



# Overseas Specialist Surgical Association of Australia

## Newsletter – December 2004

Issue no: 5

Welcome back to another edition of our newsletter. The end of the year is fast approaching and we wish to provide you with a summary of events and activities that have occurred throughout the year, 2004. This copy of the newsletter will be the last issue for this year, therefore, we would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe transition to the coming year.



### SURGICAL TEAM NEWS

A total of 7 team visits had been undertaken during the year, 2 to Cancar, Flores, 2 to West Timor and 3 to East Timor involving 28 personnel which included: 8 Surgeons, 9 Anaesthetists, 7 Nurses and 2 Coordinator / Interpreters. Several specialists joined the surgical teams for the first time this year. We hope that this involvement will be ongoing and that they can make themselves available when called upon.

Of the 7 visits undertaken this year, a total number of 758 patients were clinically assessed and 266 surgical procedures performed. Of the surgical procedures, the majority of cases have been patients with cleft lip and palate deformity and disabilities from burns.

Surgical treatment for some of the patients assessed was not possible in the environment where the teams visit. Some such patients from Cancar, Flores, were referred to Surabaya for possible surgical assistance, the more severe cases are still awaiting for possible sponsorship to Australia for treatment. Those who are so severe may not live long enough to receive any treatment.



Two patients who have been referred to Surabaya for possible surgical treatment.



Two of the patients who are still waiting for assistance for possible surgical treatment in Australia

### CANCAR, FLORES, NTT



Outpatient clinic

2 Plastic / Reconstructive and 1 Orthopaedic surgical team visits undertook to visit Cancar, Flores. A total number of 12 personnel were involved in the 2 visits, with an orthopaedic surgical team from Perth and the plastic surgical team members from Adelaide and Darwin.

### Statistical summary of clinical work undertaken in Cancar – Flores, 2004 - (2 visits).

<b>Consultations</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>Operations</b>	<b>134</b>
<i>Clefts</i>	56
<i>Burns</i>	17
<i>Orthopaedic</i>	23
<i>Other</i>	38

The excellent service provided for patients by the SSpS nuns at the St. Damian Rehabilitation Hospital in Cancar remains immeasurable. Sr. Franseline continues to bring in patients from all over Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) and Sumba. The number of patients that have had to travel to Cancar for surgical treatment from Sumba and Kupang has increased. This has encouraged the SSpS nuns to construct extra buildings to facilitate the additional patients who arrive for treatment. They are also building a hospital in Sumba modelled on their set up in Cancar.

Post operative bilateral cleft lip



Surgery - Kupang June '04 by local surgeons (awaiting revision at Cancar)



Surgery– Cancar April 04 by OSSAA surgical team

Flight schedules to and from Labuan Bajo, Flores, have not been consistent since team visits recommenced in 2002. The flights used to be empty between Bima (Sumbawa) and Labuan Bajo and that the problems with return bookings were minimal. This followed by the occasional full flights to Labuan Bajo but not so full return flights. At the visit earlier in the year, the return flight was full, so that the team had to spend 2 extra nights at Binongko, (Rehabilitation setting for disabled children) Labuan Bajo and flew back to Denpasar on the flight which only had one engine working. At the most recent visit, the team had to change planes from Bima to Labuan Bajo, the not so full return flight, however, went directly from Labuan Bajo to Denpasar.

Sr. Virgula SSpS, Sister in charge of the community in Cancar, had pre booked flight seats for the team before arrival. This guaranteed availability of seats on the return flight.

Hand burn contractures (hot water burn)



At surgery with Full Thickness Skin Grafting (FTSG)



Team members with operating theatre nursing staff, Cancar

**EAST TIMOR**



Surgical procedure, Baucau hospital

The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) has provided funding for all 3 surgical visits to East Timor this year, 2 of the visits were part of the RACS programme, the third visit was also funded by RACS but as part of the outreach programme. At this visit, the team was based in Baucau but travelled to Aileu, Lospalos, Viqueque and Venilale to conduct patient consultation. A teaching session in suturing was provided to the nurses at the Regional Health clinic in Aileu. This proved to be an important exercise as the nurse in charge of the Aileu clinic now performs and attends to all cases that require suturing at the clinic.



Mr. Rogerio Conceicao suturing under supervision – Aileu

**Summary of clinical activities for 2004 (3 visits):**

**Baucau**

Total patient consultation: 146  
Total surgical procedures: 62

<i>Clefts</i>	38
<i>Burns</i>	05
<i>Other</i>	07
<i>L/A</i>	12

**Dili**

Total Patient consultation:	157
Total surgical procedures	45
Clefts	23
Burns	09
Other	05
L/A	08

**Overall total - East Timor - 2004**

Patient consultation:	303
Surgical procedures:	107

Patient with fungating squamous cell carcinoma of right cheek



June 2004



October 2004

The team had the opportunity to visit Viqueque and Venilale for the first time during the outreach programme. Patients seen at this visit returned to Baucau for follow up surgery on the following visit. Water problem in Baucau remains a major concern, water had to be transported into Baucau for the weeks our team visited. Towards the ends of the weeks, the tanks would be empty.



