



Annual Report
Newsletter June 2012

Chairman's Report for Year Ending March 2012

This last year illustrates once again the need and value of MAA. Huge volumes of goods pass through the rooms of our store at Greenlane Hospital. Most months more than 100 cartons of goods are sent to developing countries far and wide.

Thanks for Goods Donated

MAA continues to receive goods from an amazing variety of sources, but mostly from the greater Auckland region. I would like to acknowledge again PWR (Pharmacy Wholesalers Russells) for their endless help in moving stock from pharmacies to their warehouse, before it comes to our store. We would love to have more room, which would allow us to draw stock from sources further afield.

Store Rooms

The Auckland District Health Board continues their generous support of MAA by providing our store rooms at no charge. The Board and MAA have spent time looking at fire and chemical safety in our store. There is some question as to whether we can continue there, but at the moment we continue to have a small, rather congested, but effective suite of rooms, albeit it in a basement. We thank them.

Treasured Volunteers

I want to acknowledge the amazing and generous Wednesday Workers' team who give so much of their time ensuring that MAA can fulfil its role. This very happy team, are a joy to work with and are achieving so much, in a willing and effective manner. Thank you all.

Executive & Trustees

The Executive and Trustees meet throughout the year keeping a low-key eye on how MAA is running. I wish to acknowledge and thank them, as all are volunteers and most serve outside their professional skill-base. During the latter half of 2011, while I was acting as a locum in Tonga, the good team of Executive members continued to function under the temporary chairmanship of Graeme Woodfield.

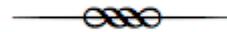
Farewells

I wish to comment on two members in particular. Dick Seddon and Graeme Woodfield are standing down from their roles. Both have served faithfully for many years; Dick as accounting and legal advisor and Graeme as chairman for very many years. MAA owes them more than we can say.

Our Store Manager, Dr Tony Wansbrough, who has done so much, put in such long hours, moved so many thousands of cartons and managed the store so well, is also retiring. To Tony and Norman, on behalf of all at MAA, I say a very big thank you. It's been a pleasure working with Tony and I'm always amazed at the things she knows about MAA. We will miss her but we hope she and Norman will continue to be on-going supporters of MAA.

Thank you to everyone, who has any role in helping and supporting Medical Aid Abroad.

Murray Kerr – Chairman



Store Annual Report 2011/2012

This will be my last annual report as store manager for Medical Aid Abroad. I am stepping down for health reasons but am very confident in the new manager who has just been appointed, Dr Mary Ponifasio.

Mary brings with her a wealth of life experience and I am sure she will manage excellently. Mary is a doctor, trained in Papua New Guinea, and has worked as an ENT specialist. As well as that, in PNG she has been an end user of aid such as ours, so has an understanding of what we do.

For myself, it has been a good 7 years, during which the store has shifted once, and then has grown considerably. Along with that has grown a band of wonderful volunteers working in the store when we are open on Wednesdays, and some working on other days of the week collecting donated items and transporting goods to shipping agents. They really do make a difference.

Contributions and Storage

We seem to have struck a chord with the modern mind-set in that nobody likes things going to the tip that can usefully be recycled. So we are increasingly being approached by medical supply companies and individuals wishing to donate their excess stock to us so that it can be used. Most of this we can take, but some, which for us would be "slow moving stock", we reject because of lack of space in the store.

Warehouse space is an issue for us, but to relieve some of the pressure, we have kindly been donated space in 2 commercial warehouses, Ashon Ventures and Civic Wholesale. For this we are very grateful.

Transporting Goods

Shipping is always an issue for us. We like to make the cost of shipping the responsibility of the recipient of the goods as giving them some ownership of the process. That is not always possible though with some poorer communities. In this respect we are very grateful to Pacific Freight Management who have given us discounted rates for shipping, and also to the

Royal New Zealand Air Force who have given us charitable freight on aircraft.

We are grateful too to the yachts which cruise for pleasure and sport into the Pacific. The skippers of these boats are often keen and willing to take cartons of basic medical supplies to drop off at isolated villages on atolls far from the sources of supply of their countries.

While we are thanking people, we most gratefully thank the Auckland District Health Board who gives us the space for our store at no cost. It seems though that we will have to move again in the near future, and the ADHB is looking for space for us.

MAA in The Media

We have had some excellent publicity this year, firstly with an article about us in the "Auckland" magazine, and then an audio recording of the store in action broadcast on National Radio on the "Spectrum" program. From this we gained another volunteer with electronics skills to check such equipment we have, and people wishing to donate goods to us.

Where Has it All Gone?

