

# Bansang Hospital Appeal

Transforming healthcare delivery in The Gambia since 1992



CEO BaBa Jeng, front row centre, with the management and senior staff.

## A message from Anita

After a very productive three weeks spent in Bansang at the start of the year, I was assured that we would make our projected completion dates on-time and on-budget. Of course in the capable hands of the Management Team, staff and contractors this was never going to be a problem.

The third and final stage of renovating the 80 bed Children's Unit had just started and eighteen bathrooms within the hospital grounds for staff were being re-built! THEN...Covid 19 was starting to make headline news; the virus was spreading at an alarming rate around the world and on a scale that was unprecedented and with catastrophic consequences to follow.

Lock down was put in place throughout The Gambia, borders closed and only flights with emergency medical supplies allowed to land. This news could not have come at a worse time, temperatures exceeding 45 Celsius and the rainy season fast approaching. The pressures on this very busy hospital continue to rise on a daily basis with demands on the staff, laboratory services and resources without the imminent threat of this pandemic to deal with.

I could not be prouder than I am today of the way that the management team continue to handle this deadly virus, with efficiency and professionalism that radiates down to the staff on the front-line who care for their patients with the courage that reflects their noble profession.

May I take this opportunity to extend my deepest gratitude to the long standing Friends of BHA, your monthly donations that you have set up through your bank have allowed us to continue paying 47 staff members and to be able to plan for the future for this amazing hospital.

I hope that you will continue to support this special hospital and its patients, together we can continue to make the difference.

Thank you everyone.

*Anita* x

**Anita Smith MBE MRG**  
**Founder & Director, Bansang Hospital Appeal**

## URGENT CHRISTMAS 2020 APPEAL



### We Urgently Need to Renovate Four Houses for Gambian Doctors

Never have we been faced with such challenging times with all normal methods of fundraising ceased, as a charity we have seen a catastrophic drop in donations. Facing such adversity has only made us more passionate to continue to help.

The hospital urgently requires additional doctors to join our inspirational team. To achieve this we need to provide quality, homely and comfortable living environments for these senior staff. Having more senior staff on site will unquestionably help reduce levels of morbidity and mortality.

We are constantly evolving and to date we have renovated 62 staff homes! We know that one of the major factors in achieving this rate of staff retention is offering a good standard of accommodation and as a result we have an exceptional team that offer outstanding levels of patient care. Here at Bansang Hospital we have managed to maintain a near 96% staff retention rate since 2014, as you

can imagine this is a no mean feat given attractive salary and benefits packages offered overseas.

We intend to renovate four dilapidated houses that will be turned into quality homes to include essential furnishings. To achieve this we will need to raise £20,000 to cover labour and materials. In these unprecedented times we know this won't be an easy feat but it would be the silver lining to a year like no other.

The benefits to staff morale and community cohesion really cannot be underestimated. Nor can the potential benefits to other healthcare facilities across Sub-Saharan Africa who we hope will use Bansang Hospital as a blueprint for their own development.

I passionately hope that together we can reach this £20,000 target and in so doing we will improve the life chances of every patient.

Thank you for your support

#### How You Can Help

Donate Online; [GoFundMe Christmas Appeal](#)

**Note; if applicable please Gift Aid when donating**

Or by cheque made payable to; Bansang Hospital Appeal  
Send to; Anita Smith MBE, MRG. 4 The Leys, Orlingbury,  
Kettering, Northamptonshire. NN14 1JE

*(You can help in many other ways, turn to page 9 for details)*

#### Project Goal:

Fully renovate four dilapidated houses into homes for Doctors who are urgently required at the hospital.

Together we can make a difference....

**Total Cost: £20,000**



## Children's Unit Renovation Work Completed



*Installing ward partitions in the renovated children's unit*

We did it! With your magnificent support, this enormous 80 bed Children's Unit has finally opened its doors to a bright and new infection-controlled environment, there's plenty for the children and staff to smile about.

