

A Word from the President

Here we are again! Since I last wrote in April there have been two trips undertaken by our teams:

In April - May 2017 Dr Mark Moore AM led a plastics team to Jayapura in Indonesian Papua on a mission organised by RACS.

In August 2017, Mark led a plastics team on the annual visit to Dili Hospital.

Stemming from the Papua trip has been an official invitation for OSSAA to send a team into Nusa Tenggara Timur. A team has been assembled and is expected to visit at the beginning of February if all works well.....fingers crossed.

As this is newsletter is being written, Dr Yugesh Caplash is in Baucau with his plastics team.

Our AGM was held on 19 October. Two new faces have been welcomed to the committee, namely theatre sisters Joy Booth and Sandy Grixti. Much thanks to retiring committee member Margaret Maloney OAM who has served so effectively (and as trip quartermaster) since we were established in 2002.

On the fundraising and fraternisation front there were two successful events:

- In June, anaesthetist and committed volunteer Dr Steve Kinnear addressed the annual luncheon at Glenelg Golf Course
- In August, the film *Hampstead* was shown at Wallis Cinema Mitcham.

Charities around Australia must be experiencing a degree of relief that the State Government charitable authorities have finally ceded their data collection (duplication) responsibilities to the ACNC.

We are grateful for generous donations and your support which enables OSSAA to remain financially well equipped.

Congratulations to Mark Moore for his appointment as Medical Unit Head of the Australian Cranio-facial Unit.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year one and all

Stephen Baker

Jayapura Papua

From 30 April – 6 May 17

This trip organised by RACS comprised paediatric surgeon Dr Liz McLeod and plastic surgeon Dr Mark Moore. Included in the team were anaesthetists Drs Andrew Fenton and Simon Roberts and theatre sisters Vanessa Dittmar and Catherine Devine. Much of the trip was spent on orientation, advising on surgical procedures and teaching young medical students at the government hospital Rumah Sakit Umum Daerah Jayapura: private hospital Rumah Sakit Dian Harapan was visited. Collaborative surgery was conducted by Liz and Mark with Indonesian surgical counterparts as follows.....

Dr Liz assisting Dr Santi perform a laparoscopic appendectomy



.....and Dr Mark and Dr Eric performing an Abbe flap lower lip reconstruction for a large lip squamous cell carcinoma.

Other operations included dermofat graft and contracture release.



Dili Timor Leste

From 5 – 12 August 2017

Dr Mark Moore's team included anaesthetist Dr Andrew Wallace and Sr Joy Booth, and local plastic surgical trainee Dr Joao Ximenes.

Dr Joao Ximenes has been training with our plastics teams in Timor Leste for some years and has now reached a high level of proficiency with cleft operations. It is sad to report that his daughter died recently.

The trip was 'full on' with 74 patient consultations and 43 surgical procedures of which 35 were cleft lip/palate and 2 burns contractures (+6 other).



In 2016 Saturnina, then aged 12, presented for repair of her bilateral cleft lip.....she returned in August 2017 for repair of her cleft palate.



Hendri Lopes, who had bilateral cleft lip and palate surgical repairs in 2001 and 2002, returned in August 2017 for assessment of speech and dentition.

An introduction to Mok by Joy Booth

I first visited East Timor in 2012 and it has been a privilege to make continuing annual visits.

I first met Mok in 2015 when he was allocated to work with the team on his first day as a theatre nurse; he was nervous and excited and keen to make a good impression. Mok quickly showed himself to be a conscientious and dedicated theatre nurse who was keen to learn new skills and make a difference. In one of our early conversations Mok highlighted that the he wanted to be a good nurse and improve his knowledge and practice ***"I want to be a good nurse and make things better for my people"***.

When travelling with the team it is essential to give the nurses in developing countries the encouragement they deserve. They are often poorly trained, have gaps in their education yet they still manage to get their patients safely back to the wards following surgery. One of the most important considerations is working alongside the local staff and supporting them in a manner that won't offend or

embarrass them. Establishing relationships with the local nursing staff is one of the first steps to provide the foundation upon which teaching and learning experiences develop.

Through clinical support and role modelling I try to equip nurses with the skills to educate their own junior staff. As the junior nurses grow to be more experienced, they themselves will be equipped to teach *their juniors*, thus



Joy and Mok in theatre

creating a self-sustaining education system. Since that first meeting in 2015 Mok has shown that he is a future leader and invited me to be his nursing mentor. Mok regularly emails clinical questions and sends me theatre policies for advice and direction. Mok has become a skilled theatre nurse and is now proudly educating junior staff in Dili theatres. It is a privilege to be a mentor and friend to Mok who is now on the way to creating a self-sustaining education system in Dili. **Joy**

Footnote

The improvements achieved in hospital theatre and recovery practices in Timor Leste through the professional teaching and nurturing by our nursing team members has been terrific! Stephen Baker

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