



Habari Gani



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Happy New Year to all our wonderful supporters and sponsors and thank you for your contribution to ATS' and Rafiki's many achievements in 2019.

2019 saw two surgical teams travel to Tanzania to carry out free, life-changing surgeries on children and adults in need. During the trips, our teams also provided important upskilling opportunities to local medical staff.

After many years battling issues in the hospital facilities, we funded renovations at our host hospital, Sekou Toure, for both operating theatres. The work addressed issues with lighting, power, air-conditioning, broken theatre doors, leaking basins, taps that don't work, a broken window, and of course, the bathrooms! Sekou Toure has benefitted from these much-needed upgrades and it has made things a little easier for our teams.

Our Masters Degree Course in partnership with Muhimbili University for Health and Allied Services is now underway and, as well as attending the 2 surgical trips to Sekou Toure in 2019, our first 2 Tanzanian Masters Degree Course students visited Perth for intensive training with our Rafiki Volunteer Surgeons. The time and energy going into this project is huge, but when our first students graduate at the end of 2021, it will be one of Rafiki's biggest achievements - Tanzania's first ever fully-qualified Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons.

In 2019 we sent 3 x 40 foot containers to Tanzania, each filled half by an ambulance and half with medical equipment. One of those ambulances is already hard at work around the Dar es Salaam area and the other 2 will arrive in Tanzania in early February. We also covered the cost of sending 83 custom-made wheelchairs to Dar es Salaam, built by Wheelchairs for Kids.

ATS built 2 double classrooms for PEC Primary school in Kilwa, which replaced old canvas tents. The school's students rank as some of the highest achievers in Tanzania and we are very proud to support a school that is working hard to give the best education possible to the children.

The Rafiki Ball was a huge success. Every year people tell me, "It was the best one yet", and I truly believe this year it was! So much energy was injected into the night thanks to Banana Zorro and Ashura, our singers and Ambassadors from Tanzania.

Once again, we had great support from all who donated auction items, bought auctions items, made donations and purchased tickets. Thanks to the overwhelming generosity of a number of donors, we have a steady stream ambulances that will be sent to Tanzania during 2020 and we are sure will save many lives in Tanzania.

On top of the Ball, fundraising events were organised including Dinner with Chef Leif Huru, Party with Manu Feidel, two boat charters and the Tanzanian Volunteer Experience. Thank you so much to our wonderful supporters.

Everything we achieved this year; two surgical trips, theatre renovations, training programs, kicking off the Masters Degree Course, sending donated medical equipment and ambulances, classroom construction, the Rafiki Ball, fundraising and thank you events, and not to mention our many, many smaller achievements and projects, were all thanks to a very small group of volunteers. On behalf of Rafiki, thank you so much for your commitment in 2019 and I look forward to 2020 being even better.

Happy New Year!

Didier Murcia
ATS Chair





SURGICAL TRIP 33

Surgical Trip 33 was held between October 18 - 31 2019 at Sekou Toure Hospital, Mwanza. Team members were Surgeons Brigid Corrigan and James Savundra; Anaesthetists Andrew Wild and Steve Hilmi; Nurses Taka Wild, Alice Haydon, Kylie Donnellan, Sally Hewitt and Sharon Ndossi; Physiotherapist Nicola Rutty; and self-funded volunteer Marnie Rowney. Barry and Jennie Logan also joined the trip as part of the auction item Rafiki Volunteer Experience and supported the team in lots of different ways: entertaining the kids, fixing doors, making coffee, buying lunch and even furniture shopping!

The team worked extremely hard, over long hours to complete a large amount of complex burns-related surgeries, cleft lip and palate repairs and others surgical work including Macrostomia, removal of skin cancers with skin grafting and infected wound debridement with skin grafting. Training was, as always, a main focus of the trip and Tanzanian Surgeons Ibrahim Mkoma and Edwin Mrema worked alongside James and Brigid for every operation and completed some of these unassisted. Glory, a physiotherapist from Muhimbili National Hospital, also joined the team and worked alongside Nicola. Glory will take these new skills back to Dar es Salaam and eventually support more patients in their post-operative burns care.

