

News from Malcolm Taylor – November 2004

The Africa Mercy

2004 has been an exciting yet difficult year for Mercy Ships. The major focus for the year has been to complete the Africa Mercy and to see her deployed and start her work in ministering to the poorest of the poor in Africa. At this time we should have been coming near to the end of the major conversion and refit work and preparing the ship for sea trials and commissioning.

However during the summer Mercy Ships experienced a drop in donations towards our capital funding campaign. This resulted in us having to instruct the shipyard to reduce its work force to a level where we could sustain the monthly payments. The reduction in work force has in turn delayed the completion of the Africa Mercy.



Although there is great disappointment in seeing another delay, there was great jubilation in the day that we floated the Africa Mercy out of dry dock. Completed in her new paint job it was a proud day for all of us and it signifies being a step closer to completion.



Now the ship is back in the water our engineers are working at full speed to get all the machinery back into service, there are engines to test, propellers to rotate and rudders to turn. I have been busy up on the bridge as we make the push to complete the installation of all the new bridge electronic equipment. This includes new radar, radio equipment, GPS and other navigational equipment.

The completion date of the Africa Mercy is at present undetermined. The shipyard has scaled down its work until we can raise the majority of the funding for completion. This is a difficult period not only for us, but also for the shipyard at a time when there is lack of orders for the yard. Our executive board are pulling out all the stops to secure the

remaining funds; this includes the potential provision of a US\$10 million grant from USAID. Please pray with us that the funding will be released soon.

To Africa...

Our Programs Department recently gave us a presentation as to what medical services we can expect to achieve with the Africa Mercy once she is deployed. With 6 dedicated operating rooms and a 78 bed recovery ward, including a first class intensive care unit, this ship offers us an increase in the operations we can provide.



Each year we can expect to carry out the following specialized surgical services:

- 570 Maxillofacial
- 120 Plastic Reconstructive
- 150 Obstetric Fistula
- 150 Orthopaedics
- 4500 Ophthalmological
- 380 Gynaecological



In addition to the onboard operations our Community Health Teams will continue to provide:

- Training-of-Trainers
- HIV/AIDS Awareness/Education
- Training for Traditional Birth Attendants
- Dental Clinics
- Optical Clinics

Please continue to hold this incredible project in your prayers, that one day she can start her ministry to Africa.

Contact Details

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Praise Items

For the floating of the Africa Mercy out of dry dock.
For the donations received for the conversion.
For the work so far.

Prayer Requests

For the release of the capital funds required to complete the Africa Mercy.
For the successful testing and completion of the machinery and navigation equipment.
For the future ministry of the Africa Mercy

Donation Details

As a full time volunteer, I receive no salary for my work. If you wish to help support my work with Mercy Ships and the worldwide Christian community, that we are called to serve, you may do so by cheque payable to Malcolm Taylor, and send it to me at the address above.

For monthly giving and for single donations over £30, and if you are a UK taxpayer, you may do so by using a Gift Aid form through Stewardship Services. Please write to me at the address above for a Gift Aid form.

News from the Fleet

Anastasis Sails From Europe

The Anastasis recently visited six ports in five countries over four months during her public relations tour in Europe. Following eight months on field assignment, next year's tour is planned for ports in South Africa.

At the first port of call in Liverpool, UK, the world's largest non-governmental hospital ship docked alongside tall ships from Britain and Russia as part of the annual Mersey River Festival. Almost 3,000 people visited the Mercy Ship during the four-day festival. After a short sail, an exuberant welcome with music and fireworks greeted the ship as she arrived in Tórshavn, capital of the Faroe Islands. The Faroese donated so much milk, bread, and fish for the crew

that no extra provisions needed to be purchased during the ship's stay.

After a month in shipyard in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, the Anastasis continued her tour in Scheveningen, along the Dutch coast. On her return sail to Rotterdam, the Mercy Ship hosted 109 sailing guests in a unique fundraiser event. In Rotterdam, daily visitor records for the Anastasis were smashed as the ship welcomed more than 6,000 people onboard throughout the weekend long festival celebrating World Harbour Days.

The ship returned to the UK and docked in Dundee, where Mercy Ships was honoured in several prestigious events with Professor Lord McColl, Vice Chairman of the International Board, and Ann Gloag, Scottish businesswoman and Mercy Ships board member. The final stop in the European tour was Bremerhaven, Germany, where the crew loaded the final donated supplies for the upcoming field assignments in Benin and Liberia.

Back to Benin

The Anastasis arrives in Cotonou, commercial capital of Benin, on 2 November to begin the third visit of Mercy Ships to the West African nation in the past seven years. Mercy Ships will bring hope and healing to individuals and communities in Benin through a variety of initiatives during the four-month field assignment.



Surgical and clinical professionals will remove cataracts, correct cleft palates, repair fistulas and undertake facial reconstructions onboard. The ship's medical facilities include three operating rooms, a dental clinic, a laboratory, and a 44-bed hospital ward. In addition, the ship provides base support for onshore projects. Community development teams will construct a maternity health clinic and safeguard the supply of clean water to five villages. An education program will offer business and vocational training, as well as conduct classes in numeracy, literacy and health awareness.

Mercy Ships will be building on the success of the previous visit of the Anastasis to Benin four years ago. Between November 2000 and June 2001, almost 1,000 people underwent surgical procedures and a further 8,878 people received dental and clinical treatments. Education teams trained 13,968 people in healthcare issues including dental hygiene, HIV/AIDS prevention, and nutrition.

The Anastasis will dock in Benin until February 2005, when the ship will depart for Liberia.

