

# Deaf Ministries International

Issue 31 | December 2020

*Taking the Gospel  
to the Deaf*

## A Tribute to Neville Muir Founder, Director, Father, Friend

It's easy to mythologise high achievers. One of the most staggering things about Neville though, was how normal he was. Neville didn't have great wealth or charisma or oratory skills. He didn't have a Ph.D or political power. He wasn't promoted by a ring of influential people. He was just Neville, going out, reaching the lost, loving them, preaching the gospel, and bringing hope and life skills to the Deaf around the world. Neville brought the modest offering of himself, humbly, gently, faithfully, gladly to God, and now, 40 years and many dozens of newsletters later, DMI runs or supports schools and dormitories in eight countries, countless employment projects across three continents and a staggering 180 Deaf churches in 20 countries.

It's hard not to mythologise someone who has achieved so much. I remember when Neville first spoke at our church. He taught about Jesus feeding the 5,000. There was a predicament: 5,000 people without food. There was the disciples' solution: "Send them away." Then there was Jesus' solution: "You give them something".

The disciples' solution made much more sense. Jesus' solution was absurd, up until, referring to the loaves and fish, he uttered five incredible words: "Bring them here

to me". And so Jesus blessed the small offering that the disciples had brought and everyone had plenty to eat. This truth about the size of our offering and the disproportionate size of God's blessing seemed to be central

to Neville's approach to ministry. He was never under the illusion that he ever had more than a little to offer, but whatever he had to offer, he offered; and whatever he brought to God, God multiplied.

One of my favourite photos of Neville is of him sitting and praying with two young men in the Philippines. One is Deaf and the other Deaf-blind. Neville is signing for the Deaf man and simultaneously signing onto the hand of the Deaf-blind man so that they both, personally, would know the love of God.

That was Neville. Not speaking to thousands, but reaching thousands one or two at a time, because those one or two are loved by God and precious to Him.

Andrew Miller  
Australian  
Co-ordinator



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“Way before God called me to join DMI, I met Neville. What struck me was how humble he seemed to be. An international leader and a mission pioneer, so humble ...? When I went on my first mission trip with him ten years ago, I discovered more. Love! I saw how he loved the deaf and how they responded to this love. And I myself felt loved too. When God now has taken Neville home, he is leaving a ministry where he has set a standard for leadership which he must have learned from Jesus: lead people by serving them in a humble and loving way. We love because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19”

*Gunnar Dehli - DMI International Director*

“ Remembering and honouring Neville for all he has done for deaf children and adults; as a teacher, friend and Christian counsellor to hundreds of disadvantaged people around the world. It is a privilege for me to work for DMI.”

*Jenny Reid, Sponsorship Coordinator*

“You are the very reason why I chose to stay at the school and dedicate my life in the deaf ministry for many years (27 years). Through you I ‘ve witnessed how God miraculously work in our school , proving that with Him , all things are possible because of your dedication, hard work and great faith in God!”

*Anabelle- Head of Fisherman of Christ Learning Center, Ligao*

“We from DMI Bicol Deaf Action/ Fishermen of Christ Inc Phils deeply mourning for his departure. We will never forget Sir Neville. We respect him and love him so dearly. No words can express how much we thank and appreciate him for all the things he has done for our Organization. He did his best to support the ministry here in the Philippines specially the deaf people. We treasure all the wonderful memories of his visit when he was alive. To the family of this good man, our prayers and deepest sympathy for your bereavement. You are so lucky for having a godly head of the family. And to us all DMI Family, let us all help one another and support each other.”

*Bing - Director of DMI Ligao*

# A Snapshot of Tibutes From Around the World

“Faith, hope, and love.

Neville brought the Gospel to many deaf people with vast faith and hope. You showed us God’s unconditional love. I will never forget how I witnessed Neville sang wholeheartedly and with full joy, Psalm 118:24: “This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” although DMI was in a hard situation at that time. The experience of the relationship with God that Neville had was really tangible. I am going to miss Neville’s endlessly faith and hope for a bigger blessing. The love you showed continues in us because you were a man close to God and revealed God’s eternal love for us. Thank you so much, Neville.”

*Matthijs Terpstra - DMI Finance Manager (Norway)*

“We first met Neville in 1969 when pastoring Collingwood Church of Christ. He turned up at our evening services with a dozen or more deaf in tow. This started for us an amazing friendship as we supported, prayed for and visited many of the DMI centres. We were inspired by Neville’s passion, patience, endless compassion and constant supply of stories of earthquakes, house fires, boiling toilets etc.Our lives are the richer for knowing him – to us he was God’s ‘Apostle to the Deaf’.

