

NOTES ON UK-UGANDA NETWORK MEETING HELD AT HESLEY WOOD
SCOUT ACTIVITY CENTRE, CHAPEL TOWN, SHEFFIELD
18/20 OCTOBER 2002

Members of the UK-Uganda Network and those proposing to participate in Uganda 2003, assembled during the late afternoon and evening to find the welcoming balloons and flag identifying the Howard Walker Building. Members met socially at the Norfolk Arms for a meal and/or at the on site bar, adjourning later in the evening to find a bunk!

Rising early Saturday morning, a hearty breakfast was provided by the Site Service Team with other Members joining as the day progressed.

0930 hours – Members came together in the Hall for a welcome from the Co-ordinator for the UK-Uganda Network, Alan K B Beavis, who invited all present to introduce themselves and it was very pleasing to see so many young people present anxious and excited about the prospects of participating in Uganda 2003.

The Meeting had received greetings from Kinuthia Murugu – Regional Director, Africa Regional Office – WOSM, as unfortunately he was unable to attend the meeting and that of the proposed Africa Network. He kindly sent information and hoped to have the opportunity of meeting members at a future meeting.

The Members were sorry that Ebuu Martin, the National Executive Commissioner of the Uganda Scouts Association, having been invited to join us for the meeting, was unable to spare to time due to other commitments in the office.

NB: Ebuu has sent Greetings from the Uganda Scout Association and his family, thanking us for his invitation to attend the meeting and was sorry he could not attend. He believes “God will give him an opportunity and may be a better one in the future”.

Attendance – See list attached.

Apologies – See list attached.

There was a very warm welcome for Michael and Godfrey, two Ugandan Scouts currently staying and hosted by Marie and Eric Goulding and Marion and Brian Stagg.

All present were provided with a name tag and Information Pack and challenged to produce a UK and Ugandan flag in suitable holder for the dinner later in the day.

It was interesting to note that amongst our Members were a party of nine 13-16 year olds from East Sussex through to the more experienced Leaders from Uganda 2000.

Robert Mitchell, an Explorer Belt holder from Uganda 2000, organised activities for the day on site.

The Members were split into teams to take on the challenge of pioneering, guided by Ian Franks, trench fire construction and water boiler facilities by Phil Morley. Why Members appeared back with mud on their faces, etc, and heavily muddied boots was not explained!

The members then split into two Groups – those with Leadership responsibilities joining Keith Shackleton, who gave an outline and talk on insurance aspects affecting our activities following the successful talk and exercises at the last Network Meeting on Health Assessment and Risk Assessment.

A hand out was distributed on Scout Association Legal Liabilities Insurance Department clarifying the Association's policies on claims.

The other Members sat down and shared with Michael and Godfrey a talk on Ugandan culture and way of life.

Lunch followed – the warm soup welcomed by those who had been outside. They then returned to carry out the alternative activity of the morning and successfully produced hot water from the boiler – it was fortunate we had a plumber present with his Calor Gas blow torch.

Late Saturday afternoon, Marvin Takel and his team met to discuss further details of the planning and arrangements for next year.

As dusk approached, Members gathered around the Camp Fire Circle, where Robert Mitchell led an enjoyable vocal session in preparation for providing entertainment when in Uganda, for clearly we lack the entertainment talents of our Ugandan friends.

In the Hall, Jonathan Cooksley transformed the room for our Halloween theme party, improvising with the black, yellow and red drapes as table cloths, nightlights, balloons. Members arrived after frantically completing their mini flags and table decorations.

As we sat down, we were joined by David Bull – International Commissioner.

After Dinner, highlights of the Network Members activities were given by our Co-ordinator, followed by a talk from David Bull.

The youngest Member of 13 then told us why he had come for the day and what he was expecting in the future. This was followed by thanks from Godfrey on behalf of the Uganda Scouts Association for our work.

The Members divided, some to the Disco, ably provided and run personally by Julian Sore. Sorry about the smoke setting off the alarms, but all evacuated the building promptly. This was the second time as unfortunately the caterers had set off the alarms at 8 a.m. and the building was successfully evacuated although some were slightly embarrassed due to the early hour of the day.

Networking continued with the young ones joining the disco, some socialising thanks to Dick Booth's home brew and others boosting the takings at the on site bar.

There was a quietness around 8 o'clock on Sunday morning with no-one talking loudly!

At 9.30 we gathered for a short Scouts Own led by our friends from East Sussex and followed by the Network Meeting.

Uk-Uganda Network Co-ordinator's Report – Alan Beavis gave a resume of the Network's activities and updates on projects.

Currently in Uganda are our colleagues from Northumberland who have returned under Geoff Breeden's leadership with seven others, to further progress the Mityana Community/Scout Enterprises Project and possible purchase of the Technical College.

Gilwell Reunion – This year we attended at full strength, recruiting for Uganda 2003 and inviting those present to participate in a Balloon Race.

Marion confirmed that the winning balloon had travelled to Norfolk, having been sold by a Leader from Sheffield. £5.00 vouchers have been sent to the lucky two.

Uganda 2003 - Marvin Takel outlined general arrangements for Uganda 2003, progress to date and dates of meetings.

