



# Mengo Notes

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## In this issue ...

... we focus on the valuable work carried out by the Counselling and Homecare Department, the Theatre Project and much more ...

## 50 Years on ...

When I was looking back at the very first edition of Mengo Notes 50 years ago it became clear to me that in lots of ways the situation then was very similar to today—debts to be paid, improvements to be made etc. From this first edition I want to quote from Dr. Roy Billington's (Medical Superintendent) address at Mengo's Thanksgiving Service on 5/7/1959.

He said "We are very conscious that we still fall short in many ways in the hospital. There is still much to be done and by God's help we will make more improvements. But especially we want in the years to come to glorify the Lord more than ever in the past. It is the Lord Jesus, who heals and redeems and forgives, whom we want to be Head of our Hospital and of all our medical work. As Christians we want to show the love of Jesus to others at Mengo Hospital and we are free to do this."

As friends of Mengo we want to praise God for the past and as we look forward to the future ask for the Lord's rich blessings on His work at the hospital.

**Christine McNally**



## WELCOME TO MENGONOTES

**We hope that this small publication will give you an insight into the work of Mengo Hospital in Uganda, East Africa and the group of Friends in the UK that support it.**

Last year (2009) the Friends of Mengo Hospital UK charity celebrated its 50th anniversary. I was just 10 when it started but even then I knew about the work of the hospital as my father was a doctor at Mengo and I often visited the patients and nurses with my mother. One of my jobs was to cut up soap for the wards. To save money the hospital bought long bars about 18 inches long and these were cut into small pieces for each ward.

It is enormously encouraging to reflect on how many adults and children have had their lives saved or enhanced by the medical treatment and care given during these years.

On my last visit I observed the birth of a lovely girl by caesarian section in the hospital theatre. The photo above is the girl about 20 minutes after she was born! Part of the reason for visiting the theatre was to see first hand why the Friends groups in the UK and Canada have been asked to help with a major theatre refurbishment programme. There is undoubtedly a real necessity for modernization as amenities are very basic and many parts are in desperate need of repair (see photo above).

It is vital that we assist with this important part of the hospital's work. Please read further details about this later in the magazine.

Dr Joseph Nyanzi, the Medical Director, and the Board of Governors led by Mr Richard Kiboneka continue to work on their agreed objective of 'providing excellent sustainable and cost effective health care services'. A major aim is to continue to focus on patient care and give equal attention to those patients with small or no incomes..... not always easy when the hospital continues to struggle to make ends meet as most Ugandans still earn less than £2 a day.

Basic needs for the hospital, such as water and electricity still cannot be guaranteed. The water pump broke in 2009 and for many days the hospital had to manage with very little water, some of it being brought in by truck! The UK Friends helped with the purchase of a new pump ... but imagine trying to run a hospital without water!

Thank you to the many readers who have supported the hospital through gifts and prayers. The staff and patients often say how much they appreciate this partnership.

**Andrew Billington**  
Chairperson, FOM UK

## About Mengo Hospital and its 'Friends'...

**Mengo Hospital** was founded in 1897 by Sir Albert Cook of the Church Mission Society. Over 110 years this hospital has grown from a 12 bed clinic to a 350 bed medical care facility, serving both urban and semi-rural populations. The hospital is widely known in sub-Saharan Africa for its medical treatment and counselling.

Over the years it has expanded through donations from interest groups to provide specialized care clinics. These include orthopedics, ophthalmology, tuberculosis, AIDS, and dentistry. In addition to patient care, Mengo Hospital is the home of a school of midwifery, founded by Katherine Cook in 1904, a 250 student school of nursing founded shortly thereafter and more recently a laboratory technician training school. In 1958 the Hospital was handed over by the Church Mission Society to an independent and autonomous Board of Governors and Trustees.

