

BANSANG HOSPITAL APPEAL NEWSLETTER MAY 2011

<http://www.bansanghospitalappeal.com>

Charity No. 1064469

OBSTETRIC THEATRE UNIT – I am thrilled to announce the completion of the new obstetric theatre at Bansang Hospital, built entirely by our own maintenance team.



New Obstetric Theatre Unit

This consists of a recovery, scrub, changing rooms, showers and toilets and is fully air-conditioned. The cost was £22,000 donated by friends of BHA. No longer will our emergency maternity patients have to wait while the general theatre is in use. We are working along side Maternal & Childhealth Advocacy International to address the high mortality rate for mothers and babies. www.mcai.org.uk Through MCAI we are delighted to welcome obstetric surgeon Sophie Haynes, who is based in Bansang for six months. There are insufficient doctors in The Gambia, so she will be training senior midwives from across the country to perform caesarean sections, and we are delighted to support this initiative.

Our thanks to Rotary Club of Jersey, Rotarian Dr Theo Keller & his wife Mathilda from Switzerland for funding the anaesthetic machine. This is the only machine designed by Diamedica from the UK, specifically for use in Developing countries. Thanks also to Chris & Jeanette Payne who joined me again in January. Jeanette is a Sister from Kettering's Special Care Baby Unit. Her husband Chris erected library shelves in the MITIE House and built two more baby resuscitation units and refurbished the existing one all for the princely sum of £16. A new one costs approx £17k.

POWER UP GAMBIA – In January I met with the PUG team from America. They came to inspect the batteries they had funded for the Children's Unit and we are delighted that we can now power all essential equipment 24/7. They also assessed all major departments and equipment throughout the hospital,

in conjunction with Global Energy who are designing a bespoke Energy Plan.



Leland from PUG checking batteries

This will be a major project to ensure the hospital remains functional during the times we have no electricity, which at present is 2-6pm and 3-9am. Candles/torches however still play a major part in the life of Bansang Hospital! Bansang features on their website www.powerupgambia.org

MITIE HOUSE – I was delighted to show Colin Atchinson, the retired Chairman of MITIE Engineering, and his wife Heather around the completed MITIE House.



Anita, Colin and Heather

The hospital staff were ecstatic in their welcome, greeting them with drumming and dancing, they then put on a dinner in the MITIE House during which each Head of Department welcomed them and explained how this accommodation now attracts key skilled professionals. Recently the Minister of Health, Madam Fatim Badjie visited and was delighted to be accommodated in the MITIE House. This was a tremendous honour and boost to the morale of the staff.

TASK FORCE – My daughter Alexia joined me once again. Her ongoing remit is to help with ideas for motivation and retention of staff. By talking and listening to the staff various events have been tried and discarded; now it has been decided to expand the TV room. There is nowhere to go in Bansang town for entertainment; it is isolated from what we would consider normal social and leisure activity. The TV room will be changed to allow projection onto a wall, similar to a small screen cinema. We need a generator to power the TV; there fore a small charge is made to cover costs. We are going to develop this idea further as it provides another opportunity for families to join together in their leisure time.



Alexia with patient Fatou on the Children's Unit

Other activities loved by all are board games, particularly Scrabble, Chess and Draughts. Groups of staff can be found all around the compound playing their favourite game. Bansang Hospital is their home, they live and play within its environs and anything that can be done to make life easier and give pleasure must be encouraged.

BALLAST NEDAM – a Dutch company contracted to build 190kms of road that will run through Bansang. During January, I met three of their Directors, and escorted them around the hospital. They were extremely impressed with both the hospital and staff. They have agreed to help replace the old sewer pipes that have collapsed and are now causing huge problems throughout the hospital; this includes contaminating the water supply to a well in a large family compound outside the hospital perimeter. Ballast Nedam have removed the trees where the

roots were breaking up the sewer pipes, and will help source and lay the new pipes for us.



