



# NEWSLETTER

Volume 16: June 2010

## A Word from the President:

Here we are again!

Since last communicating in January, there have been 3 surgical team trips to the region. In all it is expected that 7 visits will be successfully completed during 2010.

In February/March **Mark Moore** led a plastics team to Timor Leste.

In March **Bob Sillar** led a general surgical team visit to Halilulik.

In April **Rob Coren** led a plastics team to Cancar.

Due to changes in administration arrangements in Indonesia the lead time for trips is longer than it was previously. Each trip must now be officially sanctioned by the local and regional authorities, and the 'bona fides' of the surgical teams clearly established. There has always been a need to have a written invitation from the hosting hospital. We are fortunate to have the invaluable assistance of Dr Harianto (affectionately known as Dr Harry) to manage these new requirements. Sue Freeman has been effectively managing the plane bookings and visas.

Latest recruits into the OSSAA surgical teams 'family' include Katherine Bryant, Samantha Sudbury, Dr Eric Levi, and Anastasia Stain.

On the entertainment and fundraising front, Connie Granzio organising a highly successful film afternoon at The Chelsea Cinema on June 6

Your committee continues to meet monthly, while the medical subcommittee meets quarterly.

As recommended by the Australian Taxation Office, an internal review has been undertaken to ensure OSSAA is compliant with the rules governing its Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status....and we have given ourselves a tick!

## Stephen Baker

### Timor Leste (East Timor)

#### Baucau and Dili

Under the 'Timor Leste Program of Assistance Specialist Services' [ATLASS] a team visit was undertaken from February 27 to March 6. Plastic surgeon Dr Mark Moore was joined by anaesthetist Dr David Sainsbury, theatre nurse Vanessa Dittmar and recovery nurse Helen Roberts and operated at Baucau Hospital. Plastic surgeon Dr Peter Hayward, with anaesthetist Dr Brian Spain and theatre nurse Samantha Sudbury operated at Dili National Hospital.

There were very pleasing aspects to the visit, including the commitment and participation of local surgeons Dr Joao Ximenes and Dr Philip Mwaura and hard working nursing staff. Dr Joao has now undertaken 20 partial cleft lip repairs under

supervision. The aim is to have him 'flying solo'.

Of note were the high skill levels of the Baucau nurse anaesthetists and instrument nurses. Similar reports were received back from Dili. Team members, and particularly Mark Moore, can feel justifiably proud of the results of their long term commitment to training of local staff and surgeons. Sustainability has been a key focus of OSSAA endeavours. There were 72 patient consultations, 42 in Baucau and 30 in Dili and 52 surgical procedures, 34 in Baucau and 18 in Dili. Cleft lip and cleft palate comprised the majority of operations; other procedures included relieving of burn contractures, scars, excisions and orbital decompression.

During the Baucau visit the team visited Venilale in the mountains and the Los Palos hospital where 8 patients were treated in a small clinic.

While the trip was again very successful there is a perceived need to tighten communication, planning and pre-op preparation to get the best outcome from the Dili National Hospital visitations. Post operative recovery from anaesthesia also deserves greater attention.



Most of the Baucau surgical team



Doctors Ximenes, Mwauru, Moore and Sainsbury

## Nusa Tenggara Timur (West Timor)

### Halilulik

Dr Bob Sillar's team visited Halilulik in West Timor March 19 - 26 at the request of the Director of the Rumah Sakit Marianum, Sr Helma Nahak SSpS. Team members included anaesthetist Dr Allyson Armstrong- Brown, Operating Theatre Sister Kerrie Nicholls, Recovery Room Sister Katherine Bryant and Team Coordinator/Interpreter Dr Eric Levi. This was the first trip for Katherine and Eric.

The full week of consultations and surgical procedures focused mainly on Inguino-scrotal pathology (majority hernia repair) and head and neck pathology. In an ultra busy week there were 136 consultations and 51 surgical procedures. There had unfortunately been a large turnover of staff since the visit last year. A bonus however was the amount of training that was undertaken with local OT, recovery and anaesthetic staff.

Difficulties still apply with power supply reliability. The staff were very enthusiastic and did their utmost to ensure each patient was properly prepared for surgery. Some issues remain with equipment and operating theatre capacity. Team members expressed their satisfaction with progress made.



The Halilulik surgical team

## Flores

### Cancar

From 16 – 25 April plastic surgeon Dr Rob Coren led a team to St Damian/St Rafael Hospital in Cancar. Members of the team included plastic surgeon Dr Markus Nikitins, anaesthetists Drs Matthew Grill and Todd Maddock (*check across the page*), theatre nurse Margaret Maloney recovery nurse Amanda McFall, and interpreter Anastasia Stain.

