

LANGALANGA SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Registered charity no. 1076360



Patron: The Earl of Carnarvon

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The Rt Hon Lord Howell of Guildford PC

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Dear Reader,

In last year's annual Newsletter I joked that the death of the charity was greatly exaggerated. And so it has proved. In many ways there have been many wonderful highs and not many lows. All highs have centred on the performance of the scholars themselves and on the great generosity of so very many sponsors. The charity really does change lives for the better and the scholars are thankful, and say so, in remarkable emails or letters. At our May 2016 trustees meeting we discussed the phenomenon and all agreed that they would like to have copies of the best. Since then I have been busy passing on such thanks, but hey! who minds being busy doing that?!

The successes have been too numerous to mention them all but we have had a clutch of 2nd Class Upper Division degree results from some of the most unlikely starters nine or ten years ago. Peter Njoroge (pictured below), a former Chairman of the LL Scholars' Association (LLSA) has not only successfully completed his BEd degree but he has been employed on the staff of Pembroke House School to teach Kiswahili and, he hopes, Maths. He loves his job in that bit of paradise where I was once the bursar.

The very valuable part that LLSA plays in the charity's work has been demonstrated 'in spades' yet again. No task I give them is too small or inconvenient. My thanks go to the remarkably loyal and caring young Kenyans on the committee. As we all know nothing runs smoothly without the wheel bearings being sufficiently greased. I mean that in a purely innocent way! We have initiated a system where we cut, at source, KSh600 (about £4) a year off the allowances we pay to all those scholars still on the charity's pay roll. This is used to pay for LLSA's legitimate expenses. (See Item 6 overleaf for examples)

The re-emergence of the LL Scholar Professionals Association (LSPA) as a force for Good has given me much hope. This is run by those scholars who have already made their way in the work place and who wish to give something back. Their annual subscription is a great deal more than we cut from those on our pay roll and is totally voluntary. More extensive help is in the offing to local communities. Hugh Dayton also helps both associations financially and takes a keen interest in what is going on.



With very best wishes and many thanks for your interest and support,

Henry Sharon Clark

Annual Newsletter 2016

Item 1 *Trustee news*

David Ashwanden reached the magic age of 80 and, as if by magic, found Nick Singeisen to take over from him. He and his family are long standing residents of Cookham, Berkshire, where he practices as an accountant for clients throughout the country and for some who are overseas. His experience has varied from government funded programmes of pension reform in Russia to acting as Trustee for local and village societies – where, of course, he and David Ashwanden first met. David is still a valued trustee and continues to deal with treasury affairs but at a less frantic rate.

Nick looks forward with interest and enthusiasm to supporting the Fund's activities, which are of such immense benefit to the young people of Kenya. *(His words, not mine!)* He has already amply demonstrated attention to detail that is so necessary in his profession *(My words, not his!)*

As this newsletter is being written Red Neale wishes to resign from his treasurer role. Since September 2015 he has kindly agreed to stay on until Geoff finds a successor. Most of the current trustees are 'of a certain age' so it is essential that Geoff replaces many of us with his own volunteers. His cousin, Andrew Leitch, is the first such person but time is still plentiful to find others, so there is no great need for panic!

Item 2 *Succession planning*

Alison, my wife, and I have been planning our own future in the LL family. New ideas, new circumstances and new energy are needed to keep the show on the road and Geoff Nield continues to make his own plans to enable him to do so.

The current idea is that the VCs will continue to take the lead until 1 July 2018. By that date



all our scholars will have finished their secondary education, received their KCSE exam results and should know which university or college they will attend.

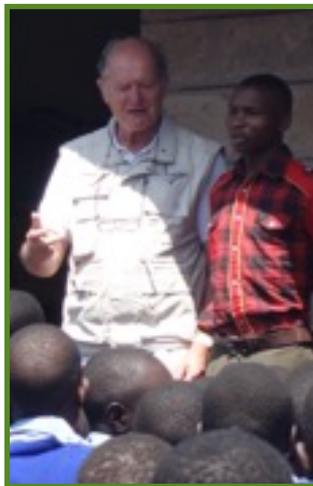
Daniel Githingi BSc, our new project manager and former LL scholar advises on fencing around a new nursery school built with KST money

Item 3 *Results*

Of the 16 scholars who made the cut for tertiary education (three did not – see Item 5), nine will almost certainly go to universities. The remaining seven will go to colleges, mainly in Nairobi. None of them will fail to complete for lack of funds alone. We have enough for them all. On that subject, I want to thank all sponsors and a huge number of

donors, for their incredible support to our young people. Together, real differences in attitudes and success rates are obvious.

Many (all?) have been made aware, many times, of the debilitating effects of corruption and we hear much tutt-tutting and assurances from our scholars that they will do better than the older generation. Fingers crossed everyone!



Harry introduces Douglas, a Form 4 Leaver, who is teaching at Karunga Primary until he gets his university allocation

Item 4 *Christmas cards*

David Thuku, our very successful artist, is making a name for himself in the Kenyan art world and has held several exhibitions in Nairobi. We hope to be selling Christmas cards again this year and we are awaiting a selection of designs from David.

