



What's Inside...

02 EDITOR'S LITTLE NOTE

CAPE COAST

03 Painting at New life Intl Orphanage

THE HILLS

04 Activities in the Akuapem Hills

ACCRA

05 First Journalism Workshop in Accra

HO

06 A Special School: Airfield School

KUMASI

08 Kumasi Children's Home

09 Miscellaneous Page (Stuffs you will learn in Ghana)

10 CLOSING REMARKS

11 STAFF CONTACT

EDITOR'S LITTLE NOTE

AKWAABA AND GREETINGS FROM GHANA! WELCOME TO THE MARCH EDITION OF THE GATEWAY, THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR PROJECTS ABROAD GHANA!

HELLO READERS, WELCOME TO THE MARCH EDITION OF THE NEWSLETTER.

6TH MARCH MARKS THE DAY OF GHANA'S INDEPENDENCE. AND IT IS CELEBRATED IN STYLE!

GHANA WAS THE FIRST BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRY TO GAIN INDEPENDENCE ON THE 6TH MARCH 1957. DR KWAME NKRUMAH WAS THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF GHANA AND IN HIS FIRST SPEECH SAID "GHANA, YOUR BELOVED COUNTRY IS FREE FOREVER"

THE DUCHESS OF KENT ATTENDED THE CEREMONY AND READ A MESSAGE FROM THE QUEEN, IN WHICH SHE SAID "THE HOPES OF MANY, ESPECIALLY IN AFRICA, HANG ON YOUR ENDEAVOURS. IT IS MY EARNEST AND CONFIDENT BELIEF THAT MY PEOPLE IN GHANA WILL GO FORWARD IN FREEDOM AND JUSTICE."

IN REPLY, DR NKRUMAH SAID: "MY GOVERNMENT FULLY REALISES BOTH THE ADVANTAGES AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES INVOLVED IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE. IT INTENDS TO MAKE FULL USE OF THESE ADVANTAGES TO INCREASE THE PROSPERITY OF THE COUNTRY."

THOSE WERE THE WORDS THAT GAVE BIRTH TO THE FREEDOM OF GHANA!

GHANA IS A BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY BLESSED WITH GOLD, DIAMONDS, AND MANY OTHER MINERALS BUT WHAT REALLY MAKES GHANA SPECIAL IS ITS DIVERSE AND CULTURALLY WARM ATMOSPHERE WHICH TOUCHES AND EMBRACES EVERYONE.

AKWAABA! GHANA WELCOMES YOU.

SPOTLIGHT ON EVERYBODY

CAPE COAST

THE HILLS

ACCRA

HO

KUMASI

Cape Coast is in the Central region and has the most adorable beaches in all of Ghana.

PAINTING AT NEW LIFE INTERNATIONAL ORPHANAGE



Volunteers at New Life International Orphanage Matthew Nelson Teutsch, Jiska Streefkerk, Kathleen Brousseau, Kylie Bernstein and Helen Mather last month painted a classroom block, doors and windows of the orphanage as part of their care responsibility to the inmate of the orphanage. The paint, brushes and others were all sponsored by Projects abroad Ghana as a form of donation to the orphanage. New Life International Home Care was founded in 1997 by Ruby Ayivor, who remains the owner of the orphanage. She provides a home for orphans, abandoned and needy children. The orphanage school began in 2001 and offers an education to both children at the home and children from Efutu village which are about 148, many of whom cannot afford school fees.

SPOTLIGHT ON EVERYBODY

CAPE COAST

THE HILLS

ACCRA

HO

KUMASI

The Hills are located in the Eastern region. It is one of the most humid regions in Ghana.

ACTIVITIES IN THE HILLS

By Anne (Staff)



Soccer Match:

It has been a busy month in the Akuapem Hills. On a social side, one of the highlights was a game of football involving the local Akuapem United under 21 team taking on our very own Obruni White Stars in Kwamoso. The mighty White Stars put up an impressive fight, but were unable to topple the local team who eventually took the game by four goals to three. It was a fantastic effort from our volunteers, and a great day all round.



