

# Olney—Newton Link

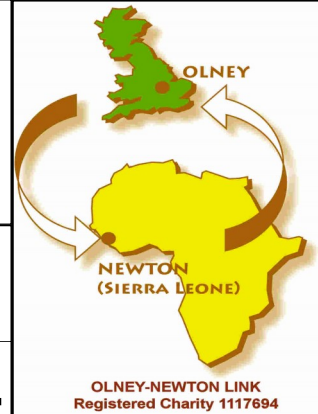
*"To advance education and to relieve poverty*

*in the village of Newton, Sierra Leone, by the provision of charitable assistance"*

**November 2015**

[www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk](http://www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk)

**ONLY**

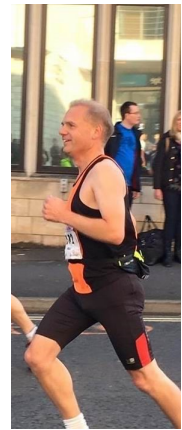


## In this edition...



What's happening here? Look at page 6

Who is this?  
Why is he running?  
The answer  
is on page 7



The audience is spellbound on page 5



A special month. Details on page 3

Do you grow these?  
Why is the Link  
involved?

Find out on page 4



BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURE FOR MONEY SENT £1000 FOR AFRICA				
SCHOOL WHICH IS EQUIVALENT TO £7,000,000				
DATE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
06/07/15				
	Iron Rods to cast pillars	140 pcs	55.00	2,200.00
	Bricks	64 pcs	35.00	2,240.00
	Stonings	20 pcs	20.00	400.00
	Sticks	75,000	35.00	10,500.00
	Sand	30 cu m	140.00	4,200.00
	Cement	18 bags	140.00	2,520.00
	Gravel	1 double m3	500.00	500.00
	Transportation			2,000.00

Thank you! Read page 2

An Ebola vaccine.... page 9

The BBQ.... page 5

Schools' News... page 8

Newton life... page 10



# The Newton Preschool



Work on building the preschool is continuing, although the rains have been so heavy (you may have read about the severe flooding in Freetown) that progress has slowed. To date we have sent out over £8000 which is about three quarters of the total amount needed. The Newton Committee is so grateful for the help we are giving through fundraising and donations.



Mabinty Sesay keeps us up to date with expenditure through accounts sent using WhatsApp - the e mail system is still not functioning well. She sent this on 26th October:

*There is not much progress with the pre school for now. Up to this time The rains come on regular basis and it is too heavy. We don't want to suffer loss in this project. We have decided to wait by the end of November we do the work. We have paid for materials we know will be more costly in the dries for example boards, cement and sand.*

*The next thing I have to do is to send the budget for the school furniture, because in the dries boards will be more expensive. The pineapple we are doing the planting right now.*

*Thanks for all the good work. God bless you.*

*Mabinty*

Labour to fill foundations

Stones

Grindstones

Workmanship

DATE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
06/10/15	Labour to fill foundation	-	-	2,500,000
	Stones hold - -	10 trips	250,000	2,500,000
	Grind stones - -	2 double trip	500,000	1,000,000
	Workmanship - -	-	-	1,000,000
				3,000,000

Iron rods for pillars

Boards

Stamps

Sticks

Sand

Cement

Stones

DATE	DETAILS	AMOUNT	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
06/10/15	Iron Rods to cast pillars	40 pcs	55,000	2,200,000
	Boards - - -	64 pcs	35,000	2,240,000
	Stamps - - -	20 pcs	20,000	400,000
	Sticks - - -	-	-	105,000
	Sand - - -	6 bags	35,000	400,000
	Cement - - -	3 bags	110,000	400,000
	Stones - - -	18 bags	100,000	720,000
	Transportation - - -	1 double trip	500,000	500,000
				2,555,000
				3,000,000

# Black History Month



The ONL display at the museum — we hope you saw it

**Black History Month** is an annual observance for the remembrance of important people and events in the history of the African diaspora. It was first celebrated in the United Kingdom in 1987.

The Olney Newton Link has put up a display at the Cowper and Newton Museum, showing what life is like in Newton today.



Newton—The Skills Centre



All about the schools...



The children...

