

ISAAC NEWTON NEWS

"To reason, not to believe"

July 2010

COMPUTER LAUNCH BRINGS LOTS OF HAPPINESS

By Edward Mugamber (S6)

Great celebrations accompanied the opening of a computer laboratory at Isaac Newton High School.

It was funded by Uganda Humanist Schools Trust. 5th July was a day to remember for both students and the entire community.



Crowds gather for the grand opening of the computer lab

Opening the computer room, Mr Steve Hurd, the leader of the UHST, said computers came to Isaac Newton so the school could compete with other leading institutions, such as Makerere College School, Buddo, St. Marys Kisubi, and Mengo.

Mr Peter Kisirinya, the director of the school, was full of happiness and said: "My dream has been fulfilled because I wanted computers to boost academics and the general welfare of the young generation to match with the growing world."

Mr Kisirinya also said this would not only help students, but the entire community, because they will use the internet to search for commodities and employment. Mr Daniel Stern, who spearheaded wiring the

computers, remarked that if these computers are properly used they would serve for a long time.

The host of the ceremony, Mr Mulwara Ezra, the headteacher of Isaac Newton, said the computers would ease teaching because staff will be able to use computers to research facts to help teach their students. Students, who spent all day smiling and jubilating, were saying long live Isaac Newton High School and long live humanism.

Joan is studying sciences, and said the arrival of computers will give her an opportunity to search all the data she wants. Many political leaders attended the day. Among these were Miss Margaret, a senior health worker and aspiring member of parliament. She thanked Mr

Hurd and his committee for what they had done for this school.

Mr Mutebi, a parliamentary candidate, promised to give whatever possible to see this foundation goes on developing. He promised that, since Isaac Newton aims at welfare maximisation rather than profit-making, he is going to ask for the tax it pays to be reduced. Mr Ssewungu, a teacher who is also aspiring to be a member of parliament, stressed that the computer laboratory is a blessing to Isaac Newton because it will help students as regards politics.

The local community was taken to see the impressive facilities, and the ceremony closed with entertainment accompanied by drinking and eating.

COBRA SCARES STUDENTS



Triumphant students hold up the dead cobra

Students at Isaac Newton got a serious shock on Tuesday, after a two-metre long cobra slithered into the girls' dormitory.

A group of pupils were showing two of the British visitors where they sleep, when they spotted the snake at the window. There were reports that it was hissing loudly, and one onlooker described its face as "very scary-looking". Several of the girls ran from the dormitory, calling for help, and a teacher and some S6 pupils appeared to help. They started by throwing shoes

at it, then beat it with spades, and eventually killed it.

It's thought the cobra climbed ten feet into the room from outside.

The British visitors were impressed by the speed at which the teachers responded. Andrew West said: "They came in incredibly fast – and acted very professionally. They were a credit to Isaac Newton School."

Although Uganda has many species of snake, they don't often come into contact with humans. But everyone present expressed relief that the cobra was spotted and dealt with so quickly.

INHS to make links with UK schools

By Steve Hurd

The Uganda Humanist Schools Association, which helps fund Isaac Newton High School, is working to link the humanist schools in Uganda with schools in Newcastle-under-Lyme in the UK.

This, along with the new computer lab, will allow staff and students to use the internet and email for joint educational projects.

Like other humanist schools in Uganda, Isaac Newton welcomes students from all

backgrounds and educates them to be independently minded, self-reliant and socially concerned.

The school aims to develop a specialism in science. In the past year it has built a new science laboratory and a library. The school promotes excellent reading and communication skills by ensuring that every S1 student has a textbook in every subject. S4 students also have a textbook each, which encourages them to become independent learners and achieve their full potential in O-level examinations. The new computer facilities will allow them to do even better.

MOSQUITO NETS STOP THE SPREAD OF MALARIA

Sleeping under an insecticide treated mosquito net is the best way to protect against malaria, said Professor Hilary Hurd from the UK.

During her talk to students and visitors at Isaac Newton she explained how the malaria parasite only grows in

mosquitoes and people.

A video helped to show how the parasite develops in human blood cells and in the mosquito vector.

She explained how symptoms such as fever and anaemia are caused when the parasite destroys blood cells.



School makes huge progress in short time - says UK visitor

The Isaac Newton High School started in a simple way with one classroom and a few students in 2005. It now has computer facilities to match the best schools in Uganda.

Speaking at the opening of the new 21st century computer lab, Steve Hurd, chairperson of Uganda Humanist Schools Trust (UHST) praised Peter Kisirinya and the staff on the remarkable progress of the school since he first visited us in 2005. The school started with a clear vision of providing secondary education for all students without any form of discrimination. The school has a strong community ethos and helps the community with a “give a pig” project which aims to provide extra income to local farmers.

