



KRIO DESCENDANTS UNION NORTHEAST (KDU-NE)

“Leh wi ep wiseƚ”

Newsletter

Edition 3

July-December 2019

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PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE



Fellow KDU Members, donors, supporters and friends
 It gives me great pleasure to present our third
 Newsletter. My continuing and sincere appreciation
 and thanks to our editorial team.
 It is hard to believe that 2019 has just rolled by. We
 are now entering a New Year and the beginning of
 a new decade. I take this opportunity to wish
 everyone peace, good health and prosperity.

KDU Northeast. We started the year with an
 Executive Team retreat. During the retreat, we
 planned activities, agreed on projects to be
 supported and events for the year. At that meeting
 there was unanimous consensus that all events
 would be used to market and fundraise on behalf of
 KDU Northeast.

The following Committees were created to help
 further the mission and goals of KDU Northeast:

- Editorial Committee
- Finance Committee
- Philanthropic Committee
- Social/Planning Committee
- Welcoming Committee
- Young Adults Executive Leadership.

The Chapter welcomed 45 new members and I am
 ecstatic to say the least. I pray they find a
 permanent home in KDU Northeast where they can
 celebrate and uphold the Krio culture. I also
 welcome them into one or more committees. Every
 member’s contribution of talent, skill and
 knowledge will help us achieve and advance the
 goals and mission of KDU Northeast.

In April, we held a successful Family Fun Day at
 Johnson Park in New Jersey. In June, we hosted a
 well- attended Africana Extravaganza. In
 September, KDU North east participated in the
 annual KDU Global Family Reunion in Boston. I am
 happy to report that KDU Northeast had the largest
 representation at this event. In October, we held
 our annual Thanksgiving service with increased
 attendance compared to last year’s. In October,
 KDU Northeast was invited to make a presentation
 to the Rotary Club of Harlem in efforts to seek
 funding to support the Sierra Leone Children’s
 Library in 2020.

During the year, KDU Northeast made financial and
 material contributions to philanthropic activities in
 our beloved Sierra Leone. These included the
 Sierra Leone Children’s Library and the King
 George Home for the Aged. Please see details
 under ‘Report on Funded Projects’.

In closing, I would like to thank our KDU Northeast family at large, the Executive Board, the Committee Chairs and the Committee members for their time, dedication, hard work and financial support to our Chapter. We also want to thank all our supporters who contribute financially to ensure that we achieve our goals for the Organization. We cannot do this without your support and we hope that you will continue to support us throughout 2020 and beyond. I know the Organization has set its sight at bigger and better things for the future. We embrace the New Year with renewed vigor and stronger dedication to make it an even better year. I am immensely grateful.

Roland Roberts
President

AFRICANA EXTRAVAGANZA

Submitted by Gloria Allen

Photos by Gloria Allen and Dorothea Allen

The fundraising event was held on Saturday, July 6 at the 4H Youth Center, East Brunswick. It was organized by the Social and Publicity Committee under the leadership of the Chairperson, Mrs. Edith Pratt-Davies. Members worked tirelessly to ensure that the event was a success.

The hall was decorated with Sierra Leonean artifacts that reflected the African theme. A female manikin beautifully dressed up with the Krio kabslot, enkincha (head tie), karpet slippas, and kotoku displayed the outfit of a 'Krio Woman'. The sounds from the DJ with the latest African music kept the hall buzzing throughout the afternoon and late into the night.

To invite God's presence into the event, Pastor Adam George opened with a Christian prayer and was followed by a Muslim prayer by Alhaji Brima Rahman. Food items on display included foofoo and bitter leaves, jollof rice, crain crain, fry fish and cassava braid, cassava leaves as well as popular snacks. Dancing to popular African sounds commenced in full swing early in the evening. Cultural performances, including the 'Fairy', Goombay music and competition added to the good atmosphere depicting the Krio culture. Raffle tickets were drawn for prizes donated by KDU members. The first prize was a TV, the second a 'Luv Mi A Luv Yu' basket and the third a basket of books by Krio Authors. Additional prizes

comprised of Colgate toothpaste products, cleaning products and other assorted items.

