

Newsletter

Autumn 2017



WHAT IS POSSIBLE WHEN AN EMAIL LANDS IN THE INBOX?

Dear Friends of UKFTSH,

UKFTSH wants, like Sainsburys "to make a difference". Surbiton being 3.059 miles from Freetown gives Sainsburys an advantage of success. Since 6 September 2017 UKFTSH has improved its chances. Dr Mary Bunn, a Specialist Palliative Care doctor from Liverpool who emailed UKFTSH, is being supported by UKFTSH for one year initially, to develop a sustainable model of palliative care at TSH and in Freetown. The trustees are enormously excited and believe that this will "make a difference". The trustees will review the development of this project at the end of the year.

Dr Lois Hong also emailed UKFTSH, she writes in the newsletter about her experiences. While UKFTSH continues to fundraise we are immensely grateful to the loyalty of our supporters both those who attend events and those who donate. This year we've linked up with New Malden Rotary Club who has generously donated towards the Dr. Bunn's stipend.

With many thanks, Ruth Cecil

Receiving certificates for the training workshop with Dr Lois Hong



...from Dr. Lois Hong

I am a family medicine resident from Singapore, in Sierra Leone for a year. I worked with the hospice team to develop the referral system and inpatient care capacity at MacDonald Village. Despite the very nascent inpatient care system we had in place, the patients we admitted showed us so much gratitude - because, they said, they had finally received some relief in their painful and distressing condition. I've also been humbled and inspired by the cheerful resilience of The Shepherd's Hospice staff. I'm encouraged by their compassion and commitment to work in a specialty which runs counter to prevailing healthcare culture. As my hospice preceptor says, "Palliative care is ultimately a response to a basic human instinct, to lend a helping hand to a fellow passenger in the mysterious and eventful journey of life." I am confident that this instinct resides in my colleagues at the Hospice and I look forward to continued growth as Dr Mary Bunn begins her stint.

Dr Mary Bunn

Mary has left her position as a Specialist Palliative Care Doctor at the Queenscourt Hospice in Liverpool to join her husband in Sierra Leone; this has coincided with our desire to find someone to develop sustainable palliative care in Freetown.

Mary is highly qualified for this project, with her experience in paediatric palliative care in Malawi; teaching qualifications and much experience teaching palliative care; her experience in medical supervision and also Mary is a Trustee of Hospice Africa UK. Mary leaves four children in the UK whom she will be visiting from time to time and she is also a flautist a fact that would have pleased our UKFTSH founder Sheila Hurton.

What is possible when people work together?

From Michael Hynds, NON-CLINICAL DIRECTOR, Aberdeen Women's Centre

Aberdeen Women's Centre (AWC) recently referred a terminally ill cancer patient to The Shepherd's Hospice. Mamie was an eleven-year-old girl from a small, remote village in the district of Pujehun, over 300km from Freetown. In mid-May, Mamie and her parents arrived at Freetown's main government-controlled hospital. Mamie had cancer in her leg (by way of a large and very aggressive tumour), which had also spread into her lungs. Following detailed medical tests, it was clear that Mamie's condition was terminal.

AWC provided medication and other medical supplies for Mamie to the government-controlled hospital, which provided medical care free of charge. However, the quantity and quality of care was substandard. Clearly, Mamie was in much pain, distress and discomfort. Her parents accompanied her during her stay in hospital. Although her mother was allowed to sleep alongside on a nearby bed, Mamie's father had to sleep outside each night in the open air.

AWC visited The Shepherd's Hospice and had discussions with its Executive Director and one of its international doctors. They agreed to admit Mamie, and also to provide accommodation and subsistence for both her parents. The family had its own private ward, with a bed for each of them and an ensuite bathroom. Although AWC continued to provide support by way of medical supplies and medications, The Shepherd's Hospice provided all meals, and other support (including morphine) that AWC was not in a position to provide.

On an almost daily basis, the hospice provided AWC with updates on Mamie's condition. AWC visited Mamie at the hospice on a number of occasions. It was extremely impressive and the quantity and quality of care provided by the hospice was excellent. For example, Mamie had her own full-sized bed (instead of the child's cot that she was allocated at the government-controlled hospital). Her wounds were bathed and bandaged carefully several times a day, thus reducing the odour from her gangrenous limbs and deterring the emergence of bedsores). Her ward was quiet, away from the brashness of an overly-loud television set, and in a comfortable and serene setting in which she could spend her final days with her parents. The care and kindness proffered by the nurses was exemplary. The hospice's doctor took tremendous care in ensuring that the nurses were confident and competent in their work.