**First Phase** at a cost of £19,000. Cardboard ceilings were replaced with labour intensive handcrafted plaster ceilings throughout, they greatly reduce the heat ingress from the roof void below the Aluzinc roof. All electrics, lighting and ceiling fans have now been replaced with low energy alternatives.

**Second phase** was the surgical ward, cost £21,558. New porcelain floor, ceramic tiles to bed height, new patient and staff showers and toilets. There are newly installed aluminium partitioning that now offers greater infection control measures and privacy for the 6 bed ICU, 6 bed burns unit and a large separate dressings bay. These aluminium bays offer greater infection control and patient privacy. Throughout the department there are stainless steel sinks and taps set in fully tiled surrounds.

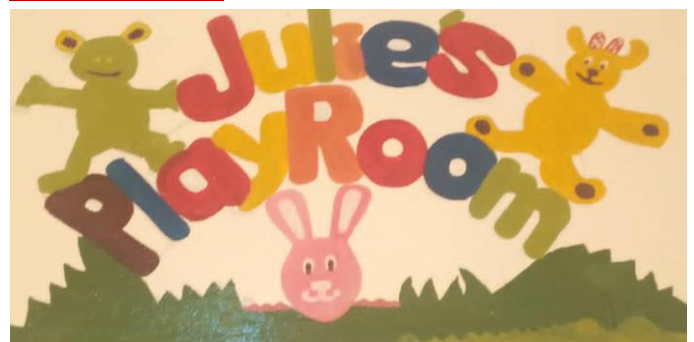
**The Third Phase** This phase was the subject of last year's Christmas appeal, cost £20,558. This proved to be the toughest challenge of all due to Covid-19. Delays were inevitable as the country had imposed emergency lockdown measures that were extended for a further 21 days in August. It was difficult for both staff and patients as they adapted to being moved to the smaller of the two wards. The staff are resourceful and knowing that the result would be so beneficial, they did what they always do, they carried on providing the best possible care.

Now we have a fully tiled malnutrition ward with new hand washing facilities on entry and an office for the Head of the Unit, Mariama Jowneh, a nurse who inspires me and all who work beside her. The facility now includes a premature baby and neonatal wards, staff room, solar battery room, a medical storeroom plus Julie's Playroom.

This children's unit was open and fully operational on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 2020.

Thank you!

### Julie's Playroom



*This room is dedicated to a very special baby girl who sadly passed away at the tender age of 8 months, 43 years ago.*

Play therapy can be the best medicine for a child's recovery, we have witnessed time and time again the smiles and laughter brought about by our therapists playing with the children.

Currently the Play Therapists are supporting the nursing staff until restrictions can be lifted and play time resumed. Julie's playroom will be reopening as soon as Covid-19 restrictions end.

## Big Surprise: It's not often that I'm lost for words



*Laurence received typical Gambian hospitality en route overnight*

I arrived in The Gambia back in January with Chris and Jeanette Payne, Bansang family members for the past 11 years. After our 200-mile journey to the hospital we were unloading the truck laden with supplies. When I turned around, to my utter shock my youngest son Laurence was standing there! He had secretly arrived in the Gambia and cycled on the opposite side of the river so as not to spoil our surprise, he enjoyed Gambian hospitality en route.

Laurence first visited the hospital 16 years ago when he was helping the British Pest Control Association eradicate rats that had infested the hospital in overwhelming numbers. He has since returned on several occasions and I now hold my hand up high when I say that he has also been the author of many of our annual newsletters and urgent campaigns.

During this visit, and being very versatile, Laurence turned his hand to help Jeanette with CPR training for all orderlies, maintenance, cooks, nurse attendants and environmental staff.

During these difficult times Laurence has since founded the Lewisham Donation Hub, supporting the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers; you can view on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/lewishamdonationhub/> We are all so very proud of what Laurence and the team of volunteers at the Hub are achieving during these extraordinary times.

