

Rafiki Surgical Missions

Habari Gani

DECEMBER 2012

What's new from Rafiki Surgical Missions

RAFIKI DINNER 2012 - TANZANIA

The 3rd Tanzanian Rafiki Dinner was held on Saturday 3rd November 2012 at the Akemi restaurant in Dar es Salaam. The night went very well, combining with the grand opening of the restaurant, and guests enjoyed numerous courses of food each with their own theme by Chef David Grier who flew up from Cape Town, South Africa for the event. The guests also enjoyed an incredible performance by the Wakwetu Jazz Vibes Band.

A big thank you to Lathifa Sykes, Steve Kysakye, Thierry Murcia and the rest of the organisation committee for organising the event.

We would also like to thank the major sponsors for the evening, without whom the night wouldn't have been possible. Triple Platinum Sponsor - African Barrick Gold Plc, Platinum sponsors - Geita Gold Mine, Mantra Resources Limited, Freight Forwarders Tanzania Limited, Vodacom Tanzania, Oryx Oil Company Ltd, Petrolube Fuchs (T) Ltd and Gold Sponsors - Rift Valley Resources (Tanzania) Sandvik Mining & Construction Limited, Capital Drilling Limited, AKO Catering Services, PanAfrican Mining Services, The Rickshaw Travels Limited and Engineered Systems Solutions.



Pictured left: Wakwetu Jazz Vibes band



Pictured above: Rafiki Chairman, Didier Murcia; past Rafiki Patient Paschal Kahindi; Rafiki Mission Coordinator Tanzania, Thierry Murcia; Geita Gold Mine MD, Gary Davies.

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MISSION UPDATE OCTOBER SURGICAL MISSION

Our second and last surgical mission for 2012 took place from 26 October – 9 November 2012 at Sekou Toure Hospital in Mwanza.

During the mission a total of 100 patients were seen with 58 of them receiving operations for repairs to cleft lip and palate, burn contracture and grafts. The team worked very long days and went above and beyond to treat as many patients as possible. With the assistance of Geita Gold & African Barrick Gold, patients were transferred from the remote communities to the hospital in Mwanza for the surgical mission.

There was an incredible turn-out for the mission after patients from the community heard the radio announcements about the mission.

We wish to thank Sekou Toure Hospital for its assistance, in particular for making its facilities available to us during the mission, and its staff for their support. We also wish to thank Geita Gold and African Barrick Gold for their remarkable work especially in sourcing and transporting patients, providing nutritional meals for patients and in assisting with translating and generally running of the clinic and finally a big thank you to Matthew Hansen, Anthony Williams, Andrew Wild, Andrew Miller, Taka Wild, Alice Haydon, Sharon Ndossi, James Smith, Shannon Muir and Jennifer Ng for volunteering their time and skills towards the mission.

Pictured clockwise from top: October Mission patient Daudi keeping occupied in the pre op area; the team occupied in the pre op area; the team unpacking the medical equipment; the team and patients at Sekou Toure; and in action on day one



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TAKA & ANDREW CATCH UP WITH PAST PATIENTS

Rafiki patients often travel long distances from remote villages all over Tanzania to come to the hospitals for their surgeries. In the week before the team arrived in October, Mission Coordinator Taka Wild and Anaesthetist Andrew Wild, got to experience a little bit of what village life is like.

Hosted by African Barrick Gold and Geita Gold Mine, Taka and Andrew met some past Rafiki patients in their homes and also travelled from Geita to Mwanza on a bus with patients for the current mission. It gave them the opportunity to check up on some past patients and to see first hand what a difference the surgery had made to their lives a couple of years on.

Taka and Andrew were well received wherever they went by

patients and their families who were so thankful to be a part of Rafiki Surgical Missions. In a village near Geita they met a man called Simon who had corrective surgery in 2011. His family were so happy with the results they put on a feast for Taka and Andrew, which is a huge honour. Andrew was given a chicken as thanks by another patient's family, and also received a couple of marriage proposals (which he politely declined).

Thank you to Taka and Andrew for taking time out to visit the remote communities. The rest of us will be able to find out a bit more about the adventure, as it will feature in next year's Rafiki Ball video.



