

# Habari Gani

## 'What's news?' with the Australia Tanzania Society

Rafiki Surgical Missions, Australia Tanzania Young Ambassadors and Safina Foundation

## 2016 Update

We have achieved a huge amount in the first half of 2016.

Mission 25 took place in April in Mwanza and was an outstanding success. We have sent three ambulances to Tanzania as well as a 40 foot container of medical equipment, with another container to be sent shortly.

The Rafiki Ball was held last month. In addition to being a fabulous night, we raised awareness and substantial funds.

We are making great progress at NIRA Orphanage through the Safina Foundation with construction of the girls' new boarding house nearly complete.



*Clockwise from above: Mission 25 Rafiki patient, Manu Feildel at the 2016 Rafiki Ball, Edith and the renovations at NIRA and an ambulance arrives at Mufinga.*



# Australia Tanzania Society



## ATS Structure

While many of you will know of Rafiki well, it is just one of the organisations under the **Australia Tanzania Society** banner. Over the past 12 years, while keeping each group separate, we have branched out from health, to include, education and youth support with the establishment of Australia Tanzania Young Ambassadors and, more recently, Safina Foundation. *All money raised for each individual group is used solely for that organisation and there is no cross-over of funds.*

**Rafiki Surgical Missions** is the biggest, longest running and most well known arm of our NGO. Since our first mission in 2004, Rafiki Surgical Missions has changed the lives of more than 1,300 Tanzanian children and adults with conditions such as cleft lip, cleft palate and burns injuries. We also pack and send containers of medical equipment to clinics and hospitals all across Tanzania.

In 2006 **Australia Tanzania Young Ambassadors** was formed. ATYA provides a platform for young Australians to establish links with their peers in Tanzania. These links help students in Tanzania and Australia build a better understanding of the world beyond their own borders. ATYA also raises funds to build classrooms, drill water wells, buy curriculum text books and send school supplies and equipment to Tanzania.

After a request for support from an orphanage in Geita, where a lot of our Rafiki patients come from, we established **Safina Foundation** in 2014. 'Safina' means 'arc' in Swahili and embodies the spirit of supporting young orphaned and poverty-stricken children. We have been helping the orphanage in Geita and also started a second project, which is extensive renovations and building works to a small orphanage in Dar es Salaam.

# Rafiki

# Surgical Missions

## Mission 25, April 2016

**Mission 25 took place** 8th to 22nd of April at Sekou Toure Hospital, Mwanza. Team members were Matthew Hansen, James Savundra, Andrew Miller, David Van Riet, Alice Haydon, Jennifer Wishart, James Smith, Shannon Muir, Taka Wild and Caitlin Thorn. Physiotherapist Jacquie Heron, Michael Muir and Michael Weguelin also joined as a self-funded volunteers.

The team assessed 71 patients at the clinic on day one and a further 19 patients were assessed during the rest of the mission. Of these 90 patients, 60 were operated on with 9 cleft repairs, 22 burn contracture releases and 10 other operations including excision of a large keloid, an amputation, parotidectomy.

Dr Ibrahim Mkoma, a surgeon, from Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar es Salaam join the team for the whole mission to learn plastic/reconstructive

surgery. Dr Emmanuel Mlay, first year surgical resident assisted the surgeons from time to time and two anaesthetic trainees from Bugando Hospital joined our anaesthetists for hands on learning over several days.

James, Alice and Taka also visited Muhimbili National Hospital after the mission. The hospital is looking to set up a plastic/reconstructive surgery unit and is very keen to link in with Rafiki to assist them with skill and capacity building. It's early days, but this could be a very exciting project for us - stay tuned!

Great work team, and congratulations on another successful mission.



*Pictured: Alice with a patient, Matt and James, the team and Dr Mkoma enjoying Tanzania's culinary delights*

# Jen's first Mission Experience

Mission 25 was scrub nurse Jennifer Wishart's first mission with Rafiki. We asked her some questions about her experience.



Pictured: Left, Jen with a patient in the recovery room. Right, the theatre with two patients being operated on side-by-side



## **This was your first mission, did anything surprise you? Was it different to what you expected?**

The theatre which we operated in surprised me the most. Having two patients being operated on side-by-side is not something I have ever seen. However what amazed me was what we were able to achieve and the complex operations we undertook in such a basic operating setting. The number of suitcases, boxes full of equipment and supplies required to carry out a mission was far more than I ever imagined.

## **What is your role in Perth? How is the work different in Tanzania?**

In Perth I work as a theatre nurse at St John of God Subiaco. We spend our day in spacious air conditioned theatres, with lights coming from the ceiling, large trolleys and more high tech equipment and instruments than you could imagine. The contrast between Mwanza and Perth was mind blowing. I learnt to improvise and the team worked brilliantly together to achieve outstanding results with the resources available to us.