## Jeannette and Chris Payne: The Dynamic Duo

As a specialist neonatal nurse Jeanette has dedicated a minimum of 3 weeks every year for the past 11 years training staff and improving CPAP resuscitation techniques as well as general care of the sick new-born.

With special thanks to **Rotary Club of Seaford and Tom Naughton** Jeanette was able to run workshops to familiarise the nursing staff how to use the recently donated defibrillators.

It is great to work alongside someone who can adapt from the high tech environment of Kettering General Hospital to being able to improvise at Bansang.



*Adaptable Jeanette assisting DIY Chris*

Chris, sorts his tool bag out every morning, returning only for a short lunch break and then back to the Children's Unit to continue with the job of securing and fixing tension wires that we shipped out in our last container together with curtain tracks, all 80 beds now have mosquito nets attached and curtains to all the windows.

This was a marathon job that Chris took in his stride. At the end of the day what better way to relax than for Chris to strum a tune or two on his guitar to the delight of the children, mums and staff on the ward.

## Covid-19 Supplies



*Temperature screening before entry*

With immediate effect upon my return home, funds were transferred so that the Procurement Officer could secure urgent supplies to help with infection control measures. The 400-mile round trip was made to purchase bulk supplies of hand sanitiser, soap, bleach, and large water containers with taps.

The maintenance team erected a hand washing station outside the hospital gates and screening of every person that needing to enter the hospital was in place as well as hand washing points outside every department. The government has since employed an infection control officer to ensure all best practice measures continue to be carried out.



### Gift of rice to all the staff



*Rice delivery in May for all the staff*

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted on the food supply and demand that disrupted critical supply chains. Working with the Management Team and recognising the needs of the hardworking staff who are on the front-line fighting Covid-19. A decision was made to prioritise food assistance ensuring that all staff received a 25kilo sack of rice.

Friends of Bansang Hospital appeal didn't hesitate to give the staff and their families support, your gift helped to feed their families allowing the staff to concentrate on their work during these stressful times. Your donation also gave the staff a huge morale boost that was deeply appreciated by everyone. THANK YOU

### Eighteen Newly Built Bathrooms



*David on the beautiful River Gambia*

Who would have thought that when I showed David and Janet Underwood around the hospital over 10 years ago that our paths would cross again? They have now retired after spending fourteen years developing a nursery school in the village of Kanubeh.

The school is not only a great success, but the Gambian Government Education Department are now involved in funding the school and building a Lower Basic School in Kanubeh. David and Janet also helped the villagers start a cashew nut farm to ensure that it would help to boost their economy enabling them to help themselves.

With £7,000 left in their charity account and a further personal donation of £1,000 David and Janet felt that BHA met with their charity objectives that included the welfare of people working in rural Gambia. A very urgent project needed addressing without delay, 18 accommodation units housing nursing staff needed the bathrooms to be demolished before they collapsed. Not only were they structurally unstable, but to the horror of the staff snakes and insects entered through cavernous cracks.

Seven of the bathrooms have been funded by David and Janet. Work commenced just before the news of Covid-19, fortunately all the materials had been purchased and were on site, with social distancing observed; eighteen bathrooms have now been re-built. Credit to our contractor Alagi Saikou who was also the contractor for phase two of the Children's Unit.

### Diamedica and Safe Anaesthesia World Wide



*Patient receiving oxygen*

*Bio-medical technician*

Founder and Director of Diamedica Robert Neighbour has supported BHA for many years. He is a world leader in low tech affordable equipment for low resource hospitals around the world [www.diamedica.co.uk](http://www.diamedica.co.uk)

We are grateful for Robert's additional support donating hand-held electronic thermometers and other materials to help the hospital manage Covid-19.

