

GUD

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2011

01—welcome 02—about gud 03—gud challenge 04—our december visit
05—kanubeh corner 06—sustainability

01 WELCOME

Hello! Welcome to the first newsletter for the Gambia Upcountry Development Charity (GUD). We'll be bringing you quarterly updates on life in Kanubeh, our fundraising events and, basically, all things GUD! Since this is our first newsletter we'll be giving you a proper introduction to the charity with a few details about how we began. In this edition, we'll report on visits to Kanubeh in December 2010, we'll hear from Nfansu Darboe, a teacher at the village's nursery school and we'll look back at some of our fantastic fundraising events. We'll also be looking ahead to the upcoming events in the GUD Challenge, where we're hosting a different fundraiser every month, and at ways that you too can get involved!



GUD
YEAR
FOR
CHARITY

02 ABOUT GUD

GUD has worked in Kanubeh for just over three years. As with much of upcountry Gambia, Kanubeh has little outside support, no services and most of the villagers live in poverty (by the UN's definition of income of less than \$1 per day). When GUD first discussed with the village its needs, education and becoming independent of aid were its main aims. With the charity's support, over the course of 2008 and 2009 the village designed, built and decorated a nursery school. Through the villagers' hard work and determination, the nursery school opened its 3 classrooms for the first time in January 2010. Most of the children in the village previously had no access to formal education but they are already making great progress. The children of Kanubeh Nursery School are passionate, dedicated and entirely inspiring. GUD has worked successfully with the village to produce worthwhile results but there is much more to be done. Alongside supporting the current needs of the school, we are building funds to support the village's own ideas for fundraising, including vegetable gardens, a banana plantation and a video club – quite a challenge in an electricity-free village!

03 GUD CHALLENGE

The GUD Pub Quiz last year kicked off the start of a year of monthly fundraising efforts as part of our resolve to increase awareness of GUD and its work. The Challenge also brings into focus our commitment to substantial fundraising over the next few years. Our aim is to raise over £10,000 by October 2011 and, thanks to the efforts of all those involved in the events so far, we are well on our way! We are a small charity with few volunteers so to reach this target we ask that you support our events and challenges or get involved yourself! So, if you're thinking of doing a sponsored sporting challenge or you fancy having some fun organising an event of your own then we'd love you to donate to GUD. In fact, we'll even help you out wherever we can!



- ▲ Tower Bridge in the plasticine quiz round
- ◀ GUD Pub Quiz Champions *The Children of the Truth*



GUD PUB QUIZ

The GUD Pub Quiz was a resounding success with over 150 people descending on The Windmill on the Common in Clapham for a night of scrumptious food and competitive banter. Unsurprisingly, guessing the 3 unusual ingredients in each brownie pleased all (thank you Holly for your brownie mastery!), as did the modeling of the London landmark with some teams producing astonishing results from the most basic of supplies (see right). Congratulations to “The Children of the Truth” who won a luxury champagne hamper. We raised over £2000 for GUD so thank you everyone for your hard work and support. We look forward to seeing everyone again at the second quiz later in 2011!

Thanks to... The Windmill and Mark Tulloch for agreeing to host the event and being fantastically helpful; Maithi Rajeshkumar, co-organiser, Sean Monks, compère extraordinaire; Roe Lane; Annie Couldrey; Holly Cowgill; Kelsey Spencer and Katie Lane. **Our fantastic raffle and auction donors:** Jon Don; Chelsea Danny; Emma Reynolds; The Windmill, Jamie's Italian, Dance Connection, Clapham Picturehouse and Roger Hooper.



▲ Key GUD fundraisers

JOIN IN

GUD is a small charity that runs on the efforts of its few volunteers. If you have any ideas for a fundraising event and would like to get involved, let us know by visiting www.GambiaUpcountry.com.



GUD DINNER PARTY

At the GUD Dinner Party, guests were treated to a champagne reception (OK, it was Cava), a tasty 3 course meal (including some freshly-caught lobster from the South Coast - thank you Mr. Spencer!), plus a special cupcake for all the guests to take home. Thank you to Dan Davies who was the photographer for the evening and to everyone who came and helped us raise over £400!



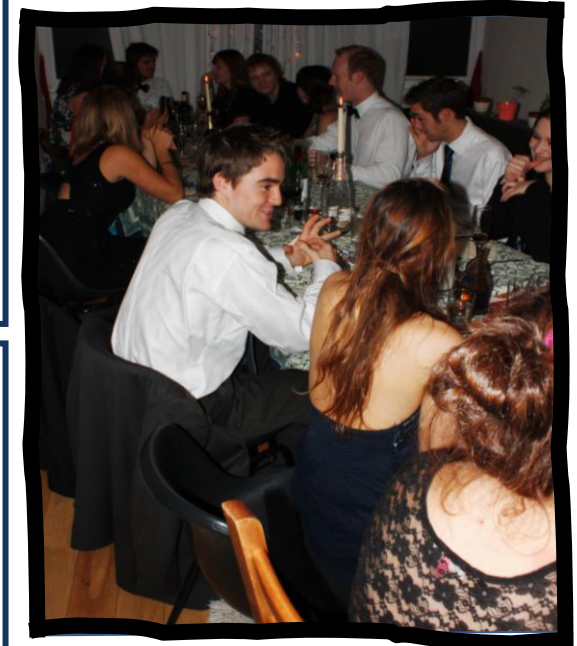
CHRISTMAS FETE, CONCERT & UPHOLSTERING!

