



Chairman's welcome

A warm welcome to you all and it is good to have the chance to update you on progress with BOAT. It has been a busy time. We said farewell to the 2013 course participants and we are in the process of recruiting for 2014. In fact we hope to have up to 10 students on the course next year. The course is getting more widely known and our students and their sponsors value it highly.

All of this costs money to get them here and provide for them whilst they are in residence at Bicton College. Strategically we plan to expand our activities both in the UK and abroad. In order to achieve this we shall need to attract more funding. My thanks go to those who already provide us with generous support. Any help from readers on new sources of money will be very welcome,

I am pleased to welcome two new Trustees of BOAT: Chris Finney and Adrian Gaunt. Both live locally and have extensive experience in the developing world. A list of all the Trustees is now on the web site.

Fred Harper Chairman of BOAT

Tractor Raffle a Huge Success

The little grey Ferguson TE A-20 tractor has almost completed its journey. Kufbert, as it is affectionately known, was finally raffled off at the Newark Vintage Tractor Show on Sunday 10th November. There was massive interest in the draw and nearly 16,000 tickets were sold since it started its journey after the rebuild by Bicton College students and staff at the Devon County Show in May.

The draw was made by Rebecca Mear, the daughter of Penny Mear who in turn donated the tractor to BOAT in fitting memory of her late husband Steve. The tickets were all placed in a large dumpy bag at the Newark Show. BOAT congratulates the winners and thanks everyone who bought tickets for supporting our work.

The winners were:

1. Winner of the tractor- Mr George Taylor from Woolhope near Hereford.
2. Winner of £250- M Kellaway from Grantham in Lincolnshire.
3. Winner of £100- Mr Pete Hawes from Diss in Norfolk.

Congratulations from the Ed

'As Chairman I would like to thank Bill and June Vellacott for the tremendous amount of work and time they have put into this success story. I would also like to thank those who were present in Newark who helped with the final push on sales and folding the stubs; these include Mick and Heather Merritt, Catriona Paton and Les and Ruth Arnold. We acknowledge with great gratitude the support of our generous sponsors including Vapormatic, Firestone, Tractor and Machinery magazine and Oakham Treasures. The tractor has not quite finished its journey. A presentation ceremony will be arranged to officially hand over the tractor and the key.'

Fred Harper



Improving Agriculture Through Training

Students at the Presentation Evening 2013 at Fursdon House (from left to right: Blessings Kambombo, Janeth Bendera, Darlington Nkenwa, Mark Phiri, Smorden Tomoka and William Moshi



Janeth Bendera receives her Certificates from Catriona Fursdon at the 2013 Presentation Evening

Farewell to the course of 2013

The six students from the 2013 have all returned safely to their homes. Many of us said a fond farewell to them on 23 May at Fursdon House by kind permission of David and Catriona Fursdon. It was a windy night but it was reassuring to meet with them and hear their favourable comments on the course. All of them were successful on the course and received their 30 credits. They have now received their certificates. Bill Vellacott and I attended the Bicton Higher Education Awards Ceremony in late September. I had the pleasure of saying a few words about the course and read out the names of the students. Copies of the proceedings will be sent to the students.

Applications increase for 2014

The process of recruiting students for the 2014 course is well under way. Over 20 applications have been received from good applicants in Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Liberia, Tanzania and Ghana. The course is becoming well-known and we could take more students than we have funds to support. However thanks to the fundraising activities of Bill and others we plan to take ten students subject to the good sense and will of the UK Border Agency which issues visas.

The course has been slightly modified in the light of feedback from last year's students and staff. Students should arrive on 23 April 2014 and be ready to start work. The Opening Ceremony will be held on Monday 28th April at 12.30 pm at Bicton College. Further details will be included in the next Newsletter and posted on the web site

An evening on The Gambia

Over 50 people gathered at the Fingle Glen Golf Club and Hotel on 27th September for a Supper and Speaker evening. David Wendover and Mike Pash gave an informative and interesting talk on the experiences of the Friends of BOAT group which visited The Gambia in December 2012. The title of the talk was "Agriculture in The Gambia and the work of BOAT". A good night was had by all at this new venue for us and £150 was raised for BOAT. Thanks to all who supported this event.



Two community farmers in a Gambian Farm Project