



November 2020 Newsletter

Prayer | Margery Hobbs Tribute | Mary Wanendeya's Letter

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds
are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.*

**Howard Thurman
1899-1981**





Over 25 years of Australians supporting children at Bushikori in Uganda

About us

Editor: Esther Cohen | Graphic support: Alysha Lowndes

The Bushikori Christian Centre is located in a rural village near Mbale, Uganda, East Africa. The centre is not an orphanage but a registered Non-Government Organisation (NGO).

Bushikori is a child sponsorship program, empowering children in poverty to be educated, growing up to become an agent of change in their own community. Care is taken that the sponsored children live with suitable guardians.

Bushikori is now directed by Anne Wandendeya, wife of the founder and late Pastor Sam Wandendeya. The main source of financial help comes from generous sponsors and supporters in Australia, facilitated by the Australian Support Committee, a Christian group of volunteers based in Geelong, Victoria.

Committee members are volunteers of all ages and denominations. We facilitate donations for child sponsorship, the Bushikori Health Centre, Joshua Primary School, the centre fund supporting the day to day running costs and special projects in Uganda. One hundred percent of specified donations are transferred to Bushikori Uganda.

Bushikori Christian Centre Orphan Support (Aust.) is registered with Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission.

Find us

Please advise our committee if you prefer to receive this newsletter by email or download from www.bushikori.org.au

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We would like to thank:

- Stephen Davey at Pagination for hosting our website.
- Christian College, Highton, for photocopying the newsletter.

Spreading the News

We would be delighted to provide information and a speaker for any churches, small groups and schools who are interested in receiving updates or would like to find out more about our mission and child sponsorship in Uganda.

Contact: president@bushikori.org.au

Prayer

Advent means 'coming' and in our Christian faith it is a time to reflect and prepare for the coming of Jesus. So, please take a moment to pray with us as we join in prayer for Bushikori and our world.

Daily Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus, Master of both the light and the darkness send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who have so much to do and seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day. We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us. Amen

... The week beginning Sunday 29th November

Hope: Let us pray for Hope in our God. Giving thanks for sponsorship and the gift of hope that education provides. We give thanks that as 2020 draws to a close and as Christmas nears that our hope and confidence can be reassured by the word Immanuel - that is, God is with us. Our God who cares for the world, who knows our every need and who faithfully provides, in Him, we can trust. Romans 12 :12 NIV Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Amen

... The week beginning Sunday 6th December

Peace: We give thanks for the message of peace proclaimed at the very first

Christmas, "Glory to God in the Highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests". Let us pray for the perfect peace of God to free us from the turmoil and chaos that daily surrounds us. We pray for peace among nations, peace in our dwellings and peace in our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

... The week beginning Sunday 13th December

Joy: 'Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.' Philippians 4:4-5 NIV. Let us remember and give thanks for the good news of Jesus' birth that has the power to bring us great joy at this Christmas season. We pray for this gift of joy to be made known to all who seek you and all who call on you. Amen

... The week beginning Sunday 20th December

Love: God of love, Your Son Jesus is your greatest gift to us. He is a sign of your love, help us walk in that love as we wait and prepare for his coming. Amen



Margery Hobbs Tribute

Foundation member and patron of the Bushikori Australian Support Committee



Margery fundraising for Bushikori



Hello everyone,

It's wonderful to be here and thank you for the privilege to speak at Margery's funeral.

I'd like to begin with offering condolences to all of you, Margery's family on behalf of the Bushikori committee here in Geelong.

I know that for you here Margery has been mother, sister, grandma and family. But to so many others she has been Mama Margery to all at Bushikori in Uganda, and for us she has been our patron, founder of Bushikori Australia, and a much loved and respected friend. In fact her name is synonymous with Bushikori for a lot of people in Geelong! Not just Bushikori but with the late Sam Wandendeya as well. I will explain in a moment.

I first met Margery and her husband Rex when he was a patient with us on the hospice program in Geelong. On arrival Rex and Margery asked me, presumably because of my accent, where I was from. So I replied, East Africa. Well, the excitement, out came the maps and their story of the safari to Kenya and Uganda in 1989 and the miracles, and wonderful experiences they had. The friendship was sealed.

