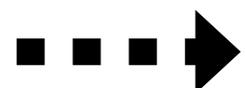




**Buloke**  
The Friends  
of Buloke Charity  
Registered Charity no. 1140094





# The letter

Newsletter February 2019 from The Friends of Butoke Charity (Registered Charity no. 1140094)

## How much did you raise in 2018?

Welcome to The Friends of Butoke Charity's annual newsletter 2018.

In 2018 the Charity's income was just over £25k and we sent Butoke just under £28k (we had a small surplus at the end of 2017). A big "thank you" to everyone whose generosity and efforts contributed to that total. Long-term Butoke supporter Andy Sugarman deserves a special mention, having raised just under £6k in sponsorship by undergoing the "Tough Mudder" challenge. As ever ALL the money

you give is sent to Butoke. The running costs of the Charity are covered by the trustees.



## Cecile de Sweemer has left us

**Butoke's founder, Dr Cecile de Sweemer, died on Tuesday 27 November 2018 aged 82. She had been suffering from Parkinson's disease for many years.**

Dr de Sweemer led an awe-inspiring life. This newsletter is accompanied by an obituary ("Empowering the Weak and Confronting Power") written by Dr de Sweemer's long-time friend and former colleague David Gosling. It is worth 5 minutes of your time.

### Many attended the funeral

Dr de Sweemer was buried on 13 December 2018 in Tshikaji, where Butoke is based. More than 1000 people attended her funeral.

### Dr Lumbala

Dr de Sweemer chose Dr Lumbala as her natural successor and he has been in more or less sole charge of Butoke for around 12 months as a result of her declining health. The Charity has full confidence in him. He is a trained agronomist as well as an experienced medical doctor. We have worked with two North American charities to provide him with support since Dr de Sweemer's death and representatives of the North American charities are going to visit him in the DRC in February. They also visited him and inspected the work of Butoke last year.



# The main activities of Butoke, 2018

In 2018 the Western Kasai region where Butoke operates continued to be plagued by fighting between militias whose objectives are not at all clear. In February the region's main agricultural supply centre was cut off by fighting causing food prices to rocket. In July two local chiefs were killed. The pressures on Butoke were intense throughout the year as the fighting resulted in Butoke having to deal with many people fleeing the militias who needed both food and medical care. Despite these difficult circumstances Butoke continued to pursue its principal activities:



## Education

Butoke continues to operate a secondary school. This has remained operative although a small primary school which Butoke operated in a separate location was burnt down by a militia.



## Clinic

Butoke runs a clinic which provides free, health-care to those with no money and low cost services to those who can afford to pay something.



## Nutrition centre

Butoke has continued to run a nutrition centre.

## Orphanage

Butoke's orphanage is home to about 40 orphans.

## Agriculture

Butoke produces some of its own food through its agricultural projects. It also has a pisciculture project.



## We are on Facebook!

We have a rather undeveloped Facebook page – but please look us up: putting “Friends of Butoke facebook” into google will get you there.

# Tough times in the DRC

In addition to having had to deal with the difficulties arising from the fighting in the Western Kasai region, in 2018 Butoke also had to deal with general political instability in the DRC. Butoke stays clear of party politics but, as many of you will have seen, the DRC is living through a difficult time politically. Much delayed presidential elections were held on 30 December 2018. The candidate favoured by the outgoing president, Joseph Kabila,

came last in the poll, but there is considerable scepticism about whether the declared winner, Felix Tshisekedi, really did win, although his victory has now been confirmed by the DRC's constitutional court. Martin Faylulu, the actual victor according to many observers, has called for civil disobedience. It is to be hoped that whatever comes next will have a minimal impact on Butoke's work in what are already extremely difficult times.

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## Easyfundraising

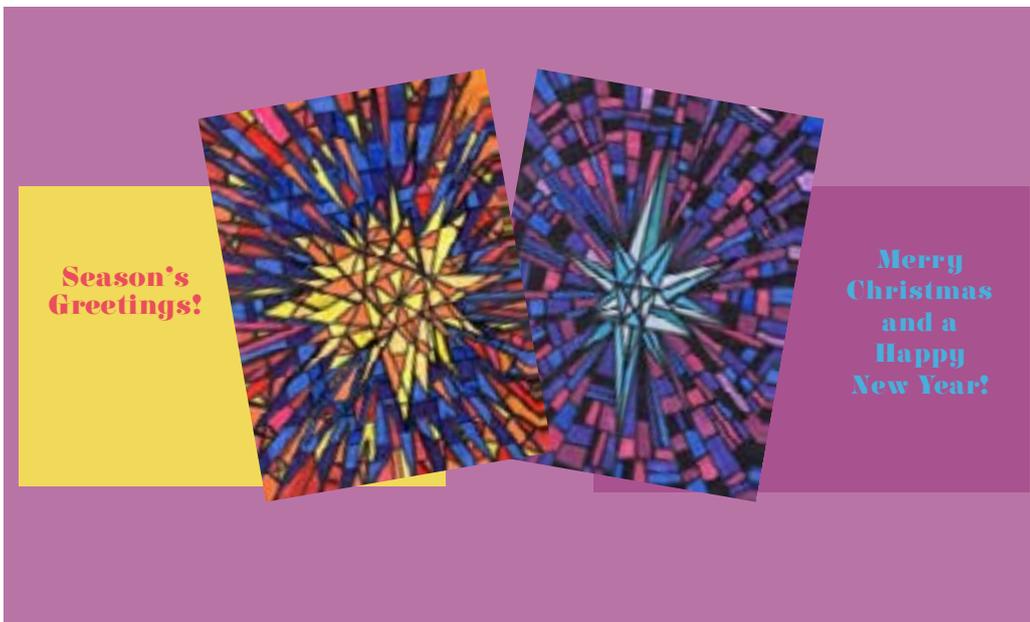
If you buy online, please visit EasyFundraising. If you visit online sellers via this site, most of the big retailers (Amazon, John Lewis etc) will make a small donation to the good cause of your choice. The amounts are relatively small but they add up: we've raised nearly £600 in the last three



years. It only takes a minute to set up. If everyone reading this newsletter used Easyfundraising, it would increase the Friends of Butoke's income by a significant amount.

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## Christmas card success!



This year, we made just over £1000 from selling Christmas cards.

If you would like to stock up ahead of next year, send Paul an email: we have several thousand left. Thank you to everyone who bought them this year, to Neil Johnson who designed them and to Par Parsson for turning the artwork into printable cards.

*If you would like to stock up ahead of next year, send Paul an email*

### Just remind me again, what does Butoke do?

Butoke is a small NGO working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Its core activities are to run an orphanage, a school, a clinic, a community nutrition centre and food security programmes. The on the ground expertise comes from a medical team lead by Dr Jean Lumbala who is also a trained agronomist.

The Friends of Butoke Charity raises funds to help Butoke continue its activities. We have four trustees: Matthew Pollard, Adriane Pollard, Marleen Tiemens and Paul Evans.