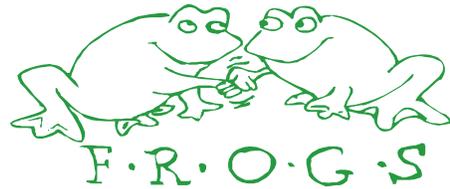


FROGS FANFAIR

AUGUST 2007



FROGS is a Registered Charity No. 1069168

PROJECT UPDATE TO JUNE 2007

Sally and Malcolm Reader

Members Sally and Malcolm have been kept busy with a wealth of different projects, since their return to The Gambia last September. Some of these have been small, but significant, and all have made a great difference to the lives of the children and teachers concerned.

A need with regard to school feeding had been brought to our attention. The World Food Programme has moved from the Kombos to the Foni District, where refugees are coming over the border, putting a strain on the local villages and schools. FROGS funded the purchase of basic feeding requirements, rice, onions and oil for two schools - Mohammedan Lower Basic School in Banjul and Bijilo LBS in Western Division. The schools are now responsible for sustaining the programmes. These cost a total of £843.00

At Bijilo LBS we also purchased strong padlocks for every classroom and storeroom doors to help with security, and restocked the First Aid box with basic materials - £147.00

Floors which cost a total of £1258.00, were the focus at Seino Primary School (2), Jeddah LBS (4 plus office) and Progress Nursery School (2) where badly eroded floors were replaced. The design in the crazy tiling at Seino were drawn up by the children.



Malcolm admiring the a new floor at Seino

Furniture was provided for Mohammedan LBS and Killy LBS. At Mohammedan three Year 1 classrooms were furnished with desks and benches and at Killy six teachers

were provided with tables and chairs. They had previously had to stand for the whole day! - £807.00

Cupboards were needed at Archdeacon Matthias George Nursery School at Serrekunda, a well built school but no storage. We built cupboards in the storeroom and teacher's office and large shelves in the playroom. All the furniture was made by local carpenters and the materials purchased locally -£333.00



New cupboards at Archdeacon Matthias George

At Pat's Nursery School Kerewan, the need was for a dwelling so that someone could live on site and ensure security for the school and its contents. A small two room house was built by the local mason and the Head Teacher says 'It will make a lot of difference to have someone on hand to deter local youths and thieves' - £308.00

A library was provided at St Theresa's Basic Cycle School, Fula Buntang at a cost of £375.00 – more about this later in this Newsletter.

At Killy LBS, a roomy kitchen and store were built to replace a black hole where the cooks spluttered and choked whilst trying to cook the children's meals – good value at £618.00 A small Nursery School at Tallinding had an extra classroom added costing £562.00.

These projects were very satisfying - we were able to follow them from start to finish within four weeks. They will both have a real impact on the children and staff of these schools.

The very last project was small, but will provide lunches for Nursery School children at Kanuma in Western Division. These will be provided throughout the Summer break and rains so that mothers do not have to take very small children to the fields with them. This project cost just over £80.00! So a busy time but much enjoyed by us both. Long may it continue!

PROJECTS COMPLETED IN 2007

Listed below are all the projects that we have completed to date in 2007. Obviously they are carried out in the local currency – The Dalasi – but we have given the rounded costs in £ sterling.

Progress Nursery, Jeddah 2 concrete floors	£347.00
Jeddah LBS – 4 concrete floors	£502.00
Muhammeden LBS Banjul 30 sets of desks	£726.00
Pat's Nursery – Cement house for security	£308.00
Killy LBS, Western Division – Kitchen project	£618.00
St Theresa's BC Fula Bantang – conversion of classroom to library	£375.00
Seino Primary – 2 crazy paving floors	£409.00
Archdeacon Matthias NS – Storage	£333.00
Muhammeden LBS – School Meal Programme	£465.00
Killy LBS – 6 teacher tables & chairs	£ 80.00
Bijilo- set up school feeding project	£378.00
Bijilo – padlocks to enhance security	£ 91.00
Bijilo – First Aid materials	£ 56.00
Wijwand Nursery Tallinding – one room + materials	£562.00
Kanuma Nursery School – 50 children's lunches x 11 weeks	£ 81.00

Once again a big thank you to all have raised funds for us as you can see with a total cost of just under £5,500.00 we have made quite a difference!

Sally and Malcolm have various applications in hand for future projects and will be looking into them when they return to The Gambia in September – so please continue with your Fundraising – Thank you!

QUIZ NIGHT FEBRUARY 2007

It seems a long time ago now, but this is the first opportunity we have had to say a big thank you to all who supported this – it was an extremely successful evening and raised £530 – we hope to hold another one next year, so 'watch this space'.

SUMMER FAYRE 2007!

Brenda Sladen

Sunday morning, WET and early, the FROGS Committee (including two very sun baked 'strangers' recently arrived from The Gambia, otherwise known as Sally and Malcolm) found themselves in the middle of a very wet field at 7 am!! Our first job was to erect three gazebos – initially brought along to prevent customers and helpers getting sun-stroke as they browsed amongst the goods for sale, but would now act as shelter from the rain!