To Lill and the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy and assure them of our continued prayer and support.”

*Barry & Anne Cutchie. - Australia*

“He was an inspiration to all of us.When I was 19 years old I met Neville for first time at his parent’s house in Ivanhoe for Deaf Christian Fellowship in August 1968 until he left for Japan. We were writing together. But 5 years later in 1974 I was falling away from the Lord for 16 years. I felt like I was in a deep pit, trapped faraway from the Lord until in 1991 I came back confess, forgiveness to the Lord, ( a long

story) Neville heard from me and he was visiting me and were supporting so very surprised to see him. I was crying as happily. We kept writing until his family came home to live here. We were travelled to overseas and churches with him around in Victoria and Sydney too and Lill also sharing and helping together. We were neighbours in Beaconsfield for 12 years. Impossible not forget to him.

I miss him so dearly. Our thoughts of love and praying for the Lord to comfort Lill, Brent, Erik, David and Ian and all wives and all family. With heartfelt deepest sympathy. With God’s blessings”

*Susan Shannon*

“We met 15 years ago, today he went to his friend and Savior Jesus. Neville, your simple heart, your wonderful laugh, and your encouragement, made a good impression in my life and the lives of my wife and even my children.”

*Fadi Alchoufi - DMI Syria*

“My best friend, my spiritual Dad, Neville Muir is gone. For sure he is with you God. Tears in heaven. So do not fears for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

*Joey -China*

“Our beloved friend, mentor and father. You have gone to be with the Lord. You fought well and have won. We will miss your love, listening ear, smile, wisdom, understanding, the way you knew every person by name and personal details, your genuine love for the most vulnerable, your faith and above all your love and enthusiasm to see that the Gospel reaches the deaf souls globally and more specifically Africa. Your love and faith for and in Africa will forever remain with

us. Rest in Peace and see you again in Glory”

*Simon Begumisa - DMI Uganda*

“I met Neville during an International joint convention for the Disciples of Christ and Church of Christ in Nashville, TN. He was at a booth for Deaf Missions. There were 2 other people too. I went to the both and introduced myself. The rest of the convention they interpreted for me. I was there signing for the Gender Rd Christian Church Choir. I appreciated it. A few years later he was back in the US. in Cinn and I drove down in the snow to be there. He was shocked I drove down. The church had 4 missionaries. Neville came down from where the 4 were sitting and interpreted the service for me until time for him to do the sermon. I will always remember him. He traveled all over the world sharing the Good News to the Deaf. Now he is rejoicing in heaven!”

*Martha Lynn Wilson - USA*

“Rich rewards await him in heaven for his wonderful service among the deaf. I am glad I crossed his path at a conference in Switzerland years back. I was blessed to know him more intimately during his visits to South Africa. Our prayers go for the families, his devoted wife Lil.”

*William Warmington*

“Neville were introduced to me by my late Husband who had been a student at VSDC. As I seen him at DCF and other church and got to know him each time. Then when DMI were formed and I attend 2008 Egypt conference. Bit by bit I was inspired by his work and his knowledge of Korean Sign Languages. He is a mountain of a Man who faithfully serve and committed to the

Lord when he made that promise since he was a little boy. And kept this promise from that day onward. We are sorry to see you go and knew your time was up, you fought that long and hard battle. You have been an inspiration to us all around the Globe. Your example shone on us. We all are in this as ONE and must work together to continue DMI. And praying that the new leader and helpers will continue to grow. My Sympathy to Lil and four sons and extended families. You won’t be forgotten.”

*Linda Beasley - United Kingdom.*

“We started Deaf Missionary in 1996 because we were challenged by Neville and He encouraged us to reach more Deaf people in other country.

Thank God for his gift of communication with Deaf people on different language and International Sign Language in different country which leads us to do this because of his example.”

*Raymond and Rita Abernethy - Northern Ireland*

“I too had the honor of walking with Neville in many countries and missions. We too laughed, prayed and worked. It was an honor. I will miss him. We had a standing joke about whoever got to the meeting or event first to save. A seat for the other. So, Neville, save me a seat! See you later my friend. Praying for all his family.”