It is worth remembering that their trip to Africa took place just a few years after Idi Amin, dictator of Uganda had been toppled, the country was in disarray, there were police and army all over the place, roadblocks aplenty and this middle aged Aussie couple travelled on a bus from Nairobi to Mbale with Sam Wandendeya, a man they met at a Christian hostel in Nairobi. That was miracle number one. They had been told to take little baggage but had suitcases full of things for the Ugandans they expected to meet. And they came home safely!

Sam Wandendeya, the founder of the Bushikori Christian Centre situated just outside Mbale, was a

wonderful man of God, pastor, evangelist, husband to Anne and father to their children, Samson, Grace, David, Mary and Mathew. I need to keep this short but you can read these stories on our website. In 1994 after meeting Margery and Rex, Sam came to Geelong seeking support for his mission.

He was called to this mission after God spared him from assassination at the hands of Idi Amin's troops in 1979. Several Christians from Mbale including the bishop were taken prisoner (because they were Christians) to Jinja, a town near Kampala. They were in a cell and Sam felt the Lord telling him to get behind the door, he did so and the door flew open and all were machine gunned except for Sam. He managed to escape. He fasted and prayed, and believed that God was calling him to look after widows and orphans, there were plenty of people fitting this category at that time in Uganda where so many died. The rest is history.

Sam and Margery in Geelong, visited so many churches, the Lord opened the doors to them as in the beginning she did not know what to do or where to go. Sam told the story of his calling to congregations and schools, never asking for money but preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ with Margery beside him all the way. Daryl (Margery's son) tells the story that Sam arrived at the airport with one set of spare, summer clothing and nothing else! The community remedied that, plenty of warm clothes, a parka that he wore going to the snow with Margery, and her daughter Jill, Peter and family.

After Sam's visit he returned back to Uganda and the fledgling committee was born with committed people who had heard the story and wanted to help. This is the Gospel according to Bushikori that Margery shared for the rest of her life, with anyone who would listen.

I remember a trip on Corio bay on the Alma Doepel with Margery, she was sitting in the sun next to a



James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...

stranger chatting, next thing, she had made a new friend and received a donation. She never asked for money, and somehow she never seemed to offend anyone. For Margery, love and care and passion for Bushikori just oozed out of her. There are so many examples, I am sure you can think of plenty too.

In the early days Margery and I visited so many churches with our story, using an overhead projector (do you know what that is?) to show pictures to illustrate as we shared with people this Ugandan story, and the amazing opportunity to support poor kids in Uganda who needed an education but couldn't afford to go. Sam always stressed that just handing out charity was not the answer. Education is the way out of poverty, at that time even though primary school was supposedly free, the students had to have uniforms and books, pencils otherwise they were just sent home, and there were up to 60 in a class.

Here we are in 2020, what a legacy, Sam who died in 1998 and beautiful Margery who died last week, Monday 26th October. Hundreds of students in Uganda have been educated all the way from primary to tertiary education and now employed, with a future, with families, and many more coming through with thanks to God's plan, Sam's vision, and Margery's undying commitment to Bushikori.

The Centre is a thriving, vibrant place, with a school, level two hospital, great buildings and gardens thanks to support from people here in Victoria and further afield.

This may sound like a promo for Bushikori but that is

not the intention, I just wanted to let you all know what Margery has meant to me as a friend and sister in Christ, and to so many, to speak of her love for us all, and those in Uganda, a love reciprocated for sure. I am sad at her passing, but filled with joy at her life and our friendship, such a blessing. For me, a saint has gone to be with her Maker.

May God bless all of you as you adjust to life without her physical presence, but her legacy and love will be with you and us forever. Thankyou.

Pamela Ferrar

Sponsorship Coordinator

Chairman Thomas Odoi from Uganda writes...

Mama Margery is gone but will forever be in our hearts. Life is eternal, and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon; and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight. We look forward to a time when the words spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ in John 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live." Let the memory of her love and labour be a source of comfort to the family and to all those whose lives she touched.



Margery opening a new building at BCC



Left to Right: Anne, Margery and David

Sponsorship Opportunities

Aquila Waiswa

Aquila is 15 years and has a twin sister Priscilla Nakato. They are both in Secondary Four this year. Aquila is at Jinja College which is near Lake Victoria in Uganda. Aquila and Priscilla only have their father and he has no reliable source of income.



Priscilla Nakato

Priscilla is 15 years old and has a twin brother Aquila Waiswa. Priscilla is in Secondary Four at Wakisa Christian School. Priscilla and Aquila only have their father and he has no reliable source of income.



