

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2017



Dear friends and supporters of Les Amis,



Registered in September 2007, Les Amis is now ten years old! A huge thank-you to everyone who has contributed to the success of this charity which has reached out to a huge number of people over the last ten years. We are pleased to be sending you this year's '**How is your money spent?**' newsletter, written by those who work with us in Burkina Faso, which will give you lots of information about how we use your donations. Reading their reports is always wonderful as we realise just how much is being achieved thanks to you and your support.

Protecting and educating girls and young women

For many years now, we have supported girls through nursery, primary and secondary school, thus giving them a real chance to succeed in life in a country which favours the education of boys. For the last two years we have been adding to this giving because we were concerned about what happened to those secondary schoolgirls, particularly those who are orphaned, who leave school but who want to continue their education. It has been lovely to follow their successes and to know that these hard working but vulnerable young women are well on the way to making something of themselves and being secure in life. This is exactly what we had hoped for. For more information about this project, read the item in the enclosed newsletter with the heading "**Ex-Saint Monique Home**".

Justine (right) has successfully finished her studies in Ghana as part of her degree in English and Chinese at the university of Ouagadougou. Justine is a gifted girl! Whilst in Accra she received an award for the best educated and disciplined student, the result of votes cast by other students and staff. Despite wishing to take a Masters in English translation, her department has, disappointingly, informed her that this particular course can't be offered. She must now choose between a Masters in Environmental Studies, Human Resources or Marketing. We have no doubt that she will do well whatever she chooses, because she is a bright and diligent young woman. Thank you for making this possible for her.



If we are in a position to do so, we are always happy to help other organisations doing the same work. One of these is **OCADES** (please take a moment to look at their website: <http://www.caritas.org/where-we-are/africa/burkina-faso/>). The work of OCADES very much mirrors the work of our own projects, such as developing the skills of local girls and young women whose situation in life makes it urgent that they receive help. You will read, in the enclosed newsletter, exactly what the girls and women make and then sell. OCADES has approached us for help in the funding of a small shop where the goods can be sold. The total cost of this project would be £8,500 and we would love to hear from any of you who would be interested in making this possible.

As you will read in the enclosed newsletter, the **Yoann Foundation** has been able to buy enough sewing machines for 20 young women to help them work for themselves and become self-sufficient. We are delighted by this aspect of our work; at £30 per sewing machine, this represents a very simple and inexpensive way of giving long-term practical help.



The girls of the **refuge in Baskouré** have been really busy this year learning new skills, to add to those skills that they have already been taught at the refuge. **Left** are bottles of liquid soap and vinegar which they have made and will sell at the local market. On top of these things, at this time of year they will have a good deal to do in the fields growing the food that they need to both sell and eat. The rainy season, so far, has been very hit and miss and we are all hoping that this will not have too much of an impact on their crop and ability to feed themselves into next year.



Ouch!



Whilst in Burkina Faso in February, Gillie came across a man who had broken his leg very badly. His family showed her the X-ray of the break (**left**). It was a serious fracture of two bones in the lower leg. The picture (**near right**) shows how it had been strapped up using twigs. It was very clear to Gillie that this man needed urgent medical treatment more suitable for the nature of the injury. However, this was not possible for the family due to the cost of £1,000 for the surgery. We were happy to give them this money so that he could have the necessary surgery, the result of which (**far right**) is a properly pinned fracture and a man up and about again, which is vital for the survival of the family. Thank you all so much for helping us to make it possible to reach out to this family.



Anything in the pipeline?

Firstly, Father Lambert has written to us to suggest some small projects he would like to put in place and which would make a big difference to many women. Amongst the proposals is the training of a group of women who can choose from a number of courses including cooking, hairdressing, cloth dying, soap making, bridal dress-making and bridal accessories. The cost of training the group would come to a total of £1,900, which seems very good value to us. Secondly, we will be giving funds to the refuge in Baskouré to enable them to install solar powered energy to the large dormitory we built for them a few years ago. The costs for both these projects are already covered and we are very excited about getting on with them.

We would dearly love to buy more desks and classroom equipment for the secondary school we built in Manni, and would need an additional £6,000 in order to do this for them. If this is something for which you would be able to make a specific donation, then we'd love to hear from you.

Lots of gratitude

A big thank-you to the **Petworth** parishioners who came to listen to a talk given by Gillie in March, as a result of which Emma Pearce was inspired to organise a sponsored walk in Petworth Park. This resulted in a donation of £185 for the refuge for girls in Baskouré. Added to that, many other parishioners gave us sufficient donations to ensure the success of the Baskouré refuge for the next year. Warmest thanks to you all!



Thank you so much to everyone who has set up a Standing Order, as without these we would not have been so successful in all our projects to date. They are the backbone of the charity. Equally, all those one-off donations are absolutely invaluable. Keep them coming if you can, but if you can't, then keep us in your prayers.

Our continued and heartfelt thanks to **Headline Design & Print** in Woking for printing this newsletter for us.

Giving talks is one of the best ways of gaining support for our work, and we are therefore always pleased to give illustrated talks to groups however big or small. If you are a member of a group and feel this is something which you would be interested in, then please get in touch.

A personal message from Gillie ...

It is at about this time that I turn my mind to my next trip. In February next year, in the space of a week, I plan to visit hundreds of people either as individuals or as part of a larger project. My personal visits are of crucial importance to both them and us. The growing difficulties with neighbouring countries, whilst alarming, will not affect our work. Please keep Burkina Faso in your prayers, and the many people like myself who travel there with only one objective: to look for ways of delivering much-needed help to some of the most vulnerable people in the world. Thank you.



The Trustees of Les Amis-Burkina Faso: Gillie & David Nicholls and Jude O'Mara-Spicer

Les Amis – Burkina Faso

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The poor will never cease out of the land;
therefore I command you to open wide your hand
to the needy and to the poor. (Deuteronomy 15:11)

In so far as you did this to the least of those brothers of mine,
you did it to me. (Matthew 25:40-41)