

AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR

AUSTRALIAN TOUR 2015

BECOME
A FRIEND
OF THE
CHOIR

3



AFRICANCHILDREN'SCHOIR™

STITCH ME
WARM ¹¹

KWAYA BIG
HEARTS ¹⁵

4

TRAVEL TO
UGANDA WITH
KATE MILLER-HEIDKE



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TODAY

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|||||
*donations in U.S. funds

FOUNDER'S WORD



In 1984 a small group of volunteers travelled to Africa to bring the first African Children's Choir™ to the west. Since then, hundreds of people have donated their time to make a difference.

There are many opportunities for you to make a difference to the children you see on stage, and millions of others in Africa. As a volunteer you can travel with the Choir and take part in the day-to-day raising of Africa's future leaders. You can volunteer in Africa at a Music for Life Center, or help organize one of the many Music for Life camps during the children's school breaks.

You can also help by sharing your love of the Choir with your family and friends, church, and neighborhood. Children have collected coins and donated them to help another child. Others have asked for donations instead of birthday or wedding gifts. Still others have had jewellery parties or dinners.

However you choose to help, your gifts will help change Africa, one child at a time.

Ray Benedict

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welcome to
our show.
we're glad you
are here.





**FRIEND OF
THE CHOIR**

YOU CAN BE A CHANGEMAKER AND HELP DEVELOP THE FUTURE LEADERS OF AFRICA

Choose a monthly pledge amount and partner with the African Children's Choir today. As a Friend of the Choir you are investing in the lives of future ChangeMakers by promoting quality education, leadership development, and Choir programs.

For more info please visit: africanchildrenschoir.com



** FOTC is an on-going monthly financial commitment.*

AS A **FRIEND OF THE CHOIR** YOU WILL RECEIVE

- + PRE-RELEASE ACCESS TO NEW MUSIC & VIDEOS
- + REGULAR ELECTRONIC CHOIR UPDATES
- + STORIES & PHOTOS FROM OUR CHANGEMAKERS



kwaya



HUMANITARIAN TOUR ► UGANDA

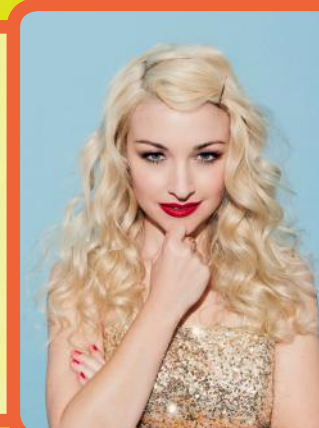
5-19 September 2015



Megan Packer from Kwaya #4
with kids from Kalerwe Music
For Life Centre, Kampala

In September 2015, 35 singers (including those from community choirs) from across the country are invited to join Australian Aria Award nominee and independent artist Kate Miller-Heidke on a two-week life-changing trip with KwaYa Australia's fifth volunteering tour to Uganda. Kwaya's altruistic, musical and cultural exchange tours afford big-hearted adventurers opportunities to not only give back in a tangible and meaningful way, but the chance to also enjoy the Ugandan people and culture at a grass roots level.

Well-known for her community mindedness, Kate Miller-Heidke lent her voice and hit song 'Caught in the crowd' to a campaign calling on all students across the country to fight bullying. Signing up to work with Kwaya #5 in Kampala's slums alongside The African Children's Choir is an adventure further expanding her humanitarian horizons. "I feel lucky that my life as an artist is leading me towards experiences I'd never even dreamed of. I have a feeling this one is going to be unforgettable," says Kate as she prepares mentally and musically for a voyage of a lifetime.



The KwaYa #5 Uganda project will demonstrate, yet again, the powerful role music can play in changing people's lives and fortunes; and building stronger communities through a shared love of music.

WHY

- To live the message of joy and hope for Uganda's children.
- To engage in a unique and life-changing grass-roots cultural and musical exchange.
- To raise funds for Music For Life's programs.
- To experience a journey of self-discovery, self-awareness and realise our role in the bigger picture.