Eunice Awayo

Eunice is 13 years old and has been in Primary Seven during this challenging year. If her grades are sufficient and she passes the Primary Seven Leaving Exams, Eunice will go to Secondary School in 2021. Eunice lives in Tororo and attends Rock View Primary School. Due to neglect by her parents Eunice's aunt adopted her.



Esau Mukhwana

Esau is 16 years old and in Primary Six this year at Joshua Primary School. Both his parents are alive but Esau's father has mental health issues. Esau is the youngest of four and has been cared for by his aunt for most of his life. During COVID-19 restrictions this year, Esau is at home reading his books because he wants to be ready for Primary Seven next year.



Eriya Mukhwana

Eriya is 17 years old and in Secondary I this year. He only has his mother and she has no source of income.



Want to learn more about sponsorship?

Contact: sponsorship@bushikori.org.au

Disruption of mail services

Letters sent by sponsors to Bushikori Uganda are being returned to our PO Box in Geelong as it seems the mail is not leaving Australia. To ensure letters are received by your sponsored children during this mail service disruption, our committee will scan and email them to BCC. Please remember to use our address (PO Box 42, Geelong) as the return sender address rather than your own.



A bulding at Joshua Primary School

Fundraising



Christmas gifts to students

Christmas Fund

In past years, just before Christmas, the Child Care Department at Bushikori gather students and their guardians for a day of fellowship and care where students receive gifts of items such as rice, cooking oil, sugar, salt, wheat flour and Vaseline. This year, however, gifts will be given in smaller socially distanced gatherings or distributed by our Bushikori Social Workers. We anticipate the welfare needs to be much greater this Christmas due to the coronavirus pandemic and have been humbled by the outpouring of financial gifts for the Christmas Fund. On behalf of all receiving joy and hope, *thankyou!*

Coffee Fundraiser

Thank you for supporting the Coffee Fundraiser which raised \$5091 which helps Ugandan Youth receive education through the Richard Stone Memorial Foundation. Your support has enabled Geoffrey to become a teacher, Lavern to become a nurse, and Aaron to become a pharmacist. *Thank you* Belmont Uniting Church Mission Committee for developing and organising this wonderful fundraiser.



Drive through donations

Christmas Cards for Sale

We have christmas cards for sale in packets of five for \$5. Each contains a bible verse and warm christmas wishes inside. The photo is of a nativity hut built by Grace Wandendeya at Bushikori.



Christmas Blessings

Edmonds Honey for Sale

We have Edmonds Honey for sale, with profits going towards Bushikori Christian Centre. Edmonds Honey is 100% locally produced, without using chemicals. See our website for purchase locations. www.bushikori.org.au Or for contactless delivery in the Geelong region, call Esther Cohen on +61 439 388 856



This period of COVID-19 isolation has limited our fundraising activities. Our support committee and friends of Bushikori fundraising group welcome suggestions and offers of help as to how we can be creative in this area.

LETTER FROM

Mary Wanendeya

Hello Geelong!

I am Mary Wanendeya, 32 years of age. I hold a university degree in Social Work and Social Administration. I am the third child of a family of five. I live in Mbale, Uganda. I have eight years of work experience as a social worker with the Bushikori Christian Centre Child Care Department (CCD) and I also manage the drug and property stores at Bushikori Christian Medical Centre (BCHC).

My passion started years ago...

I am passionate about the social wellbeing of the vulnerable groups in our communities, which include vulnerable women, children and people affected with HIV/AIDs and malnutrition. My passion started years ago given that I grew up in a family where my parents worked with marginalized communities. Their work and the transformation it could potentially bring was a key motivation for me to be a part of the team.

The impact of sponsorship brings transformation.

Most of the activities involve working with the sponsored children, widows and the community to ensure that beyond the financial sponsorship, the social welfare, spiritual development and the health of the children is met. I engage with the children and help them through the daily issues of life so to help them recognize and maximize their potential. This involves constantly giving feedback to the Uganda and Australia support offices to ensure the best possible outcomes.

The impact of sponsorship brings transformation and much needed change for each child's future. It is worth the effort of those who trust God, to start and build a sustaining and life changing relationship with the little children. Over the years, our greatest success is when the children make it through school and they have a skill or are a professional. As they write a final letter to the sponsor- they are ready for life!

