening for the Link. Fifty three people took over the restaurant and had a great social evening. The Mohan donated a percentage of the takings for the night and along with a raffle we raised over £570 for the general work of the Link. A great night was had by all!

Pictured below are staff from the Mohan Restaurant with John Gardner (deputy leader of the Council, Jan Addison (chair of the SKLA), Sue Myson (Stevenage Mayor) and Nicola Hughes (vice chair of the SKLA).



School fees situation

School fees in Zimbabwe have increased a LOT over the past couple of years. The constant rises in inflation and finally the move to the US dollar have meant that school fees have been a forever moving beast.

In the past, £3,000 a year would have paid for 300 children to attend primary school. In 2010 that cost is closer to £18,000 a year and as a result, the Link have had to make the difficult decision to reduce by half the number of children it supports. It's going to be tough to find the £9,000 that is needed for school fees this year and we have set up a working party to investigate how we can fundraise for primary and secondary school fees.

If you would like to help support a Kadoma child attend school – please read the enclosed flyer and complete the enclosed standing order form (or if you are reading this via our website, the forms are available there too). At the moment every penny counts, so please spare whatever you can to help these children get the future that they deserve.

Dates for your diaries

Saturday 17th April: Celebrate Zimbabwe Day – venue & further details to be confirmed

Saturday 17th April: The Stevenage-Ingelheim-Autun Association Quiz Night @ 7pm Poplars community centre – come along and support Stevenage's other town twinning links

Sunday 6th June: Stevenage Carnival – the Link will have stall on the High Street

NB. If you wish to be removed from the newsletter mailing list or would prefer to download it from the SKLA website (www.skla.org), please contact Nicola Hughes, 3 Chouler Gardens, Stevenage, Herts SG1 4TB or email Nicolahughes30@hotmail.com