

Malawi Amoto



Hans-Jörg Richter with Abera Ayele, an Ethiopian missionary who has worked in Pakistan and is now working in China, a good example of a missionary from a new context

Great new opportunities with SIM Malawi

Think of missionary-sending countries or areas and what immediately springs to mind? Probably Europe and North America; possibly Australia and New Zealand. More recently South Korea which is having a major impact on missionary work world-wide.

SIM Malawi is joining a small group of SIM fields to look to bring in 'Missionaries from New Contexts' (MNC); countries from areas such as South America, India and even parts of Africa. So far three SIM fields, Bangladesh, Central-South East Asia and International, offer the MNC Project and SIM Malawi becomes the first in Africa to link in to this

important, developing area of work.

The aim of the project is to assist missionaries from new sending countries to come to the field to follow their call from God. As with other missionaries, MNCs will be expected to raise their own personal support but, unlike others, the new project will look to assist in areas such as housing, medical, and so on, should it be necessary.

"We do not want people to think they cannot come out on the mission field because of a lack of resources. Rather, we want to enable missionaries from non-traditional-sending countries and churches with emerging mission

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'Malawi Amoto' editorial

The last few months have been very busy for SIM Malawi, so much so that we will be issuing a 'Youth Extra' edition in a few weeks looking at work in our 'Reach Children and Youth' Ministry.

There is still plenty in this issue, with news of exciting new opportunities opening up for and with SIM Malawi.

We also look at new partnerships that are bringing changes in Sunday School Teacher Training.

We meet a 'living archive' in 89-year-old Nora Ring who served in Malawi from 1953-1990.

For more information about *Malawi Amoto* please contact: malawi.communications@sim.org

SIM Malawi

Pursue the Unreached
Build the Church
Reach Children and Youth
Impact the HIV/AIDS Crisis
Advance Mission

New opportunities

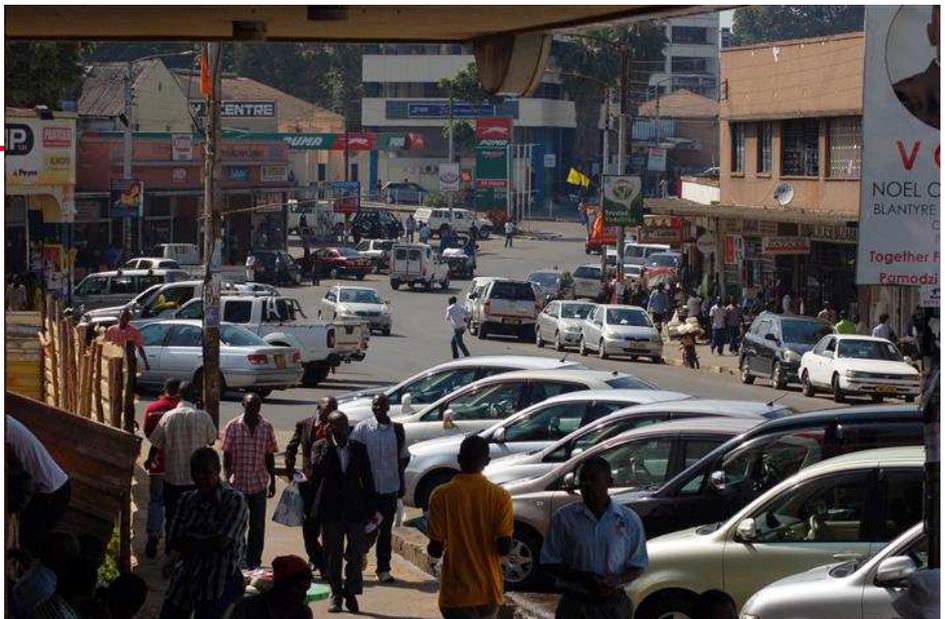
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movements to take part, with their unique skills and gifts, in the various ministries under SIM Malawi's mandate," said Hans-Jörg Richter, SIM Malawi's Country Director.

"While they may be able to raise funds for their individually agreed, essential support needs, SIM Malawi desires to assist them by covering costs that exceed the basic needs of such missionaries. These needs will vary depending on the country of origin and through which office they will be sent.

"We hope gradually to increase the number of placements of MNCs on our field. The initial project duration of three years will help us to gain experience regarding the co-operation with the various countries, churches and sending offices which will certainly lead to a fine-tuning of the project in the future."

The new project is not the only new initiative emerging from SIM Malawi; two new 'Ministry Opportunities' have also been launched working with specific



*Haile Selassie Road (top) is a key hub for Indian-based businesses in Blantyre
Below: Malawi's capital Lilongwe has a large Chinese community*

people groups – but in this case people groups originating from outside Africa.

Blantyre is the commercial capital of Malawi and for many years it has had a large population from the Indian sub-continent and of people with Indian background. Many of the Indians who have settled in the city run very successful businesses.

Similarly, in Lilongwe, the nation's capital city, there is a large population of Chinese people, either immediate ex-pats or second generation born in

Malawi.

