

HENLEY BORAMA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

(REGISTERED CHARITY No 258973)

President – The Mayor of Henley on Thames

Chairman: Brigadier Malcolm Page
01491 578712
E-mail: malcolm.page55@btinternet.com

11 Cedar House
Ancastle Green
Henley on Thames
RG9 1UN

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Report to the Town Meeting

Due to operating difficulties, HBFA has ceased to be a Registered Charity. This is disappointing, but – when we started in 1982, Borama had some 20,000 inhabitants and was surrounded by the huts of some 10,000 refugees from the Ogaden war.

Now there is a big town of some 150,000 to 200,000 people and there are three universities. So, instead of conventional aid, we have made contact with the various groups of people from Borama who are in UK and, in 2014, held a successful display of Somali crafts at the Old Fire Station Gallery and a display of dancing and drumming in the Market Place.

Due to the dates of Ramadan and Eid el Fitr, we could not manage anything last year, but we are arranging, with the agreement of the Mayor and considerable help by Cllr Jane Smewing, a series of displays of dancing and drumming in the Market Place on Saturday 16 July, from 2 to 5pm.

We look forward to seeing you there.

I should add that the Somaliland Scouts Association is (in many ways) an off-shoot of HBFA and has operated from 1992 with the considerable support of the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League, to bring some support and aid to veterans who had Crown Service in the Somaliland Camel Corps, 71 and 72 Battalions of the Kings African Rifles (71 Bn was in Burma) and other military units. The Somaliland Scouts were formed in 1942 and saw active service at the siege of Djibouti. Subsequently they were the resident battalion (of the British Army) in the Protectorate of Somaliland. This activity too is being closed down, but we have achieved a final payout of \$US 350 per man for 150 veterans in the past month, thanks to the cooperation of RCEL and of the Defence Attache and his staff at the British Embassy in Addis Ababa. A few late applicants are being investigated. Of the recipients, 43 are from the Borama area. I should add that these funds did not come from Henley, but from RCEL.

Yours sincerely,

Malcolm Page, Chairman, HBFA.