We flew to Region #2 on an eight-seater propeller plane from Georgetown, Guyana’s capital city. Most (90%) of Guyana’s population of 825,000 people live on a fertile strip of land along the coast. The land here is rich in silt from a maze of watery delta and tropical rainforest, savannahs and highlands.

We were met at the airport by an official of the Regional Department of Education. I was on a project-monitoring visit to Guyana and was travelling with Leila Jagdeo, General Manager of the Guyana Book Foundation (GBF). GBF works with some of the 117 schools and eight libraries in Region #2 and we were to visit several of these. CODE supports the Guyana Book Foundation with shipments of books from North America and funds to purchase and publish books from within the country and to maintain libraries. This year CODE is providing 20,000 North American books to the Guyana Book Foundation. CODE is also providing approximately 13,000 local language books. These books will be distributed by mini-bus, truck, ferry, canoe, donkey-cart, aircraft, and on foot in small waterproof packs carried in traditional backpacks which are held in place by slings over the forehead.

Suddie Hospital Community Library

I would like to introduce you to some of the people I met on this trip. At the Suddie Hospital Community Library, Wati, the Librarian had been on the job for five years. She produces monthly reports on library usage to the GBF. She also maintains the library, and provides lending advice to...

Thank you for your Gift to literacy

CODE is a charitable, non-government organization that promotes literacy in the developing world.

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To Guyana with love continued...

users. Wati has since completed her training and has restocked and reorganized the library, reports Leila Jagdeo of the GBF.

Buxton/Friendship Community Library

In Buxton in Region #4, Alvis Cummings and Maureen Amsterdam, both librarians at the Buxton/Friendship Community Library, were waiting for our visit. This library is still referred to by some residents as the Lessons Place. It started out as a place where students could go for help with their lessons. Its founder had approached the Guyana Book Foundation for support to establish it as a library. The building was donated by the community. Many of the libraries are established in existing buildings in hospitals and schools and the like both as a cost-saving measure and to allow the community to also contribute in a meaningful way. The GBF paid for repairs to the roof before stocking the library with books. The small stipend paid to staff comes largely from donations from Buxtonians living abroad. The place is a hive of activity most of the time. In addition to the lending facilities the library also offers reading and after-school lessons for children. It is a centre for programs for teachers and a meeting place for other community activities. The HIV/AIDS awareness program run by the local youth group, Youth with Motive, always has a packed crowd in attendance. Earlier in the week the library had to be treated for termites. Alvis and Maureen had managed to put most of the books back on the shelves but there was still a lot of work to do. Both Alvis and Maureen enjoy their work and are grateful for the basic library training they have received through the GBF. We learned that as elsewhere in Guyana the main library book borrowers are girls and women. Novels are very popular and the reference section is most heavily used during exam time.

These two nine-year olds dropped in at the Saddie Community Hospital Library during their school lunch break to return a book and borrow a new one.

To Guyana with love continued...

Meet Wendy Francis, the librarian from Capoey Lakes, Essequibo. She lives in an Amerindian community of 500. Today Amerindians, who were the original peoples of Guyana, make up only 4% of Guyana’s population.

CURRENTS

To Guyana with love continued...

Meet Wendy Francis, the librarian from Capoey Lakes, Essequibo. She lives in an Amerindian community of 500. Today Amerindians, who were the original peoples of Guyana, make up only 4% of Guyana’s population.

Yvonne Appiah, CODE’s Executive Director, maintains programming responsibilities for a number of countries, including Guyana.

CODE’s partner, the Guyana Book Foundation

CODE has worked in Guyana since 1987. The Guyana Book Foundation (GBF), established in 1996, is a locally registered organization dedicated to providing resources for learning, encouraging self-reliance and promoting awareness and understanding. Its strategy is to provide books and learning materials to schools and libraries on a national basis, and also to focus resources at areas of need in the interior and coastal regions through the establishment of community libraries. The GBF has also been supportive of training teachers in the teaching of reading.

Thank you,
Alvis Cummings
Maureen Amsterdam

Thank you, Wendy Francis, I am a teacher who has recently graduated from the Cybell Potter College of Education... If there wasn’t a library in my community I honestly think I would not have achieved my goal of college. I hope that CODE will continue the wonderful job that they are doing. Once again, thanks to CODE!

Yours Faithfully,
Aluko Jervis

Buxton/Friendship Community Library.
The library had to be treated for termites. You can see here that work was underway to re-shelve the books.

Wendy Francis had spent the whole day travelling by bus, ferry and then by bus again to get to the GBF office in Georgetown. Wendy was delivering her library and community services to the children in the area. She was particularly pleased to have met Wendy.

I hope you have enjoyed meeting some of the people hard at work providing library services and books to the children in Guyana. Thank you,
Alvis Cummings
Maureen Amsterdam

To Guyana with love continued...

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