## **Do you have a favourite patient story/case(s)?**

Every patient and story touched my heart. However, I do have some favourites. My little friend John, four years of age, had a cleft lip operation. I saw him on the ward every day and he was the happiest little guy running around. In our second week I was so excited to finally see him in theatre and the results of his surgery. A little unsure at first, he was soon just as happy as before, looking more handsome than ever.

## **What was the hardest?**

I found it very difficult to witness the burns suffered by some of the children, especially those too young for us to operate on. It was hard to understand how they sustained such horrific burns, before coming to a full realisation of their living conditions at home. Seeing how traumatised these children were coming into the operating theatre from their memories of the previous treatments of their burns was heart breaking. It was definitely the hardest part, seeing kids so young in so much pain and suffering.

## What was the most enjoyable?

After every long and very hot day of operating I would head to the ward with the surgeons to see our patients. This was the most rewarding and enjoyable part of the work. Even though not all were smiling and laughing I knew they soon would be. To see a child that previously couldn't use their hands or arms, due to burns contractures, having physio and playing with balloons with a smile on their face as they used their limbs properly was heart-warming. They are so sincerely grateful for our time and efforts, I feel it's the least I can do.



## Memorable stories?

My experience on the mission was fantastic. Full of laughs and very memorable moments with a great team. One memory that will stick with me forever is the dreaded beef carpaccio... enough said.

Since experiencing a Rafiki mission for myself, I can see the importance of volunteers and sponsors to make it all possible. Without funding and support we would be unable to provide the expertise and equipment necessary to carry out these surgeries. There are so many that work tirelessly throughout the year to ensure these trips run smoothly and I feel very privileged to have been given the opportunity to be a part of such an amazing organisation.



*Clockwise from above: Taka and Andrew, Jen with a patient, Alice and Matt in surgery with a local Tanzanian doctor, the busy ward and Andrew doing some housekeeping.*



# 2016 Rafiki Ball

**The stormy weather** didn't stop us from having an absolute blast at the 13th Rafiki Ball.

Guests walked the red carpet on the way to pre-dinner drinks, then MC Blake Johnson took to the stage and got the festivities underway. The ballroom looked stunning thanks to styling from [Owl & Bear](#) with the big crowd entertained with tunes from Sunset Lane.

The major auction was a huge success. We had some very generous donations from our sponsors and our auctioneer Frank Torre worked the bidders into a frenzy of competitive bidding. Manu Feidel provided the entertainment as he ran across the ballroom between 2 bidders who were vying for the beautiful South Sea pearl necklace from [Stefan Diamonds](#). Our experience offerings were a huge hit with significant bids for the Qatar business class tickets, volunteer experience, dinner with Anna and Jordan Bruno and Manu's cooking school. The artwork from [Di Taylor](#) and [David Bromley](#) looked magnificent in the ballroom and will look even better in the homes of the lucky bidders.

The silent auction had a great range of donated items and bidders had some fun while contributing to our fundraising.

Thank you to [Myriad Images](#) for the video presentation, [Graphic Source](#) for all the printed material and [Jasmine Skye Photography](#) for being our official photographer.

Congratulations to Lily Balfour and Thierry Murcia for receiving awards for their longstanding contribution to Rafiki.

We raised about \$120,000 from the evening. This will fund 2 missions together with the costs of sending donated medical equipment to Tanzania. Thanks to our committee members Lily Balfour, Blake Johnson, Kate Gilbey, Darren Gordon, Peter Yeoman, Matt Milford, Grant Pestell, Didier and Julia Murcia.

For more photos, please check out the [Rafiki Facebook page](#) or the album on the Jasmine Skye Photography page [here](#)

## Save the Date!

We have already secured the venue and date for the 14th Rafiki Ball in 2017. Don't forget to put **10th JUNE 2017** in your diary! Next year the Ball will be changing venue to the brand new Palladium 3 at Crown.



Save the Date!

2017  
Rafiki Ball

10th June  
Palladium 3, Crown Perth



# Congratulations Andrew Miller!

**Rafiki anaesthetist, Andrew Miller** has been elected President of the WA branch of the Australian Medical Association.

Congratulations Andrew, we know you will do a fantastic job in this well-deserved appointment.

## Ambulance Hand Over

**Rafiki secured three ambulances** from Japan and paid for them to be transported to Tanzania and donated to hospitals in areas in desperate need of this assistance. The ambulances have arrived in Mwanza, in Tanzania's north near Lake Victoria, Mtwara on the south coast and Mafinga in central Tanzania.