An excellent trip with a great bunch of people! You can follow the entire trip with a heap of photos via the [Facebook page](#) and read all about it in Marnie's article on page 5.



SURGICAL TRIPS 34 & 35

Surgical Trip 35 will take place at Sekou Toure Hospital from March 29 - 8 April 2020.

The team includes Plastic Surgeons Linda Monshizadeh and Remo Papini, (and James Savundra - see below); Anaesthetists Ralph Longhorn and Kirk Langley; Nurses Alice Haydon, Jennifer Wishart, Simone Crombie, Shannon Dry and Taka Wild; Occupational Therapist Victoria Allbrook and Self-Funded Volunteer, Rebecca Kempnich.

Welcome Linda, Remo, Kirk, Simone, Victoria and Rebecca to the Rafiki family!

As part of their Tanzanian Volunteer Experience purchased at the Rafiki Ball auction, Darryl and Tania Smith will be joining the team for a few days.

James Savundra will also be heading to Tanzania before the March Trip to lead Surgical Trip 34 with a small team to continue the training of our two Surgical Students in Dar es Salaam before joining the first section of Surgical Trip 35.



MASTERS' DEGREE COURSE

Edwin and Ibrahim are already accomplished Surgeons in Tanzania, but this Masters Degree Course will give them a 'Super Specialisation' in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.



Edwin and Ibrahim during a lecture given by Matt

In December Dr Edwin Mrema and Dr Ibrahim Mkoma, joined by Dr Obadia from Muhimbili University, visited Perth as part of the Plastic Surgery Masters Degree course. Edwin and Ibrahim are already accomplished Surgeons in Tanzania, but this Masters Degree Course will give them a 'Super Specialisation' in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. These skills are needed to treat clefts, burn contractures and many other congenital conditions and accident-related injuries, many of which currently go untreated in Tanzania without International intervention.

It was a busy stay for the visitors, learning from our Rafiki Surgeons led by Dr James Savundra, and touring some of our hospitals. Edwin and Ibrahim attended sessions with Dr Matthew Hansen, Dr Ian Timms, Dr Jeremy Rawlins, Dr Andrew Crocker, and a Plastic Surgery Trainees Seminar.

Dr Andrew Miller and Shannon Dry also adapted our 'Rafiki App' and provided training to Edwin and Ibrahim, this will allow us to share data and course information. Dr Obadia worked with Course Coordinator, Dr Ann-Maree Vallenge to cement the framework for the course.

James, Ann-Maree, Shannon, Andrew and our team of Rafiki Surgeons are all volunteers and we thank them for giving their valuable time to make this possible.

It's not an easy feat to create, coordinate and participate in a University course led by busy surgeons and coordinated across continents, but we are grateful to have a group of amazing and skilled volunteers in teaching and conducting the course and lucky to have dedicated and experienced surgeons as our first students.

Edwin and Ibrahim will make more trips to Perth over the duration of the course to hone their skills and received tuition. Many thanks to the Rafiki family for welcoming our visitors for the first time.

Next year we will open the Course to new students and will continue to grow and support Muhimbili National Hospital and University until the Masters Degree in Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery can be taught entirely by staff in-country.

This is an amazing project and we're excited that it's well-underway!



James with Edwin, Ibrahim and Obadia in Perth, December 2019



'Those Guys': Grant, Didier, Darren, Steve, Peter and Glenn

CONTAINERS 47 & 48

Late in December the team packed 2 ambulances and medical equipment in 2 containers.

Thanks to Denise and Charlie from Maiolo Wines, one ambulance will be donated to Muhimbili National Hospital and thanks to Greg & Kathy Walsh, Burswood Seafood and Carcionne Foundation another will be donated to Dodoma Hospital, in Tanzania's Capital city.

Huge thanks to Graphic Source for the signage on the ambulances, providing a mobile promotion of Rafiki and our sponsors throughout Tanzania.

Thanks to Tidy Up - Professional Rubbish Removal for collecting some great items for us, which will be greatly appreciated in Tanzania.

Finally, thanks to 'Those Guys' basketball team of Didier Murcia, Steve Bell, Peter Bell, Grant Bell, Glenn Bell and Darren Gordon (with support from coach, Julia Murcia) for packing the gear early on a Saturday morning.