Each year our Christmas card sales help a young Kenyan to access tertiary education so a huge 'thank you' to everyone who buys our cards.

Our website:
www.langalanga.org.uk

Item 5 Facts and Figures

Some headline facts and figures that I hope readers will find interesting:

- **284** scholarships have been awarded between 1999 and 2014 inclusive.
- **43** scholars are still at good secondary schools in Kenya.
- **125** scholars have completed tertiary education and are “off our books”.
- **81** scholars are still at universities or colleges.
- **21** scholars were funded through secondary school only. For one reason or another, they were not selected for tertiary funding by the charity.
- During 2015 there were **95** scholars being funded, of which a staggering **69** are, or will soon be, on degree courses and **26** are reading for diplomas.
- **21** different degree courses have been studied by our scholars at **10** different universities in Kenya.
- **16** different diploma courses in **6** different colleges.



Our older scholars meet up at the Boulevard Hotel in Nairobi in February 2016

Item 6 A problem

Never believe any story if *everything* appears to be fine and dandy - or so I have learned from experience. Even this bullish LLSF Newsletter has its downsides. Three of our Jomo Kenyatta Girls HS scholars failed to progress to tertiary education. All of them are delightful young ladies who appeared to be on stream to do well in KCSE exams. Similarly three boys from the ‘brother’ school did far worse than predicted but all made the grade for diploma support. Educated guesses abound as to why this happened but what do we do to ensure a far better success rate in 2016 and 2017? See *Item 7*



Visiting the girls at the newly established Jomo Kenyatta Girls High School

Item 7 ... a possible solution?

Extra tuition in the holidays is forbidden by law at government secondary schools. The logic *is* there but it is hard to find! So the LLSA came up with a solution. A group of seven senior scholars got together, some with degrees in education and all shining stars in their own right, to provide almost one-on-two personal tuition for two weeks of the Easter holidays. It was rated an 8/10 success by all! The demand was so great that it was agreed to devote a further two weeks of tuition in the Summer holidays when I expect to hear an approval rating of 10/10! Expenses were paid from LLSA coffers and Hugh Dayton’s donation. Money well spent? I think so, but we await the results in February 2017.

Heard the one about the zebra crossing?



A common sight on the road to Mwega Primary School

Item 8 Bits and Pieces

A Geoff Nield has also started to turn his mind to the organisation of **another dinner in Salisbury**. This will be the third of these events, which have taken place every second year at the White Hart Hotel – a beautiful 4 star Georgian hotel located in the heart of Salisbury. In the past they have been hugely successful with up to 100 trustees, sponsors and Langalanga friends enjoying good food and wine, the opportunity to network and to be updated on the work of the charity. The current plan is to hold the event on **12 November 2016** and, as before, we intend to run an auction and raffle. The price has yet to be determined, but will be no greater than £50 per head. We are also looking to change the format a little to expand the event to include those who often are not able to join us because they live some distance away – to do this we are looking at how we might connect to a wider network of dinners, perhaps held in the homes of one or two of our sponsors. In making the evening a success we do of course need some support and if you are able to contribute in some way please consider the following:

- Putting the date in the diary and advertising to friends and family. It would be particularly helpful if you could think of sponsoring your own table of about 10 attendees at the White Hart Hotel
- If you cannot make the dinner in Salisbury consider whether you might be able to host a dinner at home and connect to the event remotely in a form yet to be decided.
- Offering an auction or raffle prizes.

Further details will, of course, emerge over the coming months, but if you feel you can help in any way then please let Geoff Nield know at ga.nield@btinternet.com.

B Our website is hosted by kind permission of Tim Mercer of Mercer Design. He has his own remarkable scholar and a wonderfully helpful lady called Hannah in his office who applies her magic on www.langalanga.org.uk. She also looks after our other charity's needs on www.kariandusi.co.uk. Thank you very much, Tim and Hannah.

C James Foster, our friend in Nairobi, found an unforgettable speaker for Founder's Day. Dr Ichang'i spoke openly about the harmful effects of corruption. You could have heard a pin drop but the silence was frequently interrupted by bursts of laughter. He recognised one of our girls scholars as being one of those he teaches Geology to at Nairobi University!

D James and I tried to convince the trustees of Nairobi Hospital not to increase their nursing fees by 80% without more prior notice – and failed. 'Be prepared for the unexpected in Kenya' is my motto.

E Stirrings are afoot among the older scholars who have completed tertiary education and are now employed. Many seem determined to give something back and help pupils who are likely to be denied the educational opportunities that they have had through LLSF. Talk of providing bursaries is taking place and what better way could there be of sustaining the work and ethos of the charity for years to come? "Kenyans Helping Kenyans" is a catchy, but a sensible and realistic jingle.



A sign at Langalanga Primary School, one of many designed by Mr Anam, the headteacher, to promote the social education of his pupils

TRUSTEES

*Col HE Vialou Clark MBE Mr DN Ashwanden Mrs AM Smyth
Mr RR Murdoch Mr C Anderson Mr JE Neale
Brig GA Nield OBE Prof AR Leitch Mr N Singeisen*