

Stevenage–Kadoma Link Association Newsletter 25th Anniversary Edition (1989 – 2014)



Where has our logo gone? The eagle-eyed among you will notice the absence of a logo at the head of this newsletter. The answer is in the banner! Our previous logo celebrated the 20 years that SKLA had been in existence. That was in 2009, and now here we are celebrating an even bigger milestone - 25 years! This edition contains news of some of the ways in which we have marked this significant moment in our history.

Celebrating 25 years of Linking



In Stevenage....



Pat Akhurst and Nicola Hughes cut the cake at the AGM celebration

Among the many people who came to see us were a number who had personal connections with Kadoma! Some had attended one of the schools in Kadoma that is partnered with a school in Stevenage. It just shows that this partnership reaches far and wide.

On 30th August this year, we combined our Annual General Meeting with a celebration event for our 25th Anniversary. We were delighted to be joined for this by over 30 people, including a number of key figures from the past 25 years. These included former SKLA Chairman Dave Thompson, former Kadoma-Stevenage Link Chairman Martin Masaraure, founding members Pat Akhurst (Honorary Life President), and former treasurer Leslie Ransley, and a number of Stevenage Borough Councillors. The town's Mayor, Cllr Sherma Batson, opened the proceedings, and there was much to celebrate as we looked back over quarter of a century.

On the following day, 31st August, we had a stand in the town centre to share and highlight our



Another very successful event was a family Fun Day which was held in May at Peartree Park. Among other attractions were football matches between Zimbabwe and Stevenage. Attendance was extremely good, and the day was a great opportunity to spread the word about the Link. We also had our usual stall at Stevenage Day and this was another opportunity to raise awareness and funds.

And in Kadoma....



Chairman and secretary of KSLA on the celebration bench with Jan and John

In September, visitors from Stevenage went to Kadoma to help mark the 25th Anniversary there. Jan and John Addison, Phil and Stacy Gibb and their two young daughters Hannah and Rebekah undertook planned visits which included the presentation of a bench from Stevenage and a special “Stevenage Day” celebration in the middle of the town. As there have inevitably been some changes in the membership of the Link and in the town council in Kadoma, this was a great opportunity to reaffirm the friendship which is the foundation for the relationship between the towns.

The photo here shows Jan presenting a photograph of the “Hands of Friendship” sculpture which was commissioned for our 20th anniversary in 2009. For their 2015 calendar, Kadoma Town Council have included a photo of Jan presenting the gift to the Deputy Mayor, as this was seen as one of the most significant visitors to the town of 2014!



Presenting the gift from SKLA

As always, the visitors were received with enormous warmth and all had a very fruitful time.

Phil and Stacy, who run “Kadoma Kidz”, spent their time mainly in the township of Rimuka, working with the children in this very socially challenged area. As well as visiting different schools and other places, they organised a “fun day” in a local community centre. Having expected at most about 100 children, about 400 turned up! They also continued to support the work of Tariro orphanage, with which SKLA has been involved for some time.

Phil and Stacy were joined by Jan and John at Tariro’s “ground breaking” ceremony. This occasion was an important moment to mark the beginning of the work on the new Children’s Life Centre, to which the children at Tariro will move in due course from their current inadequate accommodation. Andy Hills, who is a qualified architect, has been working very closely with Tariro and the Town Council to develop the plans for the new provision. More information on this is provided below.

John and Jan’s visit also featured other successes. As well as sharing some of the high spots with Phil and Stacy, they visited a number of community groups and schools in the town. Jan is the SKLA school partnerships co-ordinator, and was particularly delighted to assist in the setting up of a new partnership between West View Primary School in Kadoma and Featherstone Wood in Stevenage. Both schools are very excited about the learning opportunities that will come from their new partnership – and so are we! A partnership which has taken on a new lease of life is that between Nobel secondary school in Stevenage and Rimuka 1 High School. There are tentative plans in place for a visit by a group of students and staff from Nobel, and if this comes off, it will be a huge boost to the partnership between the schools and indeed to the Link itself. This is a particularly significant partnership, as it was Leslie Rose, then the Headteacher of Nobel, who was instrumental in the early days of the Link, and whose life is appreciated elsewhere in this newsletter.

Another community link which is in the process of being put in place as an outcome of this visit is between YMCA in Kadoma and in Stevenage. This is an example of the dynamic, community-based nature of the Stevenage-Kadoma link, something which explains how it has continued to thrive for so long!

Tariro Orphanage Visits



Andy Hills is continuing to work very closely with Kadoma City Council and the Tariro orphanage as the plans to build a new Children's Life Centre take shape.

As most readers of this newsletter will know, SKLA has supported Tariro orphanage in many ways, both practical and financial, over the last few years. The ever increasing need for long-term provision for vulnerable and orphaned children in Kadoma has been behind major plans to provide a new Children's Life Centre. This is to be built on land provided by Kadoma City Council. Andy Hills has been one of those closely supporting these developments. As well as spearheading a major fundraising effort, Andy has been providing his professional support as an architect. In this connection, he made two visits recently to Kadoma to work with the Council and with the Tariro directors.

