



IN BRIEF

- Chairman's Report
- FoANs 15 birthday
- Snippets of news

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Chairman of Trustees Report

All you need is the plan, the road map and the courage to press on to your destination! Earl Nightingale

When Lesley and I sat on our beds in a hotel room in Uganda in 2001—discussing how much the nurses needed input, and whether we could help, little did we know that the organisation we dreamed up would still be in action 15 years and more than 1700 nurses later. Initially, we were encouraged by a small number of people including our new Patron Denis Robson who travelled in surgical Africa extensively. He knew who we needed to be introduced to and how much nurses needed some continuing education—particularly in perioperative practice. Later, Johnson and Johnson were key financial supporters over a number of years, and we felt enabled to assist as much as our time and energy would allow. We are proud of our voluntary achievement and of the nurses who have worked so hard to grasp new concepts placed in front of them day after day during our courses. There were some difficulties with communication in the early days (we had to write letters!) but with modern connectedness it has got a great deal easier. We now “talk” to the clinical ambassadors who keep their networks in touch with our on-line educational offerings. The internet and it’s great opportunities for education over thousands of miles, has great promise for the future too—maybe some new destinations?

Our other new Patron, John Heath has magnificently enabled the online education to have a platform.

There have been many other critical supporters and trustees who have helped us on the journey and they have each been sent a piece of birthday cake to thank them for all their wisdom , support and creativity. During any journey, the companions on the journey are vital to the enjoyment and successes of the travel. We held a charity launch event in UK and also in Africa , when in 2006 we achieved registration as a charity. During this year, we will be returning to the Aga Khan Hospital In Nairobi, Kenya the site of the African launch to hold another party to celebrate our anniversary. We will try to ensure that as many of the people who came to the first event, will be present with us in 2016—and of course some new friends and colleagues!

Looking forward to the end of the journey we need to be clear about the strategic direction that we need to take. It is important that we have input to the development of surgical team and perioperative training as surgical care is rapidly upscaled on the continent. Online education options will be essential so that spread can be ensured but there is still much to be determined and much work to do. It seems that we are not getting towards the end of the journey but changing modes of transport and continuing at an ever faster speed. Good Luck to FoAN as it negotiates the curves and bends on the new road!

Kate Woodhead
Chair of Trustees
2016.



Uganda—the first theory update course, 2001.



Lesley teaching in Uganda



Kate doing some homework.



Lesley with senior Ugandan Nurses. Kampala 2001



Ugandan Nurses receiving their certificates of attendance. Kampala 2001

FoAN's 15 birthday in 2016

As a Board of Trustees we are proud to announce the 15 anniversary of the charity during 2016. It seems a very long time ago since Lesley and I ran our first programme in Uganda. We were well meaning and had prepared as best we could for a programme we had not run before, to nurses whom we had not met (nor knew their educational attainment) nor knew how many of them would speak English. Despite our best efforts at preparation for the programme we were astonished and a bit horrified when we were greeted on the first morning by more than 70 nurses who had come to be educated. The room was jammed full of people to the point where no-one could move in or out!! We had not prepared for more than 35 and had to spend a lot of time during the week photocopying more copies of the handouts. We taught in a non air conditioned room in an African hotel, where all the delegates were staying. We had taken our own overhead projector—which went off frequently with cuts to the electricity and Oh how it rained! Tropical downpours every afternoon without fail when we could not hear ourselves speak, it was so loud on the tin roof of the classroom!

By the end of the week, we realised how poorly equipped the hospitals and especially the operating rooms were. One particular presentation I vividly remember was on tourniquets. As I got up to speak and find out what equipment the delegates had in their theatres, I had to revise my whole talk on the hoof, because of their answers! I had based my talk on familiar medical tourniquets at home in UK—which need special maintenance and understanding otherwise they can be high risk machines. As I questioned the Ugandan perioperative nurses about the level of tourniquet equipment they had, we came down and down to a cut piece of red rubber which was used to prevent blood flow into the limb during surgery. There is no possible maintenance for this—but I ploughed on describing the difficulties of acidotic limbs!! Poor nurses they were quite bemused and the session was quickly forgotten—but it certainly taught me how important it was to understand the local context before you try to teach. Since that lesson was learned we have visited a hospital and its operating theatres (as applicable, depending on the programme) every time we have taught, and before we started. It has enabled all our facilitators to fix themselves in the constraints of the locality.

Another reflection is how much the technology has changed in the fifteen years that we have been travelling. The first programmes were all delivered with overhead projectors. As we discovered powerpoint we started to take our computers with us as well as a projector—which led to some fines for overweight hand luggage! In many places the nurses did not have paper or pens and very few were connected to the internet or used social media or the internet. Only during the last few years has this all changed. Africa now has affordable phone devices in many of the countries and the nurses are as well connected as we are. However, there are many who do not use or have not yet discovered how wonderful the internet is as a resource for learning.

This 'connectedness' has been the catalyst for our current activity of putting new education online for the nurses. We are writing new programmes, using up to date references as many of the countries have caught us up with our developments. It has been necessary to find a platform on which to put our online education and for that we are extremely grateful to Wellards and to the generosity of one of our new patrons, John Heath—who has facilitated all that for us.

Snippets of news

The Clinical Services Journal, April 2016 has an article which highlights the charity's role in educating surgical teams over many years. The World Health Assembly passed a resolution last year which will ensure that surgery has to take a far higher profile in the mix of general health for all their populations. This will no doubt provide many opportunities for nurse training in many parts of Africa, so far unvisited by FoAN.

FoAN will be at Music in the Park, Thame Sunday 1 May 2016. We will have a stand and are currently making and sourcing from Africa some items which we think you will like. If you live locally do come and join in. It is a family friendly event featuring live music and dance acts to please children, teens and the rest of us! Further information available at <http://musicinthepark.org.uk/>



Dot held a coffee morning at her church in Eastleigh and raised more than £400.

Thanks to all for their hard work and generosity!



Dot's husband Geoffrey made a centrepiece to be proud of at their coffee morning. More cake has been made with the same topping and has been sent to members and supporters of the charity to thank them for all their support.

Education Modules

Education modules are being devised and uploaded to the Wellards FoAN website, where they can be accessed by registered users. 7 different modules are now in place and there are approximately 30 users.

Clinical Ambassadors spread the word when new items are available.

Clinical Ambassadors are rewarded for their help by sending them a raft of "interesting" articles several times each year.



Christmas Charity Fair held in Thorner, Kate's village helped raise another £100.

Don't forget to keep up with our activities on Facebook or our website! [Www.foan.org.uk](http://www.foan.org.uk)