Team members with operating theatre staff – Baucau hospital

During the surgical team visit to East Timor, in April, a young journalist from Perth, Ms. Rochelle Mutton, met the team in Dili and observed their work being performed in Dili, Aileu and Baucau. As a result of her encounter with the team, features of the teams work in East Timor were published in newspapers in several states.

**WEST TIMOR**



Surgical procedure – Kefamenanu hospital

The tasks of the surgical teams visiting West Timor are still more difficult than the at other centres. Due to distances between villages and regional hospitals and the provincial centre, disadvantages exceed advantages. The absence of a resident surgeon in the regional hospitals confuses the focus that our surgical teams provide reconstructive and emergency surgery, .

Patients with all categories of ailment turn up repeatedly for assessment and possible surgical treatment. In addition, the regional hospitals are not as well equipped with supplies, therefore surgical treatment of patients remains restricted, however, this has been substituted with much teaching from team members.



Teaching at Naob  
Dr. Harry and colleague



Scrubbing for surgery - Naob

Communication with the regional centres of West Timor has not always been easy. The Edwardstown Lions Club, Adelaide, has donated a fax machine to the Sisters in Kupang to alleviate this problem



Alma Sisters, Kupang with their new fax machine, courtesy of the Edwardstown Lions Club, Adelaide

Owing to the of absence of the basic medical supplies, consumables etc at the hospitals, the surgical teams have had to take so much more supplies with them. At the July visit, Ms. Mandy Bluett (Qantas) and Mr. Andrew Love have been most generous is assisting the team in providing excess baggage allowances.

The teams have provided more teaching during the visits this year and have noted some gradual development in staff capabilities and facilities at the later visit. Dr. Harry continues to bring his team from the Leprosy hospital in Sitanala, Java, to work with the team.

**Summary of clinical activities for 2004 (2 visits) :**

**Total patient consultation: 303**

**Total surgical procedures: 44**



Team West Timor with PRR Sisters

**Personnel**

Sincere gratitude goes to all these team members for contributing their time and expertise to the success of these visits. To know that you have contributed to changing the lives of those who have resigned to living in hopelessness is most satisfying.

**Other news**

The organisation would like to congratulate Dr. Peter Riddell for his achievements in becoming a Plastic Surgeon earlier in the year. We trust that Peter's achievement will be of greater advantage to the surgical teams, especially to the patients in the West Timor region.

We would also like to send our very best wishes to our mentor, Dr. John Hargrave, for a speedy recovery from recent surgery.

The Consul and staff of the Consulate of Republic of Indonesia, Darwin continue to support OSSAA's humanitarian work in West Timor and Flores. The organisation is sincerely grateful for this ongoing support.

Mrs. Joan Webb of the Kalyra Knitting Group and friends knitted 95 teddy bears for young patients who received surgery in East Timor and Cancar. These toys were very well received, seeing the faces of the children when they wake up to see a beautiful toy beside them was overwhelming.



Post op patients with knitted teddy bears

**FUNDRAISING**

The Fund Raising sub-committee, led by Mr. Doug Omond, has worked very hard throughout this year to raise funds to support the activities of the surgical teams.

**Fashion Parade**

On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> October one hundred and seventeen Members and Guests attended a Fashion Parade at Glenelg Golf Club. The afternoon was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

The Parade was provided by Christine's Fashions from Nile Street, Glenelg. The seven models who generously gave of their time were warmly received by all of those present.

A raffle held in conjunction with the Parade raised \$590.00; the first prize donated by Glenelg Golf Club valued at \$400.00 was won by Meg Backhouse. Corporate members, friends of OSSAA and members of the Committee donated the other thirteen prizes.

Mrs Jan Shackell of Christine's Fashions gave a donation of \$200.00 towards the day.



Qantas, one of our Sponsors was represented by Ms Mandy Bluett a Business Development Manager. The amount raised on the day was \$1927.61, besides this, we gained two Corporate and five Ordinary Members.

Following the success of the film day held at the Chelsea Theatre earlier this year, the Fundraising Committee has decided to have another film day on February 20, 2005 (mark in your new diary).