**Friends of Mengo Hospital UK** began in 1959 when the first issue of Mengo Notes was printed and circulated to 1000 friends, supporters, employees and ex-employees. All those who responded to this initial mailing became 'friends'. UK Friends of Mengo gained official charitable status in 1983 with the following aims:

- to advance the Christian religion in Uganda, and particularly at Mengo Hospital
- to provide medical and surgical advice, and aid
- to provide training for nurses, midwives, and other medical workers in the prevention and cure of disease



## Focus on ... Counselling and Homecare Department for people with HIV/AIDS.

This work was started by the then deputy Medical Director Dr. Brownlee in 1988. The services were basic but HIV testing and some counselling were offered and by 1989, 69 patients were registered. Now, each outpatient clinic for those with HIV/AIDS is attended by about 150 people.

These patients can be provided with free ART (anti-retroviral therapy). It is thought that about 240,000 people living with AIDS in Uganda are in need of ART but only 43% have taken up the treatment. Mengo has offered ART to about 1750 patients contributing 1% of the total need.

A paediatric clinic held weekly offers ART to about 85 children. The outpatient clinics also provides health education about safe sex and associated diseases. Tuberculosis is present in about 52% of those who are HIV positive. The clinics also identify those who need home-based care because they are too ill to come to the hospital. This offers medical and spiritual support to patients and carers in their own homes.

Other work done by the team includes the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) as mothers can pass on HIV to their infants during pregnancy, delivery and by breastfeeding- a major challenge is the choice of whether to breastfeed and risk transmitting HIV or not to breast feed and risk the baby starving due to lack of money to buy baby milk!

The Post-Test Club, another initiative, meets on a Saturday once a month as a support group for HIV positive people. Each member identifies a community where they can raise the awareness about HIV services at Mengo Hospital and the group follows this up by organising outreach activities every other weekend to communities who are willing to start thinking about setting up local services for HIV clients.

Another Saturday club is held once a month for HIV infected children offering material, spiritual and counselling support. The club started in 1997 and presently helps around 70 orphans and vulnerable children. Grandmothers (Jajjas) are the 'unsung heroes of Africa' looking after many generations of their families because of HIV/AIDS, The Jajjas' Project sets out to help these women. The staff team of The Counselling and Homecare department are now in their new building (see photos). This was built primarily through donations from The Mennonite Central Committee (Uganda) and friends of Mengo from different parts of the world. This is proving a great blessing giving the staff more consulting/counselling rooms for their work which appears to be growing and diversifying as the treatment for HIV/AIDS becomes more available.



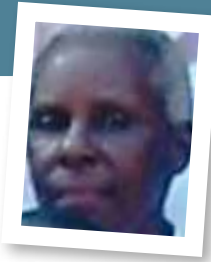
*The old Clinic*



*The new Clinic*



## My time at Mengo Hospital By Marian Dorothy Kyanjo



It was May 1975, when Dr Hugh Oliver, the Medical Director of Mengo Hospital at that time welcomed me to Mengo Hospital as the new person in charge of the pharmacy department having been seconded by the Ministry of Health, replacing an English pharmacist who had returned to the U.K after their contract expired. I was not new to the place because I had previously worked as a volunteer in the same department.

My stay at Mengo was made more comfortable as my sister Robina and her husband Zac Kalega were members of staff there. Interestingly my late mother Phoebe Ntanda was among the first midwives to be trained at Mengo Hospital in vernacular by Sir Albert Cook, the founder member.

After a year in Mengo, I got married to my dear husband Appollo Kyanjo, and God has blessed us with four grown up children and one granddaughter so far. For this, we are so grateful to God.

I accepted the Lord as my saviour in 1984, through a pharmacist called Carol Mulbacher sent by Life Ministry Uganda (Campus Crusade). This made a difference in my life as God opened my eyes to see the wonderful things in his word.

In the early nineties, two of my brothers died of HIV/AIDS, and this turned my mind towards counselling. In 1995, I transferred my services from pharmacy to Counselling and Home Care Department after a course in counselling. Working among the infected and affected people with HIV/AIDS was at times depressing, but with the Grace of God, I was able to manage. There is a feeling of fulfillment to see people going away with a smile on their faces or passing on with dignity.

