



# Kambia Hospital Appeal

Newsletter No. 14

[www.kambiahospital.org.uk](http://www.kambiahospital.org.uk)

Spring 2006

## TBA Film

In 2005 we funded a community health education film to promote the use of trained Traditional Birthing Attendants (TBA) and to encourage women to seek health care during pregnancy. The film, which was shot in Kambia by Alice Kerr-Wilson and Peter Krause last January, is now being shown at clinics throughout the district and attracting sizeable audiences.



Maternal health film being show to a local people at Bantomi village

## KHA in 2005

The past year has been one of much activity here in the UK with some very successful and enjoyable fundraising events. Highlights include the Elyans' Big Breakfast, the Kambia charity Golf Day and the Palm Wine Extravaganza.

We visited Kambia in October to see how the hospital is doing two years after it re-opened and to finalise our future plans. The coming year will see several important new developments for us in Kambia. They include extending our support beyond the hospital to:

- three rural health clinics
- a scholarship programme to allow Kambia school-leavers to train to become doctors midwives and nurses
- a district-wide training programme for 400 Traditional Birthing Attendants
- a pilot emergency transport scheme involving motorcycle ambulances, which, if successful, may be adopted by the Ministry of Health and extended across Sierra Leone.

The scale of our new initiatives and the need for consistent communication between Cheltenham and Kambia has lead us to employ a local co-ordinator to oversee our work in the district, and we are delighted that Mohamed Conteh, the revenue clerk at the hospital, is now running our Kambia office.

### Gift Aid makes a difference

Last financial year we received £3,915 in recovered tax through the Gift Aid scheme. This is money that the government pays to the Appeal on top of Gift Aided donations from our supporters. Please do make sure that you have completed a Gift Aid form so that we can apply for this top-up to your donation.

### People

We say a huge thank you and farewell to Godfrey and Pauline Taylor, who, having been the driving force behind the setting up of the link with Kambia, decided it was time to take a less active role, and resigned last year. Their enthusiasm over the previous ten years cannot be underestimated, and we are sorry they are no longer part of the team. John Kloer replaces Godfrey as treasurer and trustee. The trustees also welcome Alan Dick to the board as Committee Chairman. After a year studying for his MA in Leeds, District Medical Officer Santigie Sesay has now left Kambia and has been replaced by Dr Joseph Kandeh.

### Amazon

Our affiliation with Amazon.co.uk continues to be fruitful, contributing over £600 to the Appeal. Many thanks and keep shopping on-line through the Amazon link on the Kambia website [www.kambiahospital.org.uk](http://www.kambiahospital.org.uk)

### Amazon.co.uk



If you are buying books, CDs or a camera, why not do it via the Kambia Hospital Appeal website and help Kambia at the same time? Amazon donates 5% of the value of your transaction to the Appeal at no extra cost to you. Look for the Amazon link on our home page at

[www.kambiahospital.org.uk](http://www.kambiahospital.org.uk)  
and get shopping!

## Achievements

**In January 2006** we renewed our commitment to



TBAs at Barmoi clinic in Kambia District

improving the skills of Traditional Birthing Attendants in Kambia (a project we began back in 1995 that was interrupted by the Sierra Leone civil war). We have recently transferred £36,000 to cover the local training of 400 TBAs. The programme includes 28 days of teaching, payments for facilitators and trainers, food for all participants, training materials and transport expenses.

**We funded** a community health education film for TBAs. (*See Page 1*)

**In September** we funded a 3-day training course for Maternal and Child Health Aides (MCHAs) at the Kambia hospital. The course, which focused on



MCHAs attending a 3-day training course

identifying obstetric emergencies, was attended by 56 MCHAs from across the district and was led by Dr Modupe Wilson, the acting District Medical Officer.

**Shipments of medical equipment** and drugs were sent to Kambia throughout the year, including cholera supplies to fight a particularly nasty outbreak of the disease. We also funded important items, which were purchased locally in Sierra Leone, including three Honda motorbikes for hospital staff, a fridge for the pharmacy, mosquito nets for the wards, kitchen equipment and fuel and tyres for a hospital vehicle. In March we shipped a container full of hospital beds, delivery kits, two sterilizer machines, birthing training models and 47 mountain bikes for hospital and clinic staff..

**Four members of staff** from Cheltenham General visited Kambia in February, Obstetrician David Holmes and midwives Emily O'Connor, Pat Foggarty, Maggie MacDonald and Gaynor Faulkner. They worked in the delivery ward and provided valuable training to local midwifery staff. David and his wife, Pat and Maggie will be returning to Kambia after Easter this year to continue their good work.

**26 Delivery Kits** have been purchased at a cost of £8,600 for use at the hospital and a number of rural health clinics. The kits contain basic medical equipment and supplies that enable midwifery staff to provide a safe and hygienic environment for women to give birth. We are very grateful to a number of charitable trusts, including the **Martin Smith Foundation**, for funding this life-saving initiative

**Two of the Kambia hospital staff** visited Cheltenham in July. Daniel Macarthy and Francis



Daniel, Richard and Francis at the Elyan's Big Breakfast.