Another cultural performance towards the end of the evening featured the 'Hunting' that brought guests to their feet as they danced alongside the Hunting group.

Abundant thanks and much gratitude go to the members of the committee and to the guests as well as vendors who together helped make the event a resounding success.



**GLOBAL FAMILY REUNION
AUGUST 29 – SEPTEMBER 1, 2019**

Our host for the 2019 Global Family Reunion was our newest chapter, Boston, Massachusetts. KDU-NE's participation was the largest in number. The traditional program of events included Meet & Greet, Symposium, Awujoh/luncheon sale, dinner/dance, Thanksgiving and picnic.



2019 KDU NE THANKSGIVING

The chapter held its tenth annual Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, October 13 at the Church of Holy Nativity in the Bronx. The theme for the Thanksgiving

Service was 'Stewardship'. The guest preacher was Rev. Simeon Johnson.



Our Aku Muslim members held prayers: Masjid Al-Huda in a nearby mosque in White Plans Road, Bronx. The officiating Imam was Alhaji Abdullah Karim Savage.

KDU YOUNG ADULTS' CORNER

Submitted by Nkechi Fyle

Young Adults had a Beach Day on a Saturday in July 2019. Approximately 6 Young Adults gathered for some fun in the sun on a hot summer day.

Members had their 2nd Annual Meet and Greet in September 2019. A few of them gathered for brunch on a Saturday afternoon. They brainstormed and presented ideas for programs and social events. An event calendar for 2019 to 2020 was developed.

Members held their 2nd Annual Friendsgiving on Saturday November 16 in Teaneck, NJ. The event was a success. It was a wonderful time of fellowship, fun, and giving thanks!





as their extra-curricular activities from pre-k, kindergarteners, primary, and secondary school students. Activities such as quiz and drama competitions, writing/painting competitions, book/photo exhibitions, storytelling, cultural displays and celebration during the Commonwealth Day, the Day of the African Child, and World Aids/Human Rights Days have attracted numerous children over the years. Responding to the expressed need of the management, the chapter provided the following:

- White board and board erasers
- Toys
- Posters
- Library card trays
- Display shelves and racks for DVDs, books, and materials
- Mobile Cots
- Desk top Computers

Members are planning their philanthropic project, which will be Health Kits. These kits will be assembled in December 2019. They will then be shipped to Sierra Leone and will be distributed at a health clinic in January or February 2020.

REPORTS ON FUNDED PROJECTS

Submitted by Agatha Pratt

Photos by Alhaji Brima and Chris Davies

During the year, KDU Northeast made financial and material contributions to philanthropic activities in our beloved Sierra Leone. These were:

1. SIERRA LEONE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

KDU NE continued its historical partnership in 2019 with the Children's Library of the Sierra Leone Library Board with a view to encouraging children to improve their reading, writing, and other skills as well



Our chapter provided the following:

- A generator
- Non perishable food items
- First Aid kits
- Household products
- Personal health/hygiene products

Voluntary donations totaling Le500,000 was also made by KDU-NE members on the ground.



2. KING GEORGE'S HOME FOR THE AGED

The King George VI Memorial home for the elderly destitute and desolate has been in existence since after the end of World War II when the British handed it over to the Government of Sierra Leone.

Unfortunately, the Government of Sierra Leone could not continue to maintain it and in 1989 handed over the management of the home to a group of Sierra Leoneans and non-Sierra Leoneans who had formed themselves into a group called the Sierra Leone Society for the Welfare of the Aged. The home was relocated from Kissy Village to Grafton Village in 2012. In 2019 a call for help was received from the Home's management for water, electricity and essential items for the residents. KDU Northeast and other chapters answered to the call.

THE KRIOS OF SIERRA LEONE TO TAKE OVER THE MUSEUM OF LONDON DOCKLANDS

Africanvoice September 20, 2019
Contributed by Agatha Pratt

A new display at the Museum of London Docklands will explore the unique and largely untold history, heritage and culture of the Krio people of Sierra Leone.