You have to trust God all the way.

The biggest challenge in my work is interacting with the multi-faceted issues in the lives of the sponsored children especially the teens and trusting God to create lasting positive impact. You have to trust God all the way.

My future plan is to study more about social work to become an advocate for children and families. I am grateful to God for the opportunity to serve with Bushikori, to minister restoration and healing to the hundreds of children that God brings to us. Through this, I have gained more skills to make my community a better place. We wouldn't be able to do it without the faithful partners of Bushikori.

Welle assimiwe (Praise the Lord),



Mary Wanendeya

BCC Social Worker

Lucy Stone Interview

Interviewer: Pamela Ferrar

History

Here is an interview with a Bushikori Australian Support Committee (ASC) member, Lucy Stone. By the grace of God, the Bushikori ASC has supported BCC Uganda since 1994 after Sam Wandendeya visited with Margery Hobbs. This history is available to read on our website.



How long have you been a member of ASC?

I joined in 2006, after my husband Richard passed away. I just "turned up" at the meetings, more or less uninvited!

What was your incentive to join?

Richard (past treasurer of the committee) was very dedicated to the ideals of Bushikori, especially with regards to education, and I wanted to carry on that interest. As many meetings had been in our home I already had a good knowledge of what Bushikori did. We are so blessed here in Australia and I wanted to help in some small way to alleviate the poverty in Uganda and in particular at Bushikori. On one of her visits to Australia, Anne Wandendeya stayed with us for a few days. I found her to be so inspirational regarding her work for the needy in her area and her love of God. I wanted to support her efforts.

Can you tell me what being on the Committee means to you?

Working with a group of Christian people with the same ideals is rewarding in so many ways. We pray together and ask for guidance in our decision making. There is a bond of friendship and a sense of satisfaction when another child is sponsored, or an improvement is made at the school or medical clinic.

What does being on the Committee entail?

Meetings are held monthly at various member's homes. The sponsoring of children is a vital part of the Committee's work, and keeping sponsors informed about their sponsored child. I started up a *Friends of*

Bushikori group whose main aims are to raise funds for Bushikori and to increase awareness of the work that is carried out there. During the coronavirus pandemic, the Committee meetings have been held on Zoom and *Friends of Bushikori* have been unable to meet since March.

Can you tell us a bit about your first visit to Bushikori Christian Centre?

That was an amazing adventure! Together with Marg Ryan I experienced at firsthand what it was like in a third world country. I was fortunate to be able to bring an extra suitcase which was filled with children's books, coloured pencils, some bibles, and gifts from sponsors for their child. The 'roads' once you left the cities, were really only goat tracks with huge potholes. The Bushikori Christian Centre is only about 12 kilometres from Mbale where we stayed at Anne's home. It seemed very remote, possibly because the drive to the centre took so long on an extremely busy dirt road, full of potholes, vehicles of all kinds, trucks, cars, buses, cyclists, motor bikes, goats and cattle as well as pedestrians. Anne organized a tour of the clinic, and there, sitting at a desk was a young man in a white coat. 'Mumma Lucy', he cried. It was Isaac, my first sponsored child, now grown up and working at the clinic. He hugged me and 'danced' me round in joy. Anne took us on a field trip visiting several families. I had never been exposed to such poverty. I was shocked and deeply moved. To each family we gave rice, oil, soap and flour, but it seemed so inadequate. In spite of their poverty the people seemed to be happy, and had such wonderful beaming smiles.

Has being on the Committee affected your relationship with our Lord, or your faith in any way?

It has made me realize that God's hand is in everything that we achieve.

Can you share with me any of the blessings that may have come your way while you have been part of Bushikori?

I have been amazed many times at the generosity of the community when running a fundraising function. Also the huge amount of time and effort, so freely given, that Committee office bearers spend in keeping the organization running smoothly, all in the name of the Lord. They do a fantastic job and I feel honoured to be on the Committee with them. Finally, through God's Grace, it has been a joy and privilege to be able to sponsor children and know that you are making their life just a little better.

Thank you Lucy!