HOW

- KwaYa travellers will help change the lives of those less fortunate with funds raised in their local communities before they leave for Uganda.
- They deliver educational material and financial donations to schools and provide gifts of basic essentials to local orphanages. They conduct cross-cultural workshops at local schools.

MUSIC

- KwaYa travellers form a choir consisting of Australian singers and talented young African university students who grew up in the African Children's Choir.
- They will perform with Kate Miller-Heidke, The African Children's Choir and other popular Ugandan Artists for several audiences around Kampala, culminating in a FREE concert for the people of the slums.

If you are a singer and would like to join Kate Miller-Heidke and Kwaya #5 in Uganda in September visit www.kwaya.org/UGANDATOURSFROTPAGE.html for more info, or call **Marsha Gusti** on 0433 134 773.

Quality Education

It's early in the morning. Children awake before the sun and begin their daily routine. Roosters crow and children set off in the break of daylight to begin their walk to school, often without having eaten any breakfast. Their parents have already left for work as the eldest child leads the others down a long dirt road.

Cramped into a small unfinished classroom, squeezed onto long wooden benches, children sit quietly in anticipation of the day's lesson. The floor is nothing but dirt; the walls are brick with little mortar. A decaying door swings open, supplying the only light in the dark room. The walls are covered with hand drawn illustrations on poster boards, labelled in pen. Some drawings illustrate geographic areas, others, parts of the body. There are no textbooks on the shelves, there are no shelves. Each child pulls out a wrinkled note book from a back pack as the teacher begins to write on the chalk board. He's the only one with a textbook, so the he'll spend the day writing the contents of his book on the board and students will spend the day copying it. Then they read what they've written, but they can't ask questions. They write and they read.

Class is dismissed for lunch and children line up with plastic bowls to receive some posho, water mixed with maize flour. The posho is covered with beans. This is often the only meal of the

day, every day. There are no swings, no slides no monkey bars. After lunch the children play soccer with empty water bottles or balls of scrap and trash wrapped in tape. The afternoon lessons are a repeat of the morning and as the sun sets children make their way home.

Education is not free, everyone has to pay and the schools most can afford lack learning materials and proper facilities. At the end of each day children have just copied information; information lacking practical application to help them break the poverty cycle.

Relief and development money pours into African countries to build classrooms, but often little thought and oversight goes into what happens next. Will the subsequent days and years of more students sitting in these classrooms actually make change? Are the proper foundations and building blocks of a quality education being laid to enable children to become problem solvers, thought leaders, change agents?

The cycle of poverty continues in many African countries and breaking the cycle requires change. Providing a basic education is helpful, but it's not a long term solution. We believe providing a quality education; counseling, spiritual development and a caring environment will transform our children into tomorrow's ChangeMakers.



The odds are stacked up against such children to break the cycle of poverty. It is not just lack of accessibility to a good education; homes are overcrowded, there is a lack of food, water and basic sanitation. Those around them have known nothing else and are so caught up in the daily struggle for survival that they are unable to provide the children with role models, mentorship and social skills, let alone the social connections to rise above their current situation.

So what can transform today's vulnerable children from some of the world's most impoverished communities into ChangeMakers who will have a positive impact on Africa tomorrow?

Music For Life has developed a comprehensive leadership program to equip these children to be the ChangeMakers of tomorrow's world.

Our goal is not just to help individual children to reach individual goals.

Our goal is to **equip** each child to be a force for positive change by providing an excellent well rounded education.

Our goal is to **develop** within each individual child a desire to make a difference in their communities and beyond.

Our goal is to **empower** them to be the change, by giving them opportunities to serve so that they know right from childhood that they have the ability to make a difference.

Each individual child discovering and working within their God given giftings and passion can make a difference to not just hundreds but thousands of people.

They can be the ChangeMakers of tomorrow!

