



*Promoting friendship & understanding
through financial support for Nigerian education*

The Britain-Nigeria Educational Trust

(formerly The Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Memorial Trust)

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Dear Member,

NEWSLETTER

Here we are with our second Newsletter, the first for 2009 and already it is Spring! In this issue there is a mixture of news about our members, an update on some of our educational projects and a section dealing with Notices.

But I begin with congratulations to Derek Reeves, our Chairman who was awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours for services to The Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa Memorial Trust (now The Britain-Nigeria Educational Trust) and to the community in Farnham, Surrey. It is a welcome recognition of his immense contribution to the development and progress of the Trust, of which he has been Chairman for the last fifteen years, and for his dedicated commitment to the Farnham branch of Abbeyfield, of which he was also Chairman, the UK charity that provides housing with care for older people. On behalf of all our members I give hearty congratulations for a reward so well deserved.



Derek Reeves receives his MBE from Prince Charles at Buckingham Palace on February 27, 2009

Since my last Newsletter there have been some changes to the Board of Trustees. His Excellency the High Commissioner for Nigeria has been appointed a substantive Trustee eliminating the need for him to have a representative on the Board. The Trustees have also been pleased to welcome Mr Anthony J. Green, Group Chairman PZ Cussons plc as a Trustee who brings a wealth of experience to the Board not only through his company but also from PZ Cusson's own charity in Nigeria.

With regret the Board has accepted the resignation of Mr CR Clarke, OBE who stood down as a Trustee with effect from April 1, 2009. Dick has worked tirelessly for both the BNA and the Trust over the last twenty years, in many capacities. For a brief spell he took over from Peter Balmer as the BNA Secretary and was then its Treasurer from 1994 to 2000. At the same time Dick was Treasurer too for the Trust and was instrumental in establishing the stringent financial controls necessary to monitor the disbursement of funds. Recently he has been a member of the Investment Committee. Dick's experience and advice will be missed.

John Smith is also standing down as a Trustee and it is opportune to acknowledge his successful tenure of office as BNA's final Treasurer and for his important role in overseeing the closure of BNA's accounts and the complicated transfer of investments and assets to BNET. We are grateful for John's due diligence.

Separately I shall be writing with details about our Annual General Meeting, which will take place on Thursday 16th July, and other events planned over the next few months.

With every good wish,

Sam Clark

MEMBERSHIP

❑ **Subscription Reminder**

All subscriptions became due on 1st January 2009 and the Membership Secretary has sent out reminders to all those still owing. We are grateful to the many that have already paid, especially those who have done so using standing orders, and also to those who have enhanced their subscriptions by Gift Aid.

If you have not yet paid, and wish to remain members, it is important payment is received before 30 June 2009. Those in arrears after that date will no longer be able to take part in the affairs of the Trust. Subscription rates are just £20 for Individuals or £30 for Couples and to put that into perspective each subscription is sufficient for the Trust to provide textbooks for one class of children at an Elementary or Primary school. Subscriptions from twenty-five members, or a donation of £500, will cover the fees and cost of an undergraduate student for one year at a university in Nigeria. We do make your subscriptions count, we do value your support which is so important to our work.

❑ **News about Members**

We are pleased to welcome as joining members [Susan Hothersall](#) and [Christopher Ente](#). Membership now totals 383 after adjustments.

[Arik Air](#) – We are delighted to welcome new corporate member, Arik Air, to the Britain-Nigeria Educational Trust. Arik has firmly established itself as Nigeria's leading domestic airline, currently flying on 25 routes within Nigeria and the West African region. In December 2008 it launched its first intercontinental route between London and Lagos, flying a brand new Airbus 340-500. The aircraft has the very latest state-of-the-art avionics and a high specification, ultra modern interior with a two-cabin format. Passengers in Premier Class can enjoy their own private booths with in-seat massage system and 17" TV monitors, as well as bar facility complete with surrounding lounge area. Economy Class passengers have 50% more leg room than competing carriers on the same route.

Arik Air flies daily from London Heathrow Terminal 2; departing 22:05 hrs and arriving in Murtala Muhammed Airport, Lagos at 04:30 hrs the following day. Return flights depart from Lagos every morning at 11:35hrs, arriving back to Heathrow at 18:20hrs. For specific flight information, enquiries and bookings please telephone customer services on 0844 482 2324 or visit Arik Air's website www.arikair.com

[Mrs Anne Gardner, MBE](#) – congratulations go to Anne who was awarded her MBE for services to the charity 'Crumbs', which she founded in 1997. This Bournemouth charity is dedicated to helping disabled people re-establish their lives in the community through workplace training for employment and independent living.