It was another intensive week in paradise. In all there were 117 consultations and 78 surgical procedures. Cleft lip (45) and palate (6) and burns (10) dominated the operations. The close relationship between the consultations and operations was a tribute to the organisation by the nuns.

One issue which often causes problems is proper fasting before an operation. Fasting songs were initiated to warn and prepare patients.

A not so humorous 'highlight' was the failure of Jetstar to carry all the luggage out of Melbourne. Todd and Margaret were missing their personal belongings – fortunately the equipment was not affected. Pak Hendrik Tawur came to the rescue in tracking down the cases, steering them through customs and forwarding them to Cancar. Other than this glitch, the week proceeded particularly well for the team, hospital staff and patients. Anastasia proved to be an excellent interpreter and assistant.



The 'divine' Cancar surgical team

## Cameo performance

*There is a rumour that anaesthetists do strange things! On the April trip to Cancar an offer was made by Matt Grill to Todd Maddock – a \$1000 donation to OSSAA for the kids for Todd's hair. As seen below the operation was undertaken with surgical precision.*



Todd showing true grit!



mmm – too late for a change of mind



Good job Matt – and not a nick in sight

## Next Visits

Plans are still being finalised for the second half of 2010.

First cab off the rank is the orthopaedic team led by Dr Colin Whitewood visiting Cancar July 3-9.

Another orthopaedic team visit was planned for Naob in July but that is now on hold.

In August a general surgical team led by Dr Brian Miller will be heading for Halilulik.

In October a RACS sponsored plastic surgical team trip will be led by Dr Mark Moore to East Timor.

This may well be followed by another Mark Moore trip to Lela in November.

An ENT (ear, nose, throat) trip led by Dr Suren Krishnan to Cancar is being planned for October.

## Acknowledgments

As always we thank the hospitals, service clubs and medical supply companies (including TYCO, Johnson and Johnson and Atlas Healthcare) in Australia for their ongoing support of the teams. We have recently received a portable generator and portable ultrasound from supporters in the United States.

To RACS for their support of Timor Leste and our teams.

To our Indonesian friends and counterparts including the Indonesian Embassy in Darwin.

To the air and ground transport companies for their assistance. A special thanks to Lesley Brown of Harvey World Travel for her expertise and to Pak Hendrik Tawur in Bali for his.

None of these missions would occur without the support of our surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and local counterparts.

We have great helpers like Dorothy and Robyn Waller and Rita Hunter knitting beanies and teddies for patients.

Once again Laurie and Amanda Kennedy have provided a magnificent donation.

Finally, to you our members who make OSSAA what it is.

THANK YOU ALL

*PS Alison Kelty who has generously donated proceeds from her Xanadu stores to OSSAA is now on a mission to assist the peoples of Balibo in East Timor and Naob in West Timor – see enclosed pamphlet.*

## Coming Events/Fundraising

A luncheon has been organised for July 25 at the Glenelg Golf Club. Our guest speaker is to be Gert Skipper of zoological fame (and Panda expert). A film afternoon is planned for September 26 with the very topical *Wall Street II*.

## Personnel Profile

### BOB LAWS



Bob Laws was born and raised in Sydney and educated at Homebush Boys' High School and the University of Sydney. On graduation in 1962 with a BSc, majoring in Geology, Bob moved to Adelaide to work for Reg Sprigg at Geosurveys, where he stayed for nine years.

In 1971 Bob joined French multinational Aquitaine Petroleum in Brisbane and Sydney where he was Exploration Manager. In 1983 he joined the South Australian Department of Mines and Energy, where he was Director of the Petroleum Division until he retired in 2001.

In 2002 Bob was awarded the Public Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and the Lewis Weeks Gold Medal by the Australian Petroleum Industry for his contribution to the petroleum industry in Australia. He became a Committee Member of OSSAA in 2004 and President from 2005 to 2008. He is a member of the Rotary Club of Unley and a non Executive Director of Horizon Oil Ltd.

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# Photographic Gallery

## TIMOR LESTE

### PLASTICS



Two very happy customers



Dr Joao Ximenes operating, assisted by instrument nurse Mateus



What a difference!

*On advisement, the graphic pictures relating to repair of a burns contracture have not been included.*

## CANCAR FLORES

### PLASTICS



Looking real good!



And another!



Happy ward rounds

## HALILULIK WEST TIMOR

### GENERAL SURGERY



Getting rid of a big pain in the neck



Great expectations



Now that feels a lot better down there