On entering the ChangeMakers program children experience for the first time in their lives adequate shelter and protection. They receive a balanced diet and no longer have to worry about their next meal or whether there is water or soap to wash with. Their days have routine and structure providing the security so essential for emotional well being.

They learn that they are valuable as they are introduced to the love of their Heavenly Father. They learn to play, to consider others,

to live together. Teaching reinforced by the love, encouragement and guidance of the dedicated team of mentors. Through the musical training they learn the benefits of hard work, discipline and perseverance that develops into a healthy work ethic. They learn the value of teamwork as they work towards a goal together. And finally they experience the joy of seeing their talents develop and achieving the goal of a great performance.

The Choir Tour

This unique experiential learning experience is life changing for the young members it gives them:

- **An Expanded World View & Broad Frame of Reference:**
- As the children tour they interact with many different cultures, see advanced infrastructure and experience technology used in multiple situations.

- **Self Esteem & A Heart to Give:**
- As they perform before many audiences their confidence and self-esteem grows. Most importantly they learn that though they are young and though they are poor, they have much to offer.

- **Social Skills & Confidence:**
- They develop the ability to adapt to any social situation whether dining in a five star hotel or sharing a meal with their grandmother in the village. They are observant and know how to put others at ease. They are invariably courteous and respectful.

They no longer see themselves as inferior or a child from the slums, unable to look you in the eye and with a limited future. But in the words of our founder, Ray Barnett, they know they are princes and princesses.



"I LEARNED THAT I AS A POOR PERSON COULD GIVE TO A RICH PERSON - THEY WERE THANKING ME!"

- FRANK

"JUST BY SMILING I COULD TAKE PEOPLE'S BURDENS AWAY!"

- ALLEN

The beautiful campus of the African Children's Choir Primary School on the shores of Lake Victoria stands out in stark contrast to the schools from which the young ChangeMakers have been selected. The classrooms are large, bright and airy. The children enjoy low teacher-to-student ratios, have access to proper learning materials and technology and are encouraged to ask questions and pursue their dreams.

The emphasis is on not only providing an excellent academic training but also helping each student discover and develop their unique talents. In addition to the traditional Ugandan curriculum, the students are trained in music, dance, art, a variety of sports, computer studies and life skills. The spiritual and character development of the students is central, the daily devotions as the students worship a highlight for many visitors.

The chief inspector of schools attended an event at the African Children's Choir Primary School in Entebbe. He praised the school for its holistic approach to the students' development and commented on the poise and confidence of the student ushers. He was so impressed with the student MC remarking that most adults would not be that articulate or self-assured.

Fundamental to the ethos of the school is a sense of social responsibility and desire to share the love of Christ within the community. Students participate in student led outreaches and community work projects, empowered by these experiences the students continue with such initiatives throughout their lives.

Students graduating from the primary school consistently achieve good results in the National Primary Leaving Exams and win places at some of the top secondary schools in the country. Here despite their humble beginnings they rub shoulders with children from some of society's elite families. Many of our students take up leadership positions in their schools an endorsement of all the training that has gone before.

During this time Music For Life supplements the education system with enhancement courses run during the holidays focusing on personal development such as careers advice, interview and presentation skills, conflict resolution, computer skills, business training, critical thinking and problem solving, team work and leadership. Each student continues to benefit from solid Christian teaching, mentorship and counselling to help them deal positively with the many challenges that youth face. They also have many opportunities to put all they have learned into practice through acts of service and outreaches into the local communities.

ACC Primary School



Music For Life sponsors those in the ChangeMaker program though University/ College level. Now well on the way towards pursuing a career in their chosen fields our university students give back to the community by volunteering in our MFL Centres.

The Centres are based in severely under resourced primary schools in slum areas. Schools not dissimilar to where our ChangeMakers started their own education.

Through teaching music, dance, life skills and bible studies they bring the same gifts that they once received themselves. This coupled with lots of love and mentorship helps a new generation of children grow in the knowledge of their value in Christ, their talents and ability to make a difference.

