

FROGS FANFAIR

FEBRUARY 2009



FROGS is a Registered Charity No. 1069168

REMINDER!!! TEAMS REQUIRED!!

QUIZ EVENING

On Friday 27th February 2009

7.30 pm

Aylesford Village Club, Rochester Road,

Aylesford ME20 7BS

Teams of 6 required

£6 per head

Ploughman's Supper included

Fully Licensed Bar

To book a table please ring Lynne on

01622 761823 or email

sue@friendsofgambianschools.co.uk

AGM 2009

All members are cordially invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of Friends of Gambian Schools, to be held at:-

**Tovil Scouts HQ, Strawmill Hill, Tovil,
Maidstone, Kent ME15 6FL**

on

Wednesday 11th March 2009 at 8 pm

If you would like to be considered as a member of FROGS Executive Committee, please let any Committee member know at least 14 days before the AGM.

Due to other commitments, Ann Beale, our Secretary, will be resigning at the AGM. If anyone is interested in being our Secretary please let the Chairman know at least 14 days before the AGM.

We look forward to seeing you.

Sue Townsend
Chairman, FROGS

The Longest Hour! **Dave & Barbara Jordan**

(Dave and Barbara are living in The Gambia for 6 months in order to continue their work providing Workshops for the schools, funded by FROGS)

We are certainly in the right place at the right time as most of the schools here in the Gambia are eager for help with The Jolly Phonics Reading Scheme. Most schools in the Combo area have at least one member of staff who attended a workshop on the scheme last August and we are receiving requests almost daily for workshops to help these teachers share that training in their schools.

So far we have led three in Nursery schools and two in Lower Basic Schools. We had envisaged that we would work only three days per week (because of the heat) and only work with small groups of teachers - and Barbara would NEVER have a class on her own. We have been here one month and already all these criteria have been changed.

Last week we attended Demaro Nursery School every day (formerly Haddy's N/S where some of you have sponsored children), as the Headteacher requested some consistent input from Barbara. This was quite hard work as it meant travelling on the local ancient minibuses called 'geli-geli' - some needed a push to start in the morning and others had no springs so every bump in the road was felt -painfully! Dave always managed to sit next to a local mum feeding her baby en route!

We had great fun in the school introducing Jolly Phonics to all three classes as well as other activities such as handprints with paint,



and ball games in the playground, neither of which the teachers had attempted before - although they had all the equipment in the school. On the Wednesday the teacher of the six year old class had to leave early so Barbara said she would take the class for the last hour – this proved to be the longest hour ever known! We tried to play word and letter games with the children but their English was not good enough to follow instructions; we sang songs which deteriorated into a local dancing session and then EVERYONE decided they needed to visit the toilet or have a drink- as children everywhere do when they are bored! We played the same games the next day with the class teacher translating and all went well!



We have had some time to ourselves as well, but are really pleased that the schools are so receptive to the Jolly Phonics scheme. We will certainly not be short of work during our six month stay.

FROGS Score in Central River Division
Malcolm Reader

Whilst travelling up country to do a bit of Hippo watching, Sally and Malcolm took the opportunity to visit the latest school to receive help from FROGS, Paleleh Feeder School, Paleleh Village in the Nanija District of Central River Division.

The plight of this village was brought to FROGS attention by a US Peace Corps Volunteer (US PCV) named Jess. The village appealed for help to build a “feeder” school for infants, who, if they wished to receive education were having to walk up to 5km twice a day to the nearest nursery school.

The villagers were prepared to supply all the labour to make the blocks and build a three-classroom school plus office, but needed funds to purchase the materials. This of course was right up FROGS street, and we were delighted when the Committee gave the go ahead.

We travelled off the main highway for some distance on sand roads, passing through five other villages, until at last, in the middle of apparently nowhere we came upon the village and were directed to the school. Needless to say we had a splendid welcome from teachers and pupils, and saw a carefully built school, not yet furnished or painted, but already under way, teaching 124 children. 49 boys and 75 girls!!

The children were a mix of three tribes, Jola, Fula and Serehuli, all speaking their own dialects, but learning their numbers in English. Get you head round that!

This was a joint project between FROGS and no fewer than nine villages. Jess, the US PCV could not emphasise more what a difference FROGS had made to the lives of the families in these villages with young children.

We will certainly follow the progress of this school with great interest.

SUMMER FAYRE
Joint venture with The Friars
SUNDAY 21st JUNE 2009
The Friars, Aylesford

PLEASE PUT THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARIES.
VOLUNTEERS WILL BE NEEDED TO MAN
STALLS -

Items required – Bric a Brac and Toys, good modern books, cuddly toys for a tombola.

Please ring Sue or email using the contact information at the end of this Newsletter for further information.

GIFT AID

By a simple signature on our Membership Form by those of you paying tax, we are able to claim back tax for FROGS through the Gift Aid Scheme.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.friendsofgambianschools.co.uk