

Vicki and Chris

News from the Anastasis

April 2001 Benin, West Africa

Hello everyone,

We are enjoying our time on outreach in Benin and we thank God for our good health, our friends here and for rewarding times serving on the Anastasis in Africa.

Last month Vicki's gran 'Nanno' died and she was able to go home to Plymouth to be with the family for the funeral. It was a sad time but also a good time to be with the family remembering happy times with a wonderful grandmother.. Meanwhile, Chris went to the Mercy Ships International Office in Texas on computer business and then we both had a short visit to Guernsey to begin the preparations for the ship's visit there in August. It's good to be back on board again now and we are as busy as ever as we are over halfway through the outreach in Benin.

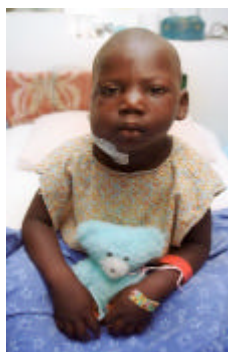
With love and thanks for your support,

Vicki and Chris

News from the ward...

The ward is very busy as we try and fit as many patients in for surgery as possible. One week we had 50 people staying (in our small 30 bedded ward) - every space imaginable filled with a body! Now we have a room at a local hospital where patients stay once they have recovered from their operations but still need dressing changes. I am one of a team of nurses who is on call at the weekends to care for these patients. This enables us to have room on board for more patients for surgery.

We recently had some Scottish newspaper reporters visit us because a lady called Anne Gloag - one of Mercy Ships big donors, came to work with us as a nurse for a week. She is quite a celebrity in Scotland and I found it quite an intrusion having many photographers on the ward but the patients are just so grateful to have surgery and free medical care that they don't mind at all. Some are even excited about being 'famous' in Scotland!



Awifatou

We recently operated on a really cute little girl - Awifatou who had lockjaw. She had part of jaw replaced with bone from her rib and is now talking and smiling all the time. Her story is particularly good because she is deaf and her family thought she was also mute - but when her jaw was fixed we discovered she could talk and will now be able to go to a school for the deaf.



Brigette before her tumour was removed

Brigette had surgery for a big facial tumour and has become quite a favourite on the ward. She loves to draw pictures and colour and often tickles the nurses as they pass by her bed, whilst looking innocently at her artwork. One evening we had a service for some of the patients and at the end there was a invitation to become a Christian. Brigette was one of those who responded. That morning we had learnt that her tumour had actually been malignant and that she has secondaries in her chest. It is great for us to know that whatever the outcome of her medical condition, she will one day be free from her suffering in heaven.



After her first surgery

Pants for poverty at the orphanage!

Our families asked us what they could do for the boys at the Catholic centre we visit and we replied – send some pants! When I began to give them out there was a near riot – I could never have imagined how receiving 2 pairs of underpants would excite young boys so much. Our interest in the boys there is finally paying off as the director finally arranged for Dodji (the boy with the prosthetic eye) to go to his grandmother’s home in Ghana and 4 boys from Togo have also been repatriated to a centre in their own country. There are new children coming to the centre every week though – last time we met a lovely little 7 year old girl – Helene who had been abused by her family. She showed me her legs covered in burns showing the imprint of an iron. These things are really hard for us to deal with – we can only pray and do what we can to bring a little joy into their lives while we are with them.



MV Anastasis or MV Anastasis
PO Box 2020 Maison de Rovereaux
Garden Valley Chemin de la Fauvette 98
Lindale 1012 Lauzanne
TX 75771-2020 Switzerland

Email vegregg@email.com
eFax 0870 137 2543