Boost at Demonstration Farm:

Work at the Projects Abroad Demonstration Farm has had a boost this month thanks to the hard work of

our Farm Volunteers Tomo, Ashley and Yvonne. Accompanied by our Farm Manager Isaac, the volunteers have begun what has now become a weekly outreach programme visiting schools to demonstrate and educate about issues such as the importance of fruit and vegetables in the diet. These presentations have so far been very well received, and although Ashley has already left, and Yvonne and Tomo will follow in March, there are plans to expand the programme to explore a wider range of topics.

Before Ashley left, she made a very generous donation on GHC100 to the Farm. This has been used to buy new seeds for planting, and some much needed watering cans and other tools.

Donations:

Other generous donations came from some of our medical volunteers. Claire, Kelly and Jonathan kindly donated some text books and medical equipment to the Paediatric Ward at Tetteh Quarshie Hospital where they had been working for one month. They have now gone to Cape Coast to begin their second placement with Projects Abroad. Judith McDowell also made a donation before she left. After six weeks working at the hospital in Koforidua, she bought 350 toothbrushes to give to the children at Akropong Methodist Primary and Day-care, where she did her final Medical Outreach.

And finally, this year saw the arrival of Anne-Sophie as our new Care and Teaching Coordinator for the Eastern Region. She has already begun workshops with the volunteers to help with creative ideas and classroom tips. And we look forward to seeing their progress over the coming months.

SPOTLIGHT ON EVERYBODY

CAPE COAST

THE HILLS

ACCRA

HO

KUMASI

Accra is the capital city of Ghana and the busiest.

FIRST JOURNALISM WORKSHOP IN ACCRA

By Roxanne (Staff)



According to Wikipedia, the definition of a journalist is, "a person who practises journalism; and journalism is the gathering and dissemination of information about current events, trends, issues, and people while striving for viewpoints that aren't biased".



In March, the journalism volunteers attended a workshop at the head office, organized by Roxanne Turk, the assistant manager in journalism.

Topics such as Ghanaian history, culture and media were addressed.

The head of news, Mr Paul Adjetey Dsane, at Vibe FM, one of our Radio Journalism placements, joined us for this event.

The workshop was a wonderful opportunity for the volunteers to meet him and take time to talk about his professional background and experiences. Mr Paul Adjetey Dsane, has been a journalist for a long time and has been involved in a wide range of media- both electronic and print. Therefore, his advice was really helpful for the volunteers.



They exchanged ideas and points of view regarding media issues in Ghana.

This meeting was fulfilling for all of them. We are grateful to Mr Paul Adjetey Dsane for his contribution and dedicating.

SPOTLIGHT ON EVERYBODY

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THE HILLS

ACCRA

HO

KUMASI

Ho is in the Volta region of Ghana. There are some wonderful waterfalls in the region.

A SPECIAL SCHOOL: AIRFIELD SCHOOL

By Kristel van den Acker (Volunteer)



The Airfield story began a few weeks ago. I went with three other volunteers (Dorianne Klop, Audrey Clement and Charlotte Twine), and Kwasi from Projects Abroad to the bush to see the school and a village where some kids live. I was speechless. I saw all the kids in the classrooms, paying attention to what the teacher was telling them. And in classes, without a teacher, the kids were trying to learn something by themselves. It was really surprising to see all these kids, trying so hard to learn new things, even without a teacher.



Airfield is a school in the bush, without facilities, without good materials to teach and the most important thing is that there are not enough teachers to teach all the children. So, after our visit, we all agreed that this school needs help!

The first thing we did at Airfield school was observing the classes and the teachers. We saw directly that the children are really missing the basics. Even the older ones are not so good in the English language and at mathematics. When you ask the children something, they can't respond in English. Also children around the age of fourteen can't add 7 and 4. So the most important thing that we need to do, is teaching them the basic things.

On the 2nd February we started at this school, every volunteer in Ho who knew about this school was enthusiastic. We made a schedule. Matt is going every day, because this is really his placement. Dorianne and I are going on Monday, on Tuesday Audrey and Charlotte are going and on Friday we are all going. So a lot of volunteers in Ho want to put energy in this school.

