

History of Afrikaya

When Geoff and Di Miles visited the Gambia in 2007 to learn African rhythms with a master drummer there, they were introduced to the musician community in Kotu-Eranjang.



One family of musicians and dancers they met was the Jarju/Jaina family.

The father of the family was an inspirational man called Kebba Jaina. He had set up a nursery school for 3 - 7 year olds in his community as there was no education available for them. He was concerned that, having so little opportunity to become educated and earn a living, the youth of The Gambia were starting to turn to drugs.

Drug barons from South America have bought up large areas of land in the neighbouring country of Guinea Bissau as an easy route into Europe. Consequently, more and more hard drugs were finding their way into The Gambia.

Kebba, inspired by Nelson Mandela, believed that if he could teach young children to enjoy education, to want to learn, he could do something very real to help and protect the children of his community. He rented a single room hut, with 1 communal toilet (a hole in the ground). He had moved several times as landlords found other more lucrative uses for buildings. Geoff and Di raised money and bought school benches so that when they moved at least they would have benches for the children to sit on need be.



Shortly after, in March 2008, Kebba died. Saddened by this, Geoff and Di made a life changing decision - to build a school in Kebba's memory.

Kebba's dream lives on. Geoff and Di registered the charity with the UK Charity Commission. In September 2010 land in New Yundum was purchased on which to build a nursery school.