Both of these groups come under the term 'Diaspora', and it is with these specific groups that SIM Malawi has opportunities for people to work.

"In both of these cases we are looking for people from the same ethnic background to come and live, work and witness to their fellow countrymen," said Hans-Jörg.

"In the case of the Indian Diaspora, mainly in Blantyre, there is no church or mission, as far as we can tell, that is working specifically with this group. We think the same is also true of the Chinese in Lilongwe.

"Both of these new Mission Opportunities will allow SIM Malawi to work alongside new sending offices in the SIM world and alongside important groups within the population of Malawi to reach out with the love of God to them and we hope in time, to be able to plant a church or to integrate them into existing churches."

If you would like to support the new Missionaries from New Contexts project, please quote SIM Malawi Project reference MW 96755





From the Archives: A 'living archive' returns to Malawi!

For the next two issues we will leave our intrepid pioneers in order to spend time with a 'living archive'. Nora Ring, aged 89 (pictured above), with her daughter Elizabeth - who was brought up in Malawi - and granddaughters Becky and Laura, recently visited Malawi, toured some of the places where Nora served, and met some of the people she helped. She spoke to Malawi Amoto twice and, in the next two issues, we will bring you her story.

On 3 April 1953, 28-year-old Nora Murchison, left Halifax, Nova Scotia, to travel to Malawi to serve with the then South African General Mission (SAGM) as a nurse. She arrived on station at Chididi, in the south of the country, on 19 May and served in the field until 1990.

During her time in Malawi, Nora experienced a great deal of change; she changed her name from Murchison to Ring, Port Herald – the nearest 'large' town to Chididi - changed its name to Nsanje, the mission changed its

name from SAGM to Africa Evangelical Fellowship (AEF) and the country changed its name from Nyasaland to Malawi!

Nora trained as a nurse in Canada and, soon after qualifying, entered Bible School, as she had felt for a long time that she was called to be a missionary nurse.

"I trained as a nurse but didn't work very long because I went to Bible School afterwards and then came out," said Nora

"Strangely enough I always wanted to be a missionary nurse from before I went to school because my mother had been a nurse, and an 'aunt' (she wasn't truly an aunt but she had a connection) had been a missionary in China, and that sealed my fate!

"I came to Malawi because that is where SAGM appointed me. They thought of Angola but they knew that Daryl, my fiancé as he was then, was a teacher and they didn't need teachers in Angola, so Malawi was their choice for us." It would be four years before Daryl was able to join Nora in Malawi and they could be married.

Life for Nora, and the rest of the

team, was, in her words, "surprisingly comfortable", with an adequate social life and good fellowship. But life was very much centred on Chididi and the surrounding area, and Nora had been on the field for 11 months before she visited Blantyre for a brief holiday.

Chididi had a 'hospital' of sorts – a building with three rooms which was used for this purpose. Nora remembers one room being used as the examination room, the second for preparation of medicines, and the third for maternity cases. Patients at the hospital came from far and wide and even from over the nearby Mozambique border.

"Chididi acted as a centre for the many villages that were scattered around," Nora remembered.

"But it was not just a question of people coming to us. We had a number of villages that we would visit on a regular basis to deal with medical problems and also to bring the Word of God to the people. At least one of these villages, that I used to visit regularly, was across the border in Mozambique."

When Daryl arrived on field and they were married, he took up his work as a school inspector for both Government .

"Daryl was in charge of what we called 'European Posts' in those days. He would do the inspections of the Government Schools as well as the little mission schools that we had. I forget how many primary schools there were, but he would travel around and visit them and, I presume, made a report back to the Government," said Nora.

On the whole, life on the Chididi station was good but there was a darker side to life in Malawi – a dark side which is still prevalent today to some extent.

Nora recalled some brushes with witch doctors and the impact of the occult on people around her. "We used to have a week of

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preaching that was quite interesting. We would go out and stay in a village for a week and, when the children were small, Elizabeth and her brother John went with us,” she said. “On one visit we had to borrow the government launch and they took us down-river to the village. When the week was over, on the Sunday afternoon, I was just walking around. John must have been with his father because I had Elizabeth, just talking to the women casually, and all of a sudden one of the women said “The child!” and she had wandered over the bank. “I said to them: “I am not worried about the water, because I can swim, but I am worried about the crocodiles,” and they said: “Oh, you don’t need to worry about crocodiles because they will only come if someone sends an evil spirit on one to take your child and who would do that to you?” It just showed the darkness at that time,” she recalls. “Another time, we heard in Chididi that in that same village one woman was set on fire because they said she was casting

spells on people. But I remember one of the men who worked with me in the *Chipatala* [hospital] as we called it said: “Why would they use fire, because we all know that fire would kill anybody?” “But also in those days there was still quite a lot of poisoning; there was one time after I was married we heard that somebody just across the border (it was illegal here in Malawi) was going to be tested by being given the *Mwavi* poison to drink. They say that if you vomit then you did not have an evil spirit. So Daryl and I walked over to Mozambique hoping we could find the person and prevent this. We didn’t know what stage it was in of course and even the children were laughing with delight that the white people could not even stop it. It was a real heavy feeling of darkness when such a terrible thing was going on and they thought it was just something to laugh about. Very