Robert works closely with Safe Anaesthesia World Wide [www.safe4all.org.uk](http://www.safe4all.org.uk) who have so generously supported BHA in the past and have donated two more oxygen concentrators, now totalling a magnificent four concentrators that are saving lives every day.

### Rotary Club of Kettering Huxloe

Rotarian Iraj Posh Mishad ran not one but THREE MARATHONS around his garden so that he could raise funds to support the needs of patients suffering from Covid-19, he is truly remarkable! With his desire to help



others, Iraj was not without his own problem as his hip took the brunt of his epic challenge! Iraj raised a total of £1,900 so that we could purchase an Airsep Oxygen Concentrator for the hospital. Oxygen is vital in saving patients' lives not just with Covid-19 but with many other health problems.



*Concentrator supplying lifesaving oxygen*

BHA funded a second concentrator from our ever-diminishing funds to include airfreight of £500 to send the total of four concentrators urgently by airfreight as we could not delay the arrival of such a precious cargo.

### **Power Up Gambia (PUG) Solar Project**



*Installation of the solar field has commenced*

Lynn McConville MD of the charity PUG based in Philadelphia was due to oversee the completion of a major solar power and battery backup system, the installation has had to be delayed due to Covid-19!!

The plan is to supply a 64kW hybrid solar system with battery backup to meet the hospitals growing power needs. Johnson and Johnson donated 600 SunPower solar panels for the project. This will allow 24-hour electricity to the critical areas of the hospital. Lynn has been working tirelessly to see that this project comes to fruition at the earliest opportunity.

The power situation remains critical as a generator that was donated as a battery back-up has been running 24/7 when the erratic main grid supply has a problem, consuming 200 litres of diesel a day, which is clearly not sustainable long term.

### **Simon Scarrow: International Best Selling Author**



*A Thrilling New Roman Epic from Simon Scarrow*

The last fifteen of Simon's novels have been Sunday Times bestsellers, with his works having been translated into over twenty languages.

Simon Scarrow has been a Patron to BHA for the past 13 years, he has raised considerable sums of money through the sales of his books, notably his novels featuring Roman soldiers Macro and Cato. Recently Simon conducted an on-line auction during last November for the launch of his latest book in the series "The Emperor's Exile". The auction of ten special edition books raised a substantial sum which will go towards our urgent Christmas appeal.

The Management and Staff are looking forward to welcoming Simon and his wife sometime in the future. It will be an opportunity for him to see the developments that he has made possible.

### **Dr Theo and Mathilde Keller from Switzerland**



*Theo and Mathilde in the newly renovated male ward*

Christmas 2020 is a Christmas that will remain in the memory and hearts of all the staff. Theo and Mathilde would like to show their appreciation this Christmas by giving a 25 kilo sack of rice to all 426 members of staff. This is to show their gratitude for the fantastic job all the staff do and remembering the unforgettable welcome they received when they visited the hospital in November 2019.

Theo, Mathilde and friends have recently answered an urgent request for a large quantity of anaesthetic supplies. Their ongoing support of BHA, without doubt, continues to save precious lives and improve medical outcomes.



## Former British High Commissioner Sharon Wardle



*Sharon and Anita, opening of the male ward in 2019*

If I may be so bold as to quote from an email sent to me from the former British High Commissioner Sharon Wardle, she finished her term in office earlier than expected due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

*"It has been a privilege to know you and the team at Bansang Hospital, and to play a small part in the journey. The BHA has achieved so much and the dedication of your sponsors as well as the amazing work of the hospital staff is truly remarkable. I have always cited your collective work as one of the best examples of UK-Gambia collaboration that has put the needs of some of the most vulnerable communities in the country at the heart of what you do"*

## Form Feeding Fund (FFF)



*Damian and Natalia, Mariama and a grateful mother*

Prior to Form Nutrition's involvement, relatives who had trekked for days to bring their loved ones for treatment would often abscond before they had been given clearance by a doctor, this was not out of choice but because of hunger fuelled necessity. Mothers who are not able to feed their newly born babies now have access to funds for milk formula, prescription costs and to support their waiting relatives with food when necessary.