❑ **In Memoriam**

◆ **Richard Barlow-Poole, CBE** who died on September 4, 2008. Anthony Kirk-Greene writes:

'Richard Barlow-Poole, who died in September 2008, had a distinguished career in Northern Nigeria as a member of the Colonial (Administrative) Service. Born in 1919 and educated at Marlborough College and Cambridge University (1938-40), he joined the Colonial Service in 1947 after war service, in which he reached the rank of major. Posted to Nigeria as ADO Abuja, he was almost immediately transferred to Kaduna as Private Secretary-cum-ADC to the Chief Commissioner. Returning from the 2nd Devonshire Course back at Cambridge in 1949, he spent the next seven years in Sokoto and Borno Provinces before once again (so well-thought of he was, in the Service) being posted to Government House, this time as PS to the Governor-General in Lagos in 1956. Such was the speed of his well-deserved promotion, from GH to Administrator of Kaduna and acting Resident of Adamma, that he was advanced to the rank of Senior DO in 1957, exceptionally within ten years of his first appointment. Posted to the Kaduna Secretariat in 1959, he first became deputy permanent Secretary to the Minister of Health and then permanent Secretary of the Ministry Lands and Survey. His final posting was Commissioner of Native Courts, 1960-68. He had been awarded the CBE in 1964.

On retirement he acquired an appointment in 1968 at Cambridge, in the University Administration, where, along with a Fellowship at Christ's College, he gave twenty years of devoted service to both institutions. It was here, too, that his huge enthusiasm persuaded the Chairman of the Britain-Nigeria Association, Lord Grey, to set up a branch of the BNA at Cambridge, in which Richard Barlow-Poole was the dominant and successful figure. He retired from Cambridge University in 1987.'

◆ **Mrs Elnora Ferguson** who died on December 10, 2008.

◆ **Mrs Bridget Tritton** who died on January 6, 2009.

◆ **Mrs Winifred Broadbent** a founder member of the BNA who died on March 14, 2009.

We extend our sympathy and condolences to their families and friends.

EDUCATIONAL UPDATES

□ University of Benin

The E-Learning Centre, funded by the Trust, became operational at the end of last year following installation of additional equipment necessary for internet connectivity. This included access to the eGranary digital library at the University of Iowa, teaching facilities and the provision of educational software. The whole facility is proving very popular with both the students and teachers.



As can be seen from the above pictures, only half of the library project has been completed and the Trustees have agreed to consider, subject to the availability of adequate funds, expanding the E-Learning Centre during 2009 by another 50 computers.

□ Students

Student Kachi Ozumba, who received a grant of £1,500 in support of his studies for a Master's in Creative Writing at the University of Leeds, gained his degree with distinction. He also won the Penguin Prize and is now having his first novel *The Shadow of a Smile* published by Alma Books in October this year. Another student, Femi Famodile, was given a grant of £500 to study at Sheffield Hallam University and, having gained his Master's in Information Technology Security Systems is now gaining work experience with the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. In Nigeria student Ursula Edina, who received a four-year scholarship to study Industrial Chemistry at Delta University, has obtained her degree with honours.

□ Umutu Girls' Boarding School

The first stage in the construction of this girls' secondary school at Umutu, which has been named the Immaculate Conception Girls' Secondary School, is almost complete. A three-classroom block is nearly ready while the first hostel, which can accommodate 60 students, has been finished.



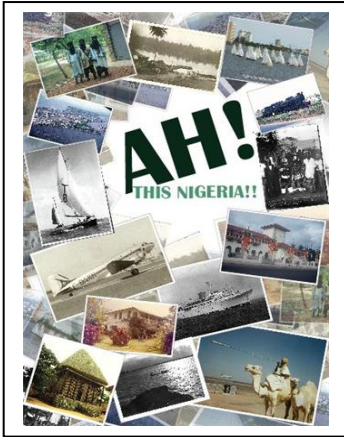
The school will be managed by a team from the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception and pictured left is the Head Mistress standing by the newly erected school signboard. It is anticipated the school will accept its first intake of students later this year.