I have worked with different Medical Directors for 34 years, i.e. 1975-2009, and I have experienced many challenges and upheavals. However, with persistence, good will and abundance of spirit, all has been possible.

My stay at Mengo would probably not have been entirely fruitful, had it not been for the help and assistance of the following people/organizations of whom I pay special tribute.

- John and Daisy Cross from Canada, and Friends of Mengo Hospital for the help to the needy people through the upper room sector during my stay at the Counselling and Home Care Department.
- Christine McNally who sponsored my trip to the U.K for the first time, then God opened up other opportunities for me to visit many other countries.
- The Mennonite Central Committee (Uganda) for all their support and sponsoring me for one year (June 2008-June 2009) at the Counselling Department.
- All my friends here and abroad, I do not cease to give thanks to the Lord as I remember you in my prayers.
- My family, for the love and support you have rendered me all these years, may God continue to bless you.

To Mengo Hospital, I wish you the best and pray that you keep on the good services you are providing as I place you in the good hands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*We thank Marion for her wonderful contribution to the work of Mengo Hospital and wish her every blessing in her retirement.*

## A gift for Mpereza Ward

With many thanks to Charles Mullaney, the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, and a bequest in memory of Dr Mark Towriss a reconditioned operating table arrived at Mengo hospital.



Donated from Scotland and shipped to Mengo by UK Friends. It was installed into the general obstetric operating theatre in Mpereza Ward, following the official handover in July 2009. This new highly versatile electric device replaces an elderly hydraulic table which was built in the 1950s and has been a real workhorse in the theatre for more than thirty years. The new table is up and running, much to the satisfaction of the theatre staff and expectant mothers and it will greatly improve operating conditions for the 1000 or so caesarean sections carried out in the theatre annually.

Mpereza Ward has also benefited from a donation of new instruments for both obstetric and gynaecological cases on the ward. Included were delivery and caesarean section sets, protective equipment for staff such as goggles and aprons, curettes and other gynaecological instruments and thermometers to name but a few. While this is a step in the right direction, there is always a need for more equipment of this nature. Such things are expensive to obtain in Uganda and plentiful supplies of these make for safer and better working conditions for hospital staff.



# Operating theatres project



*Dr John Dalton in Mpereza theatre*

The time has come for the general operating theatres in the Albert Cook Building to undergo major refurbishment. Built in the 1950s, they were an integral part of the hospital which was once the pride of modern medical practice in colonial East Africa. As time moves on, a lot changes in surgery and the theatres are now in desperate need of refurbishment.



*Old Theatre in need of replacement*



*Mpereza Ward staff with Dr John Dalton*

The general layout of the two existing theatres in the Albert Cook Building is not of a modern, practical, ergonomic design. Many of the fixtures and fittings are now unserviceable, outdated or long gone. Hygiene standards and theatre design have changed a great deal over the last 50 years and we now appreciate that all surfaces must be easy to clean, correct ventilation is critical and everything must have its place in order to reduce infection risk.

In addition to the structural aspects to be improved, great advances have been made in terms of peri-operative monitoring which has significantly enhanced the safe practice of surgery and anaesthesia. Such monitors and newer surgical instruments are required along with improved provision for sterilisation. The operating tables need replacing as well as many other items.

We want the dream of a modern operating theatre to become a reality and a great team effort between the hospital and Friends of Mengo Hospital charity groups is envisaged to achieve our goal. Ideally, if funds allow, we wish to completely rebuild the theatres with a good strong roof and everything inside it becoming a modern theatre.

The project will be expensive, but a hospital without a safe, effective theatre is not really a hospital at all. Friends of Mengo Hospital UK aim to contribute in the region of £30,000 to this joint effort to improve standards of operating at the hospital. It is important to understand that only through the generosity of those who read this article can this money be raised. Every pound counts and I appeal to you to give generously to this cause. You really can make such a difference.

