



Spring is around the corner just in time for our Spring Sale and Grand Draw. Lorna Brown, our chair, has just returned from Uganda with the latest news from the projects, but our big and very exciting news at the moment is that we shall be welcoming Moses Ekoi and his wife Hellen to Wales for the very first time. It's all still in the planning stage but we are hoping it will be in June. Moses has never been able to leave the projects he is responsible for in Ngora and, for the same reason, he will not be staying long, unfortunately, but we will make the most of their visit. We will update the website, Facebook page and Twitter with details when we know them.



Please support our
GRAND DRAW

And the chance to win cash prizes of
£50, £25 and 4 prizes of £10
All prizes donated

The draw will take place at 1.30 pm at our Spring Sale and tickets will be on sale up to that time.

If you want to buy tickets or could help by selling tickets please contact Emyr Owen on 01681 656961 or email emyr.owen.bron@btinternet.com

GOAT BREEDING PROGRAMMES

Our two programmes are doing well, thanks to the care of our two Moses in Ngora and Kamuli and the work Lorna does when she is over there. This is our core activity and how Dolen Ffermio all began, of course.

Ngora goat unit: the breeding stock now comprises 50 adult and 5 maiden does either cross breeds, (local x Boer, or local x Mubende) or pure Mubende Elite. There are 4 young Mubende Elite bucks. The unit structure is presently being improved, with a new female house, and a dividing fence so that fodder plants and pasture can be grown. When this is complete we will acquire new Mubende breeding stock to replace ageing crossbreds.

Sheep: We now have 11 local and several 25% Dorper cross lambs from our Dorper cross ram. Now that we know sheep are surviving happily in our unit, we would like to source a pure Dorper ram.



Don't miss the Dolen Ffermio

SPRING SALE

And the chance to buy plants of all kind for your gardens.
 Along with Ugandan crafts, bargains, collectables, household items, books, CD's and DVD's, clothing – plus refreshments and a raffle.

Saturday, 11 May 10 am to 2 pm.
 In the Institute, Llanfyllin

Winners of the Grand Draw announced at 1.30 pm and tickets on sale until then.

Contributions most welcome. Please contact Lorna Brown on 01691 648709 or email uk@lornabrown.net



Moses and helper with Dorper cross lamb

More information on our website and keep a lookout for more regular updates on Twitter as @dolenffermio and Facebook as Dolen Ffermio. Contact us on hello@dolenffermio.org.uk or phone Emyr Owen on 01691 656961, If you would like to be removed from the mailing list please let us know and also if you have an email address we could use.

Goat breeding programmes continued ...

Kamuli Unit: a community Artificial Insemination programme, in September, using one of our Boer bucks on local females, was successful at nearly 60% conception, and produced very good kids. Unfortunately we lost several Boer goats, owing to complications in late pregnancy and suspected plant poisoning. We hope to build up the herd with Mubende or good crossbreds and continue the embryo transfer programme.

Photo opposite
1 month old AI kid with keeper



GREAT PROGRESS ON THE KAMULI LAND

Though we were unsuccessful in our bid for funds last year from the Welsh Government to establish a tree and bamboo nursery in both Kamuli and Ngora, we did succeed in January this year, with a smaller application, £4868, for the Kamuli nursery and a target planting programme of 40,000 trees and bamboos. This project is funded by the Welsh Government's Wales Africa grant scheme, administered by WCVA. It will involve 9 schools (7 primary and 2 secondary) and the 5 Kamuli teachers whom we funded to attend a Permaculture Design course in December 2018 will play a large part. It will also involve 300 local community households, where a youth group has been formed to facilitate this. All these individuals, the schools and the wider community will greatly benefit from the project, along with considerable benefits to the environment in the whole area.

There have been harvests of maize, cabbages, aubergines, coffee (small at first because of drastic pruning on the old bushes), oranges (which are



Charles, Lorna, Dorine, Connie Kauma and Moses Kitimbo welcoming Dorine, a new member of the team

recovering from drought and black spot disease). The cassava looks particularly healthy but will not be harvested for a year. Beans have not done well but soil tests have been done to find out why. Most of the revenue from the crops is still being returned to the land for clearing new areas, buying seeds, etc. Paul Musenero has started off the livestock plan by building some pig pens and has donated a young sow from his own herd. There are now 3 paid workers for the land, at very low cost, their wages supplemented by produce.

The valley dam and swales, which were funded by members following an appeal by Tom Paddon at the 2018 AGM, are proving a great success. A pump and storage tank are now badly needed for irrigation of the nursery area

and we are trying to raise funds for these.

The accommodation platform has been completed and now awaits a thatched roof, walls and partitions to make it suitable for visitors and volunteers. Judith Howells from Llanfyllin, who specialises in low impact building methods in countries like Uganda, was able to visit Kamuli in December (completely at her own expense, as everyone does) for over 3 weeks to design and oversee the construction of a meeting house for the team and which is also used by the local community for their meetings. Judith used local materials and labour and trained a number of people so that they can continue building similar structures.



Paul Musenero and Charles Mugarura checking the cassava crop



The meeting house being constructed

A TREE AND BAMBOO NURSERY FOR NGORA!

Thanks to a remarkably generous donation, which we were thrilled to receive recently, we will now be able to establish a much needed tree and bamboo nursery in Ngora, as well as in Kamuli. Deforestation is a huge problem in Ngora with all the consequences for the environment and water retention, as you can see from the photo of Moses Ekoi talking to Charles Mugarura, our permaculture consultant, about the dire situation. Not so many years ago Moses says that you couldn't see across this piece of land because it was completely covered by trees. This donation will enable him to develop animal fodder trees as well as all the varieties of fruit and timber seedlings needed by the community. He has planted a field of forage sweet potatoes for the goats on his own land and has also raised hundreds of orange tree seedlings for the children's gifts on the NOVC project.



