

A Friend in Need, is a Friend indeed

By Myriam Breton-Jones



Kathy Gebara-Johnson, His Excellency Eldridge Stephens OBE, and Myriam Breton-Jones

Last July, the Friends of the Caribbean (FOTC) hosted its third annual Charity Ball in Milton Keynes. It was a glorious night filled with great entertainment, exquisite food and music that made you dance 'til you dropped!

Underneath this frenzy of joy and happiness, lay a more sombre reality and it is the reason we were all gathered together at the Ball in the first place: to remember Haiti. FOTC decided to dedicate the evening to raising awareness in this desperate island, recently ravaged by an enormous earthquake, pummelled by a hurricane and now dealing with a cholera outbreak that has claimed close to 700 more lives. We cannot take away these dire statistics, but we can help make a lasting change in Haiti.

Here in the UK, there is a group of Haitians hoping to do just that. They are the United Haitians in the United Kingdom (UHUK) and they are committed to educating Haiti's children. Indeed, they believe that the future of Haiti lies with its children. The charity was set up three years ago and supported one specific school in Port-au-Prince that was

destroyed in the earthquake and UHUK are looking to re-build that school and many more.

On the 11th of November, £1,000 was donated to the UHUK to help them along the way. Present at the ceremony was His Excellency Eldridge Stephens, OBE, High Commissioner to London for Saint Lucia who said, "in order to have one brick at the top, there must be a brick at the bottom". In other words, we have to begin somewhere. FOTC hopes that this donation will help UHUK educate its children, one child at a time, and help to build schools, one brick at a time.

The cheque was handed to His Excellency by FOTC chairman Ally Clarke who then presented it to two UHUK representatives, Kathy Gebara-Johnson and Myriam Breton Jones.

It will be a long time before our fellow Caribbean island, Haiti, is restored to some semblance of the beautiful country it once was. Chairman Ally Clarke said the FOTC is committed to helping this sister island, and pray for the day when they can see for themselves the brick they paid for that helped re-build the school, bringing hope to Haiti.