We need to teach them without books, because most of the books were destroyed by the rain. And the books that they have are too difficult for them. Especially for the older ones. They are in class 6 but actually they belong in junior high school or senior high school. And even the books of class 4 are too difficult for them. So every week we try to do another subject, like parts of the body or teaching them some opposite words. It is taking a lot of time, because the kids don't understand the English language very well. They speak Ewe, the local language in the Volta Region. To explain something to the children, you have to be very patient. Sometimes you have

to explain something in three different ways, but if they understand you afterwards, you are feeling very good and the kids too. They really learn something from you and you can see that.

I really love the kids at this school. They are all nice to each other and they play together. They share the stuff they have and they help each other with exercises. All the kids are just smiling all the time and they really have nothing. I went to one of the villages and the kids are living in mud houses and don't eat varied foods. Most of the time they only eat corn and cassava. Wounds, fungal infections, malaria and other diseases are very common in this community. Just because they don't take good care of their hygiene and health. I was also very shocked about the fact that a lot of kids are not living with their parents. A lot of kids are living with their aunts or grandmothers. We talked to one of the grandmothers and she's tired of her own life and doesn't want to take care of her granddaughter. So the children are missing a real mother and someone who shows their love to them. When you are giving a child a hug, you can see the happiness in their eyes. Sometimes it is really hard, because you really want a better life for them.

The children at Airfield school need a lot of different things, so we are trying to teach them the basics in English and mathematics. Sometimes we are doing creative things with them, for example making flowers. But we also try to take care of the wounds, especially Dorianne. She has done a great job during the last two weeks. She treated two girls, Nana and Fafale, every time she went to Airfield school. Their wounds are getting better, so it's really working. Sometimes it's hard, because you really have to hurt

the children, but you know that if you treat the wounds they will get better.



A very good thing that is happening right now is that an American couple are building a new school for the community. Benny is managing the project and everybody in the community is helping. It is a very nice building with eight classrooms, a room for the headmaster, five toilets and they are going to save the rainwater so they can use it in the dry season. The school is almost finished, they are painting right now. Next Sunday, the 14th March, there will be a big opening ceremony. Some kids are going to dance and some kids are going to make music. I hope this new building gives the school a brand new start and an opportunity to get new, good teachers. The new school will have the facilities and they will get new books. I hope that this will give the teachers who are already there new energy and motivation to teach the children.

To be continued...

SPOTLIGHT ON EVERYBODY

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ACCRA

HO

KUMASI

Kumasi is in the Ashanti region. It is nicknamed the "Garden City" because of the abundance of vegetation.

KUMASI CHILDREN'S HOME

Kumasi, is called the Garden City of West Africa. It is the centre of the ancient Ashanti Kingdom and has a very rich culture. It is also rich in mineral resources. Kumasi's King, the Asante Hene, is the most powerful and respected chief in Africa.

Kumasi Children's Home is one of our Care placements. It is a government institution which was established in 1965 to offer care and protection to children who are abandoned, motherless or orphaned. The home also caters for children whose mothers are mentally ill, suffer from HIV/AIDS or are serving a prison sentence. Some of the children in the home are disabled.

When our care volunteers are sent to work at the Home, their days often start around 9am; although, if they so wish, they can arrive earlier to help with breakfast before the children leave for school.

Caring for babies involves washing and feeding them, playing with them and of course, changing their nappies.

Depending on volunteers' interests and abilities, they could get involved with extra-curricular activities such as sports, music, French lessons or painting, for the children. It is also possible for them to take the children on day trips to sites of interest. There is also a library where they can help the kids with reading. They also sometimes teach at the Home's daycare.

At all our placements, especially, Care ones, it is important that volunteers show the initiative and enthusiasm to immerse themselves in the job and spend their time productively. Their role is essentially as an extra pair of hands, and where children are involved, the more help available, the better!

MY SINCERE THANKS TO ALL OUR COORDINATORS AND VOLUNTEERS WHO CONTRIBUTED SO MUCH TO THE NEWSLETTER FOR THIS MONTH. AS USUAL, THIS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT YOUR HELP!

DEAR READERS, I HOPE YOU REALLY ENJOYED READING ABOUT MARCH IN GHANA. YOUR VIEWS ARE VERY MUCH WELCOMED.

WATCH OUT FOR MORE IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE!

CHEERS!!!