Even following Mamie's sudden and somewhat unexpected death in the middle of the night, the Hospice staff were on hand to provide unprecedented care and support to her family. This included final washing, bandaging and wrapping of Mamie's body so that it would not bleed during the long and arduous journey to Mamie's home village. The staff carefully placed the body on a small stretcher and carried it compassionately, placing it gently into the rear of the waiting vehicle.

The Shepherd's Hospice is a non-profit organization and is largely supported by donations. It charges a nominal amount per night for a patient's care. In Mamie's case, although both parents were present, it charged only for the presence of one care-giver. Charges for other supplies were very modest, perhaps calculated on or around a cost-recovery basis.

We, Freedom From Fistula, via our Aberdeen Women's Centre, were happy to pay for the cost of care for Mamie at Shepherd's Hospice and believe it represented excellent value for money in ensuring a little girl, and her parents, had the best possible care in the final days of her life.

The UK Friends of The Shepherd's Hospice, Sierra Leone

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THE SHEPHERD'S HOSPICE, Sierra Leone

An early history by Michael Hurton

The Shepherd's Hospice was set up by Gabriel Madiye, its present Executive Director, in 1994 as a simple service to meet the needs of those suffering from the effects of HIV/AIDS. Over the next few years the service grew and moved to its main base in Freetown.

In 1997 they enrolled in the worldwide Voices for Hospices (VfH) event which was, at that time, a charity sponsored by BT. VfH had been set up by Sheila Hurton following successful 'Come and Sing' concerts that she had organized to support her local Princess Alice Hospice. This had become recognized in the UK and overseas as an excellent way of attracting support and raising funds for each hospice organizing an event, help and guidance being given by the charity.

All the VfH events were followed up and there was concern that no report had been received from Sierra Leone. The reason became apparent when, in July 1998, a traumatic letter was received from Gabriel Madiye (Executive Director of TSH). During the military coup in May 1997, the hospice building had been badly damaged with devastating effects on its work and with personal traumas experienced by Gabriel, his family and the staff. No money was available to restore the badly damaged hospice building – they were working with damaged walls and under plastic sheeting for a roof. Can Sheila and VfH help? Similar letters were also sent to both Help the Hospices (HtH) and Hospice Information. Sheila conferred with them and, as expected, the articles of association of all three did not allow any donations to be made. So Sheila set up a personal appeal for funds, found a secure route for transfer of funds to Sierra Leone and the first small donations were sent in autumn 1998. These enabled the start of building restoration, payment of some salaries and sending of some medical supplies.

There was now regular contact between Sheila and Gabriel by fax, these often giving heartbreaking news of the conditions under which they were trying to work and with no local funds being available. However, knowing of some UK support and concern appeared to give them huge encouragement to carry on despite horrendous problems.

Early 1999 came dreadful news - on Boxing Day the rebels had made a second attack on what was left of the hospice, destroyed it, smashed all furniture and files, stolen the van, burned down Gabriel's house and abducted his wife and two daughters (14 and 2). They had also burned the satellite hospice in Tombo and another 150 buildings. Left reeling by this news what could be done to help, there still being no resources available in Sierra Leone.

The situation was mentioned at the Princess Alice Hospice and there were immediate offers from staff and volunteers to help with a Sierra Leone Day to raise funds. Only three weeks later, a whole day of activities there raised £3000 and, shortly after, a local church, Christ Church, gave the proceeds of their Lenten Appeal, £2600. So the appeal was well and truly launched!

To be continued in the next newsletter.

Do No Harm; stories of Life, Death and Brain Surgery

By Henry Marsh

This was a surprisingly readable memoir written by a neurosurgeon at the end of his career.

Each chapter explores a particular challenge for the surgeon; different tumours or conditions upon which he is called to operate. Through the telling of the patient's story and how the operation proceeds, he tells of his own struggles to perfect his skill and the impact of surgery on his patient's life.

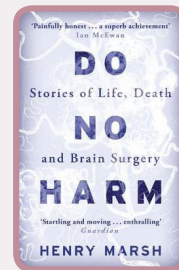
This book gives a real insight into the ethical dilemmas that can face a neurosurgeon, should he operate and risk leaving the patient unable to speak or paralysed? Or should he refuse, knowing this decision takes away any hope of survival. He speaks with great compassion for his patients and their families. In particular he movingly reflects on operations where he made mistakes.