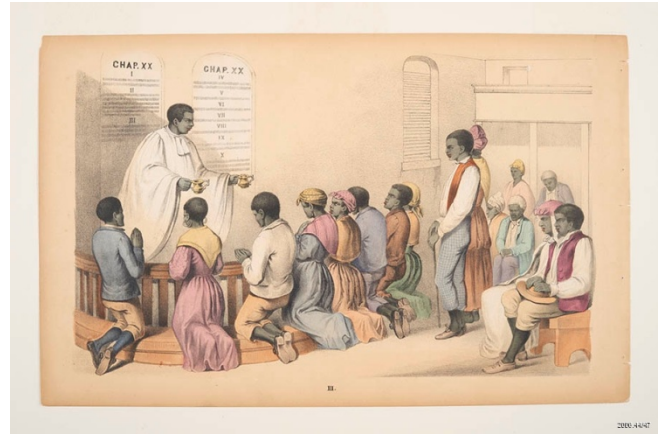


Krio dress (c) Museum of London – from the private collection of Iyamide Thomas

As well as the history, The Krios of Sierra Leone display will explore dress, architecture, language, lifestyle and tradition of the Krio community through a mix of contemporary objects from Krio Londoners as well as objects related to British colonial rule in Sierra Leone from the museum's collections. Together, this will highlight the rich heritage of the people and the diversity of cultures brought to Sierra Leone that became uniquely Krio.

Key objects on display include:

- Tillet block (a large carved wooden printing block) dating from around 1800 that bears the crest of the Sierra Leone Company. The company attempted to found a colony in Sierra Leone in 1792 and abolitionists such as William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp were among its subscribers.
- Silver entrée dish presented to Thomas Cole, Acting Colonial Secretary of Sierra Leone and Assistant Superintendent of Liberated Africans, by the Officers of the Liberated African Department on 1st August 1831. Cole was responsible for assisting those who arrived in the colony after being freed from captured slave ships. (On loan from Charles Stuart Dudley Cole)
- Krio dress ensemble showing the typical cultural embroidered dress ('Kabaslot') worn by Krio women. The dress is thought to be a combination of 19th century Victorian dress with adaptations from Americans and Maroons and has a lace petticoat underneath.



An African Minister Administering the Sacrament (c) Museum of London

The 'Krios' are descended from ex-enslaved African American, Caribbean, African and free peoples who settled in the Western Area of Sierra Leone. The first settlers sent to Sierra Leone by the British were of Black American, African, Caribbean and Bengali descent and were known collectively as the 'Black Poor'. A noticeable community in East London, the Black Poor suffered from acute poverty and in 1786 the 'Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor' was formed as a response. Initially operating as a group that provided relief in the form of food and monetary allowance, their focus soon turned to a resettlement scheme and by 1787 a ship had set sail for the 'Province of Freedom'; also known as Sierra Leone.



Interior of a Girls School (c) Museum of London

Upon arrival, the settlers established 'Granville Town' on the peninsula of Sierra Leone but the project failed after two years due to outbreaks of disease as well as conflicts and hostility between the settlers and the surrounding Temne community. A second attempt at a British colony, led by the newly formed Sierra Leone Company, was more successful and involved the resettlement of approximately 1200 'Nova Scotians'. These settlers – mainly ex-enslaved Americans who fought for the British during the

American Revolution – arrived in 1792 and established 'Freetown' which remains the capital of Sierra Leone to this day. The Maroons (from Jamaica) and 'Liberated Africans' (freed from slave ships) soon followed in the early part of the 19th century and collectively make up the heritage of the Krio people.



Silver entrance dish presented to Thomas Cole. Object lent by Charles Stuart Dudley Cole.

The resettlement wasn't without controversy. The motives behind the scheme were much debated and still are today but its ties to the slave trade are undeniable. From its origins in transatlantic slavery through to the involvement of prominent abolitionists, the story of the Krio ties in to the wider themes of the permanent London, Sugar & Slavery gallery where the display is to be held. This is central not just to the story of the museum's building and the surrounding docks but to the story of London itself.