## **ONL Trustees**

Anne McCallum—Chair

Rachel Lintern—Vice Chair  
Tricia Selwood—Treasurer  
Janet Howe—Secretary

Contact Anne at  
43 Carey Way, Olney, Bucks, MK46 4DR  
Tel: 01234 711196

Liz Brewster  
Paul Collins  
Chloe Kegg  
Tom James  
Paula Noble  
Brian Partridge  
Glenn Selwood  
Marilyn Watkins  
Sheila Woodhead

## **ONL Committee, Newton**

Valicious King—Chair  
Abu Bakarr Fofana—Secretary  
Mabinty Sesay—Treasurer  
Oseh Jones  
Mariatu Kamara  
Mohamed Koroma  
Mohamed Y Sesay  
Doris Harding  
Unisa Turay



# Pineapples

A group of local Newton women set up a cooperative pineapple farm. We first became aware of the project two years ago and we succeeded in finding a little sponsorship from a local company for it. Unfortunately its progress was hindered by the Ebola emergency. Mabinty, the Newton Committee Treasurer is managing this project and she contacted me again a couple of weeks ago saying they were making progress with it again.

She sent me some photographs and I asked Mabinty what the cost of the pineapple suckers would be and how they were planning on making it self financing. The cost is Le300 /sucker and they have to pay someone to clear the land.

In answer to my request for more details of their business plan and how they intend to make it self supporting, Mabinty wrote:

*Our business plan is, we decided to seek help from donors to plant 70000 pineapple suckers. We have already planted 20000 last year. This year we have planted 15000. We decided to do it by phases, every year we do the planting as we continue to seek for funds. Out of those plants we will get suckers from after harvest. The first plants suppose to produce this year but was burnt by wildfire. The products we will sell to the factory and fresh market. After harvest the plant will produce suckers, if we want we will sell or we continue planting.*

Wildfire is a hazard we haven't actually met before but is just one of the problems encountered by these poor souls , others being flash floods, severe drought and insect swarms. The Trustees have sent £250 to finance the purchase of suckers and hope this will be enough to enable the project to become viable again. Work has started: Mabinty's message (see page 2) on 26th October said *The pineapple we are doing the planting right now.*

Rachel Lintern



# The BBQ

was a great success and raised £760 for the preschool, thanks to your generous donations.

Chefs at work preparing the excellent food



So difficult to choose...



A delicious lunch with super salads

All the desserts so yummy!



A hot and sunny day, wonderful!



# The Concert: Music for Newton

I asked those who were there for comments about the concert. "An excellent evening!" "Gorgeous music!"

Thank you, Catherine, for another wonderful evening of delightful music. Many of the pieces chosen were new to people—and one was a special composition by Michael Rose, which the young musicians' group called 'Leapfrog', a cheeky piece which was very lively.

The wine and nibbles at the interval were a great success. Catherine apologised but really the noise from the club next door wasn't a problem.

The concert raised £500 and, even better, this has since been matched with a donation of £500 from someone who wishes to remain anonymous. We and the people of Newton are so grateful to you.



## Music for Newton

Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30 pm  
at the United Reformed Church,  
High Street, Olney, Bucks.

### An evening of classical strings

The Newton Ensemble  
Conducted by Catherine Rose  
Lesley Newing - Leader

Including music by:  
Walter - Purcell - Respighi  
Torelli - Michael Rose  
...and others



Tickets: £10. Concessions: £8 (Under 18s free.)  
On the door or in advance from:  
C.T. Wilson (44, High Street) and Orchard Press (Stanley Court)

Refreshments available  
In aid of the Olney-Newton Link





# Zip a de do dah!



Ever since I first saw the zip wire over the disused quarry in Bethesda quarry in North Wales, I wanted to do it. It's the longest in Europe and the fastest in the world, with some people reaching speeds of up to 120mph. When my cousin said she would do it with me I jumped at the chance to do it for a good cause and what better reason than raising money to build the pre-school for children affected by the Ebola outbreak in Newton, Sierra Leone.

The day was booked - 16<sup>th</sup> August at 10.40 am. Everybody kept asking me if I was nervous but in all honesty I wasn't at all afraid just excited. That could be seen on my beaming face as I was putting on the equipment. We had to wear a fetching red jump suit, a harness, a helmet and goggles. We were allowed to take a camera or a mobile with us as the harness had a pocket, so I managed to take a few photos during the experience.

Before we could do the big zip wire they walked us up to smaller one where they tightened our harnesses and attached us to the cable. I was now horizontal and looking down but felt incredibly safe. My cousin was on the second wire and we set off together. It must have lasted only about 25 seconds but was amazing. The worst part was standing when we arrived at the end, as the harness I was wearing was very heavy.

