



“The Tooth and Nothing but The Tooth”

by
Chris ‘Dr. Smile Maker’
Branfield

Life Changing Dentistry Abroad - Dr. Smile Maker On Tour

Hello there. As I write there are only 32 days to Christmas!! It creeps up on you doesn't it? Hands up if you are all sorted and ready for the festive period in good time and well done for being so organised. Good luck if you are not.

Hull City have managed a couple of wins in a row! Hooray. Let's have a few more lads and the best of luck to the new owner.

Last time I was explaining about my Moroccan charity adventure and had gotten as Abdul's place in between the mountains. Off we set again over a second mountain but this time more off the beaten track and with the help of a young donkey we named Geraldine. Hats off to donkeys they are amazing creatures. The trek took us within site and ear shot of some monkeys which was fantastic. Our charity expedition continued towards 'God's Bridge' a natural arch built upon Farda River. The path narrowed to only a few centimetres at times and there were sheer drops from the cliff edge. It was scary at times. We managed



the steep descent with loose ground underfoot into the village of Akchour and had a welcome cup of tea. Oh my legs!

The next day we were in the van for part of the way and made our way at first to Bab Baret. Bab Beret is a small town that trades in one of Morocco's biggest exports, hashish. Although we did not stop here, we drove through this cowboy town high up in to the mountains! And some of us then cycled 50 km downhill into El Jebah, a quaint little fishing village on the Mediterranean coast not yet ruined by tourism! This was where we were to educate and treat some Berber kids the next day. The real reason for being there. The next day I was walking like Robo Cop as my legs were so sore and stiff. One poor guy had been quite ill, probably something from Abdul's kitchen.

At 9am sharp we were taken to a school nestled in the Rif Mountains and met by Luke the Belgian counsel to Morocco who had been our go between with Morocco. A real gentle caring man who resembled Rene from Allo Allo. Next we were introduced to an extreme humanitarian Dr Banani: the founder of a group of international medics 'Ranks of Honour.'

He and other medics travel to hard to reach villages in Africa and set up camp to treat all kinds of illnesses and disease. We were quickly introduced to Dental Professor Tiress from Morocco and her team of young dentists. Supplies were unloaded, courtesy of Henry Schein, Optident and GC and placed on an old wooden table. Small groups of excited children were assembled in a basic classroom.

And it was here they were educated on brushing and caring for their mostly rotten teeth. After an inspection by a Moroccan Paediatric dentist they were sent to get fillings or to have teeth extracted to alleviate constant daily pain. On further investigation we discovered about 20 percent had a toothbrush at home but how many of them actually used it was another question. The decay in some of the children was so bad there were just abscessed roots left which had to be extracted.

I was posted at the tooth extraction station. I will admit that I was very nervous first. We had to follow the lead of our Moroccan dental team. There was the obvious language barrier. However, after a while we found a way with a little broken French, a little Marcel Marceau and a lot of TLC. The kids were terrific. We had kids laughing and smiling even after they had their teeth out at times. It was exhausting, emotionally, but well worth it. It may sound a bit cliché but it was one of those trips that you learn things about yourself.

At the end of the most humbling of days, I presented a Hull City football shirt to Reduan 'Mr fix it' and former Mayor of El Jebah. I gave a flashlight to Mouad the roving, charity worker Pharmacist.



Reouan and Mouad

Chris Working

Kids of Jabah

Thanks again for all the donations, it has been great. We aim to go back next year and also fund on-going dental education to keep up the good work. You can donate at the practice or via our website www.castleparkdental.co.uk.

I wish you a very happy festive season and all the best for the new year.

Take care and be good.

Chris

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