The school places a strong emphasis on improving students’ reading, writing and speaking. The school has an impressive bookstore provided by UHST. Every S1 and S4 student has a textbook in every subject and there is a

commitment to extending this policy to S2 and S3. In order to improve confidence in speaking in public meetings the school is developing a strong debating tradition. In a recent debate they considered whether the discovery of oil in Uganda would bring more advantages than disadvantages.

At the school students are encouraged to work hard and play hard. They are keen on sport and have a good boys' football team, and the girls



enjoy netball and volleyball. Stoke City Football Club, from the English premiership, has donated football kit to the school – so the team is very smart.

The new computer lab, funded from the UK by UHST, brings new opportunities. The computers contain over 3,000 books and a large encyclopedia. They contain over 1,000 hours of lessons written by staff at Makerere University and teachers from top schools such as Budo, Mengo, Makerere College and Namaguunga. The facilities will enable the school to teach Computer Studies and to equip students for working lives in modern jobs.

Steve Hurd said: “Using books and computers for teaching and learning will help to create a level playing field with other better funded schools. It is hoped that these new developments will encourage many more families to send their children to the Isaac Newton High School.”

What I think of my school - by Kisakyamukama Cissy (S4)

Isaac Newton High is my school. It is mixed day and boarding. It has a very impressive environment and the school policies are friendly and made by a committee with student representation. The science lab is a fancy structure.

Students are cheery and co-operate with their teachers. We appreciate that our teachers are always working to improve our English. Students take breakfast and lunch with their teachers. Lunch includes porridge with fried cassava and we can buy samosas and chapatti. The boys’ hostel is neat and well organised. In free time we like to talk about football and films. We enjoy playing football, rugby, volley ball and acting.

We attend evening prep from 7.30pm to 10pm, which include questioning each other and discussions. We usually wake at 4am to prepare for morning prep.

Teachers are friendly and chat to students. The school organises parties for special occasions like leaving and welcoming new students. Students who have worked hard are given presents. We have many talented students and we feel we are making good progress.

DIRECTOR PROUD OF SCHOOL



So many schools in Uganda are run by businessmen for profit. Many others are only open to

children of a particular religious faith. When Peter Kisirinya, the school director, set up the school he wanted it to be different. From the start he decided that the school would be run as a charity. All money that comes into the school is used to pay his teachers and to improve the school for the benefit of students. Peter explains: “The founding principle of this school is that we will not discriminate against any students according to their religious beliefs. We welcome students from all traditions. “As a school we have been lucky to win support from humanist organisations in Europe. We have received grants from humanists in England, which enable us to offer some free places to orphans and other needy but bright children. The International Humanist and

A selection of student views ...

Students at Isaac Newton High School have been writing their views on various topics for this newspaper.

Joannie writes about the difficult subject of abortion. She suggests that the best course of action is to consult health professionals like doctors and nurses, and consider the long-term effects of her decision. But the issue can be avoided by improving sex education and using contraceptives.

Spe has written a detailed definition of corruption, and how it has affected people in Uganda. He gives examples, saying the poor might not be

fairly judged in court, because they can't afford to bribe judges; or local leaders might mis-use funds that are intended to repair roads. He also asks who is concerned about corruption in Uganda.

Samuel has been taking notes on health. He concludes that poor sanitation, poor nutrition, dirty water, and poverty all lead to disease. He also says medicines are stolen from some hospitals, which means ill people can't get treatment. Samuel suggests improvements can be made in many areas, and education is important so people can take care of themselves and their families.



Ethical Union gave us grants to build a very fine science lab. Finally, the Uganda Humanist Schools Trust has provided funding for textbooks, science equipment, water supply, our book store and this fine new computer lab being opened today. “We are a long way from mains electricity so the lab is powered by solar electricity.

This gives us enough power to run a network of eight computers. We have much more to do to create a really fine school. Our next priority is to expand our boarding facilities. The developments over the past year have set us on the right path to a bright future for all the students and staff in the school.”

ISAAC NEWTON SPORTS NEWS

NEW STOKE CITY KIT FOR ISAAC NEWTON STUDENTS



The football teams show off their new Stoke City kit

The football players at Isaac Newton High School were delighted this week to receive a new football strip. Stoke City FC, a premier club in the UK, donated last season's away strip, which is predominantly black with red stripes.

This goes with their main strip (of red and white stripes) which was donated last year. This means the school now has two kits, which have been worn by professional players. Students can now form two teams to play against each other.

Gordon Banks, England goalkeeper from the World Cup-winning team of 1966, handed over the strip. He said: "Stoke City FC is always on the look-out for bright young players from other countries. Practice hard but don't neglect your studies".



Pictures by Andrew West