Acknowledging the burden that he carries of regret and responsibility for catastrophic outcomes from surgery.

He reveals the struggles he experienced as the NHS modernised and mourns the 'good old days' when the surgeons were viewed as Gods. I found it a very

fascinating read and would recommend this to anyone with a passing interest in medicine and the workings of the brain.

Esther Walker



2017 Quiz Night at Claygate Village Hall

For your diary...

13th December 2017

Carol Singing

5.30 - 7.00pm

at Surbiton Station

11th May 2018

Quiz Night

7.30pm

at Claygate Village Hall

Fundraising Activities

SS LUNCHES NOVEMBER

As always the yearly event of 'Scrumptious Sunday Lunches' is as much enjoyed by the hosts as by the participants! During November people offer to host a meal for which the attendees give a donation. This year we raised over £4,500; with gift aid to be added it is a marvellous sum. At the same time as raising money and an awareness of what the hospice does, the friendship and warmth found at these lunches makes the event worthwhile in itself. Usually this event is a Sunday lunchtime meal but this year we had a Pâté and Puddings event which has been a great innovation and much enjoyed by the participants. We are promised a variation on this theme for next year!! Anyone wishing to host a meal or find out about this, please contact any of the trustees.

CAROL SINGING DECEMBER

Once again our melodious sound seemed to be appreciated with £650 collected. Thanks to all and hope to see you this year!

DO YOU SHOP ONLINE?

www.easyfundraising.org.uk

Click on "Find a Cause" and enter "The UK Friends of The Shepherd's Hospice". All major online retailers will donate a small percentage of your purchase to UKFTSH. If all our supporters do this patients in Freetown will receive improved care.

WINE TASTING JANUARY

The Anglican parish of St Andrew and St Mark in Surbiton once again made UKFTSH their 'Charity of the Month' for January 2017. The main event organised by the parish was a wine-tasting led by the vicar, the Revd. Robert Stanier, who is something of a wine buff, under the title of 'The Emperor's new clothes'. Some 60 to 70 people attended, and were asked to compare three cheap supermarket wines with more up-market bottles of wine of similar types. The object was firstly to see whether the tasters could tell the difference; and secondly to judge whether it was worth paying more for the more sophisticated wines. Most of those attending had no difficulty telling the wines apart, but views on value for money were mixed. A Sancerre from Laithwaites was generally thought to be far superior to its supermarket equivalent; but a branded Pinot Noir from Tesco called "La Folie Douce" was reckoned to be quite palatable - and possibly a good accompaniment to something like Spaghetti Bolognese, where the more expensive Santenay would be wasted. (On the other hand more of the Santenay was consumed than of any of the other wines). A Spanish Cava had a few champions, but most folk agreed that it was no match for an up-market English sparkler from the Ridgeview vineyard in Sussex. There was perhaps a consensus that many cheap wines are not nearly as nasty as they used to be; and that some may be well worth considering for everyday drinking - but also that it is not just snobbery that gives more famous wines their high prices. Along with other donations from members of the church, the event raised over £1,000 - many thanks!

ANNUAL QUIZ MAY

Claygate Village Hall was again the venue for our quiz night in May. The quiz was well attended and we are very grateful to our regular competitors who come along to tax their brains, admire the wit and bonhomie of our quiz master David Fullbrook and enjoy a buffet supper. Our sincere thanks go to David Fullbrook and Peter Robson who not only formatted the PowerPoint presentation for the questions, answers and scoresheet, but also validated all the rounds submitted. We are also very grateful to Catherine Gibbs who once again organized the raffle and helped to swell the total raised to over £1400. Please come to the next in May!

And finally...

| How you helped UKFTSH raise Funds | |
|--|--------------|
| SSLunches | £4641 |
| Carol Singing | £650 |
| Quiz Night | £1408 |
| Manse Tea | £360 |
| Donations | £1375 |
| New Malden Rotary Club | £172 |
| Kingston Rotary Club (Carol Singing) | £1201 |
| St.Andrew's & St.Mark's (Wine Tasting) | £1201 |
| New College Oxford | £1000 |

As always our heartfelt thanks to you for all your support.

On behalf of Michael, Jacqui, Peter, Liz, Kathryn, Esther and Ruth.