*Dr John Dalton and Miss Emily Cook*

## Miss Emily Cook tells us ...



**Dr Nyanzi, Medical Director, Mr Kiboneka, Chairman with Miss Emily Cook standing by the bust of Sir Albert Cook, the hospital's founder**

My grandfather was Jack Cook, brother of Sir Albert Cook the founder of Mengo Hospital. He was also a missionary doctor and spent 20 years working alongside Albert at Mengo. My father was born in Mengo. As a result of my family connections I have always been interested in Uganda and especially Mengo Hospital. I first became aware of Friends of Mengo UK as a medical student at Cambridge. I attended a talk put on by the Christian Medics society and to my surprise the speaker began talking about Sir Albert Cook! At the end I introduced myself to the speaker Dr Hugh Oliver, Vice President of FOM-UK, who was as equally surprised as I was!

I first visited Mengo, albeit briefly, in 2002 during my medical elective at Kisiizi Hospital in SW Uganda. Earlier this year I became more involved in FOM-UK, and was delighted to get the chance to properly visit Mengo with Andrew and Penney Billington in February 2009. This was an amazing experience. I was really encouraged to see all the good work that is achieved despite the difficulties dealt with on a daily basis.

It was clear how much the partnership and support of FOM-UK was valued and appreciated by the hospital. I was also made to feel like a celebrity given my family connections, which was a new and rather uncomfortable experience! Although we saw several areas where work is desperately needed, the one thing which stuck out for me was the state of the main operating theatre. I am currently training in general surgery so this was particularly relevant to me. The building is in need of basic repair and improved layout. The scrubbing trough is made of concrete rather than stainless steel and the taps do not have the recommended elbow-type handles. There is a lack of basic monitoring equipment and the operating tables are not in proper working condition. All the washing of surgical scrubs and drapes is done by hand. There is also a need for basic surgical instruments. I ran the London marathon in April 2009 to raise money towards the theatre. FOM-UK plans to donate further money towards this worthy cause.

## Clive Kennett tells us about his first visit to Mengo Hospital and two children he met

### Anthony

Anthony is an orphan. He was left at the Sanyu Babies Home in Mengo by his mother who gave him up when he was a newborn baby. He is now nearly three years' old and has not been adopted, probably because he is cross-eyed. There are normally about 40 other babies at the orphanage.

After a few arrangements, Anthony visited the eye clinic in Mengo and was fitted with glasses and an eye patch, which he was very happy to wear as it made him special at the orphanage!

Since I have been back, I have heard from the eye specialist that the eye patch has corrected his sight to an acceptable level – just within a few weeks.

Hopefully Anthony will be adopted soon, as otherwise he will go to another orphanage in Uganda when he is three years' old and is unlikely to be adopted there.



### Kiteata

Baby Kiteata had just been brought into the AIDs Clinic when I was being shown around. Fortunately she did not have HIV/Aids, but she had an enlarged spleen and liver and even I could see she was blown up like a balloon. When her bobble hat had been removed, it revealed that she had red hair!

Kwashiorkor disease is a severe form of malnutrition. Kiteata had been brought by her 18 year old sister, who had walked five miles from their village to Mengo hospital. She had no money. Her father was in prison and the family was destitute. They had nothing and could not afford the very modest charges the hospital needs to make. (Mengo only receives 5% of their running costs from the Government.) There is no NHS. Mengo's income is made up from patient fees and donations from Friends of Mengo around the world.

- **£12** allowed Baby Kiteata to stay in hospital for five days and provided food for her sister, so that she could stay with her. £18 provided basic food for the baby for about the next nine months.
- A total of **£30** to probably save a baby's life. Less than a trip to Sainsbury's - **we can make a difference.**





# Victoria Ziwa

Principal Nursing Officer

On behalf of Friends of Mengo Hospital UK I would like to thank Victoria for all her years of dedicated service to those at Mengo Hospital as she commences her retirement in January 2010. She is a truly inspirational, kind, selfless character who sets a fine example to us all and will be a hard act to follow.

I first met my friend Victoria about five years ago in the summer of 2005 when I spent two weeks working at the hospital as a medical student. She immediately struck me as an extremely energetic, enthusiastic, jovial character whom I very soon realised was an institution at Mengo.

