

BANSANG HOSPITAL APPEAL

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2007

<http://www.bansanghospitalappeal.com>
Charity No. 1064469

KETTERING ROTARY – Children’s Unit

In September the final container for the fitting out of the new Children’s Unit was loaded and sent. This fitting out project was undertaken by the Rotary Club of Kettering and financed by a Rotary International Matching Grant. The project has taken 3-years to complete and has been extremely complex ensuring that the ward would be equipped with all essential non-disposable items. These range from basic cleaning materials through to beds, furniture and essential vital medical equipment that would be required to operate the unit. This is now perhaps the finest facility of its kind anywhere in developing Africa. Our biggest problem now is persuading the patients to go home after treatment..!

THE MITIE HOUSE – Staff Accommodation

Jim Wadda, our building contractor, came to the UK in July for a hectic 2-week schedule of meetings with Mitie and to speak at various Rotary Clubs updating them on the progress at Bansang. Jim and I were guest speakers at the Mitie Engineering Awards. MITIE’s Bansang Project team, over the last 6 months, have designed and planned this entire development of converting the old abandoned Colonial Medical Officers house. It’s final specification will include 12 bed sit units for nursing staff on the top floor together with study areas, plus two suites for visiting volunteers. The ground floor will be a communal living room, kitchen and dining area. The first of Mitie’s three teams of plumbers and electricians will be leaving the UK in November to oversee many of the fitting out procedures. The finished Mitie House will help to attract and retain a higher calibre of staff to work at Bansang Hospital. My grateful thanks to the Mitie team - all have given freely of their own time and will continue to do so until this wonderful project is completed. The final cost will be £70,000 and will be completely funded by Mitie. Their latest fundraiser is a raffle to win a BMW Mini One Convertible in metallic blue. The Vines Group, a BMW Mini dealer, has donated the Mini.

RAFFLE DETAILS:

Tickets are £10 each. Cheques payable to:

The MITIE Group / Bansang Hospital

Raffle tickets can be obtained from:

Mrs L Graham, The Old Coach House, Loddington, Northants. NN14 1LE

The draw will take place in June 2008.

FEMALE WARD - Modernisation

The original estimate for this project was £22,500, regrettably the costs have now risen to £52,000 due to: Changes to the original specification, plus a termite infestation to the wooden fittings in the new Children’s Unit meant that we had to reassess all future building work, as wood can no longer be used. Additionally there have been dramatic increases in most building materials together with a major fall in the value of the local currency. So far we have paid £22,500, which was donated by two anonymous

Bansang friends. Without their help we would not have been able to begin this project. Jim Wadda, due to a lack of local skilled craftsmen, recently visited Senegal to find additional workers to speed up all building work in Bansang.

TOWN CLOSE HOUSE is now open. Once the bats and rats had been evicted this building was extended and renovated into three family units and are now housing senior staff. Town Close House Prep School in Norwich can give them selves a huge pat on the back as they raised over £9,000 to fund this project. The children, tutors and parents took this to their hearts and it has given me enormous pleasure to meet many of them over the last year. I have received wonderful letters from the residents and have pleasure in sharing the thoughts of Haruna, a registered nurse, Ophthalmic Medical Assistant: “I used to live in an old dilapidated house with a leaking roof and sharing my belongings with rats and cockroaches, a situation I never dreamt would end. I lived in this condition for two years until the BHA and Anita Smith came to my rescue. My house was reconstructed within the shortest possible time, and the key handed over to me. I am proud to inform you that I sleep in a house fully ventilated, furnished and well lit with absolutely no fear or feelings of insecurity. I believe the comfort I have in my house has improved my output at work and for the first time I invite friends and colleagues into my room for coffee” I truly believe that our hardworking and dedicated staff should be able to return home to some of the comforts that we take for granted.

We have an ongoing upgrade to all staff accommodation and so far have completed twenty-four units.

UK GSer’s – BMW motorbike owners

Their book ‘Scooters in the Sahara’ records the account of their epic journey from Plymouth to Banjul on Honda C90’s and then onto Bansang to donate their scooters to the hospital. This book has so far raised over £11,000 and is filled with over 200 colour photos. The recently introduced paperback version includes a 2007 update and would make a splendid gift and is available from:

The Kettering Evening Telegraph priced at £12.95 or from the author Dennis Robinson on 01267-222877, or on-line at www.scootersinthesahara.co.uk priced at £14.95 incl. P&P.

The GSer’s are planning another trip to deliver even more scooters and they should arrive in mid January 08. Each member plans to focus on a different project whilst at the hospital. As a direct result of reading this book a member of the military based at RAF Akrotiri on Cyprus took to the saddle and raised funds by riding around the island!

Another group then organised a second ‘ride around the island’ fundraiser and completed the 860kms challenge in three days – totally mad of course, but very much appreciated by all at the hospital.

Recently myself, Steve my husband and Laurence our son visited friends, Linda & Terry Nicholson, in France. During our stay, Linda a BHA Trustee, had arranged an evening fundraiser that was attended by the Mayor and the local press. Further events in France are planned with all funds raised being used on the Female ward modernisation.

