



AFRICA INLAND MISSION  
INTERNATIONAL / ASIA-PACIFIC

# AFRICA *news*

*"Christ-centred churches among all African peoples"*

www.aimint.org

FEB-MAY 2015

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**R**eaching the Mbororo (pictured) in the Central African Republic with the Gospel is the aim of a new Focus Team set to begin in

mid-2016. This team is one of several new two-year Focus and TIMO teams planned among unreached people groups. There are other amazing short-

term and longer-term opportunities to share Jesus Christ with those who have not heard. **See pages 4-5.**

# PIONEER AIM WORKER REMEMBERED

“Her obedience to God is something amazing. She trusted the Lord with all her heart, mind and soul.”

These were among the memories shared of former AIM missionary, Valma ‘Betty’ Thomas, at a memorial service in Victoria on 29 September 2014. Betty died on 21 September, leaving four children, two children-in-law, 11 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and one grandchild on the way.

Betty was born on 23 September 1926 at Wycheproof in Victoria. She was the second child of Ernest and Elizabeth Barker. They moved to Devonport, Tasmania when Betty was 14 months old and later moved to Melbourne.

Betty completed two years of secondary school before going to work in knitting factories. While Betty was ill in hospital, she committed to train as a nurse. In November 1945 she commenced nursing at the Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital in Brunswick.

While nursing, Betty came to know Jesus as her Saviour. Betty wrote in her journal: “After I became a Christian I commenced going to the Manifold Heights Baptist Church with a group of Christian nurses. During those years I had responded to the Lord’s voice within me to be willing for mission work”. Betty committed herself to mission work during a Belgrave Heights Mission Conference.

Betty graduated from the Melbourne Bible Institute in 1957. Early that year she met Norman Thomas, a Methodist Home-Mission Pastor at Bannockburn, and they were engaged in March. Betty finished her Bible course and was accepted by AIM. They married in September 1957 in Geelong.

Betty and Norman left for Kenya on 26 November, 1957. They went to Kapsabet Mission Station to learn the Nandi language. Their first 10 years of work in Kenya centred on three mission stations, among the Nandi

people: Kapsarbet, with a Bible Training College; and, Kessup and Kaprapita, with a Girls’ Boarding School and churches. Betty helped in the medical dispensary, the Girls’ Boarding school and with the church ladies.

In the early 1970s Norman was elected Mission Secretary of the Kenya Field office. He later became International General Secretary of AIM, based in Nairobi. Their children Brian, Leanne, Ruth and Shirley went to AIM’s Rift Valley Academy for their schooling.

Retired AIM worker Alan Checkley fondly remembered Betty Thomas. “There are many expressions of her faith in action but the most outstanding for me was when she, with Norman, pioneered a new work amongst the Sabaoth people on Mount Elgon. They served the Lord with distinction.”



**crescent project**  
HOPE WORTH SHARING

Concerned by Islam?  
Know Muslims personally?

**BRIDGES:**  
Christians Connecting with Muslims

A study for Christians to share the Hope with Muslims

*Today, perhaps more than at any other time, there is a need for understanding and engaging with Islam and Muslim people.*

**Africa Inland Mission is offering the Bridges course to churches in 2015, starting in Sydney.**

*This short course will inform you about what Muslims believe and how they ‘do’ religion. It is clear and practical. As you begin to understand and see Muslim people through God’s eyes, you can explore how you might relate and engage with them in Jesus’ name. For more info [www.crescentproject.org](http://www.crescentproject.org)*

**Interested? Contact Len at AIM**

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# NEW AIM WORKERS PREPARE FOR MINISTRY

God is continuing to call workers into ministry in Africa. Here are three families — one engaging in ministry among Africans in Australia and two set to go to Africa mid-2015. Please pray for them, their final preparations and their ministries.



**Chris and Tabitha Machar**, with Hope and Faith are now full-term members with AIM and serving among Africans in Australia. Chris was a long-

term member of AIM serving in Africa and Australia. He changed to Affiliate membership to marry Tabitha, from South Sudan, four years ago. They are now both full-term AIM workers with a heart to reach unreached African people groups from their home base in Victoria. The Machar family is hoping to spend a short-term of about six months in Africa during the next couple of years.

## **Craig and Helen Waldock**

of Newcastle, NSW, are set to join the Tsumkwe TIMO team which will live

among the San people of Namibia from June 2015. Craig and Helen will leave their three adult children in Australia.



