



**DOUBLE CHEQUE:** Ann Gloag delivers a passionate appeal for donations — and pledges to double whatever is raised

Photos: Martin Griffiths/Nas Din Photography



**TRIBUTE:** Mercy Ships UK chairman Henry Clarke and daughter Jessamy Kinghorn

Photo: Geoff Garfield

# Guests dig deep for Mercy Ships

**Geoff Garfield**  
London

The generosity of Scottish businesswoman Ann Gloag sent the total raised during an Africa Ball evening in London for Mercy Ships spiralling to a staggering £250,000.

Gloag, who funded the purchase of Mercy Ships' 16,572-gt hospital vessel *Africa Mercy* (built 1980), spoke passionately about the organisation on whose UK and international boards she serves.

The ball, at the exclusive Landmark Hotel, aimed to raise £110,000 but Gloag, who made her fortune with brother Sir Brian Souter through their Stagecoach passenger transport empire, pledged to double donations.

The final figure for the ball has still to be determined but the money raised, including a live auction, will provide medical care and training during the *Africa Mercy's* next 10-month field service in Cameroon, West Africa. It is the largest charity hospital ship in the world, with a second under construction in China.

Gloag spoke about her association with Mercy Ships since meeting its founder, Don Stephens in 1997 and paid tribute to the hun-



**ALL SMILES:** Oliver Hunt of Rolls-Royce and Nicola Hunt

dreds of volunteer crew, including doctors and nurses, who give up their holidays and even pay to travel to and live on the ship where care is administered to some of the poorest people in the world.

The philanthropist, who has her own Gloag Foundation charitable trust, said she regarded the volunteers as "equal partners" but singled out surgeon Gary Parker, whom TradeWinds interviewed previously in its quarterly TW+ magazine.

"I have to say that to work in partnership with him is an honour," Gloag said. "A fantastic individual who has given his life to this organisation, but mostly to the people of Africa. If you watch him, his care, his compassion, I still find it heart-rending, a great privilege to work with people like that."

Mercy Ships' UK chairman,

Henry Clarke, had just returned from visiting the *Africa Mercy*, where he saw "the amazing work that our volunteers do".

"The fact that they pay to be onboard the ship, the fact that they are the blood bank — that says it all, because they are truly motivated to give the highest quality of service, free of charge, to the most needy in the world."

The *Africa Mercy's* impact during its recent field service in Benin, West Africa had been "immense", said Clarke, but there are "millions of people across the world who are waiting for urgent medical care".

"Your generosity can have a huge impact on what is a global crisis," he told the 230 or so guests.

Mercy Ships' UK executive director, Lea Milligan, said that more than 2,500 operations and 9,000 dental procedures were performed in Benin, and by the time the *Africa Mercy* left last month to undergo essential maintenance work in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, more than 1,200 healthcare professionals had also been trained.

It included the qualification of the country's first ever plastic surgeon and renovation of the first fully functional burns unit in the capital, Porto-Novo.



**AUCTION ACTION:** Charlie Ross leads the live auction



**ON SONG:** Guests were entertained by the Faith Works Gospel Choir



**GRIPPING READ:** (From front left), Patti and Charles Mazhude, Grosvenor Financial Solutions managing director Tony Wellings, Debbie Lester, Tristel chief executive Paul Swinney, Elizabeth Dixon, Wendy and Bill Henry, Baxter Hoare managing director Adam White and Sara Riley