Melissa Bennett, Higher Education Programme Manager at Museum of London, said: "The story of the Krio people of Sierra Leone has been largely overlooked in the history books but is of huge significance when looking at the story of not only the museum and the surrounding Docks, but of migration and the slave trade in London. It connects the shared histories of London, the US, the Caribbean and West Africa and we've worked closely with some members of the Krio community to draw out the personal stories, memories and objects that help shed light on this part of our shared heritage."



Wooden Tillet Block with central panel of ship with the wording Sierra Leone Company (c) Museum of London

Iyamide Thomas, Historical Researcher and founder member of The Krios Dot Com, said: "The Krios share a unique heritage that is celebrated in our culture and traditions, reflecting the diversity within our community. As a member of the Krio community, I am

proud to be working with the Museum of London Docklands to highlight the history and legacy of the Krio people to help bring into focus our connection to the city of London and the wider Atlantic world"



Plan of the Colony of Sierra Leone 1825 (c) Museum of London

OKU PEOPLE (SIERRA LEONE)

Abdul Tejan Cole 19 April 2013

Creative Commons

Submitted by Agatha Pratt

The Oku people are primarily the descendants of educated, liberated Yoruba Muslims from Southwest Nigeria, who came to Sierra Leone as settlers in the mid- 19th century. Many Oku historically have intermarried since then with the ethnic Creole people. The latter were primarily descendants of African-American former slaves, as well as some from Jamaica, and slaves liberated from illegal slave trading in the 19th century.

Some 99% of the Oku are Muslim, following the Sunni tradition of Islam. They are known for their deeply conservative Muslim traditions, but they have also embraced Western education and other elements of Western culture.

During their rule, the British colonial government provided official recognition to the Oku community as a distinctive community in Sierra Leone. But since independence, the national Sierra Leone government has officially classified the Oku people as members of the Creole ethnic group...

The Oku people in Sierra Leone reside mainly in the capital Freetown, particularly in the neighborhoods of Aberdeen Village, Fourah Bay, and Fula Town. Most Oku people have Islamic first names and English last names. Most Oku people also have Yoruba middle names.

Origin

The Oku people are descended mainly from Yoruba Liberated Africans who were resettled in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century. These Liberated Africans formed a distinctive community that was settled at Aberdeen village, Fourah Bay, and Fula Town. As early as the 1840s, there were references to them in documents to 'Aku Mohammedans.' Because the communities at Fourah Bay were dominated by members of the Yoruba, the people were referred to as 'Aku' or 'Oku' Mohammedans.

Culture

The Oku people have a distinctive culture that has strong similarities to that of larger communities of Muslim Yoruba people. The Oku often have Arabic first and last names. Some Oku people later adopted the names of prominent benefactors such as Savage, or other European surnames, which they thought aided admission into the missionary schools. Some elder members of the Oku community have continued to speak the Yoruba language, in addition to the Oku variety of the Krio language.

Relationship with the Sierra Leone Creole people

Scholars such as Olumbe Bassir classify the Oku as distinct from the Creoles because of their predominately Yoruba ancestry and strongly Muslim, conservative culture. The Creoles are primarily Christian. [1].

Some scholars consider the Oku to be a sub-ethnic group of the Krio, based on their close association with British colonists and their adoption of Western education and other aspects of culture.[2] Those classifying the Oku as part of the Sierra Leone Creole people note their adoption of similar English or European surnames and cultural aspects such as Awujoh.

Community organisation

Oku communities in Sierra Leone are represented by an Alkadi, the community leader.

Cultural associations

The Oku people are represented by cultural associations such as the Ebilleh Cultural

Organization. It aims to preserve and enhance Oku Muslim cultural heritage in Sierra Leone and abroad.