It was then into our cars and off to the store to load up all the items collected during the year to sell during the day. Several trips later, and after a quick cup of coffee, we started laying out our stalls and everything was ready for the opening.

Unfortunately for everyone involved the rains did not stop! Malcolm said that he hadn't seen so much water for

almost a year! But all involved maintained their enthusiasm and many deals were made, and bargains taken home. Despite the poor weather conditions we were extremely please with the £523 that we made, which will go towards the next projects identified as needing our help.

A very big thank you must go to everyone who helped on the day, and in particular to Tovil Scout Group who loaned us the large gazebo – if we hadn't had that we would not have been able to sell our wares and probably would have left them in the store!

We also owe a great deal to The Friars who allow us to join them. Unfortunately the number of visitors was drastically reduced due to the weather and therefore their profits will not be as good as they anticipated. Let's all hope for better weather next year!!

VENTURING AFAR

Malcolm Reader

One of several very successful FROGS projects completed this year was the refurbishment of a run down, redundant classroom at St Theresa's Basic Cycle School at Fula Bantang, Central River Division. At a cost of just under D20, 000 (£400) a splendid library was developed from this old building.

Fula Bantang is close to Janjangbureh, formerly called, and perhaps still best known as Georgetown, and is about 200 km from our home base in Bijilo.

As with all FROGS projects, a visit was necessary to view and photograph the end result, so a trip east was planned. Unlike most FROGS projects, Sally had been unable to oversee the day to day work, and we are very grateful to members of the US Peace Corps who did this job for us. There are several members of the Peace Corps working in this area, and doing a splendid job. Katia, our contact was actually working in the school.

This would be our longest trip yet, and we set off early on Sunday morning to catch the first ferry from Banjul to Barra. Some hope! After waiting three hours, we eventually got on the ferry and across to Barra. Barra is not the loveliest place to visit and the roads are terrible, but once out of Barra and onto the new highway the drive north was a sheer pleasure.

Going so far up country gave us the opportunity to see parts of The Gambia for the first time, and as we were under no time pressure we could stop whenever anything interesting came up. Local Sunday markets far away from the tourist belt were particularly colourful, and the prices of goods reflected the local cost of living and not tourism. An example was the price of mangos which had just come into season. Where we live we were being asked D25 for one large mango. Up country the price was D5.

Approaching Janjangbureh, we took the opportunity to visit the Gambian equivalent of Stonehenge, the stone circles at Wassu. This much publicised site was well worth a visit, and gave us another insight into ancient African culture.

Arriving at Janjangbureh we found the camp alongside the River Gambia where we were to spend the night, and finished the day with a river trip to try and spot the hippos and crocodiles that abound up here. We were unlucky this time but saw some lovely birds and unspoilt countryside.

Next morning it was time to set off to the school at Fula Bantang, which meant crossing the river. This meant using two ferries. The first to take us over to McCarthy Island, which sits in the middle of the river, then a drive across the island to the second ferry which the passengers were expected to help pull across the river with the help of a cable which is strung from the island to the South Bank.

Arriving at St. Theresa's, we were able to see the almost completed FROGS project, a splendid new library. I say almost completed, because work still needed to be done to the floor, but as cement was not available here, I had carried two bags in the back of the car, which was gratefully received. After receiving the thanks of the head teacher and staff, we were given a tour of the school, and heard of several other projects that the school was seeking help for.



St Theresa's Library

So we then set off down the South Bank of the river, with a view to visiting several other schools en route. Schools who were looking for help and schools that had received help from FROGS. Perhaps the biggest impact this journey made was the vast difference in the quality of the road. After enjoying the splendid roads on the North Bank, the South Bank roads ranged from awful to non-existent. If we could make 20 mph we were lucky, and many times we were driving at walking pace.

The landscape was never the less interesting, with unspoilt countryside and great troops of baboons running across the road. At last we reach our overnight stop at Tendaba Camp, and we spent a very pleasant few hours there before continuing our journey next day.

Again school visits were on the agenda, including Killy, where we saw the almost completed FROGS kitchen. We were to return there two weeks later for the formal handover.



Before and after – Killy's Kitchen!

So at the end of three most interesting days we arrived back home armed with many memories, a whole batch of new requests for help, but also with many words of thanks to FROGS for the help given to many schools in need of help.

MEMBERSHIP FEES 2007/2008

Membership Fees became due on 1st April. If you have not already renewed we enclose a Renewal Form with this Newsletter. Membership fees remain the same at £5 for families and £3 for concessions.

We look forward to your continuing support, but if we do not receive renewal by 31st August we will remove you from our Mailing List.

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday 22nd June 2008 – Summer Fayre at The Friars

CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Keep up to date by watching our Website on
www.friendsofgambianschools.co.uk**

Sally and Malcolm live in The Gambia from October to June, returning to England from July until the end of September.

**They can be contacted on the following email address:
sllvreader@yahoo.co.uk**