



**FRIENDS OF
IBBA GIRLS SCHOOL
SOUTH SUDAN**

NEWSLETTER
March 2014

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DONATE NOW



Cheques Payable to: Friends of Ibba Girls School
Send to: Ashlar, Icomb, Cheltenham
Gloucestershire, GL54 1JE

Eric Shepley (Honorary Treasurer)
ericshpley555@btinternet.com



moneygiving

If you feel you're able to contribute please do so through our link [HERE](#) to Virgin Money Giving! Every contribution counts and anything you do will make a huge difference to our cause! Thank you, from all of us.

Starting the Journey of a Lifetime!



Today, Monday March 17 2014, marks the opening of Ibba Girls Boarding School (IGBS), and the start of the journey of a lifetime for its first 40 ten year old girls!.

This Newsletter therefore brings you exciting news to celebrate

1. The historic opening of IGBS – a major milestone, after over 3 years of dreaming, planning, and preparing. Warmest thanks to everyone who has contributed so generously, with time, skills or money, to making this possible.
2. Recruitment of a wonderful initial team of teachers and staff for IGBS (see below) - plus the continuing search for the African (preferably South Sudanese) co-head of the school, who will work should to shoulder alongside our two volunteer teachers from Perth Australia, Paula and Jamie Sgherza, learning the ropes together, before taking over the headship on their own in two or three year's time. See the re-advertisement below.
3. Miraculous progress with fund-raising, with our largest single donation so far (see below), some heart-moving gifts, and generous grants - and an increasing number of Friends all over the world committing themselves to regular standing orders and events to support the teachers, pupils and running costs of the school.
4. Developing commitment by a group of organisations to join forces to work together in Ibba County, in partnership with the local community, the churches (both ECS and RC) and the local and state government.
5. Looking forward to the official ceremonial opening of the school on Monday June 16 – which (since the Soweto Uprising and massacre of school children in South Africa in 1976) is celebrated worldwide as International Day of the African Child. We are planning to charter a small MAF plane to take UK supporters from Entebbe to Ibba for this wonderful event. Numbers are limited. Apply for your place now.

Building a Beautiful School

Literally hundreds of people have been involved in the detailed logistics necessary for the opening of IGBS on Monday March 17.

Just In Time: The school buildings (classrooms, dormitories, wash rooms, toilets, and teachers accommodation) have all been completed on time by Anisa Construction – with special thanks to Gabriel and to Moses for coordinating this work on site and to Malcolm Worby for designing and inspecting it all. It's looking great...

Woken By Bird Song: The South Sudan Trustees held their meeting at IGBS on Saturday March 1, and all said what an inspiring environment this will be for learning – with light airy buildings set in a beautiful green forest setting, surrounded by tall trees and bird song.

Clearing A Pathway: The South Sudan Trustees and Board of Governors have been actively involved in the final preparations, especially Hon Pia Philip (State Minister for Education), Commissioner Nagomoro Bridget, Sister Margaret Scott, Principal of the Solidarity Teacher Training College, and Paramount Chief Marona Saku (who once again mobilised local young people to help with clearing the bush undergrowth).

Jobs for Local People: The bunk beds, and the wooden school desks, chairs and dining tables have all been made in Yambio, thus helping to create local jobs. A big thank you to Kenny and to Meddie Kasule for their good work on this.



Locally made school desks ready to be used

The Kampala Wagon Train: Much of the school furnishing and equipment could not be found or made in Ibba or Yambio so had to be bought in Kampala. We are immensely grateful to Caroline Holland and Malcolm Worby for co-ordinating this mammoth operation – transporting the goods from Kampala to Ibba was a test of stamina and patience.



Supplies from Kampala

185 E-Mails Bring Light in the Darkness The ordering, transporting and installing of the solar energy system, the satellite internet, and the Toyota Land-cruiser for the school have also involved complex activity across several countries (involving 185 e-mails in the case of the solar system alone!). Special thanks to UK Trustees Hugh Paget and Eric Shepley for patiently coordinating the detailed procurement, and to Genergy in South Africa, RCS Communications in Juba, and Toyota in Gibraltar for supplying the kit.