NORWICH ROTARY – Fundraising

President Nick Brighthouse and his fellow Rotarians have committed themselves to a year of fundraising to help improve the treatment of burns patients. We hope to set up a burns unit to cover infection control, dressings, pain relief and physiotherapy. This is a wonderful initiative and will substantially improve the treatment of the high number of burns cases admitted to the hospital.

FUNDRAISING – Within my family

I am not the only mad one in the household. My son Laurence is definitely a chip off the old block!!! Last year he cycled from Banjul to Bansang in incredibly tough conditions. Now he and two friends, Michael Davies and Kez Traynor, have cycled from John o'Groats to Lands End via National Parks rather than using the main roads! The trip was 1100 miles and took 3 weeks. They did wonder whether it was an indication of things to come when they flew to Inverness and Ryanair flew their bikes to Dublin, this mishap caused a 3-day delay to the start!!!! They enjoyed enormous kindness on their journey, offers of shelter and hot showers, food and drink. The money raised will be split between BHA and Dr Peter McCormick's charity in the Cameroon, The Beryl Thyer Trust, which treats the most aggressive, but treatable childhood cancer in Africa, Burkitt's Lymphoma. Dr Peter is the Medical Advisor for BHA and is my inspiration. I am delighted that Laurence and his friends chose to split the proceeds between the two charities. Check out Peter's website at www.berylthyertrust.com

CORINNE'S – Greetings cards All profits are donated to BHA and these quality cards can be ordered on line at: www.45x.com/bansang - Individual cards cost £1.00 or order 10 or more and the price is 75p per card. You can contact Corinne on 01933 270538 if you would like her to attend a fundraising event in Northants for the BHA.

BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER – Phil Sinkinson OBE

I first met Phil on a previous visit to Bansang when he made an impromptu courtesy call to thank the hospital staff for saving the life of a VSO (Voluntary Service Overseas) who had sustained a fractured spine in a motorbike accident. The staff arranged for an emergency helicopter to fly in from Senegal and airlift the patient out to meet a connecting flight to Johannesburg. Phil's quick visit was extended into a full afternoon and I was able to show him all of the ongoing projects and enlightened him of the many problems that this remote hospital encounters. He was so impressed with what he saw and heard that he mentioned the Bansang Hospital Appeal during his Queen's Birthday speech. On a subsequent visit I was invited for lunch with Phil and his wife Clare at Admiralty House. They are both now very interested in Bansang and I am hoping they will be able to join me for a short visit to the hospital in November.

STATE ENROLLED NURSES

It is with a great fanfare that I can announce that 12 of our privately sponsored students have qualified as SEN's. Our congratulations go to Modou Musa Sisawo who received the 'Best Academic Student' award for the entire school. All 12 are now working in the hospital. This is an ongoing training project, currently there are 11 students in their final year and last July 5 new students also joined those already at the school.

THINGS TO COME

In January Clive Bradley and business psychologist Michael Costello will be travelling across the Sahara in a vehicle that will be donated to the SEN School. This vehicle will be used to ferry the students to their practical placements. Clive and Michael will then work with the staff in the hospital for 2 weeks, their remit is to increase job satisfaction, increase happiness levels and increase staff retention. More next year on this.

BARCLAYCARD – IT upgrade: The IT team will be heading back out in February 08 to upgrade the computers in both the hospital and the SEN school. Additionally they will be installing the first internal telephone system throughout all departments of the hospital.

MARIAMA and ALHAGIE

No school holidays for Mariama who is now in her final year before applying to the SEN school next year. She is facing fierce competition and is working very hard to gain good results. Her journey to school has now been made easier because of the scooter donated to her by the GSer's. The Kettering Boys Brigade continues to supply funding to service and supply fuel for her scooter. Alhagie continues to do an excellent job at the hospital and is now able to support his family. He is well liked and respected by all his colleagues.

THANKYOUS

To Gambian Experience for the free flight in August, they are always a very friendly service and offer discounts for volunteers. Special thanks to the Evening Telegraph who continue to keep their readership updated on my comings and goings! My thanks to Britannia Pink & Jones and their wonderful staff who store all our goods free of charge and then volunteer to load containers. Thanks to Bob Parfitt and his team of helpers for their continued support. They have organised huge quantities of non-medical items to be delivered into the local Bansang community, the local schools and have magnificently supported the hospital staff. Finally my thanks to all of you for the amazing way in which you continue supporting the BHA. Your help is making a real difference to the lives of some of the poorest people in the world.

FINALLY I will be visiting Bansang in November in the company of Bruce Lamford from the Rotary Club of Kettering and my cousin Christine Norman, to oversee the arrival of the final container for the Children's Unit. Bruce will have the pleasure! of driving The Truck upcountry. In December I will be in the Cameroon at a symposium organised by Dr Peter on Burkitt's lymphoma. The coming few weeks will be very busy and so do forgive me for taking this opportunity of wishing you all a very early Merry Christmas and once again thank you for your continued support.

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PLEASE NOTE - NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

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