



Andy and Carol Brooke on a Sunday afternoon.

Here we are, a few days before Easter and the craving for Cadburys crème eggs and mini eggs is becoming unbearable! Carol has a secret stash though that Andrew doesn't know about. We look forward to going to the Easter service at the local church and then eating all our eggs after Sunday lunch at the beach. The simple pleasures of life... The rainy season is almost over and the temperature is hotting up nicely. Soon be time to put the fans on at night.



A wonderful team from St Paul's, London.

During February and March, we have had a steady stream of visitors who have come to do a variety of work at the hospital and to stay at the Village. It has been a busy but very satisfying time. We introduced Gemma to you in our Feb letter who is nearing the end of her 2 months stay with us. Nina, a medical interne from the UK joined us for 1 month. We also currently have a team from London who are with us for 2 weeks. They have been busy converting rooms at the Maison de Benediction, our respite home for disabled kids, into much needed office space and a school room for use by some of the Maison kids. They have also spent some wonderful afternoons doing all sorts of arts and crafts with the Maison kids and staff. It has been so good to see real friendships and strong connections forged between the kids and team members in such a short time. We

also had a great time with them celebrating Andy's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday.

With the help of our resident social media expert



Andy ready to get going on his bike!

Gemma, we had a week of online fundraising for the Maison which does great work but is in much need of funding. So, Andy, Gemma and Nina did a handbike sponsored half marathon to raise money. They were given a crash course by Fritzner, a man who took part in the Hand Cycling World Championships in Switzerland in 2015. It was a bit daunting initially, having to lie almost prostrate close to the ground "peddling" with both hands, but a bit of practice beforehand made all the difference. As Haitian traffic can be a bit on the scary side, we had a motor bike at the head of the convoy and a vehicle at the rear with the 3 bikes sandwiched in between. Actually, the traffic was better than we anticipated, but then we did pray a lot beforehand! 16miles and 2.5 hours later, a very hot sticky threesome said they would gladly do the full marathon next time 😊.

The funds raised for the Maison will be used to replace basic equipment – cooker, refrigerator, wall mounted fans, much to the delight of Miss Nancie who manages the respite home. Miss Nancy has



Miss Nancie and Sergeline

herself become a full time foster carer for a little girl called Sergeline who was left at the doors of the Maison 4 months ago. In fact, many of the women carers at the Maison are also foster mothers who take these abandoned kids home with them at the week-

ends. Children with disabilities are abandoned for many reasons in Haiti, but mainly because their

families cannot afford the long term care that is needed. The Maison is therefore a unique and important place of respite, helping kids and families cope with disabilities and giving them dignity and hope for the future.



*Carol at the White Cross*

Most visitors are a little shocked the first time they drive into the city of Cap Haitien. They pass by piles of rubbish along the roadside and dilapidated buildings with peeling paint that was once bright and gaudy. If it has rained, then the side streets turn into small muddy rivers

with debris, rubbish and worse mixed in. The air is often choked with pollutants from heavy motor exhaust, burning rubbish or tyres and all sorts of other noxious substances. In contrast though, outside of the city, there is a different world with the most amazing beaches, hills and mountain scenery. A few weeks ago, a group of us took a walk up to well know monument called the White Cross. Such a walk is definitely not a Haitian activity – why would a sensible person climb a steep mountain in the hot sun for fun? It was a good 2 hour walk up to the top, but from there the views were spectacular. Our legs ached like mad for the next 3 days!

With the help of our volunteers, Andy has been very busy at the village which has undergone some serious painting and renovation work. It is now looking very colourful and very Haitian. The chicken numbers are increasing slowly following a few losses over the rainy season. It is lovely and so funny to see so many baby chicks scurrying around trying to keep up with the mother hens. Carol is getting very excited at the sight of the fruit beginning to appear on the many mango trees. She has plan to make jars of hot spicy mango chutney for the village.

Andy is spending a lot of time these days with Bertha or big Bertha as she is known to her friends. She is not at her best at the moment, in fact Andy and others are quite worried about her. With good advice from the UK, Andy has had to strip her down a few times. I should mention of course that Big

Bertha is a much loved surgical sterilizing unit. Without her in operation, the hospital is down to just 1 very small unit, making preparation for surgical procedures difficult and frustrating. Hopefully, Bertha will respond to Andy’s charms and begin functioning as she’s supposed to. Having to fix, repair and manage as best we can with broken and old equipment is a constant battle we wage here.



*Newly painted village house*

After Easter, we will have a few days on our own at the village before our next set of visitors arrives. We are also looking forward, during mid- April, to welcoming a couple

of friends from the UK who are coming to visit us for 2 weeks – Yey!

So, until our next letter, we wish you all a very Happy Easter and a wonderful celebration of the Risen Christ. God’s blessings.

#### PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Wisdom to manage the funds we have, for an increase in future funding, donations and giving.
2. Wisdom to respond to and lift staff morale due to present financial difficulties.
3. Success in replacement and repair of generators, solar inverters, and other important equipment.
4. Thanks to God for the amazing work that continues despite the economic climate.
5. Gods wisdom and guidance for the future planned projects – extension of the Neonatal Intensive Care unit (NICU), Maternity unit, Rehab coffee shop and craft centre.
6. The many volunteers visiting and working at the hospital – that they would be used, inspired, blessed and be a blessing
7. The county and people of Haiti, lifted out of poverty into plenty.
8. For good health and physical and spiritual strength and protection for Andy and Carol.
9. Continued good relationships with Haitian colleagues, friends and staff.

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