



John and Sue Clynes volunteered in Togo, West Africa for three months on the world's largest non-governmental hospital ship

KIWI COUPLE HELP AFRICA'S POOR

WITH A BACKGROUND in boatbuilding, specialising in bearings, John Clynes was fascinated with the prospect of using his marine engineering skills to volunteer on the world's largest non-governmental hospital ship in Togo, West Africa.

His wife Sue's training as an operating theatre nurse seemed like a perfect fit for the couple as they scheduled their annual leave with a difference. John says the *Africa Mercy* is unique. "She is a ship, a hotel and a hospital all in one."

The engineering team on board is about 30-strong and includes officers, electricians, plumbers, welders, fitters, plus motormen and watch engineers to monitor her four 3120kW B&W engines and other machinery.

"All of the team are from diverse backgrounds and nations, but all contribute in a common bond to provide a stable platform to deliver health and healing to Africa's poor," says John.

The 152m *Africa Mercy* was launched in 1980 as a Danish short-haul ferry. Since her refit in 2007 she boasts a state-of-the-art hospital where the railway tracks once ran through the roll-on roll-off lower deck. A new deck dividing the hold horizontally provides accommodation for many of the 484 marine, health care services and operating crew.

While Sue Clynes worked shifts in the six operating theatres, providing life-changing surgery like cataract removal for



John and the deck department perform maintenance on the ship's Zodiac

Togo's poorest people, John and his team mates worked tirelessly to ensure the ship's generators and other systems functioned to provide the power needed to care for the forgotten poor seeking hope and healing on board.

"I felt absolutely connected to the end product of changing desperate people's lives," says John. "Every hour delivered meant people with no hope, who were crying for help, received the treatment they fully deserved."

The wide range of procedures carried out include cleft lip and palate repairs, cataract removal, orthopaedic procedures, facial reconstructions and obstetric fistula repairs. Dental procedures are also carried out and clinics set up in local villages.

The *Africa Mercy* team also train others in health care and establish community projects, focusing on water, sanitation, education and agriculture.

See msnz@mercyships.org or www.mercyships.org.nz



StowAway Turbo / Vector Turbo Optimized Marine Design Features

Rust-free molded composite drain pan designed for a quick removal of condensate water. Innovatively designed sloped channels route water rapidly to a choice of three easy to plumb drain locations.

Experience better noise reduction with a built-in cushion system that minimizes vibration to the deck. Additionally, the innovative mounting clips utilize vibration isolators. As shown in the photo, the optional molded compressor sound shield maximizes noise containment.

The centrifugal enclosed-motor, high-velocity blower can be rotated through 270° with one adjustment screw. This unit's unique inlet ring is designed to optimize air flow and ensure that the height of the unit does not increase when the blower rotates.



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