Craig is an electrician and Helen is a Radiographer and trained teacher with a heart for evangelism. They were both previously involved in ministry in Malawi for two years. Their home church is New Vine Baptist Church.

## **Norm and Noeline Scott**

from Wyoming Church of Christ, Gosford, are planning to go to

Tanzania in mid-2015. Norm is an accountant and Noeline works in aged care. They visited Tanzania in November 2014, to see two ministries where they could serve. Pray as they finalise their choice of ministry, complete some application requirements and build their support team.



## AIM AUSTRALIA'S CENTENARY IS COMING!

*Celebrating*  
**100** *AIM*  
*years*

In August 2016 AIM will celebrate the centenary of the formation of an AIM committee in Australia.

Africa Inland Mission began in 1895 under the leadership of Peter Cameron Scott, with a party of seven others. Scott landed in Kenya in October with a vision to see a gospel ministry to unreached peoples supported by mission stations from Mombasa to Lake Chad.

In 1908 the first Australian member of AIM arrived in Kenya. Albert Barnett from Wellington, NSW, and his wife Elma added another link in the chain of mission stations to Lake Chad by establishing the work around Eldama Ravine in central Kenya.

In 1916 the Australian committee of AIM was formed and a short time later a sending office was established in Sydney. Another Australian couple, Stuart and Elise Bryson, went to Kenya in 1919 and eventually settled among the Nandi in 1927. Through their efforts the Bible was translated into Nandi; this was the first complete Bible published in one volume in a language of Kenya.

See future issues of Africa News for more glimpses into the history of AIM Australia and the Asia-Pacific.

**DATE CLAIMERS!**  
**AIM Asia-Pacific**  
**Conferences 2015**

**New Zealand**  
Saturday 6 June 2015  
North Island  
*Hear about trends in world mission*  
*New directions for AIM*  
For information and bookings  
contact Pamela:  
E: admin.nz@aimint.org P: 09 281 4595

**Australia**  
Saturday 22 August 2015  
Sydney  
*First-hand report of TIMO in Chad*  
*Reaching Africans in Australia*  
For information and bookings  
contact Robbyn:  
E: finance.au@aimint.org T: 02 4322 4777

# Opportunities with AIM in the Asia-Pacific

## Hong Kong

A **Mobilising Officer** is required to promote opportunities with AIM. This is a paid position. Duties include liaising with Hong Kong Churches, Bible Seminaries and inquirers, and leading a ministry to Africans in Hong Kong, including prison ministry. This person will be proficient in Cantonese and have a heart for mission among the unreached peoples of Africa.

Inquiries to Dr Hung, E director.  
hk@aimint.org

## South Korea

**English Teachers** are required for a missionary training program. Training and cross-cultural experience in teaching English as a foreign language is desired. Applicants are required to be self-funded.

Inquire at your local AIM office or on [www.aimint.org](http://www.aimint.org).

## Australia

A **Finance Assistant** is required to work part-time in the Australian office in Gosford. This person will assist in book-keeping using Reckon and in financial operations.

A **Short-term Coordinator** is required in Gosford to promote and manage the Australian short-term program.

Both Australian positions are contracted positions, and open to suitably qualified Australian resident-citizens only. Contracts may be extended subject to performance. For information please contact Len on 4322 4777 or director.  
au@aimint.org.

# New TIMO Teams in Africa

## New TIMO Teams in Africa

AIM's proven training and church planting program — TIMO, Training in Ministry Outreach, has new opportunities in 2015-16.

**Niger** — A team among the **Fulani people** starts in early 2016 (Date to be confirmed), in partnership with SIM.

**Uganda** — A team begins among the **Ik people** in mid-2016.

**Northern parts of Africa** — a team begins in 2016. For more information see [www.timo.aimint.org](http://www.timo.aimint.org)

## Join a New Focus Team

New outreach initiatives in AIM have led to new Focus Teams. Focus on language learning, studying a variable curriculum to suit your location; and sharing the gospel. Use story-telling; English teaching; medical and other skills. Teams are two to three years.