Notable Oku in or from Sierra Leone

- Khadijatu Bassir, former Sierra Leone Ambassador to Senegal
- Abdul Tejan Cole, human rights lawyer, and former head of the Sierra Leone Anti- Corruption Commission
- Haja Alaric Cole, deputy president of the Krio Descendants Union
- Ahmed Deen, footballer
- Isha Johnson (born Isha Savage), president of the Sierra Leone football association
- Haja Afsatu Kabba (born Haja Afsatu Savage), politician who served as an appointed minister of energy and power, and a former member of Sierra Leone parliament
- Mohammed Sanusi Mustapha, one of the founding fathers of Sierra Leone's Independence
- Umaru Rahman, international footballer
- Mohamed Sanusi Tejan, Muslim scholar
- Madieu Williams, Sierra Leonean-American professional football player

Oku families

Alghali	Deen
Bakarr	Iscandri
Carew	Lewally
Cole	Osman
Dahniya	Savage

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PRINT STITCHES AND DESIGN CORNER Answers to Print Designs in Edition 2

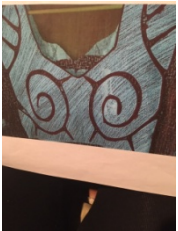
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Can you guess the name of these designs?

No. 3

No 4



KRIO PARABLES, PROVERBS AND SHOUTS, FIGHTING THE LOSING BATTLE”

Clifton B. Fyle

I gleefully read the section on Krio parables in the last edition of this newsletter prompting a follow up on my side. Yes, I can remember my mother citing Krio parables or proverbs often when in communication with us when we were growing up in Freetown. I am sure some of us, the older folks living in the diaspora will recall the Krio proverb, “ Foll way nor yeri sheee, ee go yeri stone”. It means that when sitting in your backyard doing your chores and a pestering, roaming chicken comes around, bothers you and does not go away even when you shout out loud, it will definitely depart when you throw pebbles at it. Literally, this means that a parent or someone in authority will take drastic action towards a child if that child fails to heed repeated warnings or advise.

How many of us parents or grandparents currently use these proverbs when speaking to our offsprings at home or in local settings? The truth is some of us do not make an effort in encouraging the speaking of the Krio language in our homes.

Further, I recently attended a few funeral services of elderly Krio people who passed away. I observed that certain Krio rituals were not observed. Krio “shouts” are not rendered anymore and if so, only two or three “shouts” are sung. How many of us remember “sailing along on the gospel boat to the new Jerusalem” or “no hiding place down there” or “come and dine”?

I am positive that our Krio brothers and sisters of the Moslem faith do have the same experience.

We, the older Krios of the Christian faith have the responsibility of teaching and reinforcing these and other Krio traditions to the younger ones and it must be relentless.

This is a warning that must be taken seriously, especially those living far away from the motherland. I am therefore encouraging all to pay attention to this problem which should not be taken lightly.

Folks, we are slowly losing it!!!!

KRIO PARABLES

v Shot at man no de joyn kaka dɛbul

English translation: An impatient person does not join in a masquerade

If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen

v Dɛn say udat wɔwɔ go get wata, babu bɔs kri

English translation: Someone calls out; Hey, if you are ugly, then go fetch some water; then the Baboon starts crying

The guilty is afraid.

If the cap fits wear it

v Hastings drink, waterloo drunk

English translation: The people from Hastings did all the drinking, and the people from Waterloo got drunk. The righteous suffers for the wicked.

v Wata we na fɔ yu, nɔ go rɔn pas yu

English translation: Water that was offered to you will not be given to someone else.

What has been destined for you, will definitely happen to you

No one can take away your blessings

SAVE THE DATE

Young Adults Fundraising - February 2020
KDU Northeast Family Day Picnic - April 25, 2020
KDU Northeast Dinner and Dance - July 11, 2020
KDU Global Family Reunion, Canada - September
3-6, 2020
KDU Northeast Thanksgiving Service - October 11,
2020

YOUR FEEDBACK AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE
WARMLY WELCOME. THANK YOU.

Editorial Committee:

Agatha Pratt - Chair
Gloria Allen – Vice Chair
Brima Rahman
Iris Max-MacCarthy
Ayodele House
Christo Davies
Nkechi Fyle

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