Today alumni are fulfilling the motto by helping bring positive change to Africa in a wide variety of fields including; medicine, education, relief & development, ministry, business, law and more.

KwaYa Cross Cultural Connections Project UGANDA

KwaYa believes a unique three-way cultural exchange through music, its lyrics and rhythms not only strengthens community by opening participants' hearts and minds; it increases the sensitivity of cultural differences.

KwaYa trips to Uganda commenced in 2011 and take place annually. The reason behind their enormous success and popularity is the long-lasting effect upon both the Australian and Ugandan participants. Australians initially join the tour to "make a difference"

in a country that suffers abject poverty. Ironically, it is they who are forever changed. "We are proud to provide a grass-roots volunteering experience for KwaYa adventurers.



Since September 2011, 165 volunteers have travelled to Uganda and raised more than \$310,000 in funds and 1300kg of donated goods.

Our aim is to not so much to immerse travellers in the Ugandan culture but to take them to the end of the diving board, give them a gentle shove and drop them into it. Invariably, by the second of the 14-day tour, I am not the only one with tears of joy and gratitude spilling down my cheeks. I see tough exteriors starting to crack and melt away, including my own. It is this opening of hearts and minds that inspires me to continue to lead the trips. Extraordinary lifelong connections are forged and shaped through a common

love of humanity and music. So many people on both sides of the world walk away changed forever. More aware, more grateful, more joyful."

Marsha Gusti – President Kwaya and Tour Leader

KwaYa 1

September 2011

- > 35 participants
- > \$35,000 in donations
- > 300kg of baby goods, clothing and nappies

KwaYa 2

September 2012

- > 50 participants
- > \$113,540 in donations

Kwaya 3

April 2013

- > 52 participants
- > \$88,887 in donations

KwaYa 4

April 2014

- > 35 participants
- > \$79,264.73 in donations
- > 400kg of donated goods

Members from KwaYa 1 with one of their murals (from left): Diane Cinelli, Maggie Dobbin, Clive Holden, Rhonda Collard and Lyn Woolley.



KwaYa 3 members rehearsing for a concert.



KwaYa 2 performs at a free concert in Kampala.

Whilst in Uganda our two weeks are filled with music, dance and inspiring projects such as:

- > Renovation projects in the schools where Music For Life operates. So far we have visited four primary schools located in different slums in Kampala. We also provided lunch packs to every child while we worked there.
- > Renovation and expansion projects at The African Children's Choir Primary School and Choir Training Academy.
- > Construction of a playground at The African Children's Choir Training Academy.
- > Construction of a soccer pitch for the African Children's Choir Primary School.
- > Medical checks for 150 children by Australian doctors and nurses.
- > Planting crops and gardens.
- > Gift packs to local villages for Easter.
- > Recruitment of The African Children's Choir #40 and #41.

- > \$127,552.39 earmarked towards the new African Children's Choir Training Academy to be built in Entebbe.
- > Joining with The African Children's Choir and The Young Africans to provide free concerts in local villages and Kampala's slums where Ugandan dignitaries and royalty also attended.
- > Ugandan dance, drumming and singing workshops where Aussies learn a routine to perform at the free concert.
- > Kwaya-run workshops at the Music for Life Centres in the slums and The African Children's Choir Primary School. Activities included teaching local kids: art, craft, dance, song, drama, Aboriginal art and dance, storytelling, musical theatre, tin whistle, harmonica and cricket workshops.
- > Painting murals at Nkumba and The African Children's Choir Primary Schools
- > Supplies and donations to Sanyu, Amani, Ekisa and Mercy orphanages

You don't need to be a professional singer to join our humanitarian, musical and cultural exchange tours in Africa.

The African Children's Choir Music for Life Outreach Program involves Kwaya travellers visiting and working in Uganda's slums and remote villages where many of the choir children were born and raised.

