



USA Edition | November 2021

# One Year On...

This month, we remember that it is one year since Neville Muir, the founder of Deaf Ministries International, passed away on November 12th, 2020. We continue to miss him in SO many ways! However the legacy he has left for deaf adults and the school children will continue. He loved visiting the schools, and every child was special to him. The schools all held Memorial Services for him; and we all send our condolences to Lill and his family who are in our thoughts at this sad time.



*Memorial Service, Beni D.R.Congo*



*Memorial Service Ligao, Philippines*

## Muir Family Update

Thank you to all our supporters who have expressed love and concern for Lill and Ian over the last twelve months. We want to bring you an update, to let you know how they are both going.

Lill has faced the last year with incredible resilience and faith. There have been many sad moments, as she grieves for Neville, but she has kept on going, and has found many things to be joyful about despite the sadness. The last months have been hard, with lockdown in Melbourne preventing her doing her normal social activities. However, she makes time each day for playing the piano, going for walks, and joining an online Bible study which her church runs each afternoon. Lill has maintained a connection with DMI, helping on newsletter days and sitting in on board meetings—she has become quite proficient at figuring out how to get on Zoom! Ian has found adjusting to life without his Papa very tough, but there are many things to praise God for as well. Ian now has one day off work a week to have a “play day” with his support worker, which has made the other four days of work much more manage-



able for him. Even during lockdown, he has been allowed to go out with his support worker, even if it is only for a takeaway lunch and a walk in the park. He video calls family members each day, check-

ing in on how everyone is doing and proudly showing off the food he has cooked twice a week with a support worker. Neville would be thrilled to see how far Ian has come in his communication this year—needing to reach out to ask for support when he is struggling, looking after Lill, and working with his speech therapist and psychologist, have all led to him coming out of his shell and becoming much more comfortable with communication. Ian is hanging out for

lockdown to end so that he can have his brothers over for a movie night, and take the family out for lunch at his favourite café. Please continue to pray for Lill and Ian, and for the rest of the family as they support them and help them.



## Thank You Sponsors and Supporters

These past 2 years of COVID-19 have been a very difficult time for our deaf schools and communities overseas; and a very demanding time for everyone. We know these years have been difficult for you also. But we send a huge thank you to all our Supporters who have made it possible for Deaf Action to continue to provide for the needs of disadvantaged deaf students in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.



I have thoroughly enjoyed my 16 years as Sponsorship Coordinator, but now at 76 I finally need to retire; and I will leave DMI sometime in the first half of 2022. I briefly met Neville when we were young teachers of the deaf in Melbourne many decades ago; so when the Muir family returned to live in Australia I volunteered to assist with raising financial support through sponsorship. I retired from teaching in 2005 and the Australian DMI office started in the Muir home; but we soon needed more space and moved to Pakenham.

It has been a real pleasure for me to work with the dedicated DMI team here in Australia and liaise with other DMI workers around the world. I have also enjoyed making many online friendships with Sponsors and Supporters. It was a joy to

meet people from other countries and at the International Conferences. But visiting the students and teachers in our deaf schools has been the special blessing for me. Deaf Action Sponsorship is in good hands and I welcome Kay as she takes over the responsibility in 2022.

*Jimmy Reid*

**Sponsorship Coordinator**

"I'm really excited to join the Deaf Ministries International and Deaf Action team as the Sponsorship and Administration Assistant. My family and I are long time members of the DMI family. We went to the most recent DMI International Conference held in Norway. My husband David is on the Australian Board. We are both deaf, we have a 5 year old son named Joshua, and recently, welcomed Matthew as a new addition to our family. I look forward to meeting you all in the near future in the office, interstate or in other countries!"



*Kay Van manem*

**Sponsorship and Administration Assistant**

***"We are sorry we have not mailed new sponsorship cards to sponsors; but Melbourne has been in COVID lockdown and we were not allowed to work in the DMI office for many weeks! So we worked online from home, emailing sponsors and supporters, but had no access to printing facilities. We will be able to work in the office to print and mail this newsletter."***

## Food Emergency Campaign

Over the last eighteen months we have sent over \$100,000 to our fields for food emergency relief. As reported in previous newsletters, this has saved hundreds and hundreds of Deaf families from starvation, largely caused by COVID-19. We can't thank you enough for your generous support. More recently, Malawi and Mozambique, two of the poorest countries in Africa, received \$5,000 in food emergency support. Elton, our director in Malawi gives thanks from the bottom of his heart.