*Debbie Kahn - His Sign and Deaf Child Hope*

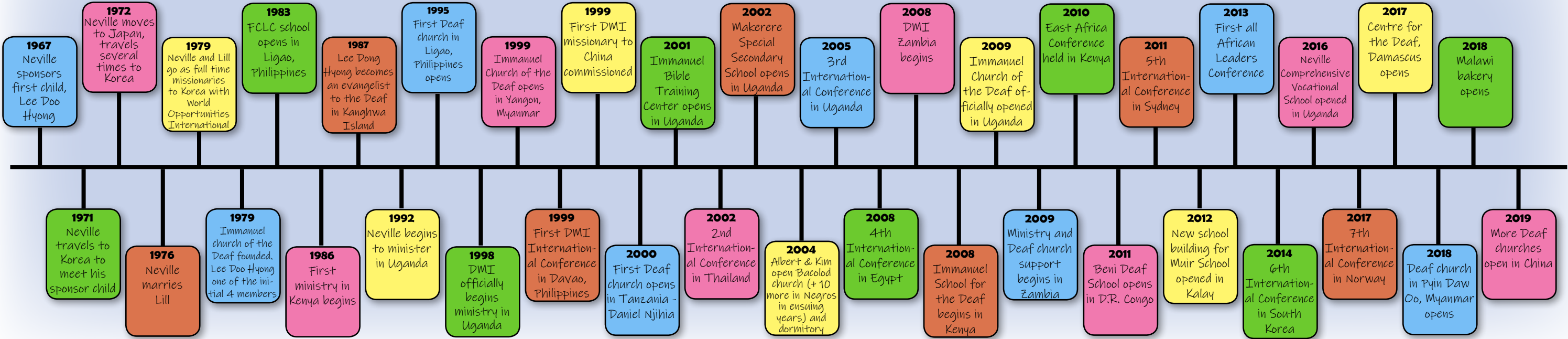
Neville rescued me from homelessness when I was living in Korea in 1983. I lived in a room at the back of the Incheon Church for several months. Neville, Lille and their family were a breath of fresh air for me. I echo what Andrew has said: Neville had a great sense of humour. He could always make me laugh. He was incredibly generous. He took the Gospel to the ends of the Earth. I can hear Jesus say to Neville: “Well done, good and faithful servant. Come into the kingdom prepared for you.”

*John Lachlan Dodwell*



## Brief Timeline of Neville’s Ministry

This is just a very breif timeline of Neville’s ministry. There are many more church openings, school openings, baptisms, small business programs, disaster relief projects, mission trips and speaking engagements we could add. We would need a whole book to include everything. This is just to give you a glimpse of all the things the Neville and Lill achieved, by God’s enabling, during their time in ministry.





# The work of DMI continues

## What now?

Many people are asking what happens to DMI now that Neville is gone. Well, we've known for some time that this day would come and we have prepared for it as best as we can. There's simply no replacing Neville - the man was irreplaceable! But we do have a team in place to carry on his work and to carry his vision. We are keen, capable and committed to the task!

Let me introduce the Australian team here. Next year in each of our newsletters, we will present to you in more detail the various teams and boards that serve around the world, starting with Gunnar Delhi, who is the new International Director and the Head of DMI.

For now, let's take a brief look at the team in the International office in Australia:



**Andrew Miller**  
National  
Co-ordinator

National Co-ordinator and director on the Australian Board. Andrew is the new 'face' of DMI Australia and oversees our schools and churches in Asia.



**Rod Chapman**  
Regional Minister  
of Pastoral Care

Rod chairs the Australian Board and has a pastoral role amongst the Deaf community in Australia and amongst our schools and churches in Asia.



**Susi Tjhai**  
Finance &  
Sponsorship  
Assistant

That's the title but Susi is really our CFO in disguise and keeps all the funding going exactly where it needs to go.



**Jenny Reid**  
Sponsorship  
Co-ordinator

Jenny diligently oversees our whole child sponsorship program.



**Amy Jack**  
Communications  
Co-ordinator

Amy is responsible for making our newsletters look so great - and coming out on time! She also keeps all our social media purring.

We are all devoted Christian servants who believe wholeheartedly in DMI's mission, work tirelessly to see it realised, and enjoy seeing Neville's vision honoured and Christ glorified. With your continued support, the work of DMI continues!

## Praise and Prayer

We praise and celebrate the life of Neville. That he answered your called all those years ago, and by doing that, You used him to do great things! We pray for Lill and the family, that you'll give them comfort and peace as they learn to do life without the man they loved so dearly. Thank you that we know without a doubt that Neville is now with You, free of all pain and sickness, singing You praises at the top of his lungs! We pray for the ongoing work of DMI. That even though Neville is gone, the ministry he started will continue to grow and the Deaf will continue to be reached, learning what it is to be loved by You.



*Neville & Lill Muir*  
DMI Founders



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Australia

Ph: 03 5940 5431

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