**Madagascar: Diego Suarez**, starts mid-2015. A single lady is required here.

**Madagascar: Tulear story-telling / youth outreach team**. One female is still required for mid-2015.

**Central African Republic**. Focus on the Zande and Mbororo, mid-2016.

**Indian Ocean Islands**. Need two families to join in October 2015.

**North-East Uganda**. Focus on the Karamoja people; dates to be advised.

**South Sudan**. Focus on the Laarim people. Coming soon.

Take the challenge, get focused and share Christ with the unreached.

# NEW DIRECTIONS NEW OPPORTUNITIES

by Len Lesleighter, Director AIM  
Australia / Asia-Pacific Mobilising  
Region

**N**ew opportunities for ministry in Africa and around the world are emerging in AIM. In a series of new planning initiatives, AIM is sharpening its focus to reach the remaining 1008 unreached African people groups. Not only those located in Africa, but those dispersed around the world, including the Asia-Pacific. This is leading to new and exciting short-term, and long-term openings.

**AIM's NEW Framework of Ministry** has defined four areas of future service in AIM:

1. Disciple-making among unreached African people groups;
2. Mobilising local churches and believers to make disciples among African unreached people groups;
3. Equipping African church leaders; and
4. Serving and supporting those doing the above.

**AIM's Vision 2020**, has set the direction for the next five years to achieve bold objectives, only God can make happen.



# FOR AIM CREATES FOR YOU

1. Reaching 20 currently engaged unreached people groups;
2. Engaging 20 new unreached people groups in Africa;
3. Use 40 new teams to engage unreached African people groups living outside of Africa, including Australia and the Asia-Pacific. This involves partnership with church partners;
4. Mobilise 400 new African workers for ministry to unreached people groups;
5. Equip 4,000 African church leaders;
6. Meet the challenges of spiritual opposition and warfare; insufficient leaders in AIM; and a lack of training in church planting and mobilising for mission. Global strategies are being developed. But already we see some exciting opportunities outlined in this issue.



AFRICA INLAND MISSION  
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**Inquiries:** For more information on how you can be part of this exciting new vision, complete the ministry-interest form on our website [www.aimint.org](http://www.aimint.org); or contact your nearest AIM office or in Australia E: [personnel.au@aimint.org](mailto:personnel.au@aimint.org) and in New Zealand E: [personnel.nz@aimint.org](mailto:personnel.nz@aimint.org)

## New Short-Term Teams

**South Sudan Construction and Discipleship Teams** are exciting new options for 2015.

Join a construction team in Kimatong; or make disciples on a team in Chukudum or Torit.

Teams will comprise three to six members. Construction teams will take members for one month or longer. Discipleship teams will run for three to six months. Each team will complement an existing ministry, mostly among an unreached people group. Outreach and language learning will be priorities.

## Join a TIMO-Quest Team

Experience cross-cultural ministry for just one month on a TIMO Quest.

AIM currently has more than 18 TIMO teams that will host a one-month TIMO Quest. TIMO Questers will pair up with a TIMO member of the same gender and do as they do. Learn language, read the scriptures with locals, do discipleship. Explore the challenge and see the potential of cross-cultural ministry among the unreached.

**TIMO Quest teams include:**

- Lopit in South Sudan**, June 2015.
  - Sakalava in Madagascar**, July 2015;
  - Clove island, Indian Ocean**, July 2015;
  - Samburu, Kenya**, August 2015.
  - Ebonite Team in Tanzania**, Sept 2015;
- Don't just think about it! Experience it!

## New GO Short-Term Initiative

GO is a two month discipleship and mission training program to help you develop Christ-like character and instil basic skills for outreach among unreached people groups.

GO is based in Africa and facilitated by experienced missionaries and African leaders.

The first GO program is on **14 June to 12 August 2015**.

Three-weeks of discipleship training will be held at Sunrise Acres in Eldama Ravine, Kenya. This is a missionary retreat centre and the participants will be housed in cabins while participating in group sessions throughout the day.

Develop your character as you learn about spiritual disciplines; understanding spiritual warfare; Biblical foundations for mission; the commands of Christ; spiritual gifts; and the culture of AIM.

Develop your skills for working in an outreach location. Learn the basics of Islam; language acquisition tools; how to live cross-culturally; story telling; security; team dynamics and relationships; mentoring and contextualization.

Then for four weeks, live among an unreached people group. You will experience on-site mentoring from missionaries and national leaders. Experience ministry among the unreached.

Get ready and GO!