In a country when many are living on less than \$1.00 a week, this kind of support goes a long way. It not only sustains our Deaf members and their families but allows us to continue with other projects as well. Our workers in Malawi and Mozambique have been able to continue teaching sign language to the Deaf who'd never had a chance to learn it before. They have also been able to start - and this is very exciting news - a new and successful farming project, thanks to our Self-Sustainability Fund.



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the back cover  
Use "food emergency" as ref.





## Self-Sustainability Fund

It's great to provide food relief. It's better to provide a self-sustainability program. Last year we started our Self-Sustainability Fund for this very purpose. This fund helps build projects and develop facilities that enable our field staff, students and communities to become more self-sufficient. Through this fund, the Deaf in our fields are learning to care for themselves and each other, can move away from a welfare culture and mentality, and build value and dignity within themselves.

Paypal or Credit Card or  
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Bank Transfer details also are  
available on the back cover  
Use "self-sustainability" as ref.

## MYANMAR - Muir School, Kalay



Pa Lian, our leader in Myanmar sent this news a couple of months ago. 'Myanmar continues to struggle with this devastating epidemic.

Yangon has 600 to 800 dying each day and hospitals are not accepting COVID patients!

Thankfully the COVID situation in Kalay was not as bad as in Yangon, and has improved even more now. Muir School in Kalay opened for local students who live in Kalay; but when fighting caused by the political unrest moved to the streets near the school it had to close again! So the teachers in Kalay are now going to the homes of students, or a few students

meet in one home; and they are enjoying learning again. We hope the students who live further from the school and need to board at school, will be able to return soon.



## KENYA - Immanuel Christian School for the Deaf

Our Kenyan school convened the first Local Government School Board and the school is now approved as an 'Integrated School.' They will enrol 'disadvantaged and vulnerable' students, including siblings of our deaf students, as day students. Integrated students will have separate classes to learn signing until Grade 3, then all students will attend integrated classes. This is a government initiative towards providing integrated education in Kenya and will encourage our deaf students to develop the skills needed to communicate with



hearing people. The school is connected to the main electricity grid, but when blackouts occur at night time some children have hurt themselves because they could not see to walk around. So everyone is very thankful for the purchase of solar panels and a battery that will automatically provide electricity for lighting at night time; or whenever the main power fails.

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The Isolation Rooms are now finished with a tiled patio and brightly painted veranda posts; and the school van has been



painted bright yellow to comply with new government safety rules for school transport.

This school was only closed for a few weeks twice this year which partly coincided with holidays; so the students have been able to complete the full curriculum. The Grade 8 students sat for the Kenyan Certificate of Primary Education government exams and achieved very high results again this year.





## KENYA - Higher School Education

There are approximately eleven ex-students from I.C.S.D now attending Kuja High School for the Deaf. It is a boarding school with good facilities, and the students study a typical secondary education program including computer and science education. Graduating from Kuja gives students the opportunity to later go to college if they wish to continue studying.



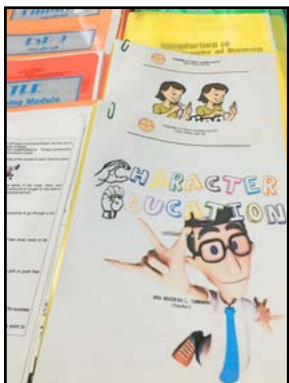
We sincerely thank the sponsors of these students who have now been accepted at high school. If students are fully sponsored for high school they are expected to complete work experience at I.C.S.D. to show their thanks for sponsorship, and sponsorship of these students at high school is greatly

appreciated.

Four other past students from I.C.S.D. are studying at Sikri Vocational and Technical Institute where signing is included and a wide range of agricultural, technical and clothing trade skills are available. The school is well equipped with technical workshops and even has a farm and animals. This school gives students the practical skills that help them find jobs and support themselves. Thank you to their sponsors.



## PHILIPPINES - F.C.L.C. , Ligao



The teachers at Ligao have shown how inventive and flexible they are and worked exceptionally hard to include the full curriculum during the 2020/2021 school year. Parents have become 'home-teachers' and that has encouraged them to learn more signs; and this benefits general communication with their children. It has been a learning situation for them all. COVID regulations prohibited the usual Graduation Ceremony

at the school, but the teachers produced a Virtual Graduation Ceremony online. They are to be commended for all that has been achieved.

The new 2021/2022 school year has started with online learning or printed Work Modules again, and many students have enrolled. The farm workers



have been able to continue their outside work as usual and the farm is going well. The rice crop was harvested in September and the piggery has many new piglets.

