

## NEWS

### 100th Container

On Wednesday 26th April Workaid shipped out its 100th container and honoured the memory of our former General Manager, who died in October 2016.

Container John Fox left The Old Boot Factory en route to Tanzania carrying 10 tonnes of equipment in 905 boxes for 17 self-help groups.

Workaid Chairman Rob Levine, two of John's sons, Adam and Luke, supporters and volunteers gathered to see the event and remember John who served as General Manager from 2013, having started as a volunteer in 2010. Between 1986 and 1994 Workaid project shipments were made to different

parts of the world including the Solomon Islands, India, Guyana and parts of Africa.

It was then decided that it would be more efficient to concentrate our efforts on East Africa, as there were so many project requests from there. In late 1993 the decision was taken to send the first dedicated Workaid container to Kenya. It was shipped in January 1994, after arranging for a partner organisation to accept delivery and oversee distribution to the projects.

The contents of Container John Fox will help change the lives of hundreds of some of the world's poorest people; a fitting tribute to John's work for the charity he was passionate about.



The Workaid website has been updated to support our goal of reaching a new group of donors and volunteers. The hard work of redesigning has been carried out by Sarah Larsen of Larsen Consultants with Tomas Pukalski of Framework Digital, who have been wonderful to work with. The site is now mobile friendly with easy to find features including a new Blog.



Check out our **NEW LOOK** website!

Let us know what you think

[www.workaid.org](http://www.workaid.org)

## VOLUNTEER Focus

If there's an activity in the Hive or a forecourt sale or a Workaid stall somewhere raising awareness, Rosa Maria, one of our most recognisable volunteers, will not be far away. She is always ready to cover for absences and turn her hand to help out at a moment's notice.

Rosa Maria joined us four years ago after 36 years in adult education, latterly at Missenden Abbey. Many of those who come and teach the various Hive classes - from cartooning to knitting with wire - are people she has persuaded to use our space! Many of us have enjoyed being corralled by Rosa Maria into putting up stalls, transporting things and clearing away - these events are no small logistical feat, all of which she takes in her stride.

Rosa Maria is so integral to the proceeds from the Hive and

Craft sales, which are now a significant part of our financial stability. More importantly, they are also a big part of our engagement with the local community and open up opportunities for learning and for developing friendships.

If you would like to join our volunteer teams please contact [admin@workaid.org](mailto:admin@workaid.org)



# ROB'S Uganda Report

By Rob Levine, Workaid Chairman

**In early February I went to Uganda for a short visit. It was a hectic week with three main objectives:**

- To try to persuade the Ugandan government to reinstate our tax-exempt status
- To see the customs clearance process first hand
- To cement relationships with our partners, Interservice, and visit some of the projects we support

Three of the East African countries to which we send consignments levy a customs duty based on a notional value of the items we send (Tanzania being the honourable exception). In keeping with our long-standing approach of minimising charges to the projects, these costs are met by Workaid.

Readers might wonder why there is a charge at all. The background is that a lot of non-charitable organisations were abusing the tax-exemption offered to charities, so the government decided in 2013 that it should be removed. The problem is that genuine charities like us have therefore had to meet increased costs, so we are seeking a 'by exception' reinstatement of the exemption. The reason we are seeking this now in Uganda is that the charges there have been rising rapidly in the last couple of years and are now significantly higher than those levied in Zambia and Kenya.

I met with the Speaker of the House in the Ugandan equivalent of the House of Commons (multiple security checks and phone removal so sadly no photos!) and others

in positions of influence and presented our case. The signs at that meeting and subsequently have been hopeful but the wheels turn a little slowly. I hope to have good news for a future newsletter.

My visit also coincided with the arrival in customs of our container Hosea, so I was able to watch the offloading and inspection process first hand. This was reassuring – the

container storage is secure and the inspection process can only happen with our partners in attendance. Father Alfred and others from Interservice watch like a hawk while boxes are opened, checked and they are then properly re-sealed and packed. The customs people are ensuring that we are only sending what we say we are sending. My visit has led to a couple of tweaks to our packing processes so that the customs

clearance can go as smoothly as possible – thanks to Byron and the packing team for actioning these so quickly!

Interservice do a really good job for us, helping to identify worthwhile projects to support, managing the arrival and distribution of our consignments and navigating the painful customs processes.

The most fulfilling part of the trip as always was the project visits. I met some really inspirational people - people with so much less than we have, who happily give so much more. Mohammed was from the Bwaise slum and had to leave school at 11, to carry water and garbage for others to raise money for his family. With some of the money he made he bought school equipment for other children so that they could carry on at school. Inspired by the difference he was making he set up a fantastic project with three friends from the slum. They now enroll 200 people a year on courses to learn the vocational skills they need to help themselves out of poverty, using the equipment we send them. It really is humbling and inspiring to see these projects in action and meet the people who make them happen!



From left – Kasiringi Eyreza (Kas), Father Alfred Tulu (Interservice), Mohammed, Brian and Richard (BYEC), Nathalie Furaha (Interservice), Rob Levine.