After waiting for the others in our group to come down the zip wire, we all got in to a red truck which was to take us to the top of the quarry; a journey lasting about 15 minutes. The views of Snowdonia and Anglesey took my breath away. The driver kindly stopped just before we got to the top so we could watch two people go right over our heads on the zip wire. Some people were by now very nervous but not me!

At the top I managed to text my daughters and husband to tell them we would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> couple going down so that they had their cameras ready. Luckily I was the only one wearing a red helmet in my group and I also had a pair of bright turquoise trainers on, so I was easy to spot. Again we were attached to the wire and horizontal to the ground. The ride down lasted about a minute but what a spectacular minute it was. We went over a lake which was a deep shade of blue due to the slate surrounding it. The sea was ahead and the mountains to my right. I could feel the wind pushing my cheeks back as I sped along. There was also a huge drop below me. Nearing the end I could see my family waving but I couldn't wave back as my arms were holding on to my harness behind me- presumably to make me more aerodynamic! As I approached the platform I had to hold my arms out to slow me down. All too soon it was over. I felt exhilarated. To date I have raised £1003 including gift aid. Thank you to all those who have sponsored me. Building work has already started on the pre-school and hopefully we will soon have raised enough money to complete it.

Marilyn Watkins

# Paul's Marathon

Paul Pickard (Rachel's son-in-law) visited Sierra Leone last year for Claire and Mahmoud's wedding. Last month he decided to run the York Marathon and raised £421 for the Preschool. A very great achievement for him personally and wonderful to raise so much money for the ONL.



A cheerful start



Tough going. Just after 25 miles as they reached the biggest hill on the course.



The Finish line.

Done it!

After I ran (well, part ran, part walked) the London Marathon 20 years ago I always said I would do another one someday so when 12 months ago a friend suggested running this year's Yorkshire Marathon it seemed like a good idea! At that point October 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 seemed a long way off, no need to start those long distance training runs for ages. But time quickly ticks round and soon the weekly runs around Stevenage were getting longer and longer. Still the prospect of running 26.2 miles seemed ambitious. Managing to complete a 20 mile run in the pouring rain on August Bank Holiday Monday finally made me think, you know what just maybe this is possible!

There's no guarantee October in Yorkshire is going to bring glorious weather, but as it turned out conditions that morning were perfect for marathon running (if a little chilly for spectators). The course starts at the university before heading into the city where the Minster rang its bells and thousands lined the streets to greet us runners. Then it was out into the Yorkshire countryside. Past the high fiving priest and the Pipe band and being welcomed to Stamford Bridge (obviously not the one where a certain team in blue play!) by an Elvis impersonator and what seemed like the entire population of the town. The first 20 miles were ticked off nicely, but with marathons it's always the last 6 that will get you. The aim was to run under 4 hours and with 6 to go that was definitely on.

At times it seemed like those last few miles would never end, but despite a nasty little hill in the final mile the finish line was finally in sight. The clock was stopped on 3 hours 49 minutes, the training had all been worth it!

Of course as I met up with my friend who had also run the initial talk was along the lines of "never again" but did we mean it? Definitely not, by the time we were half way back down the A1 I was already talking about the next one! And having visited Sierra Leone last year the thought that my efforts may have helped a little there too made it even more worthwhile.

Paul Pickard



# Buy a brick appeal

In September, Olney Middle School and Olney Infant Academy decided to help the Olney- Newton Link with their fundraising for building a Pre-school in Newton, Sierra Leone, for children aged 4 -8 affected by the Ebola outbreak. Children were encouraged to buy a brick for a £1. Their names were then put on a paper brick and displayed in their respective schools. In total £619 was raised.



The schools sent money to Newton during the Ebola outbreak, so that radios could be bought for the children. Educational programmes were broadcast to help them keep up with their schooling.



Thanks to Olney Town Football Club this local Newton team is sporting new kit.



# New Ebola Vaccine found

The Link are thrilled and relieved to hear that a vaccine to end Ebola has finally been found. Trials which have been taking place in Guinea (neighbouring Sierra Leone) have proved to be 100% successful.

We say 'finally found' as nearly 4,000 people have died in Sierra Leone (3585 quoted on National Ebola Response Centre, 3951 quoted by the BBC and Centers for Disease Control). 11,284 people have died internationally. However, scientists have heralded the vaccine as remarkable due to the 'unprecedented speed with which the development of the vaccine and the testing were carried out' (Guardian newspaper, 31 July 2015).