# WORKING WITH AN AFRICAN LOCAL CHURCH IN RWANDA

by Chris and Fiona Tyrrell

There are plenty of horror tales of serious breakdown in relationships between cross-cultural workers (missionaries) and an African local church.

*Our story, so far, is one of optimism.*

We came to Rwanda in 2009 to teach English in a Bible college. However, during 2010 we caught a vision to reach out to Rwanda's Historically Marginalised People (HMP). These people were rarely on the churches' radar. We knew of only one missionary trying to engage them, and even that effort was concluding.

An unexpected reunion with a pastor friend was an opportunity to share with him what was on our minds. He confirmed our observations and supported our convictions. He also just happened to know some HMP and was able to introduce us. The location was breathtaking. Together, we asked them questions they'd never before been asked, such as

*“Who are you” and “What is your dream?”*

We were about to go on home assignment in Australia, so we promised them we'd come back to share God's story with them.

It took us almost a year to return to the green grassy slopes of Nyabageni. We had moved to Musanze, a large regional town in Rwanda's north. Chris had accepted an invitation to volunteer in a vocational training centre (VTC) that

was owned and run by a local church, Evangelical Church and Ministries International (ECMI). Thus we could be contributing to the needs of local youth, meanwhile doing the work of an evangelist as well.

Would the people remember us, would they receive us? These questions and other emotions swirled around as we hiked the narrow and upward path through the potato and bean fields. One by one the people came out, curiously hopeful that their future might look brighter.

We began visiting more frequently, when the pastor had time, aiming to gradually build trust and a relationship through which to present the Gospel. Consistent with much of East Africa, even the HMP were religious; be that a mix of traditional beliefs and Catholicism.

*They could sing Christian songs and repeat the jargon, yet the religion they knew had not set them free in any sense.*

With our pastor friend we'd sometimes drop in to a local government office, on the way to Nyabageni. We thought we were being open; so they could get to know us and exactly what was our motivation. However, one day we were abruptly instructed to stop work, followed by five suspenseful months of interviews and supplying documents and information. The ECMI

leadership stood with us in everything, until all requirements were satisfied.

Ultimately we were free to work again, but this time things would be different.

*This time we are a ‘TEAM’ and there's no ‘I’ in TEAM.*

This time we can't meet exclusively with the HMP. We work under the authority of ECMI, and we have a Rwandan leader. God gave us Samson, the VTC headmaster, his wife Pheranady, another ECMI pastor, Aloys and a single man Vedaste to be part of the team. We the missionaries are dependent on the Rwandans.

The first big expression of this newfound freedom and fresh enthusiasm was to visit an unsaved HMP man dying with cancer. David was so close to death, yet he responded in simple faith to Pastor Aloys's challenge from John 3:16. Just days later we buried that man, the first fruit of what God is doing on the hills of Nyabageni, having started long before we arrived.

*These days we rent a small adobe building to hold meetings. Up to 150 people squeeze in each Sunday, to sing together and listen to another Bible story.*

We pray that they are hearing, and understanding too. We pray that there will be real disciples of Christ and a Christ-centred church at Nyabageni, not just more religious converts.

We observe change, slow change in each of us. Among the people on the hills, and among the team. Locals mention a greater sense of community and peace, and a working-out of their growing faith. They meet during the

week to revisit the stories. The team acknowledge that the HMP are a mission field right here on our door step. They acknowledge that the typical preaching content and style they inherited hasn't led to heart change and transformed communities, in spite of the huge number of Rwandan church-goers. They speak of how great is our God, and have embraced storying the Bible as an effective means of communicating

Biblical truth, a method that they can see is actually leading to understanding.

Partnering with the Rwandan church has given us the opportunity to participate in mobilising Africans towards mission. Evidence of this is that I'm writing this on in Australia while on home assignment, and yet the Nyabageni outreach hasn't stopped in our absence: it's growing towards maturity.



# A GAP YEAR IN MADAGASCAR IS A GREAT WAY TO LEARN

Three months in Madagascar has been a life-changing and learning experience for Laura Jennings.

Laura, from the Australian Capital Territory, is doing her gap year, having completed year 12 in 2013. She became a teacher's assistant at the Madagascar Christian Academy in Antananarivo from September to November 2014.

