



# AUSTRALIA BRINGING HOPE INC.

September 2009

Issue 3

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## Australia Bringing Hope Inc. (ABH)

is a locally based development and relief organisation set up to work in developing countries and is currently working in Uganda. The aim of ABH is to work along side local people helping them in areas of health, welfare, housing and income generating projects.

ABH is currently partnering with Bringing Hope to the Family and Gidcco Ministry.

## Letter from CEO, Phill Grigg

August 31, 2009

Dear supporters,

Greetings from Uganda.

It's the start of the wet season here. We've had a good start with seven inches of rain in three weeks. The last two weeks have been dry though. We're really hopeful for a good season as the last wet season, and therefore food production, really failed. Even in Kaihura, one of the least affected areas, food prices have risen dramatically. Beans are 50% more expensive than they were three weeks ago, and basic foods have doubled in price. The northern parts of Uganda have been in drought for a long period of time and people are facing starvation. There have been reports this morning that it has started to rain in some areas in the north. Therefore this wet season is looking promising but there won't be any food available to be harvested for several months.

This week four board members from Embrace Uganda (US organisation) visited Kaihura. They ran a seminar for married couples and held a pastors' conference on Thursday and Friday.



Immense joy for all involved: The container on site in Kaihura



Erection of Beekeeping Project workshop

We have also had two young ladies, Mary Anna and Megan, from Global Support Mission (US organisation) staying here for the last two weeks. A guy from Global Support Mission called Erin has been in Kaihura for a month doing filming.

(continued page 2).

This inspirational poem was recently shared at a funeral.

It's not how much you accomplish in life that really counts, but how much you give to others. It's not how high you build your dreams that makes a difference, but how high your faith can climb. It's not how many goals you reach, but how many lives you touch. It's not who you know that matters, but who you are on the inside. Believe in the impossible, hold tight to the incredible, and live each day to its fullest potential. You can make a difference in your world.



Production in the workshop

(Continued from page 1)

Training in the bee keeping project has been going well. We now have ten full time staff and several casual employees. We have almost completed assembling 160 bee hives. However, we have only been able to purchase 35 colonies of bees, some of which are only very weak or have died. So it will be some time before we are able to produce honey and be self sufficient. Otherwise most things are set up well and we are just about to start erecting an over head water tank and we'll soon start

assembling the machinery in the honey plant. We've had great cooperation from the local land owners in Kaihura, many of whom have offered their properties for us to put bees on. About three weeks ago we were visited by the Minister for Investment (this is the equivalent of a federal minister in Canberra) who was shown through the workshop and was very pleased with our progress. We are currently in need of \$5000 to extend the workshop to enable us to use the workshop for Dorcas Vocational School. As a matter of interest the carpentry section of the vocational school is already training students and is running well, but we are hoping to extend the building so that we are able to teach mechanics and engineering / welding.

The Global Support Mission team have been out in the remote villages with the Hope Again medical clinic staff conducting testing for AIDS. Mary Anna from the US is a paediatric nurse.

The vocational school is on holiday for four weeks. The building is needing extensions as there are too many people living there. Most of the Home Again orphanage building is completed. There have been quite a few new children arriving recently and therefore this also requires upgrading, and they are always running out of water.

Thank you to all our supporters in Australia. Your support is greatly valued.



Phill with his fiancé, Irene

Phill Grigg  
CEO

**Phill is excited to announce his recent engagement to Irene. They are planning to marry in November.**

**The board of Australia Bringing Hope wishes them all the very best for their future together.**



## Drought in East Africa

Written by Pastor Fred Mwanje,  
Gidcco Ministry.

Edited by Katherine White.

We believe that as you continue keeping abreast with our activities and get to know who we are, you will surely be uplifted and blessed by what God is doing in our lives. God has rescued us from a life of hopelessness and agony and brought us into a life of hope and happiness. He has a good plan for us (Jeremiah 29:11) and hope you can be part of it.

The Mission of Gidcco Ministry in Uganda is to preach the Gospel, plant churches and schools, empower communities socially, economically and through education, and sensitize about the HIV/AIDS pandemic that continues its deadly foray in the villages.

As drought spreads throughout East Africa, more than three million Ugandans are at risk of starvation. According to recent information the famine is the result of spectacular climate change in the region. Massive floods in 2007 ruined crops and eroded fields throughout northern, eastern and central Uganda. The current drought has worsened the food shortage and led to the current crisis. Hunger has claimed the lives of more than 40 people in the northern, eastern and central parts of the country due to the "food shortage". The famine in Teso, Eastern Uganda, has claimed about 35 lives, and has taken many of us by surprise.

Karamoja, North-Eastern Uganda, is one of the areas worst hit by the famine. There have been reports of massive numbers of deaths as a result of the famine.