## PHILIPPINES - Bacolod Dormitory is now Bacolod Boarding House



The Bacolod Dormitory in the PHILIPPINES stayed open for the 2020/2021 school year. Lockdown travel restrictions forced a few students to stay some weekends but those girls were glad to do so. They are like sisters to each other. Thank you to Supporters in Australia and England who donated the computers they needed. Other Bacolod students who have

internet at home worked online if they could not travel to the dormitory. The dormitory opened again for the new school year and is now described as a 'boarding house' to meet

government requirements. Some students are again working online and 3 students are now residing with Ps Albert and Kim at the 'boarding house' during the school terms.





## D.R. CONGO - Beni School

Beni school in the D.R. CONGO has been open for most of the year with only a few weeks in lockdown. The students enjoy attending school and eating a hot lunch every school day. Beni is in an agricultural area and the curriculum includes general subjects and practical skills that will help the students grow food on their family farms. About a quarter of the students at this school have lost one or both parents in the terrorist fighting over the last decade, and families have been forced to move closer to populated areas to be safe



Alain, the Principal is deaf himself. His hearing has deteriorated greatly since he was young. He completed his education and teaching qualifications and has always had a very caring heart for deaf students. Principal Alain started this school in Beni, where there is police support, and has devoted himself to these deaf children. Some of the students walk one and a half hours to and from school each day.

Alain says, "I first started teaching in rented classrooms far from Beni in peaceful times. There were 150 students and many parents were interested in sending their children to school. In 2013 the government built 4 classrooms where the school is today. In 2014 terrorists started slaughtering the population in neighbouring villages. Then they arrived in Beni, and I only survived because I lived in the centre of the town where there was security. In 2017 Ebola started and

this killed 2,500 people in the area. Orphans were staying with their family members. I even lost 2 deaf and my parents from Ebola. The school is located where many people died of Ebola. Today insecurity continues mixed with COVID."



Alain also saw the need to provide a hot school lunch for the students, and suggested the school start a vegetable garden and later a farm. These projects are now a great success. However,

earlier this year thieves broke into the kitchen by removing boards from the kitchen walls; and stole their food! So a strong brick and concrete storeroom has been built to store the produce from the school garden and farm.



**Above: New storage building**  
**Left: Kitchen break-in**



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## Students in ZAMBIA and UGANDA



**Hastings**

Hastings and Maliza have been attending school for most of the time but there were some weeks of lockdown early in the year. Hastings is now in his final year at school and will sit for the government exam. We expect him to do well because he has achieved good results in the past. Good luck Hastings! Maliza has also progressed in his learning and he is well cared for and happy at his school.



**Alphonsine**

Alphonsine in Rwanda is now waiting to commence her internship for 6 months and she will be supported through with her school fees, food, transport and interpreter. Thank you very much to her sponsors who have loyally supported her through High School and College to achieve this level. We all wish her success.





**Mulangala Mumbere Tsongo Akilimali**

We urgently need sponsors to support the students at Beni School.

See contact details to get in touch with our Sponsorship Coordinator

## UGANDA

I would like to sincerely thank all those who have sponsored the Wakiso Secondary School in Uganda in past years. Those students have now moved on to vocational training, and are studying at Vocational Centres or Colleges. Now we need individual sponsors for some of them.



**Winnie**

**Sylvia, Peter and Winnie** are completing Internships now but COVID 19 has delayed their Graduation ceremonies. They are waiting for Malaika Vocational College to fully re-open. We hope the current lockdown will finish soon. **Jordan and Allan** are studying 'Carpentry and Joining' at the Ugandan National Association for the Deaf Vocational Centre where all teachers sign. **Rachel** is studying 'Garment Design and Tailoring' also at UNAD. **Simon** is learning 'Leather Working' at Ruti Vocational School and Prossy is 'Training on the Job' now.



**Simon**



**Allan**

Congratulations to these students. They are very happy to now learn skills that we expect will give them employment. Our disadvantaged deaf students need an actual vocational course to support themselves as adults. This is the practical aim for all our deaf students. **Yuba, Sam, Kenneth and Brian** completed their Primary exam but COVID has prevented them going on to secondary education because the secondary schools have delayed opening. Solome is still studying at Mulago School for the Deaf.



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**Sponsorship Coordinator:**

Jenny Reid

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We wish you all a Happy Christmas. Thank you for your ongoing support. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as Sponsorship Coordinator.

Warm regards,

Jenny Reid

Sponsorship Coordinator



Neville & Lill Muir  
DMI & DA Founders