

A Word from the Chair

Dear All,
Welcome to Issue 1 of the BNLF newsletter, the exciting new medium for making contact with our members and supporters, of which there are an ever increasing number. As the group continues to grow and prosper, it is imperative that it stays close to its members and develops effective strategies for engaging with them. So what better than a newsletter to disseminate and receive all the latest news. So please try to take the time to have a look at what the BNLF is doing and to get back to us with your news and views. The Group is an interactive and mutually supportive forum for lawyers with an interest or affinity with Nigeria to connect with each other and benefit professionally. The more you reap, the more you sow! So get sowing! What's coming up this year? As you can see, there's plenty happening. Let me also tell you that the BNLF has been invited to take part in "The Nigeria Law Project", which is a collaboration between the Law Society and the Legal Defence & Assistance Project in Nigeria (LEDAP). The project involves training in international human rights as well as law practice management, and most of the work will take place in Nigeria. Look out for more news on this but no enquiries from non-members! The Group is only as good as its membership allows it to be. So continue to support your Group. Happy reading and wishing you all plenty of overtime! A big thanks to all those who made this newsletter possible. See you all at the next networking event on the 10th of May.

Many thanks
Oba Nsugbe, Chair

BNLF News

Networking Events

Our networking evenings have turned out to be a great hit with members as a terrific way of socialising whilst talking shop. One member commented that she had only intended to drop in for a few minutes because of childcare issues but ended up staying for two hours. Our next one on the 10th of May will feature a captive legal accountant. No speeches! He will simply answer all those questions we have been dying to ask but dared not.

Legal Surgeries

We have now had our second successful legal surgery, the third will be taking place shortly after this Newsletter goes out to you. Spread the word. BNLF volunteers are giving to the Nigerian Community in the form of free legal advice. Although the service is primarily for the Nigerian community, we will not discriminate against other members of the larger community who might want to take advantage.

Codicil

Charles Onitchabor.

Some of you will remember Charles Onitchabor who attended our February networking evening in the company of Lucy Hicks from the Law Society's International Section. Charles was a Commonwealth Fellow and the head of the Nigerian Bar Association's national secretariat based in Lagos. Sadly, Charles passed away shortly after his return to Nigeria in a tragic motorcycle accident. May his gentle soul rest in peace.

Legal Education:

The Federal Attorney General is reported to be keen on revamping legal education Nigeria. It is alleged that the four "Law Schools" will be scrapped and private operators are to be permitted to tutor law graduates under license and supervision of a central body, similar to the situation here. Write with your comments and views on this proposal to info@bnlf.org.uk

MANSAG Dinner:

Finally, the Nigerian medics are holding their dinner on our turf at the Renaissance Chancery Court Hotel. Tickets are £100 per head and the date for your diary is 3rd June. It has been suggested that we make up a BNLf table. Interested members please email info@bnlf.org.uk

Publications**Corruption and Misuse of Public Office**

- Colin Nicholls QC, Tim Daniel, Martin Polaine and John Hatchard.

The first dedicated work to examine the legal and practical issues relating to the investigation and prosecution of corruption, providing the practitioner with a complete guide to handling a corruption case. Published by OUP. ISBN 978-0-19-927458-1 / 800 pages / Hardback / Cost £125.00.

Visit www.oup.co.uk/law/practioner for further information and orders.

Launch of the First UK On-line Black Lawyers Directory

On 23 February 2006 the Black Lawyers Directory, known as BLD was launched at the Law Society. BLD, an on-line directory, www.onlineBLD.com is the UK's first guide to black and minority ethnic lawyers and all organisations with at least one minority ethnic lawyer.

For further information please email: info@onlineBLD.com

If you would like to contribute any information or news about events, publications etc to this newsletter, please email them to info@bnlf.org.uk. Copy deadline for inclusion of material is 1st day of the month at latest, circulation is scheduled during the first week of the month.

Dates for your diary:**BNLF Networking Meetings**

The next BNLf informal networking meeting is taking place on Wednesday 10th May 2006. Throughout 2006, every second Wednesday of the month, 6.30pm onwards @ TORTS HOLBORN BAR & RESTAURANT, 78 HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON WC1V 6LS. Free glass of wine for the first 5 to arrive.

Dates for 2006(all on Wednesdays): 10th May, 14th June, 12th July, 16th August, 13th September, 11th October, 8th November and 13th December

Legal Surgeries

The Nigerian Chaplaincy in conjunction with the British Nigeria Law Forum are holding Monthly Legal Surgeries. Free legal advice to the Nigerian community by experienced lawyers.

Every First Thursday of the month at St Marylebone Church, 17 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5LT.

We are currently finalising details (venue, dates etc) for the following BNLf events.

June 2006, BNLf Workshop**7 October 2006, Gala Dinner****October 2006, Annual Lecture****December, AGM and Christmas Dinner**

The 2005 AGM and Christmas dinner was held at Torts wine bar in Holborn. Let us know if you have any special venue in mind for the next one.

News from BNLf Members

The next Paceworking Promotional & Networking event is on Fri 12 MAY 2006 at 6.30pm, Torts Wine Bar, 78 High Holborn. Includes a fashion showcase/parade of collections by top and new designers. Guest list admission £8 (adv booking) /£10 on the night
Advance booking recommended-Tel Hotline 08717113 055

For further details of this event or previous events click on the website www.paceworking.co.uk