Bunk Beds Donation

Gifted by Bloom Women's Conference

Background

The growth of Joshua Primary School (JPS) is greatly attributed to the Christian environment under which the school operates. The growth has come with numerous challenges, from a 40 classroom capacity under a mango tree at reception to a fully registered and licensed primary school with over 800 pupils enrolled in 2020. One of the key success factors of JPS is its ability to increase the number of children enrolled in boarding. Boarding offers opportunity for the children to concentrate on studies because many time constraints at home do not permit the children to study after school. Other socio-economic hardships increase absenteeism hence lost study time for the children commuting from home. Thus, the parents and teachers have been promoting the establishment and operation of the boarding section.

Today JPS has a hostel facility to accommodate up to 300 students however, the bed capacity is insufficient. At the beginning of term one, February 2020, we had a bed deficit of 163. Bushikori Christian Centre (BCC) prepared a prayer request for a donation of beds to fill the gaps to the Australia Support Committee (ASC). This prayer was answered through support mobilized after a presentation by Esther Cohen to the Bloom Women's Conference (Justice Cause) on October 19, 2019. In this Interview with Danielle Leal the background of BCC Uganda was presented and the need for 50 bunk beds for the girl's hostel was presented.

A donation of \$7244 (Ugx 17,924,228) from 400 Australian women was received towards provision of 50 bunk beds which will cater for 100 students.

Support Use

This project brought together different people to ensure good closure. Two BCC staff were fulltime assigned to the project these included the Headteacher of Joshua Primary School as well as the Estates manager. Other staff who participated at various capacity is the Human Resources officer and Accounts team.

Although implementation of this project was disrupted by the COVID 19 lockdown, we were able to complete it when some activities were eased.

Activities included:

1. Identifying local artisans to fabricate the beds
2. Identifying suppliers of materials
3. Fabrication of beds
4. Monitoring of fabrication activities to ensure quality work
5. Transporters of finished beds

We are glad to report that this project benefitted three artisans, two retailers of materials, and one transporter. We have had all the 50 beds delivered and placed in the hostels awaiting the schools to reopen for use.



Bunk beds in the hostel



Esther at Bloom Women's Conference



Bunk beds



Robert Wabomba Headteacher
Joshua Primary School (JPS)

COMMUTING FROM HOME IS NEVER EASY ESPECIALLY FOR GIRLS

'I wish to pass my appreciation to One Hope Church for the gift of beds to the school. The beds came at a time when there was much need. At Joshua Primary School we aim to have all sponsored children accommodated in the hostels, especially those sponsored. Commuting from home is never easy especially for girls and the young children. However, this was hampered by inadequate facilities like beds and hostel space, thanks to the One Hope Church for this timely gift. Students residing in the hostels are offered a Christian living environment, good food, psychosocial support as well as safety. This collectively results to better academic performance for children in hostels as compared to those that commute to school from home. I on behalf of the teachers, the children and the parents wish to again convey our sincere thanks to the One Hope Church for this generosity. May Gods blessings be with you always.'



Wamundu John Bosco Hostel
Master Joshua Primary School (JPS)

MOST SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE NOT SECURE IN THEIR HOMES

'I extend my sincere appreciation to One Hope Church for supporting the school with bunk beds. We have faced shortage of beds due to the increasing number of children joining the hostel section. The 100 children will certainly have a better sleeping place when schools resume. Infrastructure is being developed to have more children in the boarding section. We are hopeful to have the boys hostel completed soon. Most school children are insecure in their homes; the hostels therefore offer more than education but also medical and psychosocial support. Children in hostel easily manage school academic assignments hence performing better in class. We shall forever be grateful for the donation of these beds. May the Lord Bless all the hands that contributed.'



Workers for Bigumire Richard
owner of Abbas Metal Crafts Ltd.

IT WAS SUCH A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO BE IDENTIFIED DURING SUCH A DIFFICULT TIME

'I am so delighted to have benefited from supply of materials and fabrication of beds. First and foremost I was pleased to serve where I reside and trade from. I have a team of artisans who chose to put in more time as this was regarded as a 'home assignment' once again thanks to the donors for this good heart. It was such a great opportunity to be identified during such a difficult time of lock down to transact business with Bushikori Christian Centre. As a shop, we have not made any sales for a long time. Thanks again, we engaged eight young boys in cutting of metal pipes, welding and painting of beds. These boys were paid wages that enabled them to contribute to food supplies in their respective families. This put a smile on the faces of the family members and they will remember how this project helped them put food on table during such a difficult time.'



If undeliverable, please return to:
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