

FRIENDS OF AHOTOKUROM NEWSLETTER

December 2006 Edition 13

Welcome to the latest newsletter from Ahotokurom - Ghana!

Again we thank you for all the good work that you have enabled through your generous support.

More news of the Quads

The quads that we reported on in the last newsletter are now 10 months old. Whilst they are all well, they have left a trail of chaos and many tired helpers at Ahoto.



Their background is of a very poor family with very little income. Their father is a fisherman but has very little work. Their mother is a fish-smoker and with the quads now has 7 children. She has always lived in the family room with her mother, grandmother and her own children. The senior members of this extended family help to raise the other children.

Initially, it was hoped that the quads could return to their home when 6 months old albeit with additional help but we now know that they would not have survived. The current plan is for the mother to return to fish-smoking 4 days a week in December, coming back to Ahoto and the quads 3 days each week.

One wonderful aspect of the care given to the quads is that Clair is taking a leading role. When a baby, Clair, who is now 19, was very sick & was not expected to survive but with care, nursing and prayers from the sisters - she made it and now helps others. Our ultimate aim is for the quads to return to their village full time but we don't know when that will be.

Visit our new website

Visit our new website which has been prepared by David Edwards. It has a wonderful exposition of many of the activities at Ahoto. It's well worth visiting!
www.ahoto.org

News of Philip

Many of you know about Philip who was training for the priesthood until he was involved in a traumatic car accident which resulted in him becoming paralysed from the chest down. He was also very sick; the sisters took him to Ahoto and nursed him back to health although he is still paralysed. They have provided continuous care for him at Ahoto ever since then.

Recently Philip has had a very difficult time, having had high fevers and extreme headaches. Dr Otabil spent many evenings with Philip trying to fathom out the cause of these. He was frustrated because both the local x-ray machine and the scanner were out of order. We were first told that Philip will need to go to either South Africa or UK for surgery, but once again by some miracle an American Urologist with a Mercy Ships Team, was visiting the regional hospital in Cape Coast. Dr Otabil wasted no time and had Philip transferred there. He had successful surgery for the removal of a 5cm diameter stone from his bladder and was home in Ahoto in 72 hours with his stone in a jar waiting to show everybody! Many thanks to Sister Nelly and Rose for nursing him so well. The other news of Philip is that, he is beginning a refresher course for his deaconate – **so watch this space.**

Educational success.

We are all delighted at the educational success of 2 of our 15 year old youngsters. Both boys who live in Childcare have gone to St Augustine's as boarders. As they obtained the highest marks in their school they did not have to struggle for places (as has been the case in

Registered Charity DMJ No 232421

the past). Both of them have had health problems (one with leprosy and one with buruli ulcer) each missing 3 years of schooling. In spite of this they have started at their dream school but will be back to Ahoto for their holidays. We say **ayekoo** (meaning well done). The Friends of Ahotokurom are paying their school fees – so thank you all.

Information Technology

Having been collecting funds for a new IT training centre at Ahoto the dream is getting nearer and we hope to be able to report on the development plans in our next newsletter. We are not there yet but it's definitely getting closer!

Tetteh children

The 5 Tetteh children, whose father (an ex – Ahoto resident and leprosy sufferer) died recently are coming to Childcare every weekend. These children have never received much tender loving care at home but they certainly do get love, care and plenty of support when they are at Ahoto.

Kojo

Kojo is a 15 year old lad who has been a long term resident of Ahoto. Unfortunately he has muscular dystrophy and the news of him is not good. He has deteriorated such that he is now totally dependant on a wheelchair, except for the odd occasion when he feels like sitting on the floor! Apart from when he is at school in the morning we have to have a full time helper with him. He likes to go to school but then sleeps most of the time that he is there. The joy of seeing him eat is no longer possible as he has to be spoon fed with no interest from him at all. Please continue to pray for him.

Kuful

Kuful is a small nearby village and is part of Ahoto's outreach programme. Through the Sisters'

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fund-raising a Community Centre was built in 2004. The villagers now run a kindergarten in the Centre in the mornings. On 2 evenings each week the European students, with the help of a translator run literacy and homework classes in 4 groups for mixed ages and abilities at which up to 50 youngsters attend. So, the Centre is put to very good use.

Kiful is very poor with tremendous unemployment but we don't know how big the problem is. So, Mark Mantey has arranged for some of the European students to conduct a census. This will identify the population, average family size, number of dwellings, age profile, employment etc. More information in the next newsletter.

The disabled children from Kiful are still coming to Ahoto for training.

Minibus

My apologies for attributing the Minibus to the wrong parish. As you all know **Carshalton Parish** were the main fundraisers! Thank you **Carshalton**.

Christmas is nearly here

The sisters are well advanced in their preparation for Christmas. Christmas Day is the biggest day of the year at Ahoto. We are now in advent and St Clare's and Childcare meet daily for prayer.

This is a time to remember you all especially, because without you, none of the work at Ahoto would happen. Ahoto always has a very joyful Christmas but it probably is not as you all imagine. The Staff and Sisters ensure that every family and child celebrates the birth of Christ.

We thank you for making the past years possible and we are of course relying on your future generosity. God bless you all.

News from St Clare's

The Elders at St. Clare's are doing fine. However there is a young lady who also lives there called Afua

Grace. Well, all were very surprised to hear that their mentally challenged and physically disabled daughter was pregnant. Afua has now given birth to a baby boy named Gabriel (as he was born on the feast day of The Guardian Angels). Sadly, the father, also a leprosy sufferer hasn't yet come forward to take responsibility. Afua has been cared for very well by everybody and all joyfully accept the birth of a baby boy. The challenge now is how to give Afua Grace the space and support she will need to be the mother to this baby.



Men at St Clare's

School

To enable Ahoto to concentrate on disability issues it was decided to transfer the kindergarten school to the neighbouring village of Atonkwa. Funds were provided to enable two new classrooms to be built there. The children and staff of two classes have already transferred leaving just one at Ahoto. The new minibus has enabled this change in the emphasis of the work to take place.

Special Education Unit

The Special Unit has now been divided into three. The first section is the Nursery Unit that looks after mentally and physically challenged

Registered Charity DMJ No 232421 youngsters up to the age of 6. These are treated (if appropriate) with endorphin release therapy.

The middle section is a Primary and Junior Special Needs School which cares for children up to the age of 16.

The senior section is the newly formed Training Centre for life skills such as catering and farming.

Scholarships

Many thanks to Rainham Parish yet again for more help. Seven new scholarships are in the pipeline. These are to train youngsters in trade skills to enable them to get work.

Passion Sunday Palms

Do you know where your palm crosses come from? Well, the folks in St Clare's make 11,000 palm crosses (that's nearly 220 each and every week of the year). These are sent via Father Doug to many parishes in South East England. So, next Passion Sunday think of the people at Ahoto.

We thank you all for your care and concern and hope that this small newsletter will help you to understand the very real difference that you can and do continue to make.

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