HOW

KwaYa travellers will help change the lives of those less fortunate with funds raised in their local communities before they leave for Uganda. We deliver educational material and financial donations to schools and provide gifts of basic essentials to local orphanages. We also conduct cross cultural workshops at local schools.

MUSIC

KwaYa travellers form a choir made up of singers from all over the world plus talented young African university students who grew up in the African Children's Choir. We perform with the African Children's Choir for a number of audiences around Kampala culminating in a FREE concert for people from the slums with other popular Ugandan artists.

Upcoming Tour Dates

KwaYa 5:

5th - 19th September 2015

Register your expression of interest:
www.kwaya.org/UGANDATOURSFRONTPAGE.html

Want to learn more?

If you're interested in joining us on one of these musical and cultural exchange tours, visit www.kwaya.org contact Marsha Gusti at 0433.134.773 email kwayaaustraliainc@outlook.com

STITCH ME WARM

Stitch Me Warm Aussie knitters are bringing a little warmth and love to children in Uganda and remote areas of Australia, one stitch at a time.

Jude Mapleson from Alice Springs in the Northern Territory travelled to Uganda with KwaYa # 3 and took up the Knitting Group Coordinator role.

She has received parcels via airbag, trucking companies and school buses on tour from as far afield as:

- Helen Boelens and her elderly knitters in Holland
- Maureen Harmony and the Peregrine Beach Knitters from Queensland's Sunshine Coast
- Lynne Hutchison from Banyule Charity Group in Melbourne
- Christine Ingram from Melbourne
- Judith Buchanan and the Holy Trinity Craft Group in Sebastopol, Victoria.

Each year KwaYa travels to Uganda and hand delivers much needed cardigans, jumpers, beanies and toys to the babies and children.

The project also sends knitted goods to the remote areas around Alice Springs for the local indigenous population.



KwaYa 3 participants handed over 550kg of donated goods including baby goods and clothing to orphanages and schools in Uganda

Jude has formed a bond with charitable association Western Desert Dialysis Inc which has received more than 250kg of blankets, beanies and children's clothing through KwaYa Stitch Me Warm.

Western Desert Dialysis was founded by indigenous people from western desert communities in the Northern Territory, particularly Kintore, Kiwirrkurra, Papunya and Yuendumu.

It was initiated by a group of artists on dialysis who organized an art auction raising more than \$1 million to start a program that could bring dialysis to them, in their communities, close to family life.

The Purple House clinic in Alice Springs has 130 patients. It is the only dialysis centre in the world offering a drop-in service of friendship and nurturing to patients and their families. Dr. Wendy Zerk, a Kwaya singer who has travelled to Uganda twice, volunteers there one day a week.

The clinic has chooks, a vegetable garden, a pizza oven and groups of women sitting in the sun stripping plants to make bush medicine.

.....
If you'd like to join the team as a knitter, or donate wool, needles, patterns or crocheted garments, register online at www.kwaya.org/stitchmewarm.html or contact Jude at **0459.480.804**



Patrick Tjungarrayi from Kintore in the Northern Territory with Sarah Brown, CEO of Western Desert Dialysis (The Purple House). Tjungarrayi was responsible for organising the paintings that were auctioned in Sydney, raising more than \$1 million to fund the creation of the non-government dialysis clinic in central Australia.



The Holy Trinity Craft Group in Sebastopol, Victoria



Beanies sent from The Netherlands photographed with Sturt Desert Peas in Alice Springs in the Northern Territory.



KwaYa Stitch Me Warm Knitting Group Coordinator Jude Mapleson.

Benji Riggs travelled to Uganda with Kwaya #2 in 2012 at the age of 15 years and raised more than \$11,000 for the African Children's Choir.

Benji, who lives in Rostrevor, South Australia, was an active member of the school choir and graduated from Scotch College in 2014.