Juggling In The Heat: Paula and Jamie Sgherza have been living on the school campus since Feb 27, and have had their sleeves rolled up in the dusty heat, juggling and nudging along all the final preparations and people – getting all the books, equipment, staff and pupils together in the right place at the right time. Paula and Jamie are proving to be not only inspiring teachers, but also great organisers and doers – we send blessings and best wishes to them and all the staff and pupils on this auspicious day.

Educate A Girl – Heal A Nation: The most important preparation for the school of course is not the buildings but the people and the culture. Bridget and Sister Margaret and Paula in South Sudan, with regular Skype and e-mail discussions with UK Trustees Julie Lodrick and Jean Hartley, have been thinking hard about the values, objectives, policies, and relationships which will help to shape and form the culture of the school from the beginning.



Girls in Ibba Village

3 Days of Prayer and Fasting: Commissioner Nagomoro Bridget, as one of the two main donors of the 73 acres of land for the school, organised 3 days of prayer and fasting at the school site last week with around 40 people from the local community taking part in a blessing and dedication of the land and of the school. Let's join them in solidarity.

Head-Teachers - Two for the Price of One?!

The IGBS Trustees and Board of Governors have decided to appoint two co-heads to jointly lead and manage the school in its first two or three years.

Paula Sgherza, an experienced primary school head-teacher from Perth Australia has come as a volunteer for two years, and we are actively searching for an African co-head to work alongside her and her husband Jamie (who is co-finance manager), learning the ropes together.

We have considered several candidates for co-head, without yet finding the right person for this challenging job. The Trustees are now thinking that it may be best to look for a younger South Sudanese person, with training as a school teacher, but who may not yet have gained management experience.

Working alongside Paula and Jamie for the first two years, and with continuing support from the Yambio and Yei teacher training colleges, may help someone to grow into the job.

Please look at the job advertisement below and let us know if anyone special comes to your mind

In the meantime we have appointed a wonderful team to work with Paula and Jamie to get the school started – including Youane Peter Kumbonyaki as one of the classroom teachers, plus a live-in matron, a school assistant, a community outreach worker, cooks and security guards. Full names and photos in the next Newsletter.



Youane Peter Kumbonyaki

Fund-Raising

- Margaret Eddershaw and Keith Sturgess have made an amazing donation of £120,000 in memory of Margaret's sister, Jilly Hopkins, who died recently. Read Margaret's tribute to her sister at the end of the newsletter.



Margaret and Keith handing over the cheque to Bridget

- During the Board of Governors meeting which they attended in Ibba on Saturday March 1 Keith and Margaret announced that they would also support the immediate appointment of a “community outreach worker” for the school, with a grant of \$2000 per year for 10 years. True Friends of Ibba Girls School. Read Margaret’s 3 poems about her recent visit to Ibba with her husband Keith Sturgess, to see the school for herself, on the website.



Margaret handing Bridget 1 of 40 pencil case she donated for each of the girls

- The Joyce Carr Doughty Trust has made a further generous donation of £30,000 to provide a 4x4 Toyota Land Cruiser for IGBS
- The Horne Family Trust in Canada has donated £20,000 towards the teaching and running costs of the school
- IT Schools Africa (ITSA) has donated 12 laptop computers for the school, and paid for them to be transported out to Ibba in Feb/March



John Benington handing Bridget one of the laptops from ITSA in the presence of Jamie Sgherza

- The UK Department of International Development (DfID) has donated 200 textbooks, 5 for each of the 40 girls, one for each of the 5 subjects in the new South Sudan curriculum
- DfID's Girls Education in South Sudan (GES) programme has registered IGBS as an eligible school and will contribute per capita grants for each girl who attends regularly, and some support to their families
- World Vision in Yambio has donated 4000 (!) shoes for the girls. Eat your heart out Imelda Marcos!
- St Nic's Church, Nottingham, has released their grant of £32,000 to help support the running costs of the pupils and teachers in year 1.
- Christ the King RC Church in Coventry has committed to giving £5,000 per year for 5 years towards the operating costs of the school
- Following John Forde's visit to Ibba last August, 5 Staff in Coventry City Council's Public Health Department are running a half marathon in support of IGBS (they are grateful they do not have to imitate Lady Godiva's horseback nakedness this time)
- Ruth Tennant is running a marathon for Ibba in Brighton on April 6
- Edith Galliers, convenor of the FIGS London is a regular runner and has decided to set herself the challenge to do two marathons in a month to raise awareness and funds for FIGS. She will be running the London marathon on Sunday April 13th and Prague marathon on Sunday May 11th. To find out more or to make a donation please visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/LondonFIGS>