At the end of May, the Honorable Cosato Chumi (MP) officially handed over the ambulances to the local hospital in Mafinga. The significance of this event warranting being broadcast on the television news in Tanzania.

Last week a ceremony was held to handover a second ambulance to Sekou Toure Hospital in Mwanza. Rafiki board member, Ambassador Chialo, represented Rafiki the guest of honour was Mr. John Mongella, Regional Commissioner for Mwanza. Also in attendance were senior officials from the regional and district administration.

Mr Mongella said he hoped that the friendship with Rafiki continue to grow and the mutual admiration that exists will be sustained. Rafiki was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from the President's offices.

Ambassador Chialo said the ceremony concluded with Mr Mongella receiving the registration documents and keys of the Ambulance from him, Mr. Mongella then went and tested the car by switching it on and driving it a little.

We hope the ambulances make a big contribution to the health services in Mafinga, Mwanza and Mtwara.

Freight Forwarders Tanzania has once again proved invaluable in supporting the transportation of the vehicles and attending to all clearances. Thank you again Freight Forwarders Tanzania.



*Pictured: The ambulance arrives in Mafinga, a priest's blessing and the certificate from the President's office.*



# Medical Equipment

**As well as three ambulances**, in 2016 we have sent a 40 foot container to Tanzania with 50 hospital beds, an operating table and general supplies.

Collecting some of the donated equipment has also put our team to the test, especially from the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle where the beds had to be carried down some very tight stairs and wheeled across a busy road. As usual, our team handled it like the hospital-bed-transporting pros they are. Well done guys.

We have picked up a lot of medical consumables and supplies from the closure of Swan Districts Hospital. Tanzania has very strict importation laws and every item needs to be documented and the expiry date checked. We have some wonderful volunteers giving up next Saturday (25 June) morning to come and help us out. We will be ready

to send the supplies, along with some beds and additional equipment, to Tanzania in the next few weeks.

Thank you to our container packing volunteers, lead by our driver Neil Anderson from GKR Transport and Freight Forwarders Tanzania for making it possible to send this much-needed equipment and supplies to Tanzania. We are also very lucky to have Harry Bray from GoGo Furniture let us use their storage space. Without somewhere to store the gear we collect in between packs, there is no way we would be able to collect all the equipment and send it to Tanzania.

Please keep an eye on the Rafiki Facebook page for shout outs for volunteers, or email [info@asanterafiki.com](mailto:info@asanterafiki.com) and ask to be added to the email list.

*Left & Right: picking up beds from Fremantle.  
Centre: medical supplies from Swan Districts*



# Wound Care Info Sheets

**Sometimes things get a little bit lost** in translation working in Tanzania. Many of our patients come from rural areas where they may not even speak Swahili (let alone English), may not be able to read and write and sometimes are very young to be caring for themselves.

We are very excited to be working on a project with Bec Warwick, from [Illustrations by Bec](#), to create fun, illustrated information sheets to help explain post-operative care to our patients. The idea came from our super ward nurse, Shannon, who explains what the patients need to

do to care for their wounds when they go home. The sheets will explain things like when to get the stitches taken out and what precautions to take to help the healing process.

Once again we have been able to count on support from Graphic Source who will print the sheets on very cool, untearable, waterproof paper.

Thanks Shannon, Bec and [Graphic Source](#) for working on a project that will help us give the best care possible to our patients.



# Volunteer Profile: Lily Balfour

For the past eight years, through her employment with MPH Lawyers, Lily has made a huge contribution to Rafiki with her administrative support. She has gone above and beyond her administrative role in attending and organising events and container packing, in her own time. Sadly for us, Lily is leaving MPH Lawyers at the end of next month and moving interstate. Thank you Lily for all your hard work and commitment, you will be missed.



## How long have you been volunteering for Rafiki and what roles do you play?

I've been volunteering with Rafiki since 2008. My support mainly revolves around the administration required for our events and missions. Whether it be preparing all the paperwork and making the necessary bookings and reservations for

the surgical missions or liaising with the other members on the Rafiki ball committee for the Ball. I am also the person that is hassling everyone to get involved and come along to pack containers and wheel beds around hospital corridors early on Saturday mornings (yes those beds have a mind of their own sometimes). I try to complete an inventory list of what is being packed into the container for the shipping line, which usually involves lots of photos along the way and a confused Monday morning compilation. At least I've started completing the list on my phone these days as my writing was never very legible (perhaps that's from being surrounded by lawyers and doctors)!

## What's been the most challenging?

The most challenging part is trying to remain patient in our dealings in Tanzania as things always happen at a far slower pace. Everything happens in "Tanzanian Time" so you have to be prepared to wait and get everything prepared a long time in advance. I also learnt from personal experience that sending documents by international express post to Tanzania (its trackable and express were my thoughts) was not a good idea as the mail must get very lost on the way. After numerous instances of preparing and sending the documentation the second time round I learnt valuable lessons and heard the first documents I sent did finally arrive in Tanzania a few YEARS later!