I will never forget the first time I met her, in Mpereza labour ward (general maternity unit), doing what she loved – boots

and apron on, she had just delivered a mother and she greeted me emphatically, suggesting I get some gloves on and get involved with obstetrics in Africa!

Her integrity, honesty and true Christian faith are just a few of her outstanding characteristics and it is little wonder that she attained the top nursing position of Principal Nursing Officer.

Despite her senior status she regularly visited all the hospital wards acting as an advocate for all the nurses in the hospital including students. That said, I will always remember her in Mpereza ward, boots on, encouraging young mothers, teaching students, conducting deliveries and rejoicing in the birth of new life.

**Dr John Dalton**



Mpereza Labour Ward staff with Victoria second from the right

# FOM UK Executive Committee

In the last edition of Mengo Notes we appealed for new members to come forward and join the committee so we are very pleased that Dr. John Dalton and Miss Emily Cook have joined us. John spent his "elective" at Mengo in 2005 and has worked at the hospital on three subsequent occasions. Emily, a surgeon has also visited the hospital several times. Her grandfather was Jack Cook, brother of Sir Albert Cook. We are thrilled that John and Emily have

such a personal connection with Mengo and we welcome their enthusiasm. Christine McNally has also rejoined the committee. She was a physiotherapist at Mengo in the early 70's and latterly has been involved with the work of the Homecare and Counselling Department.

FOM UK Annual General Meeting will take place on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Please contact us for more details—we would love to see you there.

# Family and other news

## Miss Hermoine Baker

It is with sadness that we record the death of Miss Hermoine Baker on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. Hermoine worked at Mengo Hospital for over 20 years in the 50's and 60's as a Senior Nurse Tutor and still remembered the hospital in her retirement when she lived in Weston-super-Mare. Her friend writes "I know you will always remember her as she was, full of spirit and life and energy in the service of others, in the wonderful work she did in Uganda teaching young people to become good nurses. I have no doubt that in the years since she left those young nurses have passed on their skills to future generations."

## 50 years of outstanding service - Dr Hugh and Mrs Gwen Oliver

Hugh and his young wife Gwen first began work at the hospital in 1960. Hugh is an obstetrician, but inevitably he undertook many other medical duties during his 16 years at the hospital. He was Medical Superintendent for his last five years in Uganda from 1971-1976. Gwen was a marvellous partner and focused on hospitality, entertaining many hundreds of people over the years.

On returning to the UK they continued to support Mengo Hospital through the UK Friends Group. Hugh as Chairman and Gwen as Secretary for many years. Only in the last few months have they

retired from direct roles on the Board of trustees. Hugh remains the Vice President.

Few people have given such long and consistent service and support to the hospital. We honour and salute them for all that they have given and achieved and rank them alongside the hospital founders, Sir Albert and Katherine Cook. As followers of Christ, their greater priority has been to serve their master well and we are confident that He would use similar words to those in the New Testament 'Well done, good and faithful servants'

**Andrew Billington** Chairperson

## A message from the treasurer

**Firstly a huge thank-you on behalf of Mengo Hospital for your continued and vital support to the valuable work that occurs on a daily basis in Uganda.**

As the current treasurer I am acutely aware of the generous "pounds and pence" that arrive on a weekly basis and as I step up more fully into the role, taking over the correspondence from my mother Gwen Oliver, I trust that the minor address change featured in this issue of Mengo Notes will not stem that flow. Gwen has lovingly mastered this role for the past 16 years and I will endeavour to continue to bank the funds entrusted to us with the efficiency that she has maintained. She will certainly be a hard act to follow.