Co-Directors Damian Soong and Natalia Bojanic have transformed and enabled care to continue, effectively stopping readmissions.

I cannot effectively put into words the relief and joy that the Form Feeding Fund brings not only to patients and relatives but also the staff who were once faced with not being able to support patients and relatives feeding for the duration of their stay. This remarkable initiative is without doubt having a life changing effect on patient care.

Form Nutrition supply a range of plant based products, do visit their site: <http://www.formnutrition.com>  
For every product purchased on-line, 30 pence is donated into the Form Feeding Fund.

## Aid 2 Gambia



*Mark and the team at Bansang Hospital*

January 2019, three ambulances were driven by a team of volunteers from Nottingham to The Gambia. Bansang Hospital was the happy recipient of one of them.

The management and staff are most grateful for the timely donation of the ambulance. It was officially handed over at the Ministry of Health for registration before being put to use transferring patients that need to be taken to the Teaching Hospital on the coast, this entails a 400 mile round trip.

Aid 2 Gambia has since donated 8 sacks of rice for patient feeding and they continue to raise funds through their shop in the Gambia to fund containers to the Gambia, profits help to provide toilet facilities for schools.

## Sewage Tanker: A Self Sustaining development



*Anita visits the prison to see the tanker in action*



The sewage tanker is improving hygiene conditions throughout the communities to include three Government hospitals, health centres in Central and Upper River Regions, Regional Health Teams offices and the prison in George Town.

Gone are the problems of sewage leakages and the associated health problems. Funds generated will maintain the tanker and contribute towards projects within the hospital. This unique initiative is run by volunteer staff who have formed the "Hospital Workers Association". This is yet another way that the staff are helping the hospital and the communities.

### Farming Activity



*Villagers harvesting the couscous for the hospital*

This year the hard work of the local village communities and high levels of rainfall has resulted in a bumper harvest of couscous, this is despite not being able to farm their land across the border in Senegal due to Covid-19. The crop will be threshed, put into sacks and stored for supplementing patient feeding throughout the coming year. Additional sacks are sold to staff at a much subsidised rate.

The farming activities throughout the year are due to the generosity and hard work of the village communities, overseen by the volunteer "Hospital Workers Association". The two Massey Ferguson tractors, donated by friends of BHA, also greatly assist the local village communities with their crop production.

### A Bicycle Made for Two



*Very happy maintenance men, zero travel expenses!*

A tandem bike was donated and shipped in our last container by former intrepid traveller Steve Dart. The tandem caused great excitement, a bicycle made for two... never been seen before in rural Gambia. It's the perfect bike for the hospital's two young maintenance men, to travel back and forth to work each day as they both live in the same village. Such a gift is a real morale booster.

