

Africatrust Networks

5th December 2002

News from our volunteers in West Africa

December Newsletter

International Volunteering Day

Things here in Kumasi, Ghana are going really well following the induction course in Cape Coast which was great. On Friday, the Headmaster of the Garden City Special School and I transferred the mentally disabled boys from the children's home. It is amazing to see them wearing school uniforms for the first time in their lives and being spoken to and interacted with. Hopefully, in a year or two they'll be talking and learning tie dye and batik.

My projects are going really well although it really is true that it needs much patience to do things here ! I'm building a wooden climbing frame made from local trees and some swings from tyres. The Headmaster is very keen to use locally produced and sustainable materials and he's being wonderful in helping me. He's invited us all to his house for dinner this week. The school teaches the children and young people vocational skills. With the guidance of the Head I'm to use some of the donation money to buy tools and materials for them. The others are doing well, painting the children's home, buying tools and fixing a school roof.

I hope you are not too cold and wet at home.

Clare Cooper

Graduate, 2002, University of Sussex



Noble words from Ben Okri, Nobel Laureate

TO AN ENGLISH FRIEND IN AFRICA

Be grateful for the freedom
To see others' dreams...
Do not think your way superior
To another's

Do not venture to judge
But see things with fresh and open eyes
Do not condemn
But praise when you can
And when you can't ,be silent...

Live while you are alive
Learn the ways of silence and wisdom
Learn to act, learn a new speech
Learn to be what you are in the seed of your spirit
Learn to free yourself from all the things
That have molded you
And which limit your secret and undiscovered road...

Remember that all things which happen
To you are raw materials
Endlessly yielding of thoughts that could change
Your life and go on doing so for ever...

Live slowly, think slowly, for time is a mystery...
Be grateful for life as you live it.
And may a wonderful light
Always guide you on the unfolding road...

Elmina Castle, Ghana, visited over 500 years ago by Christopher Columbus during his time of living in Porto Santo, Madeira where his father-in-law was the Portuguese Captain-General. Then named El Mina by the Portuguese[in their search for gold] it is now a UN World Heritage Site and a popular weekend visit for our volunteers during their two week induction course nearby at Cape Coast.

For more information about Tropical Work Experience www.africatrust.gi

To apply to volunteer in Africa :
www.africatrust.gi/forms/appform.htm

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