"I settled well into the school where I am a teacher's aid. I know all the kids in my class, some of the parents and some of the other teachers. Spending nearly five hours per day, five days per week with 20 four year olds is pretty intense and tiring, but it is also fun!

*"I am getting used to the Malagasy way of doing things, which is a lot more relaxed than Australia!"*

One of the main challenges is that almost all of my students are Malagasy, so English is their second language which can make communication hard.

"Similarly with the other teachers at the school, communication can be difficult because of the language barrier.

But I am learning to speak slower and more clearly, and I think my English has probably improved!"

Madagascar Christian Academy is one of three English-medium schools in Madagascar. The school of about 200 students from kindergarten to grade eight, uses a Christian curriculum. The staff are all Malagasy teachers. Visiting teacher's assistants are in high demand. The

teacher's assistants do not teach, but assist the Malagasy teachers in their regular lesson planning and teaching. An AIM orientation is a key activity before visiting teacher's assistants commence at MCA.

"As part of my orientation, I spent time visiting the markets, catching buses, getting to know the area where I am living and working, going into Antananarivo (Tana) itself and having my first language lesson.

"While it has been great to get to know the city a little bit, the poverty here is very confronting."

When we went into Tana, we bought a kilo of strawberries for less than A\$1. As we were leaving the market, three children with no shoes who were obviously hungry came up to us.

"It is very common to see children begging, but these three children weren't asking for money, they just asked for one strawberry each. When we gave them each their strawberry, they said "merci" so politely I was blown away.

*"The contrast between the rich and the poor here is quite extreme."*

While this is quite hard to handle sometimes, it has also been lovely to meet the locals who are all so friendly and ready to help. They are very patient which is a good thing!"

In February 2015, NSW teacher Lara Dikha, plans to join the team at MCA for four months.

For more info on short-term opportunities at MCA, or other opportunities in teaching or home schooling missionary children, please contact AIM in Australia or New Zealand. Complete the ministry interest form on our website [www.aimint.org](http://www.aimint.org). This is an important work in supporting AIM workers engaged in outreach activities.





# RESPONSE FORM

## Yes, I would like to support AIM's ministry

I want to give monthly

\$50  \$25  \$100 \$

Give a one off gift of \$

Please complete the payment authority below.

Please make cheques payable to Africa Inland Mission Int. (Aust.) Inc. or complete card details below; or donate online: [www.aimint.org/au/give.html](http://www.aimint.org/au/give.html) (PayPal fees apply to online gifts)

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You can make direct payments into AIM Australia or New Zealand bank accounts.

### For Details, Contact:

New Zealand: Pamela T: 09 281 4595, or

Australia: Robbyn T: 02 4322 4777

### Response slips can be mailed to AIM in:

New Zealand:

PO Box 13457 Onehunga 1643

Australia:

PO Box 328 Gosford NSW 2250

# THANK YOU

Thank you to all our prayer and financial partners for your ministry in 2014.

You have made a difference! You have enabled AIM to continue sharing the Gospel in Africa.

One result of your prayers is a growing team of Asia-Pacific workers in Africa. In November 18 people from Australia and New Zealand attended AIM's Orientation in Gosford. The group was 50% full-term appointees preparing to go to Africa in 2015. Others included short-termers set to go.

*Thank you for praying. Please continue to pray.*

Your generous giving has enabled workers to continue in Africa and in our Australian and New Zealand home offices. Thank you for also giving to specific projects in 2014, including:

**(Unaudited figures in \$A, 1 December 2013 - 30 November 2014)**

<b>Missionary Support</b>	<b>\$534,900</b>
<b>General Donations</b>	<b>\$41,500</b>
<b>Chairman's Appeal (staff support)</b>	<b>\$7,000</b>
<b>e-Bibles, Gabra outreach</b>	<b>\$12,860</b>
<b>Dukana outreach</b>	<b>\$4,511</b>
<b>Safina Street Network</b>	<b>\$2,419</b>
<b>Radio Nuru, Mwani outreach</b>	<b>\$1770</b>

## New Vision 2020

AIM's Vision is to mobilise 400 African missionaries by 2020, to take the gospel to unreached people groups (see pages 4-5). AIM's African National Workers Support Project is your opportunity to help this happen.

*Your gifts will help support African missionaries on TIMO teams.*

The balance will come from their African churches.

To join this exciting partnership, use the response form overleaf, or donate online, quote: TIMO-111-U.