Getting into the Christmas spirit, GUD had its own stall at the Christmas fete in Chichester, West Sussex. Despite the extremely icy conditions our range of gifts, homemade cakes & cookies and handmade Christmas cards went down a treat. This event and a Christmas concert earlier in the week brought in over £100! What's more, Janet upholstered an entire set of chairs and as thanks accepted a generous donation of £250!



DRESS-DOWN DAY AT SOUTHERN WATER

The Durrington and Horsham offices of Southern Water held a dress-down day for GUD. David and Janet visited the offices, talked to staff about the work of the charity and collected a very generous £523 from the staff! Thank you to everyone at Southern Water!



▲ GUD Dinner Party

UPCOMING EVENTS

- A team of 9 GUD volunteers will be climbing Mt Kilimanjaro in mid-August!
- The GUD Football Tournament will be returning for its second year in July, with local teams competing for the coveted trophy at Clapham Common this summer.
- We have many more fundraising events organised for the coming months – check out our website for more details on how you too can get involved or fundraise for GUD with your own event!

With the efforts of only a handful of volunteers, since October 2010 we've managed to raise over £4,000! If you have any fundraising ideas or would like to support us to reach our goal, please contact us via the website at www.GambiaUpcountry.com



04 OUR DECEMBER VISIT



Returning to Kanubeh in December 2010 proved to be an emotional experience: seeing old friends and witnessing how the school had developed since the previous year. Officially, the school's first term began in September although preliminary classes have been running since January.

Our first full day in the village being a Sunday meant we could visit the school without disrupting lessons. As we walked towards the nursery school, the front painted with local scenery by an artist from the School Committee, the children crowded around us, happily singing the alphabet and eager to get inside the classrooms. I can safely say it wasn't the dust causing our eyes to fill with tears!

The remainder of our December visit further emphasised the great difference that a year in school has made to the children's lives. The sense of boredom has been extinguished – children command the attention of their teachers and proudly recite what they've been taught. The school is a huge adjustment for everyone but the teachers are just as excited to learn as the children are and the successes of the first year have far surpassed our expectations.

During the week, we led an activity with the children called 'What I want to be when I grow up', giving the children a chance to talk about their ambitions and have their photographs taken for display around the classroom. We also ran our yearly football tournament: a sight to behold as the children, flying off the pitch, discarded their kits for the next teams to play!

We held an arts and crafts afternoon making bracelets and necklaces with beads (thanks for the wonderful donation from Tracey Ells at Creative Beadcraft). Girls and boys alike happily created their jewellery and before long the classroom was a rather chaotic combination of laughter, shouting and tears (when some of the string inevitably broke)!

We spent a lot of time discussing with the villagers their ideas for the banana plantation, including developing the necessary skills base for its workers, and for other workable business plans that, in the long-term, will enable the villagers to fund the running costs of the school themselves. The Al Kalo (village chief) has formed a committee to build on these plans with a view to implementing the most viable over the coming months.



05 KANUBEH CORNER

Kanubeh Corner is our way of giving you a feel for life in the village. In each newsletter we will focus on someone from the village or a project undertaken by the village and GUD.

NFANSU DARBOE

Nfansu teaches Class 2 at Kanubeh Nursery School and plays a vital role in supporting GUD's work in the village. He is dedicated to helping Kanubeh develop and has very clear visions about the village's future. Nfansu is an excellent communicator, adept at conveying the village's ideas and concerns. We focus on him in this first newsletter because his passion, intellect and enthusiasm were an important catalyst for GUD's work in Kanubeh. We interviewed Nfansu on our last visit, below are some of his responses. The full video footage will be on our website soon!

"I have many roles in the village. I am a teacher. I am a secretary, helping the village people with their development. I try to encourage my people to learn. Maybe if we start to educate people now, maybe in two or three years' time they can go on to another school. "Without the charity, the children would not go to school. Education is important so that we learn that we can develop ourselves and that we do not need to just rely on the help of outsiders to come and help us. Education will change Kanubeh, really, because without education we cannot help ourselves or our community".

When we asked Nfansu what future he sees for Kanubeh, he said that he would like everybody to be educated: "If everybody is educated then everything will become easier. We will be able to make important decisions together as a community".



Nfansu also affirmed Kanubeh's desire to be self-sufficient: a fundamental focus of GUD's work. He said: "If we have a banana garden or something like that, we are ready to work, and we will work so that the money from that will be able to support the school."

Finally, we asked Nfansu why he thought it was important that people in the UK continued to donate to GUD: "Some people there [in the UK] they don't even know Kanubeh, but they are still helping to develop our village. If I see those people I would give big thanks to them. I love those people, because they are trying to help us, and they are trying to develop us. A lot of children are going to the school and they are learning. And everybody here is happy with that."

06 SUSTAINABILITY

As a small charity our own personal fundraising efforts only go so far and to really establish ourselves and ensure a sustainable future we need regular donations. If you think you can help in providing us with a monthly donation then please get in touch. The upkeep of the school, including the teachers' salaries, comes in at around £200 a month – if we could cover this amount through regular donations from our supporters then we can focus on enabling Kanubeh to develop projects for their own self-sufficient future. It's easy to do and the smallest monthly donation makes all the difference.

