



Pelican News



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Blue Skies Newsletter

A Christmas Message from Anthony Pile



It has been one of those extraordinary years. What happens around the world very often affects us – invariably we find that where economies come under pressure we gain. South Africa and Egypt are cases in point. It is not always like this; UK for example. Because we sell our fresh-cut products to UK, we were adversely and quite severely affected when the economy there faced a reversal and the Pound with it. The roller coaster journey through 2016 has just about come to an end and we have all managed to come through together! We are a resilient and tough bunch of people!

I am often reminded by those around me how important our culture is and what a huge part it plays in getting us business, attracting new trading relationships and in generating warmth from the general public. We are going to try and launch products under our brand name in the months ahead and we feel we have a head start thanks to quite simply who we are!

I like to think of our culture as a corporate conscience. People in Blue Skies do not need to be told to care for others or turn from the wrong way to do something, we just *know* what to do. We make a profit so that we can afford to do the right things. Sometimes it is right to put machinery in place so that we make more profit and at other times we make profit so that we advance the collective responsibility we have to look after our own people, the communities in which we work and the stakeholders in Blue Skies.

What amazes me and fills me with pride is the way you and your colleagues brush off adversity and apply yourselves with energy and vigour unmatched by our competitors. You are the reason we are growing and growing profitably. Your determination, focus and sheer professionalism impress our customers and when you consistently deliver on your commitments they come to Blue Skies first.

In 2017 we are setting out to spend more than ever before. We want to build a business suited to the next exciting chapter in what will be a long life. Now we have to deliver the plans set out in our budget and I have no doubt that we can, given the quality of our leaders and the quite remarkable people we serve.

Jenny and I want to thank you for making Blue Skies what it is and to wish you, your families and loved ones a very happy Christmas, perfect celebrations and a New Year to suit us all.

Ex-President John Kufour visits Blue Skies Ghana



Ghana's Former President John Kofi Agyekum Kufuor visited Blue Skies Ghana this month to learn about what the business does. Kufuor served as President of Ghana between 2001 and 2009. His presidency marked the first peaceful democratic transition of power in Ghana since independence in 1957. He is pictured above Ruth Adjei.



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The Great Fruit Adventure visits Blue Skies Ghana



Blue Skies Ghana were visited by Max MacGillivray and Gareth Jones this month. Max and Gareth are motorcycling from London to Cape Town to raise awareness of where fruit comes from and encourage kids in the UK to eat healthier foods. Their journey has so far taken them across Spain, Morocco, Western

Sahara, Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso and Ghana. While in Ghana, Max and Gareth toured the Blue Skies factory, visited farms and stopped off at Foundation Projects including the winning schools of our School Farm of the Year competition. From Ghana, they travel to Kenya where they continue their adventure down to South Africa where they hope to arrive in Cape Town by February. To find out more about the Great Fruit Adventure, visit the website at <http://www.thegreatfruitadventure.com/>



Above: Max MacGillivray with Ruth Adjei in Ghana



Above: The Head Teacher at Anoff Junior High School tries out one of the Triumph motorcycles to the delight of all the teachers and students.

Hella visits Blue Skies in South Africa



Hella Lipper-Morse from Waitrose visited Blue Skies in South Africa in November 2016. Here she is at Habata melon farm near Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape holding a King David variety watermelon and joking that she has a new baby!
Report and photo by Stephan Morris.

Blue Skies UK achieve AA result

Blue Skies UK achieved another excellent result in their latest BRC audit. Auditor Peter Jeynes from NSF was effusively complimentary about the people, the factory and the quality system at Swanley, but still found it necessary to give Marta one minor non-conformance which is the first one for Southfleet and Swanley for 4 years!

The technical team at BSUK strongly supported by the production team, and both teams expertly marshalled by Vijay, achieved the same high standard for which they have established a very high reputation and which remains unsullied by this result. Linda was absent having undergone an operation and we wish her a rapid and comfortable recovery.

Very well done again team! It was a pleasure to be with you for this audit.
Report by Stephan Morris.

Farewell Erik van Nieuwenhuizen



On December 4th we had organised a Farewell for Erik van Nieuwenhuizen (Sr. Category Manager Albert Heijn) with whom we worked so closely together during the past 4 years. Important and big steps forward have been made in the relationship between Albert Heijn and BlueSkies. I could learn a lot during this experience and I am very proud that together we could make Erik such a big fan of ours. He will never forget his trip to Ghana and he was very touched and grateful for the video messages and presents he received. *'When I think of the people of Blue Skies and the business there appears a smile on my face and feeling of proudness.'* Erik said. We grew

the business with Erik from 5.1 to over 15 million Euros turnover in less than 4 year's, which is outstanding! We should all feel very proud of that! Thank you Erik, you are part of the Blue Skies family, we hope to see you back some time!

Report and photo by Paul van Breukelen. Paul is pictured with Erik at the Zaanse Schans. Erik on the left with his present from Ghana, a wooden Elephant.

Blue Skies Bake Along raises £194 for charity



Staff at Blue Skies HQ recently participated in a 'Bake Along' in support of Macmillan Cancer Support. Blue Skies bakers were allocated contestants of the BBC's Great British Bake Off and challenged to recreate their bakes for the enjoyment of people in the office. A variety of bakes were produced including the ones pictured above. The Bake Along raised £194.34 which was added to the money raised by the Walk for Sara in October, giving a grand total of £633.85 raised for Macmillan by Blue Skies. Many thanks to Rachel Buckingham for organizing the Bake Along and to everyone who took part.

Standing up for women in Africa



Lorna Dix from Blue Skies HQ is working with a Trust called "Women Matter" which sets out to support women in Africa. Lorna is pictured above about to attend a meeting at the House of Lords in London.

South Africa marks World Aids Day



Pictured: Blue Skies SA Accounts department commemorate World Aids Day and show their support by wearing the red ribbon.

"The campaign against AIDS is the task of all of us - young and old, government and community organisations, religious and traditional institutions, cultural and sporting bodies. AIDS knows no custom. It knows no colour. It knows no boundaries. We have to work together wherever we are to preserve our nation, our continent and humanity as a whole." – Nelson Mandela 1994.

New factory takes shape in S. Africa



Work is progressing well on the new factory for South Africa.

Andre is pictured top left planting a 5 rand coin in the concrete roof of the amenities block of the new South Africa factory. The builder insists that this brings good luck to the construction.

Top right shows tightening large nuts to ensure that the column stays upright and the structure does not fall over.

The picture on the bottom shows the view of the construction from the amenities roof. Centre front is the main changing room. Centre is high care, and the man in green is standing in the ops room.

Many thanks to Stephan Morris for the photos and captions.



Party time at BSUK



Pictured: People from our UK factories in Swanley and Southfleet get together for a Christmas Party



Merry Xmas from BSSA

"It's Christmas and we just want to say 'Thank you' and that it's been a pleasure working with you this year. In warm appreciation of our Association, we extend our best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year filled with peace, Joy and Success. Hope you and your family have wonderful holidays and a happy new year. We survived the past year because of hard work creativity and dedication. We are really grateful for your tremendous efforts, wishing you all a joyous Christmas season."

From the Blue Skies Staff Association (BSSA), Ghana.

Anthony appointed Chairman of UKGCC



Anthony Pile has recently been appointed Chairman of the UK Ghana Chamber of Commerce (UKGCC). UKGCC facilitates and promotes trade and commercial relations between the UK and Ghana.



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