Now 18, he is taking a gap year to work on a year-long charity campaign for the Leukaemia Foundation as well as recording an album, writing a TV serial and starting a business.

"What I do after that, who knows. I have been accepted into a Bachelor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Adelaide University, but what happens next year entirely depends on what happens this year," he said.

Inspired by an internet video of African children receiving a shoe box containing small toys, pencils and other stationary, Benji came up with the suitcase initiative – now called Benji's Suitcase Project.

"These are things that if you gave to a kid in our western culture, they would feel sorry for themselves because it wasn't an iPad, new phone, PlayStation or Xbox.

"But the look on these African kids' faces was unforgettable; it was pure joy," he said.

"I thought it would be a good project to do with a group of kids that I had made an effort to try and understand when I was in Uganda. I wanted to have a personal touch so by discussing the idea with Marsha Gusti (Kwaya Australia) we developed the idea into something that has the potential to be, I think, quite emotional."

Benji's aim is to raise enough money to fill 150 suitcases for the current touring members of the African Children's Choir #42, as well as children in secondary school in Uganda.

The money will be used to buy clothes, shoes, and school supplies to fill each 'suitcase' which will be presented to the children when they depart Australia.

Benji has raised the money with lots of help and donations from local communities and schools, as well as hosting events such as two cabaret fundraisers and three auctions.

BENJI'S SUITCASE PROJECT

He has also recorded and released a song on iTunes, which all money raised donated to KwaYa Australia.

"I plan to coordinate this project by using social media as much as I can. Social media is under appreciated and taken for granted. Millions of people use it every second so all we have to do is get it out there for people to see," he said.

"Various people are helping with this project including friends, family and those who I have worked with in the past, but the person who is helping the absolute most is my mother. She always has and always will be there every step of the way."

Benji says he was attracted to Uganda by both his love of travelling and desire to help people.

"I've always thought of Africa as a dangerously beautiful place and was thrilled by the prospect of visiting one of the African countries.

"I learnt, through spending time with children and families who have grown up with practically nothing, the more we smother ourselves with what we perceive as the latest fashion, the hottest craze or innovative technology, the more we fall deeper into the illusion of bliss, safety and comfort," he said.

"We have grown too complicated and have developed busy lifestyles because we truly believe that the harder we try, the more we'll succeed.

"But how can you possibly measure success? How can you even begin to explain what success is and how you achieve it?

"Those people I met in Uganda in 2012 helped me realise that it doesn't matter if I'm successful in life or society's grand plan. They taught me that as long as I am truly happy with myself and my family, I have succeeded at living," Benji said.

Find out more about Benji's projects at www.sparkofinspiration.org



kwaya Arts of Africa

Proudly made by the village women of Uganda

Everyone who goes to Uganda with KwaYa is inspired by what we do there and feels a personal satisfaction with their contribution towards the on-the-ground projects we support.

Many participants go home vowing to do more to assist kids in Africa to receive an education and remain committed KwaYa members, donating their time to help us achieve our many goals.

And then there are others who know that they want to do more than just help. They have an idea, a drive and an unwavering passion to see it eventuate.

Meet Jenny Black and Tammy Magnus: They ran the popular Zumba workshops at the schools in Uganda during our visit with KwaYa 4 in April 2014.

Since returning home, they pioneered, initiated and created our latest project - Arts of Africa. They import Ugandan local arts and crafts and sell them through private events and local community markets in Laurieton and Port Macquarie, NSW. All profits go back to The African Children's Choir.

This project not only benefits the Ugandan children; it also aids the local village women who make the crafts.

As of November 2014, they have sold more than \$10,302.75 of Ugandan arts and crafts, with a profit of \$5075.25 for The African Children's Choir.



Imported Ugandan arts and crafts are sold at community markets in Laurieton and Port Macquarie, on the central coast of NSW, as well as Sydney. All profits go back to The African Children's Choir.



Sydney Venture

Nyssa-Katlyn Buckland, Louise Lehané, Heather Baker who started the Sydney branch of Arts of Africa. Young Benji Lehané lends a helping hand.