The edge of the Bwaise slum



This year's enrolment session



An aspiring carpenter

## NEW Patron



Peter Harper, Lady Carey and Lord Carey

We are delighted to welcome Lord George Carey of Clifton, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, to our list of patrons. Lord Carey spoke at our 30th anniversary celebrations with enormous wit and wisdom, and even joined in with the drum band dancing! The sense of community at Workaid, and the work we do in Africa clearly struck a chord, he and his wife Eileen greatly enjoyed their tour round the Boot Factory. The addition of such an illustrious name to our patrons will hopefully provide a fillip to our fund-raising and awareness-raising activities.

## NEW Trustee

Richard Canham, a former HR Director, now semi-retired, is a welcome addition to the team of Workaid trustees. His career centred on leadership, personal development, coaching and team working. He was born in Nairobi and spent his very early years in Kenya and Senegal. He feels very fortunate to have found Workaid and to be asked to be part of such a purposeful and focussed charity, which has done so much in a part of the world to which he has a strong commitment. He lives in Chesham Bois with his wife Anne and they have five grandchildren, so far!



## HUB Workshop



Workaid's Hub enables people with learning disabilities to take part in workshop activities. Most of them have finished college courses and need work experience to build up social, communication, teamwork and varied practical skills, supported by an experienced co-ordinator. Tasks are many and varied, including cleaning treadle bases, a favourite job for Sandy Boswell and Eliza Williams, shown here. Their experience in taking part in real work helps these volunteers develop skills in endeavour, patience and teamwork. The Hub team has made many friends and learnt how to act appropriately in the workplace. Workaid is pleased to offer this unique opportunity to people with mild to moderate learning disabilities to help them take a step towards employment.

## HIVE of Activity



You'll be amazed to learn that this April marks four years since our Craft classes began. The years have gone very quickly indeed and we are delighted with the growth and development that crafts at Workaid has experienced. We now have over 500 people on our mailing list and we thank you all for your support and enthusiasm and for your contribution to Workaid in general. A very big thank you also to the tutors and demonstrators who have given their time and expertise so willingly and generously and who have made the whole thing possible. The crafts activity has brought new people to Workaid, new volunteers, new fundraising ideas and of course much enjoyment to the participants, as well as new skills. Details of current classes are on Workaid's website.

## CUNNINGHAM Donation

Frank Cunningham was a volunteer for 27 years. After he sadly passed last year, not only were some of his tools sent to projects in Tanzania in a container named after Frank, but his grandson, Thomas, ran the Bath Half Marathon on behalf of Workaid, raising over £300. The Cunninghams have also paid for an upgrade to the Workaid tea room in remembrance of their father. We are delighted to be able to let volunteers and visitors enjoy such a lovely area thanks to them. Shown here are Nigel & Mark Cunningham holding the Chiltern District Council Award that Frank won last year, with Workaid Chairman Rob Levine and Sylvia Parrott, Patron.



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Workaid will be at the following events, come and join us to say hello!

**20th May:** BBOWT Plant & Produce Market,  
Gt Missenden, HP16 9AE  
[www.bbowl.org.uk](http://www.bbowl.org.uk)

**20th May:** Café Africa, Amersham, HP6 5HN  
[www.cafe-africa.co.uk](http://www.cafe-africa.co.uk)

**27th May:** Donkey Derby & Spring Fair,  
Burnham Park, SL1 6DR  
[www.burnhamdonkeyderby.co.uk](http://www.burnhamdonkeyderby.co.uk)

For further events please visit our website.  
[www.workaid.org](http://www.workaid.org)



## PROJECT FEEDBACK

Workaid recently implemented an online feedback survey form at [www.workaid.coffeecup.com/forms/ProjectFeedbackForm](http://www.workaid.coffeecup.com/forms/ProjectFeedbackForm)

So far, projects in Tanzania and Zambia who received tools in late 2015 or early 2016 have been contacted and 11 projects have completed our survey.

The results are very encouraging:

- 516 additional students have been taken on
- 376 are making and selling products, so help towards their family income
- 341 extra children are being sent to school
- 401 are experiencing an increased standard of living
- 365 are working to develop their own businesses
- 266 are in paid employment using their new skills

WORKAID tackles poverty by providing disadvantaged people with the tools they need to learn a skilled trade and earn a living. The results of this survey show how that is working in practice.

## PARTNERSHIP WITH PHOTOAID

At Workaid we're updating our website and social media presence to support our goal of reaching a new group of donors and volunteers. We have lots of keen but self-taught photographers among our volunteer group. Hooking up with PhotoAid was fortuitous for us. Ness Champion and David Newton came to our workshop and ran a brilliant session for a group of our volunteer enthusiasts, sharing tips and insights about how to take better pictures. We'll use these to enhance all of our PR efforts, and have lots of plans for how we can continue to work with PhotoAid, a partnership that we hope will work well for both of us!

- [www.photoaid.org.uk](http://www.photoaid.org.uk)



Photo © Angus Thomson

## 2016 STATISTICS



In the calendar year 1st January – 31st December 2016

- 7 containers left Chesham: 2 to Kenya, 2 to Tanzania, 2 to Zambia, 1 to Uganda
- Containing consignments for 121 groups
- 5657 boxes of tools and equipment
- 730 sewing machines
- 175 knitting machines
- 726 tool kits for carpentry and other trades
- Also in the same period we sent 7 consignments of un-refurbished tools to Krizevac for Malawi, containing 210 sewing machines, 178 bicycles and other items including books and footwear