This year we shipped 1617 cartons and innumerable walkers, wheelchairs, drip stands, autoclaves etc. The goods went to the Philippines, Kiribati, Fiji, Samoa, South Africa, Ghana, the Cook Is, PNG, Niger, India, Uganda, Tonga, Laos, Vanuatu, Bolivia, Tanzania, Solomon Is, East Timor, Cambodia, Lesotho, Nepal, Libya, Romania, China, and Malawi. Whew!

The majority of aid though went into the Pacific; in particular Fiji which has suffered severe floods this year. We even were able to supply drip sets to be air freighted to Fiji when the Western Districts were running low at the time of the flooding.

But Libya too was sent 2 large shipments of hospital supplies as humanitarian aid during and following the civil disturbances there that led to the downfall of Colonel Gaddafi. This was arranged though us by 2 Libyan doctors working in New Zealand and concerned by the lack of supplies in hospitals in their home country. We were pleased to make a humanitarian response to the need.

Thanks

Thank you too to all of you who support our organisation by donations. We always have a need for funding and we are grateful for it all. Our major costs with the store are the payment for our very part time manager, the consumables that the store needs, occasional shipping, and mileage.

Tony Wansbrough – Store Manager 2012



Several hours on a Wednesday are spent as an MAA volunteer, mostly spent on the pharmacy side of the operation. This involves unpacking drugs that have been sent to us from pharmacies, clinics, hospitals and pharmaceutical wholesalers and manufacturers. We keep drugs that are up to 6 months out of date and unfortunately this means we actually throw out a good deal of the medicines returned to us but we also get many drugs that have 2 or 3 more years before they go out of date. Once the drugs are sorted they are shelved alphabetically in groups of like medicines e.g. asthma, blood pressure, antibiotics etc. Orders are also put together to send to various clinics and hospitals overseas, so there is quite a big turnover of stock. Shelves are regularly checked for any drugs that might need to be disposed of and of course are tidied at the same time. All the while, because there is a team of us, we manage to socialise, so it is an enjoyable time and a lot of work is done as well. Often one of us has baked so there is home-cooked fare for morning tea which makes for a very friendly, family atmosphere. Digby and I have been part of MAA for many, many years and feel it is our way of giving back a little made all the more easy now that we are retired.

Janice Nelson – MAA Store Volunteer



A Trainee Doctors Experience in Peru

While on O & G I participated in multiple deliveries, caesarean sections and hysterectomies. I have seen ectopic pregnancies, cervical cancer, untreated uterine adenomyoma resulting in a 5 kg uterus, the life threatening complications of pre eclampsia, and a variety of other conditions.

In medicine, I learned about tuberculosis, malaria, rabies, parasitic infections, pesticide poisonings, suicide attempts and depression for slightly different reasons from those we encounter here.

In paediatrics I saw a few cases of necrotising enterocolitis, and death of a newborn due to lack of ante natal care and wrong labour management. Surgery cases are very similar to NZ but usually presenting much later and with complications such as burst cysts and appendices. Also presentation and management of common conditions in all disciplines is rather different, especially in the light of limited availability of medications and equipment.

One interesting issue is the ethics of health care in Peru. The doctor-patient relationship is very different and is based on power and knowledge of the doctor compared with the lack of those for the patients. The mutual respect and trust accompanied with autonomy and well informed patients in NZ is rare in Peru, where a very traditional way of practising medicine is dominant.

And last but not least in the stories of Peru are the donations I brought over from NZ. I contacted Medical Aid Abroad and asked for some donated medical supplies to take over to Peru. They happily agreed and I ended up travelling with 6kg of their generous donations. It was accepted by Sicuani ED and Pampaphalla health centre with much appreciation and gratitude. The look on their faces was worth every kilogram I had to carry.

Leehe Vardi – Medical Student



Treasurers Note

MAA will be most grateful for any assistance you can give to improve our financial position. We are donated large quantities of medical supplies, but this has to be collected, sorted, stored and then packed and consigned to very needy poor places in the Pacific, Africa, and Asia, all done voluntarily. Your support is gratefully received.

Our Annual membership amount has been \$50 (or more which would be very gratefully received), and the amount remains unchanged for this years membership. You can either pay this by post, or by Internet banking.

If you indicate that this or any other amount is a Donation, then it will be receipted and this receipt posted back to you for tax rebate purposes which you can then apply for.

Enclosed is a form which we ask you to kindly fill in and return with your cheque (or indicate that you have done internet banking) to our postal address:

Medical Aid Abroad NZ

PO Box 26336
Greenlane Central
Auckland 1546

By doing this you enable us to send you a receipt so that you can claim a tax rebate as it is a donation to a registered Charity.

For Internet Banking our account number is: 06
0287 0232094 25. Please ensure that you use your name as a reference in the payment details so that we may track your transaction.

David Morris – Treasurer