Heather Baker, Louise Lehané and Nyssa-Katlyn Buckland were so inspired by the idea, they created a thriving branch of Arts of Africa in Sydney.

These women have a burning desire to do that something extra that will change a life. They are living proof that with a little effort and determination we can do something on this side of the world that benefits those who create and produce stunning pieces of traditional art in a remote village in Africa.

The added bonus is that the buyer also enjoys the art daily while one more child from Uganda's slums is able to go to school.

Connect at www.facebook.com/kwaya.artsof africa

Cottage by the Sea Queenscliff

...helping children and families in need

The African Children's Choir has been lucky enough to be on the receiving end of the Cottage by the Sea's generosity at the beginning of both their 2013 and 2015 tours.

Providing a haven at their facility in Queenscliff, Victoria the children and crew were able to recuperate after their long flights to Australia. It was also a wonderful opportunity to prepare for concerts and workshops for the upcoming three-month tour of the east coast of Australia.

The kids were loved, fed and cared for by the extraordinary staff at Cottage by the Sea.

"It was indeed a heart warming sight watching the children who come from a land-locked country brave the ocean for the first time," KwaYa Australia President Marsha Gusti said.

"Cottage by the Sea staff provided wetsuits and watchful eyes as the children took to the freezing waters of Port Phillip Bay like baby seals."

Cottage by the Sea (CBTS) is an Australian non-government, not-for-profit organisation that provides fun, inspiration and opportunities for disadvantaged young people in a positive, healthy, seaside environment. Their vision is that every child deserves a happy and a healthy life.



Once in, they wouldn't come out.



African Children's Choir 39 braving the waters of Port Phillip



Angel and Damalie try their hand at the ropes

CBTS seeks to assist young people to develop self-awareness, confidence and resilience, inspiring them to remain engaged in education, family and their community and to achieve their goals.

For more details visit <http://cottagebythesea.com.au>



KwaYa "Big Hearts"

Small change for big change in Africa

The Big Hearts Fund was started shortly after The African Children's Choir first tour of Australia in 2013.

Ten-year old Bob had to seek medical attention for stomach pain while he was touring with the choir in the Blue Mountains in NSW. We later found out Bob had previously suffered a serious bout of malaria which attacked his liver.

Diseases like malaria are treatable and don't have long term effects, but in Bob's case medical assistance wasn't readily available to him before he joined the African Children's Choir.

Bob's story moved a group of Aussies to start the Big Hearts Fund to help children like him.

So far, the Fund has raised approx. AUS \$4100 (UGS 9,299,100) to assist almost 60 people receive medical assistance, treatment for malaria, typhoid and ulcers, medicines, optical and dental treatment, x-rays, physiotherapy as well as providing for transportation costs.

Isaac Lwanga recovering in hospital after surgery to his wrists and leg following a motorcycle accident in early 2014.

Find out more about the
Kwaya Big Hearts Fund
www.kwaya.org/bighearts.html

Isaac Lwanga (from Choir 19) was involved in a boda boda (motorcycle) accident in February 2014, and sustained a compound fracture in the femur (largest bone in the leg), which broke in two places and a shard of bone pierced the skin. He also broke both his wrists.

Isaac was taken to Mulago Hospital where he received primary care. They reset the bones in his wrists and plastered them. They also cleaned the wound on his leg and plastered the leg.

Support from the Big Hearts Fund paid for Isaac's stay in the hospital ward, all his medical expenses including his surgery. Big Hearts has so far covered AUD \$1327 (UGS 3,000,000) of Isaac's medical expenses and continues to cover the costs of his ongoing care. Isaac is now able to walk without assistance following extensive physiotherapy.