Contact Edith for one of the FIGS T- Shirts with our new theme – Educate A Girl – Heal A Nation at: londonfigs@gmail.com

Numbers to Remember:

- 120,000 pounds: the wonderful £ donation from Margaret and Keith Sturgess
- 4000 shoes: donated by World Vision
- 185 e-mails: exchanged between South Africa, South Sudan, the middle East, Australia and the UK to get the solar power and panels transoorted to Ibba
- 40 ten year old girls - starting at IGBS on Monday March 17
- 52 miles - the two marathons to be run by Edith Galliers in Brighton and Prague
- 26 miles – the Brighton marathon run by Ruth Tennant
- 13.5 x 5 miles - the half marathon run by members of Coventry City Council's public health department

- 12 laptops - donated by ITSA
- 3 days of prayer and fasting by 40 people to bless the Ibba school site last week
- 2.5 hours – the time for all journeys in South Sudan!

Woman Co- Head for Ibba Girls Boarding School (Re-advertisement)

Dates: Apply by: May 30 2014,

Job start: As soon as possible

Location: Ibba County, Western Equatoria State, South Sudan

Contract type: Full Time

Contract term: Three years in the first instance, following satisfactory probation.

The Trustees for Ibba Girls' Boarding School is seeking to appoint an outstanding Head teacher to co-lead and manage this new school in Western Equatoria State, South Sudan. Website: www.ibbagirlsschool.org

The school opens in March 2014 and the Trustees and Board of Governors wish to appoint an African Head to work alongside the newly appointed Co-Head, Paula Sgherza (an experienced primary school principal and teacher from Australia) as soon as possible after the school starts.

The School is located on a 73 acre forest site and Ibba, which is situated between Yambio and Maridi in Western Equatorial State. Ibba is about 2 hours by road from Yambio, and 45 minutes from Madiri. Ibba also has its own small airstrip which is used for flights by light aircraft (e.g. Mission Aviation Fellowship).

The school will cater for girls from the age of 10 to 18+, and is starting with 40 ten year old girls in 2014. Ibba Girls' School is a purpose built school and over the course of the next 8 years will expand to 320 girls between the ages of 10 and 18.

The school is constituted under South Sudan law as a Community School and is a formal partnership between the local community, the churches and the Western Equatoria State government.

The school will follow the new South Sudan curriculum and will aim to fulfill the potential of girls from local communities in all 10 counties of Western Equatoria State.

The facilities to teach and accommodate the first 40 girls are built to high standards and will be ready for the opening of the school in February 2014. Good quality teachers accommodation is provided on site.



Paula Sgherza (Co-Head) in the girls dormitory block

The Headmistress will work with the co-head to lead the academic development and operations of the primary part of the school and will be responsible for enabling and ensuring high quality learning for the girls.

This is a wonderful opportunity for a committed teacher who is inspired by the challenge of starting up, leading and developing a new girls' school in this developing country, with the opportunity to be innovative and make a real difference.

We particularly seek a qualified and committed teacher from South Sudan. You may not yet have much or any management experience but you will have the opportunity to learn on the job, alongside Paula and Jamie Sgherza, our two volunteer teachers from Australia.

As Head Teacher you will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of Ibba School and play a leading role in:

- meeting the learning needs of the children in the school
- ensuring the development of the school with community support
- leading school growth and school improvement
- supporting the delivery of high standards in all aspects of the school.

You need to have:

- a personal commitment to the school's core Christian values, and to welcoming and working with people of all faiths and none
- qualified teacher status with a degree as a minimum expectation
- proven success in managing curriculum and school organisation
- a leadership style which emphasizes good communication and team work
- a preparedness to live in at the school and to contribute to the community

You will be offered a three-year contract in the first instance, with progress through probation. It is hoped that, by mutual agreement, the contract will be extended further, dependent on performance.