□ Acknowledgement

Mr David Brandler is currently undertaking an inspection visit to our various projects in Nigeria. Our grateful thanks go to Arik Air who, in support of the Trust, has generously provided him with a Premier Class return air ticket to Lagos. His comprehensive programme will include visits to Benin, Umutu, Lagos and Abuja. Another Trustee, Bayo Oladimeji, has just visited Kaduna for meetings with the National Teachers Institute to discuss furthering our Tafawa Balewa Teacher Award Scheme that enables selected teachers upgrade their skills.

NOTICEBOARD

- **Ah! This Nigeria!!** is a wonderful collection of over 300 amusing and informative anecdotes, copiously illustrated, covering over 70 years of expatriate life in Nigeria from the 1930s to the present-day.



As the traditional expatriate life - in the old sense of a stay lasting several years - draws to a close, it seems almost criminal that the memories of those who have passed through this fascinating country have in many cases not been recorded in detail. This anthology is the result and has been appropriately titled *Ah! This Nigeria!!*, a Nigerian expression often used more in exasperation than in anger. This book is, needless to say, full of such situations.

You will read and laugh about meeting one of Africa's worst dictators, the wonders of local medicine, wearing Victorian dress at Lagos Airport, colonial government, National service in Nigeria, playing sports, air travel through the decades, escaping from a civil war, dealing with officialdom, running a ferry service in the creeks or just the daily trials of simply "managing" in Nigeria, be it at home, in the office or during time off.

If you ever worked in Nigeria or had friends who did then this book, which has approximately 380 A4 pages, is for you. It costs £33.00 including UK inland postage and may be ordered through Alec Travers at:

White Rose Cottage, Conghurst Lane, Four Throws, Hawkhurst, Cranbrook, Kent, TN18 5DZ.
Tel. No. 01580 – 753347, or email at alectravers40@hotmail.com.

Proceeds of this book will go to the Ishahayi Beach School Foundation, Lagos.

□ **West African Archaeology Conference**

The Nigerian Field Society (UK Branch) is co-sponsoring with the University of Sheffield a West African Archaeology Conference which takes place in the Humanities Research Institute, Leavygreave Road, Sheffield over the weekend of 27th & 28th June. The organiser of this summer symposium, Dr Philip Allsworth-Jones, is bringing together a number of eminent speakers who will cover a wide range of aspects within the subject covering new developments and new perspectives. Saturday will be a full day with lunch at the University and an informal evening dinner will be arranged for members of the NFS to which BNET members will be most welcome. On the Sunday those attending will meet for lunch in Castleton or, for those more intellectually immersed in archaeology, there is a morning workshop concentrating on ethno-archaeology.

There is a registration fee of £30. Further information and Booking Forms may be obtained through our member Sheila Everard (NFS Secretary), 3 Hill Meadows, High Shincliffe, Durham DH1 2PE (telephone 0191 384 5830) or by e-mail at sheilaeverard@shincliffe68.freeserve.co.uk. Applications by Monday 1st June 2009.

□ **Five Years in The White Man's Grave**

This is a book about an education officer in Nigeria, 1928-33, written by Geoffrey Webb. Most of Geoffrey Webb's account of his period in Nigeria - Bornu, Zaria, Kaduna, Bida, Ilorin, Omu - was first published, in instalments, illustrated with his photographs, in the Leicester Evening Mail, in November 1936. Here is the full version, with additional notes by his sons Adrian and Nigel who both served in Africa.

Proficient in Hausa, Geoffrey Webb took a strong and well-observed interest in local customs, as is evident from his account. Later, in collaboration with Captain Frank William Taylor, he wrote *Labarun Al'adun Hausawa da zantatukansu* (*Accounts and conversations describing certain customs of the Hausas*), published by Oxford University Press in 1932 as No. 7 in 'Taylor's Fulani-Hausa series' of language books and readers.

Anthony Kirk-Greene writes: 'This is a really delightful memoir ... a first class read ... Unusual among the Colonial Service memoirs which have become familiar reading since the 1980s, here is a classic of a much earlier era. It is the almost tangible intensity of personal relations with Nigerians as much as the standard pleasures (and problems) of life and society on a small station ... that will emerge with poignancy and pleasure to grip many a reader. *Five Years* is surely one of the most attractive, honest and readable personal memoirs of Colonial Service work and life in an earlier Nigeria that I have had the pleasure of reading ... a truly enjoyable and valuable new source...'

Price (UK): £8.95 + £1.50 post & packing. To order please send a sterling cheque in advance by post to:

Legini Press, 29 Well Street, Langham, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 7JS.
Or use credit card or Paypal on www.leginipress.co.uk