Yet again, the country will have to rebuild itself. This is desperately sad as following the horrific Civil War, Sierra Leone felt that it was finally getting back on its feet. Although listed as number 183 out of 187 countries on the United Nations 'Human Development Index 2013' – a rank which shows how a country compares to the rest of the World in terms of life expectancy/poverty/education etc. – Sierra Leone had expectations of great improvements and was slowly climbing the list.

The 2015 UNDP index is yet to be released. However, we suspect that this upward trend has been brought to a halt. Life expectancy was quoted as being 45.5 years in 2013 – a terribly young age. What will it be in 2015?

One of the biggest catastrophes in Sierra Leone is the number of orphan children that have been created. These children have watched their Mums, Dads, brothers, sisters and community surrounding them die – they must take priority. Because of poverty levels (72.68% below the poverty line in 2013), taking on care of the children is a huge undertaking. Even though Ebola has hopefully been wiped out, we mustn't stop helping!

Trials of the vaccine have been funded by the World Health Organisation and a number of countries such as Norway, Canada and Great Britain. The British Government provided £1m of funding and has pledged more to ensure testing continues and is started in Sierra Leone and other countries.

For more information on the vaccine, follow this link to the Guardian newspaper website:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jul/31/ebola-vaccine-trial-proves-100-successful-in-guinea>

Chloe Kegg

Editor's Note: As I am compiling this newsletter, a British nurse lies seriously ill in London due to the Ebola virus flaring up again and causing meningitis.

# Going shopping...

These photographs were taken at the market in Newton.



Dried fish is a vital part of the diet



Shoes are made from old tyres



Cassava and Yams provide carbohydrates



The indoor part of the market—vital in the rainy season



Friendly faces—"Snap me!"



A long walk home with a heavy load.



# Are You Coming To The Quiz?

**Which 3 words appear on  
the helmet in the poster  
for Stanley Kubrick's  
1987 film 'Full Metal  
Jacket'?**



Know the answer or want to know... or just enjoy quizzes... if so grab some friends and join in our Quiz Night in aid of **The Olney-Newton Link**.

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**7.15pm arrival for a prompt start at 7.30pm**

**At The Olney Centre**

**Teams of up to 6 - £8:50 per person including  
supper & soft drinks.**



Tickets are available from Orchard Press or CT Wilson. Enquiries ring 01234 711751 or 01234 711196.

<http://www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk>

Tickets from Orchard Press or CT Wilson

*Would you like to write something for the newsletter?*

*E mail to Janet Howe at  
olneynewtonlinknewsletter@gmail.com*

*By Friday January 16th 2016 please*



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS 2015

Friday 20th November	Quiz Night, 7.15 for 7.30pm. Tickets £8.50 from Rachel
Sunday 6th December	Dickens Day. Support our stall— why not donate a bottle?
Saturday 30th January	Race Night at Carlton House Club
March—date to follow	Soup Lunch
Friday April 8th	Cheese and Wine Evening at 40 Midland Road

More details can be found on our website: [www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk](http://www.olneynewtonlink.org.uk)

### CORPORATE MEMBERS SCHEME

We are fortunate to receive support from local businesses, both financial and practical. Corporate members sponsor the Link's work through a series of packages:

**Bronze Membership**, £100 per annum – Benefits:- your website link and name on ONL's website.

**Silver Membership**, £150 per annum – Benefits:- your website and name and description on ONL's website and your company name and logo in our newsletter.

**Gold Membership**, £200 per annum – Benefits:- your website name and link and profile (maximum 30 words) on ONL's website and listing as sponsor in newsletter and logo.

**Platinum Membership**, £500 per annum - Benefits; link, profile (maximum 200 words) on ONL website, logo and advert carrying their logo in newsletter

#### GOLD

	<b>Ashwood Chimneys</b> is a professional, highly accredited, family run company based in Olney which undertakes and specialises in all aspects of chimney works within the Beds, Bucks and Northants area.
	<b>David Coles Architects</b>
	<b>J Garrard &amp; Allen</b> , Solicitors, has been established for over 200 years. The firm has a local and international clientele. We like to provide a friendly, efficient and prompt service to our clients, many of whom have been with us for years. The firm is pleased to sponsor the Link's work. For more details of the areas of law covered by the firm, please view the website— <a href="http://www.jgalaw.co.uk">www.jgalaw.co.uk</a>
	<b>Heron Opticians</b> a friendly, professional family business.
	<b>Stephen Oakley</b>

#### SILVER

	<b>Souls Garages</b>
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#### BRONZE