## What does the work mean to you?

Rafiki whilst meaning "friend" in Swahili has become more like a family to me as a lot of the people I have met along the way have become very close friends, which has also made my choice to move from Perth to Tasmania all the harder. That said, there's no doubt I will still keep involved with the charity and the people I have met, perhaps now from a distance, but will keep in touch given the effect Rafiki has had on me over the years.

## What's been your favourite memory working with Rafiki?

The memories that continue to stay with me are definitely of the patients the teams have operated on throughout the years. Whilst the before photos are confronting and certainly were hard to look at in the beginning of my involvement I now look forward to seeing the transformations and the look on their faces, particularly the children when they finally get a chance to look in the mirror and see their new face. In the time I've been involved over 900 people have had operations that have significantly changed them, their outlook on life and their future. To know I have helped, even in a small way, in getting the teams to Tanzania to be able to work their miracles means so much to me.

## What do you like most about the organisation and the people involved?

Rafiki is made up of a very passionate and dedicated team that continues to grow. All of them are volunteers and willing to give up their time to help out as much as possible. Without this diverse range of people from so many different backgrounds we wouldn't be able to keep going. What is great to see is the new people wanting to get involved and, as it continues to grow, the message is becoming more widespread. I hope from this, through the surgical missions, equipment and training that occurs Rafiki will be one of the main drivers in making a substantial change to large numbers of people in Tanzania and benefit the country as a whole. If you aren't yet involved don't think you need to give up a lot. Sparring a few hours on a Saturday morning to help pack a container or helping the team out with preparations for the Ball is of assistance. Every person is helping to make a difference and I'm just so glad I am one of those people.

**Good luck on your new adventure Lily, the Rafiki family wishes you all the best.**

*With big shoes to fill, new MPH Lawyers' employee Tara Van De Kraats will be taking over many of Lily's administrative roles.*

# Safina Foundation

## NIRA Renovations

Find us on 

**NIRA is a small, privately run orphanage** the Safina Foundation started supporting through infrastructure upgrades about two years ago. We have renovated existing buildings and fixed their water well, which provides them with water for drinking and washing, growing food and selling to the community. Thank you to the Walsh Family and the Rotary Clubs of Mandurah City, Mandurah Districts and Melville for their generous donations which have allowed us to undertake this significant work.

Our latest project at NIRA is to build new accommodation for the girls. Currently they share 2 dorm rooms and a pretty awful toilet and shower block. There were foundations for a house that was

never completed, so we have used this existing work to build a new house for the girls to sleep and wash in. The accommodation will now have more privacy with the girls able to share smaller rooms with fewer people in each bedroom.

The new house will have tiling, western-style toilets and a shower room. There is also a guest bedroom with en-suite which can be used for visiting volunteers or a house mother. The house will be a much nicer environment for the girls and they will be able to use the two old dorm rooms as a dining hall and study room. Many thanks to the Walsh Family and Penrhos College for once again stepping up and joining Safina Foundation to fund these works.

*Left: before the renovation. Right: nearly completed.  
Below: Alice, Taka and James with Edith.*



## NIRA Visit

**Taka, Alice, James and Jacquie** visited NIRA after the April Rafiki mission. Most of the kids were at school, but Taka said Edith seemed to be doing a great job of looking after the children they did meet and the renovations were coming along well.



# Chinese Malaika Charity

**A newly formed charity**, Chinese Malaika Charity (CMC), has joined with Safina Foundation to support the NIRA Orphanage. They have donated goats, chickens, food, books and a water purification system and would now like to get involved in the construction projects and further renovations undertaken by Safina. They are also going to teach the children Chinese.

NIRA celebrated their 11 year anniversary on 15 May and CMC surprised them with gifts and food.

Thank you so much to CMC. It is wonderful you have come on board to support NIRA.

Since we met Edith, the Principal of NIRA, she has secured help from more groups and local supporters like Safina and CMC. We are very proud to support NIRA and it is great to see Edith working hard to find more projects and support to help NIRA be sustainable and provide a safe place for children in need.



Left: food donation from CMC. Right: showing the children Chinese New Year decorations. Below: CMC with Thierry, James, Ambassador Chialo, Edith and the children.

## Internet Connection for NIRA

Following the donation of laptops to NIRA by Safina, Penrhos College have stepped in to generously donate the funds necessary to have the internet installed and paid for the next 12 months. This will open up a whole new world for the girls and help them with their studies. Soon we will be able to connect with NIRA online. You can follow the progress on the [Safina Facebook page](#).