

An unlikely Return – Part 3

With much thanks to many for your generosity, Steve's and my story of Sahn Malen continues to grow and build on its own success. It is time to bring you another update.

You may recall that a year ago, the library at Sahn Malen Junior Secondary School had been built by **Schools for Salone**, but its shelves were still empty. A new Peace Corps Volunteer, Amy Schober, had been assigned to the school, but had barely begun her service there. A year later, so much has happened.

BOOKS

Because so many of you opened your hearts to this cause, we did send books to Sahn Malen. Last November I went to the Books for Africa warehouse in Atlanta GA with my librarian friend and we picked out two pallets of books ranging from easy readers, spelling, math and science to sets of encyclopedias and dictionaries, and even medical guides for the village clinic. Two pallets is a lot of books! They arrived in Freetown in January of 2012 and were delivered to the village by the middle of the next month.

([Download the original story "An unlikely Return."](#))



Peggy Packing Books



Pallets Ready to go



Amy organizes the Sahn Malen Community



And the Books



Soon Books were on the Shelves



and Students were using the Library

LIGHTS

Back home, we learned about a Solar Suitcase made by We Care Solar: a self-contained, easily installed solar system with 2 collection panels, a battery, 8 LED lights and wiring. It had been developed to provide light in maternity clinics in remote parts of the world where electricity is nonexistent and had been tested in Sierra Leone that year. Just by providing light during the dark nights when so many babies like to be born, these Solar Suitcases have cut the infant and maternal death rate by 25%. We began to dream about what a little light could do for the library, which can be a stifling oven during the heat of the day during the dry season. By lighting the building, it could be used by students as well as the community in the cooler evenings at the end of a long work day.

Using money left from your generous donations last year, we purchased one Solar Suitcase and **Schools for Salone's** Executive Director, Cindy Nofziger, delivered it to PCV Amy Schober while traveling to Sierra Leone for the 4th Annual Teacher Training Workshop there.



SfS Board Members inspect a Solar Suitcase



Cindy's son Michael explains to Amy Schober how the Solar Suitcase works



Amy installs the Solar Collection Panels



And the LED Lights

With the library equipped with books and lights, it was time for the Grand Opening. Amy had been working with volunteers from the community to get everything organized and a checkout system in place. On October 24, 2012 the community gathered to celebrate with speeches and a ribbon cutting, followed by a tour of the library. Amy emailed that 150 – 200 people from the community attended plus a few journalists. She was even interviewed by two radio stations about the opportunities afforded by the library.



Dignitaries gather for Opening Ceremonies



And a Ribbon Cutting



Then the community was invited inside



And the Library was Officially Open

Little did Steve or I realize where our journey would lead and we could never have gotten there without your support and the wonderful work of **Schools for Salone** and its partners here in the US and in Sierra Leone. We are continuing to work with Books for Africa and other supporters to send 4 more containers of books of about 22,000 books in each. With your help, we can keep this story moving forward not only for Sahn Malen but for many other small schools and communities throughout Sierra Leone.

Schools for
SALONE

Peggy & Steve Garber