Pieh, the Pharmacist and Laboratory Technician, spent two weeks at Cheltenham General on work

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## Charity Golf Day

Congratulations to John Kloer, KHA Trustee and Treasurer, for the outright success of his Charity Golf Day at Cotswold Hills Golf Club in July. The event raised over £7,000 thanks to John's determination and hard work. John summarises the day:

"The day started with ominous heavy black clouds but these soon gave way to mainly blue skies and sunshine, as 120 golfers teed off from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in calm and benign conditions. There was much laughter and goodwill in evidence as the golfers enjoyed their bacon bap and coffee before starting their round. Registration, Starters and Ball Spotters were all members of the Cotswold Hills Golf club and their support was invaluable and made such a huge contribution to the smooth running of the event. Special mention should be made of the support that Peter and Maureen Winrow gave in the months leading up to the event and on the day. The Golf teams were split into 3 groups of 10 teams,



Tess Denley, Ladies Captain, Peter Winrow, Co-Organiser, and John Kloer

each with four players, and each group had its own Golf and Raffle prizes and separate meal and prize presentation times. The final prize giving ceremony took place at 7-30 p.m."

"I would like to thank all the companies and individuals for their generosity in entering teams, providing prizes, making donations and providing assistance on the day. The Cotswold Hills Golf Club Directors made a huge gesture in awarding the Appeal Charity status for the day."

The funds will be used to launch the "Cheltenham Scholarship" which will provide training for new medical staff who will work at the Kambia Hospital. Thank you to everyone who supported the day!

## Palm Wine Extravaganza

On 26th November 2005, Sacred Hearts Hall in Cheltenham was filled with the pulsating, rhythmic sounds of West Africa, as top Sierra Leonean guitarist Abdul Tee-Jay and his acclaimed six-piece band Rokoto took to the stage for the Palm Wine Extravaganza – an evening of dinner and Sierra Leonean Palm Wine and High-life music. Vast, hairy-stemmed palm trees towered overhead, creating an exotic canopy for the guests, who enjoyed cocktails followed by a delicious three-course dinner.

Abdul performed three sets – one set of acoustic palm wine music (he is the top exponent of this traditional form of Sierra Leonean music alive today) and two lively sets of high-life music with his band. The irresistible rhythms drew the majority of the guests onto the dance floor for a final hour of energetic dancing.



Richard Kerr-Wilson with Emily O'Connor, Polly and Mark Palmer

In addition to the entertainment, there was also a grand raffle and an auction. The evening raised over £9,000, which will be spent on the training of 400 traditional birth attendants throughout the district of Kambia.

Our grateful thanks to organisers Polly and Mark Palmer and Emily O'Connor for their tireless efforts, and to all who attended.

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placements.

We are extremely grateful to Stefan Bates at the Blood Transfusion unit and Richard Wallis at the Pharmacy at Cheltenham General, and to Martin Horwood MP for assisting us with Daniel and Francis's entry visas to the UK.

## Forth-coming projects in Kambia:



A ward at the Barmoi clinic in desperate need of renovation

**Rural Health Clinics:** We have been asked by district health staff to extend our support beyond the hospital to three rural health clinics as a way of improving access to healthcare for people living outside of the main town in Kambia. During our stay in Kambia in October we visited a number of possible clinics to see the level of support needed. It is likely that we will undertake the major building renovations of the dilapidated clinic at Barmoi, which needs a new roof, windows, doors, ceiling and repairs to the water pump, as well as supplying sets of basic medical equipment, medicines and staff training for two further clinics at Konta and either Masselleh or Kamagbewu.

### Motorcycle ambulances

We are currently working with The eRanger Production Company to install an emergency transportation network between two rural health clinics and the district hospital. eRangers has developed an ambulance suitable for rural transportation using specially modified motorbikes with sidecars. The vehicles are currently being used in Malawi, Ghana and South Africa with much

success.

eRangers founder Mike Norman has donated six ambulances for Kambia and will visit the district later this year to train clinic staff and auxiliary midwives to drive and look after the bikes. A small maintenance garage will be built at the hospital and the cost of running the vehicles will be shared between the KHA and the local communities in Kambia. The project will provide pregnant women in the area with a reliable and free method of transportation between their homes, the local antenatal clinic and, if necessary, the hospital, so that more women can benefit from medical care. If this pilot scheme is



The Lifecycle ambulance

successful, the Ministry of Health in Sierra Leone has expressed a keen interest to adopt and extend the project throughout the country. Visit the eRanger Production Company's website at [www.eranger.com](http://www.eranger.com) to find out more about these unique ambulances.