Special thanks to Steve Bell, who gave so much of his time to collect tyres and stretchers and charge the batteries up so we were ready to go. Grant Bell also manufactured the awesome ramps for us - thank you!

These are the 5th and 6th ambulances and the 47th and 48th containers we've sent to Tanzania! It's a massive effort from all involved and we look forward to sending many more ambulances over the next few months. They are sure to save lives in Tanzania.



We've now emptied our storage unit of medical equipment and are on the look out for more;

- Medical equipment and machines in good working order relevant to conditions in Tanzania, such as monitors, orthopaedic equipment, scanners, hospital beds, wheelchairs, walkers and crutches etc
- Medical consumables with at least 9 months before expiry date
- Surgical instruments, such as scissors, scalpels etc

We can arrange collection and delivery to our storage space in Bibra Lake.

Contact julia@lumedia.com.au

SPOTTED!

Our 4th ambulance, donated to Kigamboni Hospital, was spotted by one of our Rafiki ambassadors during a patient transfer at Muhimbili National Hospital. Great to see it's being put through its paces, helping people in Tanzania.





Marnie's RAFIKI EXPERIENCE

Nurse Marnie joined team 33 as a self-funded volunteer and recounted her experience in this article for us. Thank you Marnie.

Marnie with Sharon on clinic day

My experience as a self-funded volunteer for two weeks on Rafiki Surgical Trip 33 came at the right time, in the right place and with the right people. Paperwork prior to the mission was intense. I was reassured by people who had been that “you will love it” and “that’s something that I’ve always wanted to do” and “how did you get to go” from those who had yet to experience it.

It was a long flight - Perth to Doha to Dar es Salaam via Kilimanjaro, where we stopped to let passengers off. My main memory were the constant reminders that plastic bags are illegal in Tanzania and you will be fined. After another flight from Dar, we finally arrived at our final destination, Mwanza, late on Saturday night and were escorted to our Hotel – all in the dark and 24 hours since we left Perth.

The weather in Mwanza, Tanzania is warm and its people friendly. From our Hotel, The Tilapia on Lake Victoria, I was introduced to the legendary Rafiki challenge, a pre-dawn walk every morning to the high point to watch sunrise. It’s a meandering stroll, 15 minutes uphill – passing school children, the odd cyclist and other early morning walkers – finishing with a climb to a huge boulder that overlooks the township, way down below.

The mountains are the backdrop, and when the sun rises at around 6.30 there is often a breathtaking display of colour. So many team selfies have been taken here. And now I have my own to prove that I actually did it too!

Sunday was the first day on the ground. People can talk you through what to expect, but I could not have prepared for what I was seeing, smelling and feeling. Firstly, the truck arrived, and we unloaded countless suitcases which were loaded into Sharon’s room. They came in every size, colour and shape, each with its own id number matched to the inventory of contents. To me it seemed like organised chaos.

By 11am our bus to Sekou Toure Regional Hospital was loaded with so many suitcases one needed to climb over them to get a seat. It took 20 mins to the Hospital. My only comment was that next time I would bring concrete to fill some holes in the road.

First impression upon entering theatre was that it was welcoming, not so light but clean, worn and cool. Old hands were very pleased to see a new addition - flushing toilets!

“Perhaps more than 100 people are seen that day. My first impression was ‘seriously, do all these people need our help?’”

Our theatre room was large enough to have two operating tables, which allowed two surgical teams to work side by side. Besides the anaesthetist eyeing off their machines (Steve “what’s your new machine called, got to have a name.... imagination running ‘wild’ he says BOB... I said WOW that’s fantastic). Reeling from that I spied two retired bar stools idle in the corner, these are the surgical team chairs – there was no rest for anyone.

The flow from theatre appeared to be in a circle. You exited the theatre to the washroom, which was kind of a solitary place and allowed you to look beyond the window. What stood out was the weather. It dictated how much activity would be going on outside– warm during the day and buzzing or storm brewing, everything takes cover, then sunset.

On Monday, clinic day, we were asked to wear our white Rafiki polo shirts, which seemed like a great idea. It’s a busy waiting area – perhaps more than 100 people are seen that day. My first impression was “seriously, do all these people need our help?”