It is hoped that building work will start in the new year with the first house. Current funding available is around £10k held in the SKLA account with a further £5K held outside. This leaves another £15K to raise but match funding is available meaning that only a further £7.5K needs to be found. Andy is confident that this is achievable and says 'with a little more generous support we're almost there, which could be critical timing given Tariro are on notice to leave their current premises'. Do feel free to contact Andy for more information or make a donation – cornerstone@ntlworld.com.

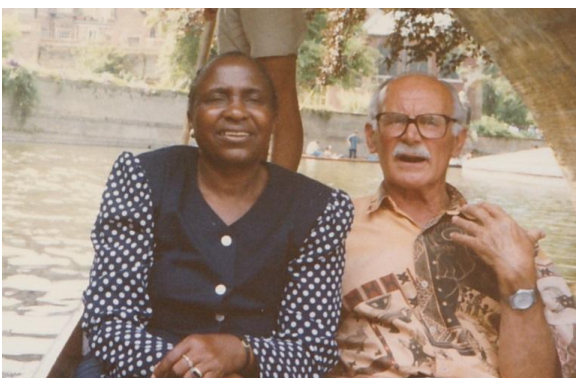
During his visits, Andy has also been working on strengthening links between Kadoma Baptist Church and Bunyan Baptist Church in Stevenage, discussing the possibility of a team from Bunyan visiting next year and being hosted by KBC members. The churches are in contact and also exploring projects to do together – including involvement with Tariro.

A Tribute to Leslie Rose

This is a tribute to Leslie Rose (former SKLA member) who passed away in February 2014, written by Pat Akhurst, Honorary Life President, SKLA.

The Stevenage-Kadoma Link was very fortunate to have Leslie Rose involved from the early "setting up" days, in particular because of his interest in education and strong belief that everyone was entitled to have a decent one. He was the first Headteacher of Nobel School in Stevenage and when he retired was able to go out to work in schools in Kadoma and learn about how education was being developed in the new country of Zimbabwe. His own experiences here, immediately after the war, of huge classes and great shortages of stock and books, meant he could empathise with teachers there and was able to share the problems they were facing.

One problem was that very few girls were attending secondary school because families could often only afford to pay the compulsory fees for one child so sent a son. This meant many very able girls were missing out and had no opportunity to go further than Grade 6 in primary school. Leslie asked the Link to set up support for girls by sponsoring their fees and this later expanded to include boys after the economic situation deteriorated. This is the scheme now known as the Leslie Rose Bursary and his family asked for donations to this in his memory as it had meant so much to him.



Leslie was a member of the Britain Zimbabwe Society (BZS) and represented SKLA as well as attending research days organised by BZS on different aspects of life in Zimbabwe.

It was a great pleasure to have Leslie as a friend over the years and I remember chatting about serious (and not so serious!) topics as we packed books for Kadoma in the early days. Though his range of knowledge was enormous he

always respected the opinions of others. Colleagues who had worked at Nobel with him also mentioned this at his funeral and his ability to help young people gain confidence. It is no wonder he was such a well-respected Head-teacher.

Two old friends of SKLA attended Leslie's funeral, Mike Sango and Rutendo Masaraure, who is the daughter of Martin Masaraure. Mike and Martin both served as headteachers of schools in Kadoma, which were involved in the Link.

Always willing to lend a hand when the Link was involved, whatever the situation, there would be interesting conversations when Leslie was with you. It was doubly tragic in later years when a serious stroke severely affected his speech as well as semi-paralysing him. He showed enormous courage and determination learning to live with his disabilities, continued to take a great interest in the Link and always wanted the latest news. That was Leslie - interested in other people at all times.

Support for pensioners

Zimbabwe Pensioners Support Fund have just completed their latest trip to Zimbabwe to deliver food parcels to pensioners who lost all their savings in the economic crises in Zimbabwe. They are now collecting and planning for their winter trip and hope to deliver extra food to see them through the cold winter months. SKLA recently sent another donation from a very kind supporter. A big thank you to our SKLA supporters and to ZPSF for their hard work.

Stevenage Christmas Tree Festival 2014

We entered an SKLA themed tree, called 'Basket Tree', in the Rotary Club Christmas Tree Festival. It's a great way to let people in Stevenage know about the Link we have and it was probably the best of our entries yet. In fact for the first time ever not only were we voted in the top three, our tree won! As well as helping to raise awareness, the Waitrose voucher first prize has been converted into a donation to the Link.



We now have a Facebook page on which we try to share latest news and photos of events here in Stevenage and in Kadoma. Please 'like' us:

www.facebook.com/StevenageKadomaLinkAssociation

If you don't have access to Facebook you can still view our page by going to www.skla.org and clicking on the Facebook button

NB. If you wish to be removed from the Newsletter mailing list or would prefer to receive it via email, please let me know either by mail (Nicola Hughes, 3 Chouler Gardens, Stevenage, Herts SG1 4TB) or via email Nicolahughes30@hotmail.com