

HENLEY BORAMA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION
(REGISTERED CHARITY No 258973)

President – The Mayor of Henley on Thames

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Ms Jacqui Brazil
Henley Town Council,

4 April 2014

Report to the Town Meeting – 10 April 2014

An *ad hoc* committee, to which Mrs Carol Crowdy has been co opted, is much encouraged by the Town Council's agreement to our using the Old Fire Station for an exhibition of Somali artefacts and handicrafts, plus a video on contemporary life in Borama. The Town Council has also made a grant towards the cost of advertising the exhibition.

The exhibition is provisionally named “**BORAMA comes to HENLEY**”. Its aim is to re-generate interest in Borama, which has had a friendship link with Henley since 1982. There was severe disruption between 1988 and 1991, during the civil war. The outcome of the civil war was that Somaliland threw off the oppressive regime of the Mogadishu-based dictator, Mohamed Siad Barre, and declared itself an independent republic. She remains independent, but has not yet gained international recognition

In 1993, Borama hosted the **SHIR WEIN** (big conference), which prepared a constitution and proceeded to elect the veteran Mohamed Haji Ibrahim Egal as President of the Republic. After Egal's death, the Vice President Dahir Raele Kahin (from Borama) took over and later was elected to the Presidency. After a full five year term, he was defeated at the Presidential elections by the current President “Siulyano”. The transaction was peaceful and the two men shook hands as authority passed..

Borama is thriving and a third University opened recently. The first, Amoud, was opened some 18 years ago and HBFA was able to secure substantial shipments of books to it from the charity Book Aid International. Sadly, the School for Deaf Children, which HBFA has assisted with donations, has had to close for lack of funds.

The exhibition will be from **4 to 11 June in the Old Fire Station** and preparations are well in hand, with the assistance of the Somali communities in London and Northampton. We expect that several Somalis will be present during the exhibition, to explain some of the exhibits and to talk about Borama.

We aim to attract as much attendance as possible, not least from schools, and we hope to bring in as many new members as possible to HBFA. We will be advertising the exhibition extensively.

Malcolm Page, Chairman HBFA.