Pictured top Andrew and his 'gift'; Taka & Andrew being mobbed by school kids; the feast; and left Taka and Andrew with past patient Jumane.

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VOLUNTEER FOCUS: TAKA WILD

Why did you decide to become involved with Rafiki Surgical Missions?

Doing medical volunteer work has been the goal in my nursing career for a long time. I was trained in a Red Cross Hospital in Japan and originally came to Australia to learn English so I could do international aid work.



Just as I was planning to start my volunteer medical work, my husband was invited to join a Rafiki Surgical mission. He went on his first mission then, and I was invited to join a year after. Since then, I have never looked back!

What is your role with Rafiki?

I have been the Rafiki Surgical Missions Coordinator since November 2011. I get the teams together and coordinate the surgical and anaesthetic equipment we use. I also work as the team anaesthetic nurse and the team leader on missions.

How long have you been volunteering for Rafiki?

I first joined Rafiki in 2006, so it has been 6 years and I have done 11 missions with Rafiki to Tanzania.

What does this work mean for you?

This is a very important part of my life nowadays. We are very lucky to live in such a privileged country. This is something small that I can do to really make a difference in some other people's lives.

What keeps you coming back?

It makes me very happy to hear our former patients doing so very well and to see the huge changes for the better in the patient's, their families and even their communities following the surgeries. Tanzanians are very warm and caring people and I see great community spirit amongst them. There are lots to learn from them for us as well. People take care of each other in Tanzania without many words and I really like that. I also find it very rewarding to work with a team of people who share the same goals and passion.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Attending the October Mission were Fleur Schell and Richard Hill who were the lucky bidders of our first 'Rafiki Volunteer Experience', auctioned at the 2011 Rafiki Ball. Fleur and Richard relaxed in Zanzibar, went on Safari and swam with whale sharks off Mafia Island!

The highlight was spending a few days with the mission at Sekou Toure Hospital, meeting the patients and watching the surgeries. A big thank you to Fleur and Richard for all their help during the time they spent with the team.

We will be auctioning another Rafiki Experience Package at next year's Ball, so look out for more information.

Pictured: Fleur entertaining the pre-op patients and Richard watching a surgery.



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VOLUNTEER FOCUS: MATT HANSEN

Why did you decide to become involved with Rafiki Surgical Missions?

I have had a great interest in East Africa ever since spending three months in Kenya on my medical student elective in 1979/80. I worked at a small hospital in the town of Kisumu on the banks of Lake Victoria and saw both the tragedy of treatable but untreated disease and deformity and the quiet fortitude of the afflicted people. As a medical student I could do very little but with accumulated training and experience I now have something worthwhile to offer. I had previously worked with other aid groups such as Interplast and have always enjoyed travelling to the third world but had not done much of either for several years. The chance to join with Rafiki came up a few years ago and has been a great opportunity to give something back using the training that I have been lucky enough to acquire.

What is your role with Rafiki?

I work as a plastic surgeon. My main area of expertise is in the head and neck/ craniofacial area so cleft lip and palate problems are very familiar and constitute more than half of what we do on the missions. We also do a lot of burn scar contracture surgery for what are often severely disabling deformities as well as dealing with various tumors and post traumatic deformities

How long have you been volunteering for Rafiki?

I have been volunteering since 2009

What does this work mean for you?

This is the most fulfilling work that I do. In a short space of time the team is able to expertly treat a large number of children and adults with deformities and tumors varying from the simply disfiguring to severely disabling or even life threatening. This is not work that would be done by



someone else if we didn't visit. Most of these unfortunate people have effectively been abandoned to their fate. I know that on a global scale this is just a drop in the ocean but each little drop is a diamond!

What keeps you coming back?

Many things, the camaraderie of the team, the stoicism of the Tanzanians, the problem solving at all levels of patient management, the opportunity to use my expertise for great good, the smiles of the people we have treated and the joy of the parents as we give their child back after surgery.

