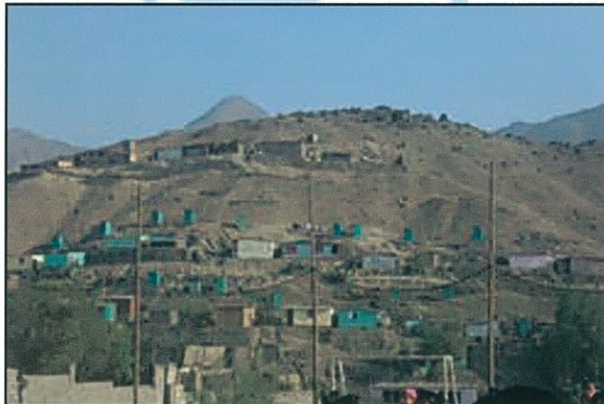


Operation San Andres: A Christian Ministry to Peru

Dr. Luis Campos tells of the work with which he is involved in Collique.

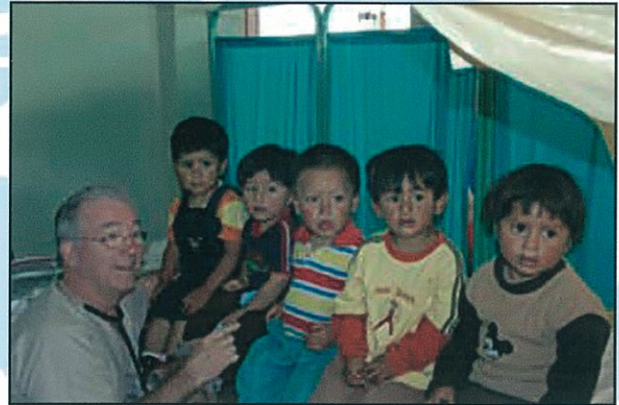
Operation San Andres was begun by my wife Ruth and myself in 2003 as a Christian ministry to impoverished people living in Collique, a shantytown on the outskirts of Lima, Peru. However, the history of this adventure really began many years ago in my homeland of Peru. When I was a boy, my father met with Miss Christina MacKay and Mr James Mackintosh, and my older brother and I were accepted as pupils at Colegio San Andres in Lima. At the time we did not recognize God's providence in the fact that places in the appropriate grades had recently become available during these times when it was very difficult to find good schools. My life in the new school was exciting from the beginning. We had many "gringo" teachers, a new kind of school uniform, a "house" system for sports, and English classes. I have especially vivid memories of daily morning assemblies in which Mr Mackintosh, wearing his impressive, formal academic robe, gave talks that left a profound influence in so many of the students.



The shantytown of Collique

The first time I became aware of the *Barriadas* (shantytowns) of Lima was when I was a member of *Adelante Juventud*, a student group started by Mr Sam Will. There were two *barriadas* that we visited during my last year in high school, "El Pedregal" and "Comas". We were all emotionally impacted by the desperate living conditions in these slums, which were located next to the city dump. Quite a lot of physical labour was required to create a flat area where we could hold meetings for the children. Some churches still exist today in the area where we did this work.

During this same period I was struggling with my decision to follow Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour. As we confronted the conditions of people from the *Barriadas*, I became convinced of two things. First, I realized that their economic needs paled in comparison to their spiritual need; and second, that we are commanded to love the poor, dispossessed and defenceless as an expression of our love for Christ. With some help from Miss Joanna Miller, an ex-missionary to Colegio San Andres, I wrote an article (in English) about the shantytowns for *Leader*, our school magazine. Unbeknownst to me at the



Volunteer Richard with some of the local children

time, the embryonic beginnings of OSA were included in this article when I wrote the words 'Give them Hope! Hope in Him who is the Maker of the Universe but "had no place to lay his head". He knows all about poverty.'

During these school years in Peru, I always wanted to become a doctor, and because of my increasing knowledge of Scotland, I aspired to study at Edinburgh Medical School. This dream became a reality after spending seven years in Scotland. I became a member of Buccleuch and Greyfriars congregation in Edinburgh, where I met Ruth (née Gilmour) and where Mr James W Fraser married us in 1968. We have been blessed with four children and five grandchildren.

After moving to the USA, I began my cardiology practice in Houston, Texas. Since then, Ruth and I have been involved in medical missions in Houston and Mexico for more than 25 years. Then, in the year 2000, while visiting Pedro Arana in Lima, we learned about a church in Houston wanting to start medical mission trips to Peru, so we assisted with their organization and joined them for a couple of trips to Peru. In 2003 Ruth and I decided to organize a mission trip of our own and enlisted a team of 16 people including doctors, nurses, dentists, and lay support people. During that trip we visited Collique, which has the poorest population we had seen up to that time. We are members of South Main Baptist Church in Houston, and with the support of our church friends, the decision was made to continue working with the residents of Collique with the hope of making a long-term, holistic impact on that community. This is how Operación San Andrés (OSA) started. The name was chosen in honor of the Apostle Andrew, who is seen in Scriptures as introducing people to our Lord. Additionally, St Andrew is the patron saint of my beloved Scotland and the name of the school where I came to know the Lord. We realized that our resources were extremely limited, and we prayed that just as Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes of the youth who was introduced to Jesus by Andrew, so our resources might be used to satisfy some of the needs of the people from Collique.

