

FRIENDS OF AHOTOKUROM NEWSLETTER

June 2010

This year's Focus Our Mission Statement

Ahoto has developed a five year Strategic Plan, 2010- 2015. Strategic priority areas have been identified and these provide guidance in championing, developing and supporting the future direction for the work at Ahoto.

It has been agreed to focus on these following activities for 2010 :-

- Continue to reach out to those for whom there is no place in society in Ghana
- Acquire wheel chairs with solid tyres to support the people of St. Clare's and Enyindakorum.
- Replace the old Toyota Landcruiser.
- To start work on a Christian Hospitality Village resourced by physically and mentally challenged people.
- Provide regular information to friends and benefactors
- Improve financial management systems



Ahoto children at play

**To make a donation
Please send cheques/postal
orders made payable to**

'DMJ Friends of Ahotokurom'

**The Treasurer
Holy Cross RC Church
208 Sangley Road
Cattford, London, SE6 2JS**

The Team



**The Sisters, L to R
Hedwig, Elizabeth, Monica, Lydia,
Elizabeth, Pat**

The team of Sisters, 'working their socks off' at Ahoto are Sisters Pat from England, Monica from Ireland, Hedwig, Alice (a novice) and Lydia (a postulant) all from Uganda and last but not least Elizabeth (also a postulant) from Ghana.

All of these sisters are very ably supported by a large team of dedicated, committed and caring individuals recruited locally in Ghana.

Jackson Kofi The International Delegate!

Jackson Kofi Nyarko is the Senior Teacher in the Special Needs Unit. He suffered from leprosy as a youngster but was cured. He moved to Ahoto as a 13 year old, but was still very unwell. Following surgical operations and a 6 month confinement to a wheelchair, he started school. His first school was based at Elmina Castle, infamous for being a slave trading post over 200 years ago. He developed his education through various grades until he trained in Special Needs Education.

His first trip to the UK was sponsored by Rainham Parish where he gained great

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confidence and since then has never looked back.

In the past 5 years, when not at Ahoto he has been travelling the world, by invitation, lecturing at congresses from Washington to India and from Geneva to South Africa. His specialist subject is the **stigma and discrimination** that leprosy victims suffer. He is now called to some HIV congresses as sufferers also experience similar problems.



Jackson Kofi

He is a member of the board of directors of the international group that fight for the respect and dignity of people affected by Hanson's Disease (leprosy).

He now lives with his wife and 3 children in the neighbouring village of Ankaful.

**Here, we have a child of Ahoto
who is now internationally
famous.**

Irish

Medical Link Team

Cardinal Turkson has just set up a women's Fistula Hospital at Mankessim. This is only the second such hospital in the entire continent of Africa. A senior team of 4, including a consultant and senior midwives came from Limerick, Ireland to look at the new facilities and offer advice on procedures prior to the opening of the hospital. The team stayed at Ahoto and were given traditional hospitality **including a party and dancing at the Mantey's!**

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Replacing the Toyota



Landcruiser
"Don't Touch Me"

After 13 intense years together, the time has come to bid farewell to "Don't Touch Me", the Toyota Landcruiser. This has now covered over 460,000 kilometres travelling over the country roads of Ghana, battling with potholes, floodwater and broken bridges.

"Don't Touch Me" is essential to the work of Ahoto.

About £40,000 is needed to replace it. However, even for international aid organisations, times are hard and their budgets are reduced. But if 20 people could each raise £1,000, Ahoto is confident that agencies would match this £20,000 with £20,000 of their own funds.

Special Needs Unit

This Unit supports children and young adults who are physically or mentally challenged and have no place in society.



Special Needs – Nativity Play

At present it has 4 divisions, an Assessment Centre (babies 0-4 years), Kindergarten (4 – 10 years), Special Unit (10 -15 years) and Training Centre (15 years +).



Assessment Centre
Elizabeth & Auntie Bea

Sister Hedwig



A Profile
Sister Hedwig

Sister Hedwig joined the Ahoto family in October 2009. She brings a great experience and dynamism to the centre. Sister Hedwig is the 5th of 7 children from the western region of Uganda. She was taught by the DMJ's at school and they obviously created a good impression on her. She claims

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that she joined the DMJ's due to their compassionate nature, particularly with the poor.

After joining the order she studied for her teaching qualifications and then taught in a primary school with over 80 pupils in a class (a bit different to Europe -but they were probably better behaved).

Sister has worked in Uganda, Burundi, Cameroon and now Ghana and is a multi-linguist.

She has spent considerable time working with rural women and the poor; work that she enjoys and finds rewarding.

She has been given the responsibility to set up a full time DMJ presence at Enyindakurom looking after the families there, many of whom are former leprosy sufferers.

She aims to strengthen their unity through group work. This will be achieved by communal workshops with different age groups of active areas of the community including:-

- Formation of ability/interest practical skills groups e.g. sewing, block laying, painting, sports and drama.
- Workshops on youth related social issues and the advent of IT.
- Formation of study groups during term and school holidays.
- Regenerative health activities to improve healthy lifestyles.

Sister Hedwig, we all wish you every success,

There are many more stories of activities at Ahotokurom on our website Please take the time to look

at

www.ahoto.org

For further information on any of our activities please contact

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