



Andy and Carol celebrate Haitian flag day.

There are lots of Public Holidays in Haiti. Our latest one was in celebration of Haiti's flag, ("Fet Drapo") on 18<sup>th</sup> May. It's a bit like the equivalent of 4<sup>th</sup> July in the US. It is a day of festivity which includes street processions, lots of music and lots of dancing. At the village, we celebrated it a bit more quietly!

So far we've not yet had a visitor to the village whom we have not made as welcome as possible. Preparation for visitors is hard work and time consuming. It can involve all kinds of repairs, clearing out, patching up and painting. We have in our diary the names of a stream of visitors who'll be arriving over the next few weeks and months and our aim is to make the first visitor just as welcome as the last.

We anticipate, however, the arrival of somewhat unwelcome visitors in the not too distant future. Far be it from me to name and shame, but last year's unwelcome visitors were called Matthew and Irma and visitors like these require a lot of time consuming work in preparation for their arrival - and usually even more work after they've left. The trouble is they don't give a great deal of notice before they arrive. Yes, hurricane season will soon be upon us, and we will be preparing for their expected arrival as thoroughly as we do for all of our visitors. One part of the plan was to obtain a supply of Gaffa tape, which we received by courtesy of HHA's very own CEO, Carwyn Hill, following his recent visit. This tape will be used to stick down the louvered hospital windows to prevent the dislodging and whipping out of the narrow panes of glass that are the standard design of most windows found in Haiti. This is just one of the many safety

measures that have been reviewed and discussed by Carol and HHA/hospital Logistics staff. These measures will be put in place by the Disaster Response Team to protect our hospital staff and patients, as news comes in of approaching hurricanes. On occasion these unwelcome visitors set off, predicted to arrive in Haiti, but then fail to show up. We pray that this will be the case for Haiti this season.

On a lighter note, we have our latest long term volunteer with us at the moment. This is Sophie and

she will be with us for the next 3 months. Sophie is a midwife from London. She has come to work at HCBH as Maternity Coordinator,



A thorn among roses? CEO, Carwyn Hill,(centre) with L-R, Carol, Kirsty, Tanya & Sophie

heading up a new project investigating women with high blood pressure during pregnancy that can lead to a dangerous condition called Pre Eclampsia. World wide, this condition causes 76,000 maternal deaths each year, in developing countries such as Haiti. Sophie is also working for the next 2 weeks alongside Tanya, an Obs and Gyny doctor and Research Fellow at Kings College London.

We were sad to say goodbye this month to volunteer

Kirsty, an Occupational Therapist from Australia. She's now returned to Oz. Kirsty worked really well with patients in our Spinal Injury Rehab unit. She joined up with 2 members of the Swiss Physio team and together they made incredible progress with some of the spinal injured and stroke patients. The



patients loved Kirsty. They loved to hear her speak creole words with her Aussie accent! She also played a mean game of Bananagrams and Dobble. Good on ya Kirst. We'll miss ya loads!

Staff at Lehigh Valley Hospital in Pennsylvania were the hosts of Dr Genet – Head of Maternity and Nursing Manager Miss Jean Francois at the beginning of May. Their trip was sponsored by THHT (The Haiti Health Trust) who are US partners and close friends of HHA. US visas for Haitians are notoriously difficult to obtain with a very long and complicated application process. Finally seeing them off at the airport was truly great cause for much celebration.



Nurse Jean Francois and Dr. Genet at Cap Haitien airport

techniques. These new skills and expertise will be shared with members of the Maternity department

Dr. Genet and Miss Jean Francois spent one week shadowing doctors and medical staff at LVH, updating their skills and learning new

when they return to HCBH. This form of training and exchange of knowledge is really important to the ongoing development of



Dr. Tim Pellini, Dr. Genet, Dr Melissa Motz and Head Nurse, Miss Jean Francois at LHV hospital, Pennsylvania

HCBH, in raising standards of care and treatment and improving hospital efficiency.

“That’ll teach you to be chivalrous!” these were Carol’s words as I rolled out of bed the morning after a big thunder storm. I had taken pity on our two kitchen staff ladies and had offered to take them home after their work due to the heavy rain.

It was only a 10 minute drive away but the back streets where they live had become a sea of mud.

“Do you think you’ll be able to drive through there?”, asked Merlande our cook. “Course I’ll get through there!” I exclaimed. Merlande obviously didn’t know the capabilities of a Toyota Land Cruiser!

Half an hour later, shin deep in mud and after lots of heaving and pushing, myself and some willing volunteers finally saw the vehicle slide not too gracefully out of the mire and back on to relatively dry ground. Unfortunately, the strenuous heaving took its toll on my already unstable spine and for the following days I grunted after the tiniest movement.

I visited the Swiss physios at the hospital who ordered me to rest and not to lift anything. My selective hearing and lack of obedience meant that after the final straw of lifting the outer cover of the generator to turn it off one morning, my legs gave way and I ended up wheelchair bound for the next 2 days - forced to admit that the



It was the generator’s fault!

my vertebrae where it belongs, I and everyone else hopes that I’ve learned my lesson.

I have to say at this point that Carol was nowhere near as sympathetic as she could have been during all this!

doctors possibly knew best after all. Now on the road to recovery, as my disk maneuvers its way back between

#### PRAYER REQUESTS

1. Give thanks for the successful exchange visit to the US by Dr. Genet and Nurse Jean, and that new skills in healthcare techniques will be embraced at HCBH.
2. Give thanks for the improvement in Andy’s back and for the fortunate presence of Swiss spinal injury specialists at just the right time.
3. For our cook, Merlande who is suffering a difficult pregnancy. Baby due in November.
4. For an end to continuing problems with solar power which means increased usage of generators, both at the hospital and the village.
5. For successful grant applications that have recently been made, to fund much needed ongoing and future projects at the hospital.

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