“Heartbreakingly, what they revealed under their clothing was the trauma they’d endured, there were no secrets there. The burns, scarring and contractures. I couldn’t imagine what they had gone through, or what had caused that sort of damage.”

If I could take the time to just focus on each and every person I met I would, but it is seriously a blur – I was overwhelmed. Sometimes I couldn’t tell if they required surgery at all, given they were all smiling when they entered the room or frightened.

Little children dressed impeccably and some clothes whiter than our clinic t-shirts, which were brand new. However, heartbreakingly, what they revealed under their clothing was the trauma they’d endured, there were no secrets there. The burns, scarring and contractures. I couldn’t imagine what they had gone through, or what had caused that sort of damage. Sometimes I thought I’d seen the worst but then along came another. I can probably say that was my most tiring and taxing day of the whole trip as we wondered how will we possibly help them all.

It’s an intense environment and by Day 3 I was questioning whether or not I could continue to spend 18 hours a day with this mob. And I still had 11 days to go. I don’t even spend that much time with my own family!

Half way through the mission everyone entered a pizza place for dinner and I happened to stop just outside with the bus driver to look at a stall – 6 minutes was all it took for the search party to come find me – I felt a bit guilty until someone mentioned that I had the Rafiki phone with Hotspot so no one had internet connection until they found me

Day 3 to Day 7 – was just heads down operating. I was bit hard on myself for not remembering their faces, names, dresses, clothes but only their wounds. I did however remember little Hamzah – I thought he was the face of Rafiki – he had that million-dollar smile, energy, charm, youth and so engaging he made a difference – his progress from April when he was first operated on to now was miraculous – that sparked joy. He had further surgery this time and will have some more in the future. I was amazed at his spirit, he never wavered before or after surgery. He was inspirational.

At the opposite end of the spectrum was an elderly gentlemen I remember as being so quiet, shrinking away to hide. He had the left side of his face pulled down from burns. The damage was on his face, he could not hide it beneath his clothes. He didn’t smile or make eye contact. What was his life really like now – I wanted to hug him and say you’re in the right place with the right people.



Team 33 at Sekou Toure

A vision that will stay with me was operating on a young girl who had burns from neck to knee. Burns patients can’t be operated with air conditioning on in the room. Soon enough our air becomes stifling, uncomfortable, its hot but not steamy and never unbearable. I offered deodorant after a few hours of this – “we don’t bother as we are all in the same boat” was the response. Another pact.

Cleft lip repair “before and after” photos are always heart-warming. I was privileged to witness “the during” part. The teaching component for local doctors and nurses also enabled me to gain knowledge throughout the procedure. There’s just so much gratification having a cuddle afterwards, even though he’s too young to really understand what all the fuss is about.

Day 8 – Sunday is day of rest. There was no hill top climb but we walked to the Hospital for ward rounds. I managed to tour the maternity ward. I cannot explain and don’t want to describe, the vast difference between countries. Photos don’t do it justice. I was amazed at how quiet this ward was and how self-sufficient everyone is. We visited the markets and lunch afterwards, whereby our team split in two groups – I truly had separation anxiety.

The final 3 days were full with operating and finally demobilisation.

A grand ceremony of cool drinks, samosa, singing (not us), speeches, photos, handshakes and then - just like that - it is finished. This final act or curtain drawing was a glorious full stop, because we had accomplished so much, and goodbyes are never easy.

Marnie

Self Funded Volunteer

Special thanks you to; Taka Wild, Andrew Wild, James Savundra, Brigid Corrigan, Steve Hilmi, Sharon Ndossi, Sally Hewitt, Alice Haydon, Kylie Donnellan, Nicola Rutty, and self-funded volunteers Jennie & Barry Logan.

NEW LOGOS & BRANDING

Thanks to the team at Graphic Source, you may have noticed our snazzy new logos and this fantastic updated newsletter design.



Rafiki Surgical Training and Medical Support .



Education and other support activities, rests under the Australia Tanzania Society, which is our overarching organisation.

Our Facebook page has also been updated, the new address is

www.facebook.com/rafikiaustraliatanzania

Graphic Source are huge supporters of Rafiki and go above and beyond helping us throughout the year. If you're looking for a high-quality print, design and web studio, please check out their web site.

www.graphicsource.com.au

AUCTION ITEMS NEEDED!