TRAINING AT SEKOU TOURE

The Rafiki teams also work very closely with the local medical teams to share expertise in areas such as anaesthetics, surgery and health care. Whilst in Mwanza for the latest surgical mission, Dr Matthew Hansen was invited to present at Sekou Toure on cleft lip and palates and the treatment options.



Pictured: Dr Matt Hansen presenting at Sekou Toure

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WHEELCHAIRS FOR KIDS

Pictured: Volunteers packing the containers for shipment to Tanzania



In addition to the containers below, we have also been able to send 2 x 20 foot containers of wheelchairs through the support of the charity Wheelchairs for Kids.

We would like to thank Wheelchairs for Kids for all their time in constructing the 322 wheelchairs that will greatly assist many children in Africa to become more mobile.



GHAWA AMBULANCES

Global Health Alliance Western Australia is a collaborative network of healthcare providers and educators from Western Australia that are working with the Universities in WA and Tanzania to help grow relationships by improving health and reducing poverty in Tanzania.

Rafiki Surgical Missions was able to facilitate the importation of two ambulances into Tanzania for GHAWA. The ambulances have been deployed for use in the community in Dar es Salaam and Masangania.



CONTAINERS

Since our last newsletter update in August, another 2 containers of medical equipment have been transported to Tanzania. These containers included hospital beds, theatre tables, mattresses, wheelchairs, walking frames, school supplies and hospital consumables which are due to arrive in Tanzania in mid-December. The equipment will be distributed to various hospitals and schools in remote areas in Tanzania.

Thank you to all of the volunteers that have come down and assisted with the packing of the containers as without you this wouldn't be possible.

We are always looking for more people to assist in packing the containers. Please contact Lily on info@asanterafiki.com if you are interested volunteering a few hours of your time.

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QATAR AIRWAYS

Good news everyone, Qatar Airways started flying from Perth to Dar es Salaam and Kilimanjaro in October 2012 flights from Perth increased to daily on 2 December 2012. Its dedicated Business Class terminal at Doha will open on 12 December 2012, Qatar Airways is a fantastic airline and if you are looking at travelling to Tanzania (or Europe or elsewhere) we would happily recommend it.



PRESIDENT KIKWETE ACKNOWLEDGES

Honorary Consul for Australia in Tanzania and Director of Australia Tanzania Society and Rafiki Surgical Missions, Thierry Murcia met the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, His Excellency Jakaya Kikwete during a hand over of a container load of hospital equipment to remote communities, this time in Shinyanga.



The President was overwhelmed by the generosity of Rafiki Surgical Missions and commented on how important and meaningful the equipment will impact on the remote regions in Tanzania will be.

LIKE US!

Help build the Rafiki Surgical Missions on-line community. Search 'Rafiki Surgical Missions' on Facebook and 'like' the page. We'll share photographs from the missions and events, and you keep you up to date with the latest news.



DONATIONS

Information in relation to making a donation to Rafiki can be obtained from our website www.asanterafiki.com or alternatively please contact Lily Balfour on +61 8 9221 0033 or info@asanterafiki.com

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

If you would like to join our mailing list or need to update your contact details then please email Lily at info@asanterafiki.com

SPONSORS

A big thank you to all of our sponsors for 2012, in particular our major sponsors African Barrick Gold, AngloGold Ashanti, Murcia Pestell Hillard, Myriad Images, Graphic Source, Corporate Traveller, Stefan The Diamond Centre, Freight Forwarders Tanzania, Serena Hotels, GKR Transport, The Swiss Watch Box, Greenhouse, Woolworths, Ferngrove, and Bridal Creations. We are very grateful for the support you have given to us throughout this year and hope that this will continue in 2013.

A huge thank you also needs to go to all of those who volunteered their time and assistance to Rafiki this year. Your help has been much appreciated and we hope that you will continue with your involvement in Rafiki in the years ahead.

Thank you also needs to go to St John of God Subiaco Hospital for donating consumables and pharmaceuticals, St John of God Hospital CSSD Department for sterilising all of our drape packs and Craig, Stuart and the staff at d.s.biomedical in Belmont for their help in reconditioning our surgical equipment.

Finally, we would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and we look