The film selected is "The Aviator" starring Leonardo DiCaprio as Howard Hughes and Cate Blanchett as Katharine Hepburn. **Plot Outline:** A biopic depicting the early years of legendary director and aviator Howard Hughes' career, from the late 1920's to the mid-1940's. **The film is listed in the top 5 nominations for the 2005 Academy Awards.**

In conjunction with the film day another major raffle will be held. Prizes again being donated by our very generous sponsors.

Tickets and raffle books will be forwarded to all members early in January 2005.

### **COMMITTEE**

Following the last Annual General Meeting, the new committee has been nominated as follows:

President:	Mr. John Russell
Vice Presidents:	Mr. Stephen Baker Dr. Mark Moore
Treasurer:	Mr. Alex Johnson
Secretary:	Ms. Sue Freeman
Members:	Mr. Doug Omond Dr. Peter Riddell Mr. Bob Laws Dr. Arto Kartika
Co-Opted members:	Dr. Dion Suyapto Ms Ruth Boveington

### **Special Meeting**

Since its inception, OSSAA has been seeking to achieve tax deductibility for donations received. Under the Australian Government rules there are a number of criteria, in addition to humanitarian effort, that need to be satisfied; in particular there is a need to display sound management over a period of time before such applications will be accepted. Material on our operations has been provided to the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Australian Taxation Office. On 21 October 2004, acting on advice from the ATO, constitutional amendments were made at an extraordinary meeting of the Association to establish a OSSAA Relief Fund. We are hopeful that tax deductibility will be achieved soon.

The Lions East Timor Dental Project and OSSAA are about to sign an agreement whereby the two organisations will assist one another where and when the need arises. Two well known Adelaide dentists, Dr. Terry Yuen and Dr. Richard Salter have been providing a dental service in East Timor following Dr. Mark Moore's invitation later in the year 2000.

Each organisation will uphold its own funding arrangements but will provide assistance to one another where possible in their East Timor Programmes.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The following organisations and individuals are acknowledged for their ongoing support. Without this support, the surgical teams would not have as easily achieved as much as they have throughout 2004.

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)  
 Rotary Club of Unley,  
 Rotary Club of Campbelltown  
 Lions Club of Edwardstown,  
 O.P.A.L.,  
 Johnson and Johnson,  
 Calvary Hospital,  
 Royal Adelaide Hospital  
 Womens and Childrens Hospital – Adelaide,  
 Adelaide Pathology Partners,  
 Mr. Zacharrias Manongga - The Consul and staff of the Consulate of the Republic of Indonesia (Darwin)  
 Mr. Brian Measey - Thrifty Car Rental, N.T.,  
 Ms Mandy Bluett - Qantas,  
 Mrs. Joan Webb - Kalyra Knitting Group & friends,  
 Mr. Mel Reynolds - Melsa Medics,  
 Mr. Jim Kiely – Smith & Nephew  
 Mr. Mark Clear – Ansell,  
 Ms. Patricia Mann-Davis & Mr. Terry Mill – Tyco Health Care,  
 Karen Halbert – Astra Zeneca,  
 Mr. Barry Bratchford,  
 Mr. Greg Smith - Helican,  
 Mr. Tim Drysdale – Defries Industries,  
 Mr. Gary Rintoule – Densly,  
 Mr. Peter James – International Linen,  
 Marinella Auri – Dynek Plastic Surgical sutures, Ms. Vikki Denny – Anaequip;  
 ASEA Rehab, Northern Territory.  
 Mary-Lou Bishop – Medtel  
 SAGRIC staff, Adelaide

### **Memberships**

As of November, 2004, OSSAA has 104 members plus 16 Corporate members

Memberships remain \$25 per year for ordinary membership and \$100 for corporate membership. Remember, the organisation is dependent on your support to improve the lives of those who are much more disadvantaged.

The Committee of Management would like to thank all members (corporate and ordinary) for your help and support. We trust that you will continue to provide your support to helping those who do not have the chance to help themselves.

Further information can be obtained by writing to us at : PO Box 138, UNLEY, SA 5061 or to: Ruth Boveington, PO Box 795, Darwin, NT 0801



**Overseas Specialist Surgical Association of Australia**

OSSAA has provided help and a chance in life for many hundreds of people, especially children, and young adults who may otherwise have remained isolated from appropriate medical support and assistance.

Memberships fees are \$25 per year for ordinary membership and \$100 for corporate membership. Remember, the organisation is dependent on your support to improve the lives of those who are much more disadvantaged.

If you wish to make a donation or become a member, please fill in the following and send to:  
O.S.S.A.A. - P.O. Box 138, UNLEY, SA 5061.

I would like to:

- make a donation
- become a member
- be a corporate member

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose cheque / money order for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card type: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number:

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_