Bob and the Magnus family during the African Children's Choir inaugural tour of Australia in 2013

Lizzy & Brendan's Inspiration

Lizzy Oakes and Brendan O'Reilly visited Uganda with KwaYa 3 in 2013 and then hosted Uncle Abraham, Bob, Ronnie and Charles during the Blue Mountains stage of the African Children's Choir (ACC) tour that same year.

"It was an amazing experience having been to Ronnie's and Charles' homes in Uganda and then having them stay in our home," Lizzy said.

During the choir's Australian tour Lizzy, a nurse, and Brendan, a gardener, learnt from Uncle Scott Lambie that Bob had stomach pains because his liver had been damaged by malaria.

"What a shock it was to learn that a 10-year-old boy had a damaged liver! So we asked Uncle Scott if there was anything we could do.

"He told us Australians had been very generous to the ACC, but if people wanted to do more, setting up a special fund for

medical and emergency expenses would be really helpful," Brendan said. "Great idea, we thought."

Lizzy and Brendan decided to make it as easy as possible for the ACC's many new Australian fans to help. Their idea was to ask for a contribution most Australians could afford - a few dollars a month - and it could all add up to make a huge difference to people in Uganda.

"It was a thrill to get Uncle Scott's message at the start of this year saying that is exactly what has happened. It worked!" Lizzy said.

"Money raised by Kwaya's Big Hearts Fund goes a long way in Uganda, paying for malaria treatment, eye tests, and mending broken limbs.

"And we learnt one of Africa's great lessons: we can all make a difference. We hope more Australians join in when the ACC returns to win new fans in the 2015 tour."

MEET THE ARTIST

Joel Balimanya is the artist behind many of the handmade arts and craft items you see for sale on our tours. Look closely and you'll see that many of the products are made from recycled materials, like car tires and scrap metal. In addition to providing his unique products for our sales, Joel also makes the car tire sandals and accessories the children performing with African Children's Choir wear on stage.

Joel himself is a former Choir member, having travelled with the 9th and 11th African Children's Choirs.

"My life revolves around the ACC. They helped me realize my dream, what I am and who I have become."

Joel is committed to using his talents to inspire the children with the Choir by teaching them how to transform scrap materials into works of art.

"With my art, I believe I will change the world by inspiring the younger generations. I keep telling the children to use what they have to create what they do not have."

In addition to making jewellery and shoes out of re-purposed car tires and scrap metal, he also specializes in ceramics, glass works and using natural materials to transform every-day house hold items, like lamp shades, into interesting and unique works of art.



"WITH MY ART, I BELIEVE I WILL CHANGE THE WORLD BY INSPIRING THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS. I KEEP TELLING THE CHILDREN TO USE WHAT THEY HAVE TO CREATE WHAT THEY DO NOT HAVE."



MEET THE ARTIST

CHRISTINE



"FINDING A MARKET CAN BE QUITE CHALLENGING, BUT I AM GRATEFUL TO THE AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR FOR HAVING SUPPORTED MY WORK BY BUYING MY PRODUCT"

Meet Christine, a Ugandan jewellery maker with the gifted hands that create the colorful paper beads our fans love to wear. Christine is a proud mother of four, two boys and two girls. One of her daughters, Angel, toured with the 39th African Children's Choir.

Christine makes the paper beads and carefully strings them, along with seeds, onto string and wires. Her little ones help her when they have spare time after school. She is proud to have taught her children this craft. In a day, they can make about 150 necklaces. Christine jubilantly says, "I am proud of my children and for having learned my trade. This is a gift not many parents get to give their children. I believe they too will make a living from it in the future."

For Angel, making jewellery with her mother brings her great joy, as she has seen many of her host families buy and wear the very items she, her mother and sibling created. "It always makes me happy to see someone buy my mom's jewellery," she says with a wide smile.

From her jewellery making trade, Christine says she has been able to pay her children's school fees and to feed her family.

Christine hopes to expand her business to empower more women to become self-sufficient. "I pray that in the future I will be able to employ more women and make the paper jewellery business even bigger here in Uganda and internationally," Christine declares.



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