Moses talking to Charles about the catastrophic disappearance of trees

3 teachers from Ngora attended the Permaculture Design Course in Western Uganda, led by Charles. They will be involved in introducing permaculture to their schools and the tree nursery development and are presently making preparations, with Charles, for a permaculture training course in Ngora district in December this year.

REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT BY SOLAR PROJECT IN NGORA

In the 2 years since the solar project started, 1755 lanterns have been sold and 100 home installations completed for lighting, refrigeration, radio, TV and phone charging. Larger solar systems have been installed in schools (15 primary and 5 secondary), 6 health centres and 6 government offices or staff houses. So nearly 2000 households, 20 schools and 12 workplaces now have some form of safe lighting. A remarkable achievement by our colleagues. The aim of our social enterprise Teso Energy and Construction Company, is to light up as many community homes as possible to replace smoky, dangerous, kerosene lanterns and candles, and to install solar power in local institutions. Ugandan national grid power is extremely expensive. The solar lanterns for school students (many of which are given to the children on the NOVC project) are very popular, enabling them to study when the sun goes down early in the evening.



This classroom now has 2 light bulbs thanks to the solar panel installed at the school

The construction side of the company started well with small contracts, and now has a tipper truck, but faces an obstacle in its pursuit of larger government contracts as the government has now stipulated that there has to be £20,000 deposited in the bank before it can bid for these larger contracts. This is clearly beyond their means, as well as ours to help.

THE ALL IMPORTANT FUNDRAISING

We have these wonderful projects and equally wonderful partners, all of them striving to become self-supporting. Until they reach that point, please help us to support them, as so many of you have done so generously in the past in various ways. We have had many donations from individuals and organisations and we were thrilled to receive £220 raised by the pupils of Llanfyllin Primary School from their Harvest Thanksgiving last year. We did well at Christmas time, with Jake Garland, one of our younger members who has visited Uganda, raising £268 from a gig he organised at the Cross Keys after the Llanfyllin Christmas market. At the Market we raised £206, our best ever result from a produce and gift stall. We were very grateful to receive a large donation from the funeral of the husband of a very good supporter. Thank you to everyone who has donated or supported us in the past 6 months. All money raised goes out to our projects in Uganda, apart from a small amount kept back for postage, printing, audit and bank charges and all UK volunteers are unpaid.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU FROM THE NGORA CHILDREN

The Christmas 2018 catalogue, which raises funds for the Ngora children, did very well last year, with special thanks to the pupils of Llanfyllin Primary School who raised £220. This meant that 30 new children could be recruited in 2019 who will have 3 years on the project and given school uniforms, stationery, shoes, a mosquito net and vital training in a wide variety of income generating and household skills. In 2018 the gifts were changed to include tree seedlings and a solar lamp, together with maize seed. The poultry gifts have been discontinued temporarily until the problems of disease in the area have been resolved, though Moses Ekoi and his team are determined to populate the purpose built poultry house as soon as they can.

Moses, his daughter Ruth and the committee of six work extremely hard to administer the project, organise the activities and monitor the children at home and at the centre, which is Moses' own house and compound. The children attend "Centre Days" once a month (each year group in turn) and that is when the skills training takes place in carpentry, machine and hand sewing, machine knitting, weaving, repairing shoes, cooking, embroidered cloths, making mats, jewellery, etc. Things produced are sold in the community, local markets and some have been brought here to sell.



The knitting machine is very popular during the skills training and earns a good income for the children

As we explained in the Autumn newsletter, the Ngora team are exploring ways in which to adapt the NOVC project in order to benefit more primary school children in view of the large numbers whose families ask for places and who have to be disappointed. In addition, they are very keen to offer support to youngsters at secondary school or who have dropped out because their families cannot afford the fees. The idea is to build a Resource and Training Centre and Moses has bought some land (out of his own money). No further progress has been made and this is clearly a long-term project because of the funding implications.

We are exceedingly grateful to Rachael Sharpe for taking on the day-to-day running of the catalogue and to Cordelia and Dave Goodman for designing and producing the catalogue, to Emyr Owen for the Welsh version and to Eileen Roberts and Cate Wallington for help with the distribution.

Trustee Cordelia Weedon's children's project in nearby Nyero is still going strong with the limited funds she is able to raise herself.

OUR FIRST EVER DINNER A GREAT SUCCESS

We hosted our first ever dinner on Friday evening, 29 March at the Wynnstay Hotel in Oswestry, attended by 58 people. There were two main purposes: to provide an opportunity for existing friends and supporters to get together and to raise the profile of Dolen Ffermio in Oswestry in order to attract new supporters and volunteers.

Emyr Owen, the organiser and our vice chair, commented: "The evening was a great success and, after an excellent meal, Dr Ben Jones gave a very interesting and illuminating talk on village life in rural eastern Uganda. Dr Jones is a social anthropologist who did his PhD research in 2001 near to Ngora. He has just returned from 5 months there on a research fellowship investigating the changes that have taken place since 2001, especially in education".



Left to Right: Oswestry town councillors Duncan Kerr and Olly Rose, Dr Ben Jones, Sandy Best (Mayor of Oswestry), Lorna and Emyr

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