Its been a dry rainy season in East Africa. Last week, 35 people died of hunger in Northern Uganda.



Children in schools have no food and are hungry. You know how hard it is to study without food.

We request supporters to help Gidcco ministry ([www.gidcco.co.nr](http://www.gidcco.co.nr)) so that we can rescue the lives of people in Uganda.

Pastor Ibana and Sister Beatrice from our church have been the first missionaries to visit the village of Mases. The village, located at the extreme north end of the Jinja district is home to about 3000 inhabitants of the Basoga tribe. These people barely have anything in the way of worldly possessions; no electricity, no running water, no tarmacked roads, no shoes, but the missionaries saw that they are people full of hope and love. God bless their hearts.

We have had many hospitalisations of our members and a lot of sickness, that has stretched our resources to the limit. Special thanks go to our partners who provide funds that make it possible for us to treat the sick and reach out to those with different problems.

## Australia Bringing Hope: Recent Movements

We have been asked a number of times recently how to donate to Australia Bringing Hope. Donations can be made with cash or by cheque payable to Australia Bringing Hope Inc. Another option is to go to our website [www.abhinc.org.au](http://www.abhinc.org.au) and go to the 'our community' link.

A great regular donation is to donate to a particular cause. For example, donating to the regular maintenance of the medical clinic vehicle or donating the wage of a teacher in the vocational school.

Over the last few weeks ABH has begun getting out and about throughout South Australia to promote our organisation. We also have a number of presentations booked over the next few months to a range of different groups. Please contact



Belinda and Katherine with Wally Young

us if you are interested in having ABH attend your next group meeting or function.

Board members, Dean Schunke and Belinda Webb visited Jamestown on August 18. They spoke to the Uniting Church Women's Fellowship. Women from the surrounding region also attended the afternoon in Jamestown.

The following week Belinda Webb and Katherine White were invited by West Torrens Rotary Club member, Wally Young, to attend their Rotary Club meeting at the Mile End Hotel. Wally was involved with Phill in sending the container to Uganda earlier this year. We had an enjoyable evening at our first ever Rotary meeting and greatly valued the Rotary club's hospitality. We look forward to building on the relationships formed during this evening.

We were invited to share with the young people from Junior Youth at their tree planting afternoon in Armagh, via Clare, on August 30. They planted 219 trees throughout the afternoon on the property of Ian and Narelle Roberts. Katherine White shared with the young people, aged 10–12 years while standing around a lovely warm bonfire. The young people were incredibly interested in hearing

about the way of life in Uganda for young people their age. So keen to support the young people of Kaihura, the Junior Youth donated the entire amount of their hard earned 50 cents per tree to ABH. What an inspiration these young people are! The amount that they donated is the equivalent to an average person's wages for four to six weeks in Uganda.



Some of the young people from Junior Youth with Lutheran Pastor Linards Jansens, Greg Tolke and Katherine's husband, Christian and son, Matthew.

# The HIV / AIDS Epidemic

Article written by Katherine White

Since returning from a two week visit to Uganda in April, I have been keen to increase my knowledge and understanding of HIV / AIDS. I'm writing this article to share some of the information I've accessed as a general overview for those who may be also interested in knowing more about this subject.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus, otherwise known as HIV is a virus that can lead to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, known as AIDS. HIV is a progressive disease that attacks a person's immune system, and kills off healthy immune cells. Once a person has reached a certain level of deterioration it is then considered that they have AIDS.

The statistics estimate that at the end of 2007 there were 22 million adults and children with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa, and an estimated 1.5 million Africans had died from AIDS.

However, HIV / AIDS isn't just an African disease. By the end of 2007, when the last statistics were collected, there were 33 million people infected with HIV worldwide. There have been 25 million deaths worldwide from AIDS related causes, the equivalent to Australia's population. Since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic in the early 1980s until 2007, Australia has recorded 6,767 deaths, and at the end of 2007 there were over 16,000 people in Australia living with HIV.

It's easy to get complacent about this issue and to forget about the devastating consequences that HIV / AIDS continues to have. HIV / AIDS is still very much an issue, and one that isn't going to go away any time soon. The statistics tell us that there are 6800 new infections of HIV daily, just under half of these are 15–24 year olds, and 5700 deaths every day globally.

In Uganda, UNAIDS statistics estimate that one million people have died of AIDS, and it has significantly decreased the life expectancy. This then takes away from the country's labour force, reduces the agricultural output and food security.

The statistics are incredibly tragic in relation to the children of Uganda—the deaths from AIDS related causes has left over a million children orphaned. Women represent 59% of those affected with HIV / AIDS in Uganda, and young women are nine times more likely to contract HIV than young men. It is believed that this is due to women marrying earlier than males and becoming

sexually active at a younger age, and that often their partners are older and more sexually experienced. Approximately 25,000 infants are infected with HIV through mother-to-child transmission in pregnancy.