Anita with Ballast Nedam management team

They have also brought in truckloads of laterite to level the hospital grounds allowing easier access for the horse and carts bringing in the patients. They will be levelling the area for the proposed orchard, and near the MITIE House, they plan to create hard standing for a multi purpose sports area. I am so very grateful for all their help and practical kindnesses and I hope to report a successful conclusion to this project in the next newsletter.

HONDA C90 SCOOTERS– March saw the arrival of the third team of mad scooter enthusiasts! Nine men, eight scooters, one 4x4 backup vehicle and trailer again braved the rigours of the Atlas Mountains and the Sahara. It is an incredible achievement to travel from the UK at 40 miles per hour to Bansang Hospital, through some of the most inhospitable terrains in the world. The weather was dreadful, including rain in the Sahara! Bansang was 49°C in the shade!



An amazing scooter delivery team

Tom from 'Cotswold Stores' filmed the entire journey which will be edited and sold throughout the stores

sometime between September and October. Every penny from the DVD's will go towards the renovation of the existing old general operating theatre and the building of a second much needed one. These scooters are vital in reaching out into the country following up on patients such as malnutrition and mental health cases. They are also used to collect and transport blood. They are useful in so many ways, both large and small. Well done and thank you so much to everyone who made the journey, your ongoing support really makes a difference to the life of the hospital.

THE FAMILY FEEDING FUND (FFF) – is supported by Friends of BHA and the Routz Group, aged 6-16, from Orlingbury Church and the Lent Lunch in the Village Hall. This fund has been set up to help the families of seriously ill and long term patients who cannot afford to feed themselves until the patient is ready for discharge.



Adama is recovering on the malnutrition ward.

Patients have been taken home early and consequently have often been re-admitted with the same problem. This is a new project which we hope will ensure the patient remains in the hospital until well.

THE STAFF FARMING ASSOCIATION – have been given 7 hectares of land. They pay a small monthly fee of 20 dalasi, approx 30p, for the honour of being a member. They then work the land themselves; in November they harvested enough couscous to feed the patients for one year, and enough beans for seven months. When asked what they got from it, they said nothing other than the delight of being able to provide food for the patients.

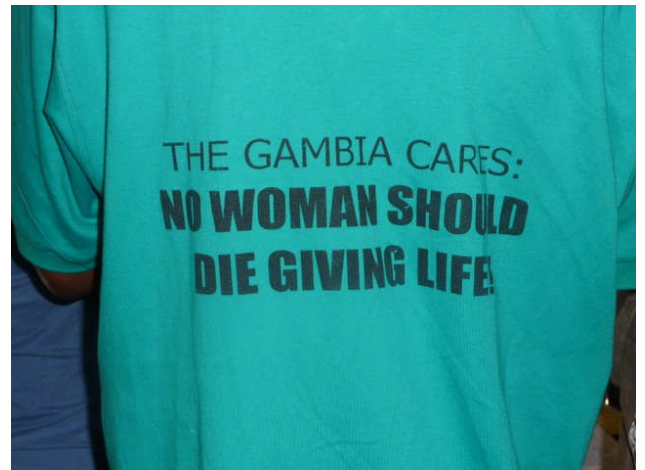
A donation from friends of BHA will enable us to purchase Mango and Orange seedling trees, one for each member of the Association, who will then be responsible for the care of that tree. This will form a small orchard close to the MITIE House.

NORWICH ROTARY – Congratulations for winning the Rotary Districts John Grant Trophy for the best international project in 2010.



Chris Spalding in the new Burns Unit

Bansang benefited from over £30,000 of new equipment for the dedicated burns beds, pathology, laboratory, operating theatre and sterilization room. Chris Spalding joined me in January to officially hand over the equipment. Thank you all so much, your efforts have made an immeasurable difference to the treatment of burns patients at the hospital.



MY MOST GRATEFUL THANKS TO FRIENDS OF BHA

We are all facing increasingly difficult economic times and yet with the commitment of the staff and your loyal support we continue to have a very positive impact in the hospital and the care of the patients. On behalf of the hospital staff, patients and community, I would just like to say, THANK YOU.

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