



HISTORY OF BIF

On the 4th of July 2003, a meeting of some very energetic and patriotic Bonny indigenes was convened by me at the residence of Mr. Nengi Halliday in North Brunswick, New Jersey, USA. Those present at that meeting were Nengi Halliday, Leslie Green, Dima Brown, Late Ted Allison, Maxwell Brown, Atedoghu Banigo, Gogo Brown, Chris Jumbo, Steve Benstowe, Norman Halliday and Adango Miadonye. The gathering was to find solutions to the numerous problems that beset us as Bonny people both at home and abroad. At the end of the meeting, we resolved to form an umbrella organization – Bonny Island Foundation (BIF) for Bonny people in North America.

BIF was formed to be a catalyst for change; to promote education, Ibani culture and heritage, to foster unity and progress among Bonny people. We were courageous enough not to follow wherever the path may lead, but instead to go where no path exists and leave a trail. With the wind on our back and God with us, BIF has been on the right track, and has achieved some notable objectives including but not limited to:

1. Formation of the BIF on 4th July 2003 and its registration on 4th of February 2004, as the first and only registered Bonny organization in North America.
2. Organization of annual conventions, at which we form new friendships and cement old bonds.
3. Medical outreach to Bonny, during which lectures on topics of public health importance were delivered. A health clinic with distribution of free medical supplies to the indigent.
4. Donation of an ECG (Electrocardiogram) machine to the Bonny General Hospital for the diagnosis of Cardiac conditions.
5. Donation and distribution of protective face masks to all the Major Houses in Bonny, during the COVID -19 Pandemic.
6. Update of our Lord's Prayer in Ibani to encourage usage of Ibani language.
7. Formation of the first Bonny cultural groups (Owu ogbo and Eremina Ogbo) in North America.

8. Advocacy and campaigns towards the completion of the Bonny- Bodo Road.

9. Advocacy and campaigns towards the rebuilding of the Bonny landing jetty in Port Harcourt.

10. Award of Bursary/Scholarships for tertiary institutions to Bonny indigenes across the 34 houses of Grand Bonny Kingdom, in the areas of Medicine, Engineering, Law, Accounting, Political Science, Education, Mass Communication, Management, etc., about half of whom have successfully completed their programs.

11. Recognition and presentation of lifetime achievement awards to notable Bonny citizens in the fields of History, Medicine, Law, Community advocacy, etc.

12. Launching of the Bonny Light House, an interactive internet forum for Bonny indigenes at home and abroad.

13. Interfacing with the Rivers State Government on issues of importance to Ibani people.

14. The erection of a new 17-foot-tall monument over the old one of Nigeria's first professional photographer, Late Jonathan Adagogo Green at the Bonny Cemetery.

15. The distribution of food packages (rice, geisha, and other condiments) to over 400 widows and the elderly, in the Bonny community, through BIF's outreach program.

It is evident from the foregoing that BIF has and continues to play its role as the foremost community-based organization among the Ibani at home and abroad. The BIF in the years ahead, God willing, will continue to strive for the development and advancement of our homeland Bonny.

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Chairman, BIF Board of Trustees.