### So what have we committed your money to in the past year (since May 2009)?

We continue to try to focus funds on the staff and patients and the hospital environment that will benefit them:

- Nurses Uniforms (£500); a fund to subsidise the purchase of uniforms for newly qualified nurses
- Theatre bed purchase (£6,200); a legacy to purchase, transport and install a reconditioned theatre bed *(As this bed was gifted this money is being held to refurbish the main theatre)*
- Water pump (£3,000); finance to purchase a valuable pump to provide water from a local source when the mains water supply fails
- Albert Cook underground water storage tank (£2000); part of the water harvest project
- X-ray film processor (£3,355); money to replace a vital piece of equipment
- Phase 1 electrical improvement project (£2,200); a management run initiative to update and improve the safety of the electrical supply around the hospital *(money is also currently being retained for Phase 2)*
- Staff Christmas party (£1,000); our annual gift to thank staff for their commitment during the year
- Nurses Diet Supplements (£2,000); another annual donation to allow the inclusion of meat with staff meals.

We believe that the above donations represent a valuable investment into the continued Christian work at Mengo Hospital and trust that you agree.

**Thank you once again for your continued support.**

**Richard Oliver**  
Treasurer.

**No members of UK Friends receive payment for their work - all donations go to Mengo Hospital.**

## Help us support Mengo Hospital ...

If you would like to be a friend of Mengo Hospital, or if you would like to get more involved, please complete the form below, ticking the relevant boxes and return it to us. If you would like to make regular donations please also complete the Standing Order Mandate and return both forms to us.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Forename(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Please send me future issues of Mengo Notes by post/email (delete as applicable).
- I would like somebody from FOM UK to contact me with information about organising a fundraising/awareness event.
- I want to make my donations go further so please Gift Aid all my future donations to **Friends of Mengo Hospital UK** (registered charity number 289737) and all donations I have made for the six tax years prior to the year of this declaration.
- I want my donation to go towards **operating theatres project /other urgent needs.**

*giftaid it*

Using Gift Aid means that for every pound you give, we get an extra 22 pence from the Inland Revenue, helping your donation go further. This means that £10 can be turned into £12.20 just so long as donations are made through Gift Aid. Imagine what a difference that could make, and it doesn't cost you a thing.

**Completed forms should be sent to: Friends of Mengo Hospital UK, 18 London Road, Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire, CB22 5DD. To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must at least equal the amount we will claim in the tax year.**

### Standing Order Mandate

To: the Manager of \_\_\_\_\_ (Bank / Building Society name)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Customer Account name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sort code: \_\_\_\_\_ Account number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please set up the following Standing Order (cancelling any previous instructions regarding this payee) and debit my account accordingly:**

Amount: £ \_\_\_\_\_ - Amount in words: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of First Payment: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ (dd/mm/yy)

Frequency: Monthly / Quarterly / Yearly thereafter on the same day. (Select as appropriate.)

Beneficiary details:

Bank: CAF BANK Ltd, Kings Hill, Kent. Account name: Friends of Mengo Hospital

Account number: 00082896. Sort code: 40-52-40. Reference \_\_\_\_\_ (for internal use)

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ (dd/mm/yy)

**IMPORTANT: Please return to Friends of Mengo Hospital UK and not to your bank.**



# Helping is simple...

There are plenty of ways in which you can help us support Mengo Hospital. Here are just a few suggestions:

- **pray** for us and for the needs of the hospital
- **donate by post**  
Please make cheques payable to Friends of Mengo Hospital. There is a gift aid form overleaf.
- **set up a regular payment**  
Simply fill out the standing order mandate on page 15.
- **organise a fundraising/awareness event**  
This can be anything ... how about a coffee morning at your church, a bring-and-buy sale or even a sponsored sky dive!
- **visit Mengo Hospital**  
Why not spend some time at the hospital? Even if you are not a doctor, nurse or medical student there are still ways you can help ... nothing beats seeing the hospital for yourself!
- **give through your will**  
A generous legacy could assist 100s if not 1000s of Ugandan patients.
- **shares**  
You can give shares and get exemption from capital gains tax, and that's not all, you get income tax relief on all your giving too!

## [www.mengofriends.org.uk](http://www.mengofriends.org.uk)

### Contact us:

Treasurer: **Richard Oliver**

Call us on: **01223 844479**

Write to us at: **FOM UK**, 18 London Road, Great Shelford, Cambridge. CB22 5DD