The salary is negotiable, and is enhanced to reflect the pioneering nature of the school.

To Apply:

Letters of application including the reasons for applying to Ibba Girls' School together with a full CV, a recent passport-size photograph, and a supporting letter and three references should be sent by e-mail to the following 4 people :

1. Chair of the Trustees: Hon Pia Philip, Minister for Education, Wesern Equatoria State: piaphilip2@yahoo.com
2. Chair of the Board of Governors: Commissioner Bridget Nagomoro, Commissioner for Ibba County: nagosb@yahoo.com
3. Co-head of IGBS: Paula Sgherza : paulasgherza@gmail.com
4. Chair of the UK Friends of Ibba Girls School: John Benington: J.Benington@warwick.ac.uk

The closing date for applications is Friday May 30 2014. Interviews will take place in Ibba on Monday/Tuesday June 16/17

Supporting The Running Costs Of The School

Warm thanks to the 500 of you who have donated so generously to get IGBS up and running. It simply would not have happened without your help! Now we face two further fund-raising challenges:

- To generate a sufficient stream of regular donations (by standing order) to support the on-going costs of teaching, feeding, and accommodating the students and teachers for the next 8 years
- To raise sufficient funding to build the additional dormitory, wash-block, toilets, dining space etc. in readiness for the arrival of the second intake of 40 ten year old girls next February 2015

We have set up a FIGS fund-raising working group, which is developing a clear long term fund-raising strategy and action plan, and is preparing a series of bids to specific Trusts and Foundations. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer to help with this bid-writing.

The most urgent need however is to move forward from one off donations to regular giving through (Gift Aided) standing orders. So if you have not already done so please join the growing number of people who have decided to give a monthly standing order to support the opening and running costs of the school (e.g helping pay for the teachers, books, equipment, accommodation and food).

Before you forget, please sign up right now to contribute £5, £10 or £20 per month (compare it with your monthly mobile phone subscription?)

<http://bit.ly/1hA3Yd5>

We will make sure you get regular progress reports from the school and about the 40 girls.

Alternatively, there are 4 ways to make a donation:

1. **By Cheque payable to:** Friends of Ibba Girls School, to our Honorary Treasurer Eric Shepley at: Ashlar, Icomb, Cheltenham, GL54 1JE
2. **BACS Transfer for the credit of:** Friends of Ibba Girls School,

Co-operative Bank;

Account No: 65525782

Sort-Code: 08-92-99

Please add your name as reference.

3. **By Text** by texting FIGS14 followed by the amount you wish to give to 70070
4. **Virgin Money Giving** please click on the 'Donate' button.

Tribute to Jilly Hopkins (nee Prangnell)

My 'kid' sister, Jilly, (13 years my junior) was determined to go her own way from an early age: on the 11+ examination paper for the Grammar School, she wrote only her name, because she didn't want to follow in her two older sisters' footsteps, but to attend the Secondary Modern school with her friends. She later regretted this, but her natural abilities led to a successful career.

Jilly developed a passion for cars and for more than thirty years she worked in the motor industry, mostly a wholesale representative for Clarion, suppliers of car accessories. She was one only two women among the company's representatives and for several years she was proclaimed their top sales person. (We always said she could sell sand to the Egyptians.)

With Clarion, Jilly also travelled abroad and was especially excited by her trip to South Africa. She loved children, though she never had any of her own, and was a committed 'aunt' to the offspring of many of her friends.

When she died suddenly in February 2013, I inherited her house and decided I should mark the life of my bright and beautiful sister. My husband, Keith, and I visited a dozen countries in Africa and in the late 1960's Keith taught at the University of Khartoum. We decided to donate Jilly's estate to the education of African girls in her name and felt the new country of South Sudan had the greatest need.

A number of charities responded to our enquiries, but the Ibba project interested us most because it was a secondary school for girls, yet conceived as a community facility. In addition, we thought it important that the idea for the school came from a

local person, Commissioner Bridget. Our visit to Ibba this February convinced us of the excellence of the plans and the work so far. And I am sure my sister would have approved of the donation too.

- Margaret Eddershaw

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