

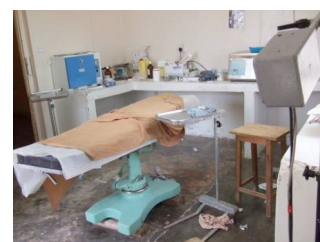
Bearings & Shortages

I suppose it was to be expected that once word got around that the surgeon was back in town it would get busy. Well predictions turned out to be correct and bed(ful)lam would correctly summarise the past, present and ongoing situation. The New Maternity Ward opened in mid February and has been busy since. Much nicer surroundings, but still a little cramped. The old Maternity ward has become an overspill ward for Surgical and is now full most of the time. Fortunately, I have a UK surgical trainee at Kisiizi for 3 months who is able to assist with some of the workload.



The last couple of months have been about finding bearings of various sorts....

1. The Hydro main shaft bearing for instance, which started making noises, got hot and meant that the power went off – for a long time. The freezer, which had recently been fully restocked on our return from UK, hastily became defrosted and a large bar-b-q was in the offing before the pong of the offing contents attracted all the rats from Hamlyn. The bearing had cooked itself onto the shaft so took a considerable amount of bashing and smashing to dislodge it from its semi-welded position. Off up to Kampala the bits did go for various remedial engineering. In the interim, a large diesel generator was acquired for the hospital. This voraciously scoffed diesel, such that limitations were imposed on the power output to the residences, and candlelit dinners were still the order of the night. Combined with a shortage of LPG, cooking was a difficult task unless you enjoyed toasting marshmallows over candles and even the marshmallows were hard to get hold of!
2. Clutch. This had been squealing its annoyance for some time, especially in traffic jams. It was time to get it sorted. The parts were located in Kampala, something of a minor miracle given that the main dealer often doesn't have parts. It was to be a major undertaking. The engine half came out, the prop shafts came off, the diffs, the gearbox, in fact it seemed most of the car was in various places around the garage at the hospital. 3 days later the car emerged from ITU almost sorted. A few more tweaks here and there and we were off to Kenya to visit Robert. The broken aircon belt which happened near the school could be coped with, but the haemorrhaging power steering fluid had me flexing muscles in places I thought did not anatomically exist even on Mr Incredible. Our car is now officially held together with cotton thread – at least the seal is where the power steering bolt goes. Remarkably resourceful these local mechanics.
3. Theatre. Whilst it was good to be back, setting a course through the backlog of cases has been hard graft. The list of unusual, punctuated with occasional tragic cases has been extensive, so much so that it was regrettably not possible to fit in a fistula repair visit to Gahini in Rwanda prior to the Schoonbee's departing for their home leave to UK. Theatres were in a bit of a state as no formal In-charge was in place and the newly appointed person had no theatre experience! Head, wall, repetitive oscillatory movement between the two comes to mind.



There have been a number of irritating shortages to contend with of late; diesel for instance. The price has doubled in the last few weeks as the pipeline from Mombassa to Eldoret in Kenya has had problems, as well as manufacturing difficulties at the refinery in Mombassa, which have led to severe shortages in Uganda. Quite a bit of profiteering going on it would seem. LPG has been hard to come by too. Our local milkman has been unwell, so good old UHT has been the mainstay. Medically, it has been hard to offer a high quality service on



occasions through shortages of blood, and the number of patients falling out of trees or acquiring significant chest injuries requiring drains has used up all our supplies. Getting hold of simple things like 20ml syringes, surgical drains, plastic tubing, replacement chest drain bottles and spare parts for anaesthetic machines leaves me scratching my head on occasions about how to improvise something out of nothing.

Jane successfully completed her 'Return to Midwifery Practice' course in Reading and found out the other day that the essay components and other practical experience have been satisfactorily completed. There are quite a few forms to fill in to re-register in the UK and she is working her way towards this before she starts working on the Maternity ward here. Another container full of banana boxes and other equipment arrived a few weeks back which she has been gradually unpacking and sorting. It was fantastic to have Rebecca & Bethany out to visit over Easter. I think they were hoping for more sunshine, but the weather was unseasonably hotter in the UK than in Uganda. We're into the rainy season a bit more here now, so the mud road in and out to the tarmac gets a bit sporty from time to time. Robert had a great time with his big sisters over Easter. It was very tough for him to have to go back to school. Ben has been busy at Keele University, but also training with the TA. We hope to see him over the summer.

We have had some other visitors too. Good friends from our home church as well as a retired surgeon and his wife. Given the variety of what was on offer to deal with, I am pleasantly relieved that they are considering coming back again later this year. Ed brought out some high quality urological equipment which coincided with some cases that would have been tricky to have dealt with if not available. His wife, Anne, was good company for Jane just when she needed it.



We had to evacuate our house the other day.tree-felling was in progress. Someone was a bit out on their moments, angles and trigonometry. About fifty porters, heaving at a tangent, salvaged the crisis situation. Never a dull moment at Kisiizi!

As we travelled back from Kenya to Kampala a few weeks ago, we were telephoned and told of the tragic death of a medical student who had just finished her elective placement at Kisiizi. Two students had completed their time at the hospital and were travelling back to Kampala when the coach they were on was involved in an accident with a lorry. Several people were killed at the scene, including one of the students. Everyone at Kisiizi was in shock and there was a lot of prayer for Laura's family and friends as they began to come to terms with the terrible news.

There has also been some civil unrest in Kampala with rioting over a decision to sell part of Mabira Forest for development <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/6548107.stm> . Things have calmed down a bit now thankfully.

For those of you who are frequent visitors to the Kisiizi website, you will be interested to learn that this is being revamped – in fact completely redesigned and built. The original website has highlighted Kisiizi globally, with a growing number of enquiries coming via it over the last couple of years. There is no official date to launch the new site yet, but we hope that it will provide a means to keep you more informed of what is happening here. No pressure then, Andy!

To be on (or off) the list to receive the Newsletter by email, contact: adrianshutt@yahoo.com
You can have it with [Pictures](#) or [Picture-Free](#), just let me know.

For **Newsletter by Post**, contact: **Mr & Mrs A Brazell, 6 Brackley Rd, Buckingham. MK18 1JD. Tel: 01280 822387**

If you can pick up the Newsletter at your church, please do so. It saves on postal distribution costs.

Adrian & Jane Shutt are CMS Mission Partners. For more information visit: www.cms-uk.org

If you could support Adrian & Jane in their work at Kisiizi, please contact: info@cms-uk.org or tel: (020) 7928 8681

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