Obviously the statistics are horrific. There are some positives in relation to treatment, namely antiretroviral therapy. This therapy treats retroviral infections like HIV with drugs. The drugs do not cure the virus however they do slow down the growth of the virus enabling the infected person to stay healthier longer.

The Ugandan government have previously run prevention campaigns: abstain, be faithful and use condoms. It's my understanding that there are campaigns like this continuing today.

Despite the excellent progress made in antiretroviral therapy, prevention campaigns, and voluntary counselling and testing we cannot assume that this is an issue of the past. UNAIDS report that for every 2 people who begin antiretroviral drugs another 5 become newly infected. The AVERT website reports that only 32% of those affected in Eastern and Southern Africa have access to antiretroviral treatment.

I believe that there is hope. ABH partners with Bringing Hope to the Family (BHF) who support around 2800 orphans (this number continues to grow). Faith Kunihura, BHF Director, estimates that about 260 of these children are HIV positive. Without organisations like BHF and Gidcco Ministry these children wouldn't have access to what is essentially life saving medical treatment. Phill tells me that 38% of primary school aged children don't attend school. Without the support of organizations such as these, children wouldn't have access to education where they are able to learn about the AIDS virus and how to keep themselves safe from this virus.

Despite what can seem a hopeless situation, we *can* make a difference. Supporting ABH enables us to continuously work to support those affected by HIV / AIDS. A Ugandan journalist is quoted as saying that "if someone tells you they haven't been affected by HIV / AIDS they're lying."

*I have endeavored to provide accurate information by using credible sources. I apologize if any of the information provided is incorrect.*



## Australia Bringing Hope Board

Australia Bringing Hope is a Christian organisation based in the Mid North of South Australia run by a small board of volunteers.

**Phill Grigg** was a bee keeper in the Clare Valley. He volunteered in Uganda twice before moving to Kaihura in January this year and plans to live there permanently. He has two daughters and is newly engaged to Irene.

**Mark and Colleen White** have been married for 29 years. They have two children and four grandchildren. They are the pastors of Clare Valley New Life Church. Mark is also a part time postie in Clare, and has recently started a life coaching business called 'Gain Life Coaching.' Colleen is a qualified counsellor and family therapist and works from her home office. She is also the chaplain with Mid North Christian College in Port Pirie and the counsellor at Horizon Christian School.

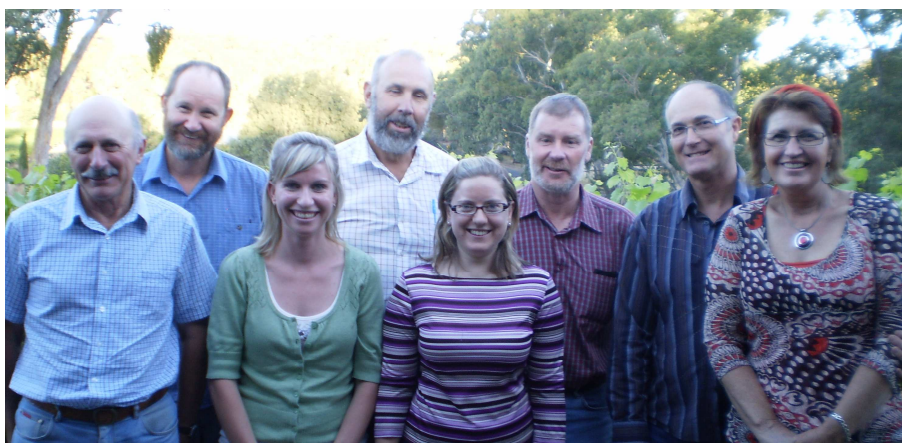
**Belinda Webb** has been living in Clare since 2006, and works as a physiotherapist at Lower North Health. Belinda and Katherine travelled to Uganda in March 2009.

**Dean Schunke** travelled to Uganda in July 2007 with a small team, including Phill for four weeks. One of the main tasks they completed was making window frames for the vocational school and general maintenance. Dean is a farmer at Manoora.

**John Bartholomaeus** is married to Raelene and they have two daughters, Shelley and Megan, and two grandchildren. John is a farmer at Hill River and they also run a small party hire business.

**Graham Jenkin** is a farmer in Kybunga growing wheat, barley, field peas and sheep. He is married to Kathy and has two daughters, Michelle and Hadassah. Graham is very involved in the local community working with a number of different programs including the Clare Valley Christian Outreach Mental Health Program and Clare Valley Christian Financial Services.

**Katherine White** lives in Blyth with her husband, Christian, and two young children, Matthew and Sorayah. Katherine is a social worker with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.



ABH Board: Dean, Graham, Katherine, John, Belinda, Phill, Mark and Colleen

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