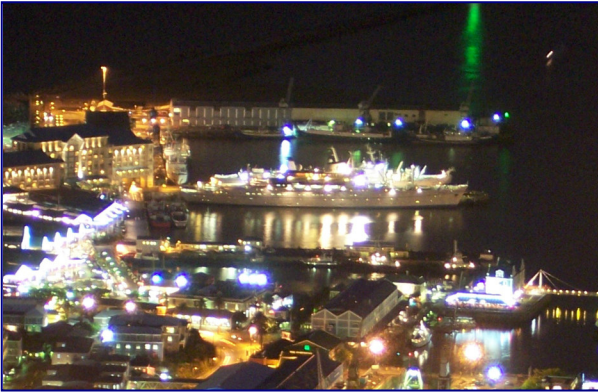


## Ship Report

28 October 2005 | Sailing to Monrovia, Liberia



### South Africa sends off the *Anastasis*

After time doing dry dock repairs, public relations, and loading in the South African port cities of East London and Cape Town, the Mercy Ship *Anastasis* began her sail to Liberia on 19 October. She will arrive in the capital city, Monrovia, well-stocked and well-prepared for the seven-month field assignment — thanks, in large part, to the generosity of the South African people.

A staff of 10 worked tirelessly to plan for the ship's stay in South Africa and for her subsequent return visit to Liberia. Andre Cronjé, a Mercy Ships crew member and a native South African, arrived in Cape Town in September 2004 to work with the seven-member Advance Team. They secured donations and assistance from numerous South African companies, radio stations, and musicians. Ric Amansure, CEO of Mercy Ships Southern Africa, held a gala event in Cape Town to honor these donors before the ship departed. Some 400 people attended, including representatives of Tiger Brand Foods, which donated products valued at approximately \$63,000 US. The Power Group of Companies, based in Cape Town, offered much-needed construction materials.

These contributions make it possible for Mercy Ships to continue offering hope and healing in Liberia, a nation rebuilding after 14 years of civil war. The fighting claimed more than 250,000 lives and decimated the country's infrastructure; there is no electricity or running water, and the unemployment rate hovers around 80 percent.

The services planned for Liberia would not be possible without the support, generosity, and encouragement of the people of South Africa. Nelson Mandela, who served as the country's president during its acclaimed rise to democracy a decade ago, endorsed the work of Mercy Ships, saying, *"I applaud Mercy Ships in their efforts of transformational development as they make a lasting difference in a world of need. Mercy Ships have committed themselves to the vision of an African renaissance in their mission to add hope and healing to the continent of Africa. We have a purpose for our lives and a legacy that will last beyond our lifetime. I salute the vision and mission of Mercy Ships."*

### Back in Liberia

Eric Williams, the Advance Team leader currently stationed in Liberia to prepare for the arrival of the Mercy Ship remarked, *"Liberians are looking for something to celebrate, and they're having to look hard now. Mercy Ships is a bright spot in their lives. People are excited to have us come."* Phase I of assistance from Mercy Ships took place from March 2005 - June 2005; Phase II will run from November 2005 - June 2006. In this second visit, Mercy Ships will continue to work in close collaboration with the Liberian government, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), and the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) as the charity provides a wide range of services.

Among these will be an estimated 1,700 surgeries and 10,000 dental procedures, as well as training for more than 100 local health care workers. In addition, Community Development Services and Church Empowerment will undertake projects that include completing the renovation of a public school, drilling wells, training adult literacy facilitators, and equipping church and community leaders.



## Powering up community development

What does it take to continue helping a West African community recover after 14 years of civil war? Thirty-eight tons of cement, 110 pieces of timber, 500 sq m of roofing sheets, 100 kg of nails, and 1300 liters of paint – all donated by a leading South African construction firm.

Graham Power, founder and head of the Power Group of Companies, recently visited the Mercy Ship *Anastasis* in Cape Town, South Africa. After hearing about the work of the ship's community development work in Liberia – from building latrines and digging freshwater wells, to training community leaders and re-roofing a school – Power offered his company's resources.

*"It's amazing how God provides,"* explained Jens Schierbecker, the ship's manager for Community Development Services (CDS). *"I was ready to order everything – I had the companies lined up, just waiting for my phone call. Then the next thing we know the Power Group is working on getting everything together for us."*

The Power Group provided materials for latrine construction as well as for the rehabilitation of a school ruined by Liberia's civil war in a rural area near the capital, Monrovia. People who fled their homes during the conflict are beginning to return, and Mercy Ships is providing practical and spiritual assistance as communities rebuild their lives.

*"It was a total God thing,"* remarked Schierbecker. *"It's so unusual for one company to donate everything we need, especially in a country not often visited by the ship."*

Schierbecker found that many people in South Africa were familiar with and supportive of the concept of community development. The Power Group of Companies itself is well-known for using labor-intensive techniques in township redevelopment, providing local people with employment and skills training even as their new homes are built.

*"God knew that you can't be human in isolation,"* said Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu in a recent visit to the Mercy Ship. *"Here in South Africa, we hear people speak of ubuntu – 'A person is a person through other persons'. We can be human only together."*

Thanks to the generosity of the Power Group of Companies, Mercy Ships can re-direct funds earmarked for construction materials to other projects bringing hope and healing to the people of Liberia.