It's pretty amazing that the majority of Rafiki's fundraising comes from auction items at the Ball.

Thanks to generous donors and bidders, we have the funds to send our medical teams to perform life-changing operations, train local staff and send much-needed medical equipment to Tanzania.

In the past we've had exclusive experiences with celebrities, incredible dinner parties, boat charters, holidays, artwork and jewellery. If you can help us out with something special, please let us know.

Every little bit goes a long way and we are also on the lookout for silent auction items.

If you have any ideas or something to offer, please contact julia@lumedia.com.au

We need your help to put together some amazing auction prizes in 2020!



June 6

Save the date

**2020
RAFIKI
BALL**

CROWN PERTH



KILWA CLASSROOMS

"The school's aim is to provide a better pathway and future with all classes being conducted in English as well as Swahili."



Standard 4/5 students at PEC Primary School in Kilwa will start the new school term in a beautiful new building. This is the second double classroom ATS has, through the generosity of Kathy & Greg Walsh, constructed for the school, which replace temporary canvas tents.

Kilwa is a poor community on the South coast of Tanzania with approximately 42,000 children and limited opportunities. PEC Primary School was established to increase the standard of education in the area. The school's aim is to provide a better pathway and future with all classes being conducted in English as well as Swahili.

Incredibly PEC Primary School has risen to achieve some of the highest academic levels in Tanzania, but as the school and the children grow, so does the need for addition classrooms.

Through their own fundraising, and the generosity of key sponsor Mr Sultan Sultan, PEC School is also constructing dormitories to house students needing accommodation.

There are opportunities for volunteers from Australia to spend time with the students in Kilwa to help develop their English language skills. You can read about the experience in the article on the next page.

LOOKING FOR AN *African Adventure?*

As part of the Tanzanian Volunteer Experience auctioned off at the Rafiki Ball, Barry & Jennie Logan spent some time in Kilwa with the children at PEC Primary School.



October 2019 was an amazing time for Jennie and myself as we embarked on our much anticipated Rafiki Volunteer Experience, purchased at the Rafiki Ball. For almost four weeks we criss-crossed Tanzania, saw some breathtaking sights, met some amazing people and were lucky enough to be part of the Rafiki Surgical Trip 33.

A surprising highlight of the trip was the time we spent in Kilwa, a coastal community some 5 hours drive from Dar es Salaam. Sultan Sultan, a long-time supporter of ATS, has established a private community school in the town, PEC Pre Primary and Primary School, providing local students with high quality education in a secure, non-sectarian environment.

While still a relatively new school, it is punching far above its weight, with students achieving results that put them at the very top of the tables in Tanzania's education system.

ATS has played a part in helping to fund the construction of new class-rooms for the growing school and now a fantastic opportunity exists for volunteer teachers looking for a new challenge to spend time at the school, working with the teachers and students and enjoying the hospitality and culture of this amazing coastal town.

While you may find the school and its facilities a little different to what you are used to, the curriculum is taught in English and the students are very keen to learn.

They are also very polite and met my terrible efforts to teach them the hippopotamus song with great enthusiasm! Whatever your area of expertise, or special interest, you'll be able to make a valuable contribution to the school. In return, you'll be made to feel welcome and appreciated by the local teachers and community.

You'll not be lost for things to do out of school either, great beaches with swimming, fishing and diving in the clear water. Even head off on safari. The island of Kilwa Kisiwani, just off the coast, has some amazing medieval ruins dating back to when it was the centre of the Kilwa Sultanate, which stretched along the entire Swahili coast, trading in a host of valuable commodities. Interestingly 1000 year old coins from Kilwa have been found in Northern Australia, the oldest foreign artefacts ever found here.

This a great opportunity for a couple, or a couple of friends, to immerse themselves in a rich and diverse culture and be part of an amazing community for the duration of your stay. You'll need to cover your airfares and general expenses, but you'll be accommodated and looked after like royalty while you are at the school! Are you up for the challenge?

Barry

Tanzanian Volunteer Experience

If you'd like to find out more, contact Julia julia@lumedia.com.au