### The following photos speak for themselves



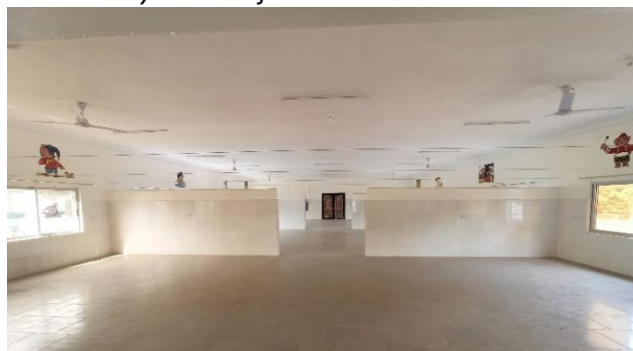
*Anita gets a cuddle*



*Happy mum and son*



*Glenis Haynes with junior Rushden & Diamonds FC*



*Completely renovated Children's Surgical unit*



## You can support the Bansang Hospital Appeal in so many ways

- ONE OFF DONATION:** Please either donate on-line: [GoFundMe Christmas Appeal](#) or send a cheque made payable to: Bansang Hospital Appeal (address below)
- DONATE MONTHLY:** Monthly donors are the lifeblood of this charity. The financial assurance they offer helps us make long-term strategic plans. If you are able to contribute in this way, please get in touch [anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org](mailto:anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org) or download the Standing Order form and Gift Aid form from the BHA website <https://bansanghospitalappeal.org/contribute-donate/>
- FUNDRAISE:** Running a marathon? Walk around the garden like Captain Tom? Swimming across Scotland? Scootering across the Sahara? Whatever the idea, we'd love to support you!
- LIKE ON FACEBOOK:** Liking us on Facebook helps spread the Bansang story to all your friends. It doesn't cost you anything, but it helps us no end! So please click the like button on our Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/BansangHospitalAppeal>
- FOLLOW ON INSTA:** We've just opened an Instagram account, and will be posting pictures to it regularly. If you'd like to see our pictures, please follow us and possibly share with your friends and family. <https://www.instagram.com/bansanghospitalappeal>
- RAISE AWARENESS:** If you work or socialise in a place that would be happy to highlight this charity, please get in touch. We have lots of information leaflets and fundraising boxes that you can take with you. They may just help us reach someone that becomes the difference in future years. [anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org](mailto:anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org)
- CONTACT US:** Anita Smith, MBE MRG. Bansang Hospital Appeal,  
4 The Leys, Orlingbury, Kettering, Northamptonshire. NN14 1JE  
[anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org](mailto:anitasmith@bansanghospitalappeal.org) // 07783 551945
- GIFT AID:** Please help us to maximise your gift by ticking the Gift Aid box whilst donating on-line or by completing a Gift Aid form at the end of this Newsletter.



I'm sure many of you will have heard of Gift Aid. It's a UK government scheme that allows our appeal to claim an additional 25 pence for every £1 you donate. To collect Gift Aid on your behalf, we need to ensure the following;

- ✓ ***You are a UK taxpayer who has paid or will pay an amount of tax (income and/or capital gains tax) for each tax year that is at least equal to the Gift Aid claimed on your charitable donations in that year.***
- ✓ ***You have completed, signed and returned an enduring Gift Aid declaration form allowing us to reclaim Gift Aid on your behalf (the Gift Aid form can be found on the last page of this newsletter).***

If you are a regular donor who has not signed a Gift Aid Declaration, please consider doing so as this will maximise your donations. If you have already completed a Gift Aid form, then we also need your help to ensure your declaration is valid and our records are accurate. If any of the following applies to you, please get in touch;

- ✓ ***Your name or home address has changed.***
- ✓ ***Your circumstances have changed, and you are no longer paying sufficient UK tax on your income and/or capital gains to cover all Gift Aid claims.***

Thank you for your continued support and for helping us to maximise your donations with Gift Aid, it really does makes a considerable difference.

# Gift Aid Declaration - Bansang Hospital Appeal

## **Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate**

Donating through Gift Aid means charities and community amateur sports clubs (CASCs) can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you give. It will not cost you any extra. Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer.

## **In order to Gift Aid your donations to Bansang Hospital Appeal you must tick the box below**

Please treat all donations I make or have made to Bansang Hospital Appeal for the past 4 years as Gift Aid Donations until further notice.

☐ I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer, please tick the box.

**Note:** I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year then it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

## **My details:** (please note we can only accept your home address)

Title \_\_\_\_\_ First name or initial(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Join us:**

Would you like to be kept informed via email about our latest news and campaign updates?

☐ Yes please - please tick the box and please add your email address below.

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ No thank you - please tick the box to confirm you do not wish to be kept informed.

## **Please notify Bansang Hospital Appeal if you:**

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

## **Please complete, sign and return this form to:**

Anita Smith, 4 The Leys, Orlingbury, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 1JE