To be continued next month ...

Operation San Andrés: A Christian Ministry to Peru

Continuing on from last month, Dr. Luis Campos tells of the work with which he is involved in Collique.

We praise our Lord that the efforts in Collique have been blessed. In 2005 we were able to purchase a plot of land, where a three-story house has been built. "OSA House" is now the centre of operations for our daily ministries in the area. Each weekday, approximately 60 children, aged eight to ten, come to OSA House for a 'Bread of Life' programme. In addition to providing a nutritious meal, the staff help them with schoolwork and teach Bible classes. Community Bible studies are also held on a weekly basis.

OSA has "adopted" the nearby Jose Galvito pre-school, providing a cooked meal for the children there. We were granted permission to construct a "sports complex" on property behind the house owned by the pre-school. Team sports and recreation provide wholesome outlets for teens and younger children who might otherwise become involved with drugs or other destructive behaviour.

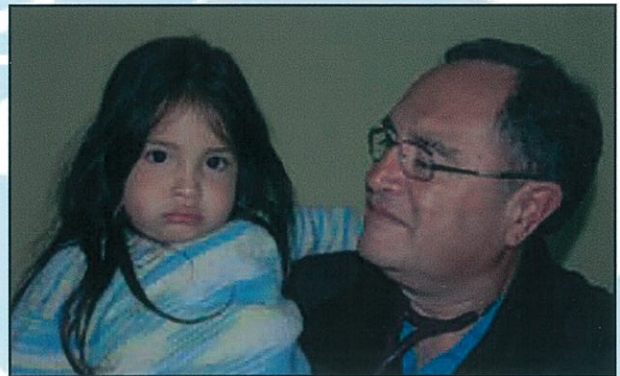
We have observed the tremendous blessings that each volunteer in this mission has received

OSA have been making regular medical-dental mission trips to Collique since 2003, and a great number of people have been helped both medically and practically. For example, 2,000 pairs of shoes and 2,000 pairs of glasses were distributed. The young English-speaking helpers interacted warmly with the Spanish-speaking Peruvian young people from Pueblo Libre Church, enriching the lives of all as a result.

OSA continues to have a significant Scottish influence. My brother-in-law John Gilmour is a retired doctor who, with his wife Karen, a nurse, lives in Kirriemuir. They, along with Jim Estill, a dentist from the same town, have been involved in OSA from the beginning and are influential advocates for this mission in their communities. Several Kirriemuir churches have adopted OSA as their mission project and in addition to financial support, the ladies of these churches have knitted clothes for the children of Collique.

Our dreams for increasing the social and spiritual impact of the OSA mission continue. We would like to start some educational vocational activities to help people with income producing projects. Eventually, we hope to construct a Clinic for primary medical care, with emphases on education and prevention.

After several months of prayerful discernment and preparation, Chris and Jess Rose and their young son Joshua moved to Collique to begin service as full-time missionaries for the OSA ministry. Both have previous experience living in Latin America. They will provide supplemental teaching to



Dr Campos with a child wearing one of the knitted jumpers

about 50 children who attend the OSA after-school program called 'Living Water-OSA.' Through this program, children are provided with a nutritious meal and have an opportunity to learn about Christ. Help with schoolwork, recreation, and crafts are also part of the daily activities. They are also teaching English and leading Bible study for adults in the community. Jess will soon begin leading a family enrichment course called Motherwise for women in the community. Help for new mothers in The Collique State Hospital has also been provided in the form of blankets and clothes for the newborn babies. It was good to be able to share the love of Christ with these mothers and to give them hope and peace that our Lord is with them always.

Our prayer is that He would continue to perform miracles in Collique, providing for the people in ways we could never imagine.

Ruth and I praise our Lord for the many blessings we have received in this ministry. Through this adventure we have grown spiritually, and our family has become more united. We have fellowship with wonderful Christians whom we did not know before, and have grown closer to friends we've known for a long time. We have observed the tremendous blessings that each volunteer in this mission has received, and the many lives that have been forever changed. Most importantly, as time progresses, we see improvements in the physical, mental, and spiritual health of the children and families with whom we work, and we pray that as we attempt to share the Love of God, these people will come to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ.

There is a pressing need for additional funds to support the ongoing programmes.

For more information please contact: Karen and John Gilmour: karen-rgilmour@hotmail.co.uk

To Learn More About Operación San Andrés please visit www.operacionsanandres.org