## Fundraising Barn Dance

On Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> of March the Kambia Hospital Appeal offered a big night out for the local cowboys, cow girls and their children. Early in the evening, the Sacred Hearts Village Hall in Cheltenham filled up with an excited crowd, with more than a



Dancing at the Barn Dance

few Stetson hats, cowboy jeans and check shirts out on parade.

The phenomenal Bristol-based band “The Jellied Reels” was given the responsibility of providing the



Rocking and reeling to The Jellied Reels Band

entertainment for the evening and they had things under control from the first note. With a heady mix of folk, country and rock numbers they guided the eager crowd through the evening’s dance patterns. It was a pleasure to see men, women, girls, boys, grandmothers and grandfathers take to the floor and join hands in increasingly complicated dances.

Half way through the evening, when the dancing had made people sweat and the first bottles of beer, wine and lemonade had been emptied, an appropriate meal was served; a hearty ploughman’s supper was just what people needed after all the physical activity.

The ticket sales, the raffle and the games played during the evening accumulated a total of £1500 for the hospital appeal. The evening once again proved that by bringing people together for a good time, significant contributions can be made for our ongoing activities in Sierra Leone.

## Visit to Kambia, Sierra Leone

By Emily O’Connor

In March I accompanied a team of three other midwives and an Obstetric/gynaecologist on a visit to the new hospital in Kambia. We left Cheltenham with a good few layers of snow, but arrived at the airport in Freetown late at night in intense heat. The bumpy drive to Kambia in the hot and humid conditions was an amazing start to an incredible experience.

Nurses Alice and Margaret were awake and ready to greet us at 2 am! When we eventually crashed into

bed sleep was an interesting challenge due to the humidity, vultures scampering around on the roof, dogs yelping and the unfamiliar night sounds of the hospital. Our resident cockerel certainly pushed his luck with his morning chorus.

During our time at the hospital there was always someone in labour being cared for by the maternity care health workers, or a relative, or no one at all. We were often able to help by suggesting examinations and assessments needing to be done and going ahead with Caesareans, saving lives that could otherwise have been lost. We were working in ghastly circumstances. ‘Scrubbing up’ under a trickle of water from a plastic bucket, putting on operating gowns that were clean but perhaps not sterile. The hospital generator only comes on for three hours in the evening so most of the time there was no light other than our torches and the fan didn’t work, making the humidity almost unbearable.

The poverty in Kambia was stark and we witnessed many deaths. Two mothers and seven babies died whilst we were there. There were two intrauterine deaths and a stillbirth that would undoubtedly have been saved under different circumstances. One baby was admitted with tetanus probably as a result of the practice of using cow dung on a new-born infant’s umbilical cord. At the hospital we ran two very demanding teaching days for 30 maternity health care workers, covering basic teaching skills and management of obstetric emergencies and resuscitation of babies.

A colleague and I were fortunate to visit some of the remote rural health centres in the district. It was a long, dusty, bumpy ride with dangerous road conditions to reach these areas. The conditions in these peripheral clinics were shocking. Termite-ridden door and window frames (no glass), no privacy, sticks secured to a trolley used as intravenous poles. One clinic actually had bats hanging from a hole above the ‘make do’ delivery bed! When I asked the midwife we met what would happen in an unexpected emergency, she said that a woman could be taken on the back of a motorbike to the hospital three hours away, if there was a bike available!

Back at the hospital, we went to the wards in the evenings and danced, clapped and sang with the women. We ended each day singing our own rendition of ‘Sing Hosanna’ with words adapted to our cause!!

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**Gift Aid**

Tax paid on any donation that you make can be recovered by charities at basic rate if you confirm in writing or verbally

- that this donation and any further ones should be treated as a **Gift Aid donation**.
- your name including forenames, title and address with postcode.
- that you are a taxpayer. N.B. You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the amount we reclaim on your donations.

So, a donation of £10 would be worth £12.82 for The Kambia Hospital Appeal.

NB Higher rate taxpayers can claim the difference between basic and higher rate tax on their tax return.



I would like to help the Kambia Hospital Appeal and enclose a donation for:

£10     £25     £50     £75     £100     Other £

or please pay The Kambia Hospital Appeal £..... each Month/Quarter/Year (delete as appropriate) commencing ...../...../..... until I cancel this order.

Signature: .....    Date: .....

**Your bank details**

Bank Account No: ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / .....    Bank Sort Code: ..... / ..... / .....

Bank Account Name: .....

Bank Name and Address: .....

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**OFFICE USE ONLY:** Kambia Hospital Appeal bank details (to be completed by the Kambia Hospital Appeal)

Bank Name and Branch: .....

Bank Account No: ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / ..... / .....    Bank Sort Code: ..... / ..... / .....

**GIFT AID**

I am a UK taxpayer and would like this donation and any further donations I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise, as Gift Aid Donations

Signature: .....    Date: .....

Name (Dr, Mr, Mrs, Ms) .....

Address .....

.....

Tel no: .....    Email address: .....

Cheques should be made payable to "The Kambia Hospital Appeal" and sent to the address above

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