Nick Winter advised that there were now 15 to 16 who had paid deposits, 3 having attended this weekend and proposing to join, so the party was nearly full. Stewart McKay was now recruiting for the Mount Elgon climb/s.

Uganda 2003 T-shirts were on sale throughout the weekend together with the shirt badge – it was suggested these should be used for fundraising.

Bulangira Disables Association - Peter Scurry gave the latest report on this project.

Mityana Community Enterprises - Members were advised that Geoff Breeden and a party were currently in Mityana progressing the Community Enterprise Project.

Queen's Jubilee Parade – Members thanked Fran and her colleagues for attending and we were advised that Fran's picture appeared in the official publication.

Uganda - During the summer, 7 Members had visited Uganda in a private capacity to attend the wedding of Pross – Pross ran the successful UNITE Project as the Co-ordinator from 1994 until she went to America to further her education. She has now returned and is settling in her hometown with her new husband and sends best wishes to all the Members of the Network.

Outspan School, Bwaise - Keith Shackleton advised Members that earlier last week news had been received from the owner of the plot of land on which the wooden classrooms remain, that he had decided to sell and in three days 3 million shillings were raised and sent to purchase the land.

The challenge for Scouts in Northamptonshire will be to raise the money, arrange for and/or build brick classrooms to replace the wooden ones in 2004. Well done Northamptonshire.

Palissa - Stewart Hall, County Commissioner for Surrey, has agreed to raise £10,000 to provide a generator and electrical installation for a school for disabled persons in Palisse.

Trees for Life - The Reverend John Wilkinson from Oxford advised progress on the Trees for Life Project being run between a partnership of the Methodist Church in Oxfordshire and those in Uganda.

Buwenda - In August, a further party of Venture Scouts had visited Uganda, including three who had seen our activities on the website and wished to join, one from Suffolk, one from North London and a Leader from Leicestershire, all enjoying the experience at Buwenda.

Mbarara – Veronica Moloney regretted that she was unable to be with us. Currently she has retired from Scouting and is awaiting retirement from employment, as a result of the accident in which she was involved in Uganda in February.

Scout Skill Training

Following the Team's return visit in February, curtailed through their unfortunate road accident, we were pleased to note that both Dave Thomas and Bill Barnes were successfully recovering from their injuries but, regrettably, Veronica Moloney remains off work due to her slow recovery.

Veronica continues to support sponsorship from local people in Bromley, Kent for the education of over 40 children in Mbarara.

Resources for Africa Region - About two weeks ago, a container was despatched from Scout Shops, Lancing, with surplus stocks of old style uniforms, etc, and four computers facilitated through the Network and printers for countries in Africa.

Computers for Uganda Scouts Association - In September, the Network was able to air freight four computers for the new Districts in Uganda. Thanks were received with a request for printers – donations welcome.

Website – Our website continues to attract interest with a steady stream of requests, both from Scouting and others, wishing to know about life in Uganda.

Our e-mail system continues to be the lifeblood of the Network although it does suffer from a large number of scam virus messages but we are continually being vigilant in protecting our computers.

Project Update – The UK-Uganda Network Co-ordinator, Alan Beavis, continues to monitor and update projects being undertaken by individuals, groups, districts, counties and nationally in support of the work of the Uganda Scouts Association and its members. Never a day passes when there isn't some news or interest shown in our work.

The theme for the weekend has been Uganda 2003, but we must now look beyond and encourage support for the formation of a Planning Committee for our 10th Anniversary – 2005.

As we mature, there is a need for a Uganda Network Trust to provide the necessary resources and exit strategy for the many projects which have been undertaken and to provide education for Ugandan Scouts and, more importantly, their attendance at international events around the world.

We should now be preparing for the Ugandans participation in the World Scout Jamboree in 2007.

Gift Aid – members were encouraged to sign Gift Aid donation forms to enhance income for the activities of the Network.

Members' spouses attended doing their own thing – the Meadow Hall Shopping Centre being an attraction for some. The Members expressed their appreciation and thanks to the Directors of Berkshire Scout Enterprises Limited for their sponsorship.

The Members' attention was drawn to the forthcoming International Fellowship Day, 25 October, that would be marked by those Members involved in the International Scout and Guide Fellowship.

Alan Beavis was pleased to note the support and enthusiasm that the weekend was generating for Uganda 2003 and beyond and suggested that we should be thinking of encouraging support for forming a Planning Committee for our 10th Anniversary in 2005.

It may also be appropriate to set up a Uganda Network Trust to fund education of Ugandan Scouts and their attendance at International events in the future together it would strengthen the links of the Network.

The Members invited the Catering Team to join the meeting where the two District Commissioners were presented with International Fellowship logo letter openers and chocolates for their spouses.

Marion and Brian Stagg were thanked with a gift for their organisation of the meeting.

The Members dispersed for site activities, adjourning for lunch and departing home.

I am sure the venue was cleaner than when we arrived so we hope to return in the not too distant future.

UK Scout & Guide Alliance.

On Sunday, the meeting hosted a Committee Meeting of the UK Scout and Guide Alliance chaired by David Mowbray and they were joined for an initial period by David Bull – International Commissioner.