sad.”
Despite these problems, Nora is in no doubt about the time she spent in Malawi and that, given the chance, she would do it all again. “They were certainly happy times; I don’t mean they were perfect, there were times when things did not go smoothly. It didn’t feel like a job; it just felt like what I wanted to do and what I liked to do and it was a great privilege. Daryl and I often said if we were starting out again that would be the route we would take!” she said.
In the next issue we will look at some of the highlights of Nora’s recent visit to Malawi.



Top: Nora was able to meet people whose lives she impacted during her time in Malawi and (bottom) was able to meet up with the current SIM Malawi team and friends when in Blantyre



“Come over to ...” the call for Sunday School Teacher Training

In Acts 16:9 we read of Paul’s vision of a man from Macedonia saying: “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” A similar request is being made when it comes to SIM Malawi’s Sunday School Teacher Training Programme. But rather than the call coming from Macedonia it is coming from neighbouring Mozambique and Zambia.

This call has come through the work of a new partner organisation – Sunday School Training United Movement (STUM). Set up in 2012 by Pastor John Msowoya, STUM has seen a dramatic start to its training work, and the model it uses is now being sought out by people in neighbouring countries.

“STUM operates on three levels,” said John Msowoya.

“We have Clusters, which are groups of between three and ten churches in an area; then we have Zones which are collections of Clusters; and finally we have Districts which are collections of Zones. Our vision is that, by working across all denominations, we will be able to provide every church in Malawi

with the materials it needs to run a Sunday School, to train the teachers it needs, and to make sure there is a Sunday School in the first place!

“The development of this model has been so successful that in just two years we are seeing some exciting developments. We have people working in areas close to the Mozambique and Zambia borders, and people from those countries are now demanding that we go and advise how they can set the model up so they can improve

how they train their Sunday School teachers.”

STUM is the latest development in around a decade of hard work carried out by SIM Malawi’s Sunday School Teacher Training Co-ordinator, Jim Young. When he first arrived, with his wife Diane and family, from New Zealand in 2003/04 he was working exclusively with SIM Malawi’s partner the Africa Evangelical Church (AEC). Since 2008 that work has developed to cover most, if not all, church and denominational groups, and has led Jim and his team to travel the length and breadth of Malawi several times over, delivering the training. With the cost of all this travelling increasing, something needed to be done.

“We realised that, despite all of this travelling, we needed to make more progress in the training programmes, faster progress than we had been able to do to that point,” said Jim Young.

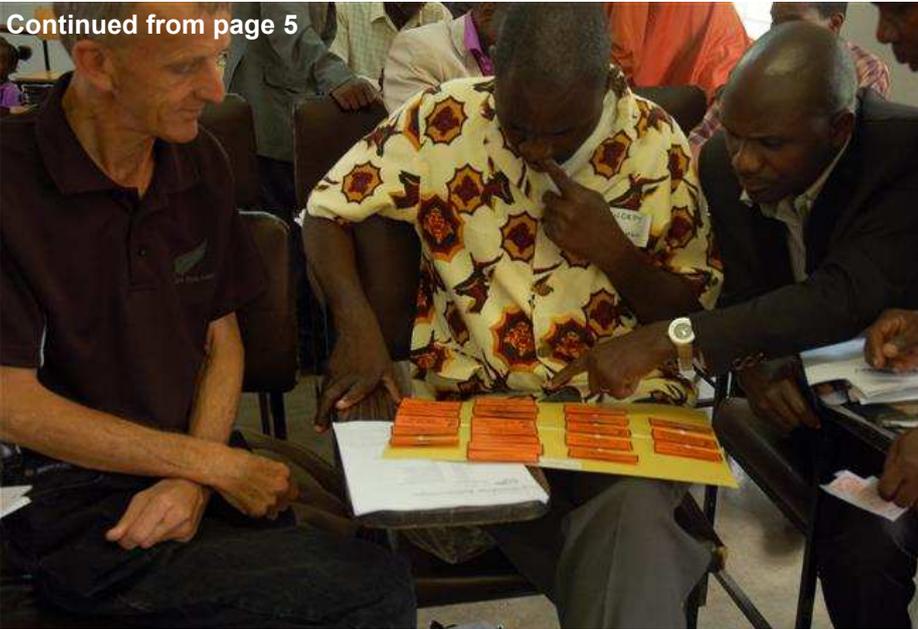
“So we were delighted that John caught the vision we had and saw the potential of forming committees to help deliver training on a more local level, that was the beginning of STUM and its model of Clusters, Zones and Districts.

“We realise that SIM Malawi will still need to help resource the

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*Above: Sunday School teachers at the Kasungu training event working together on a project
Top: Jim Young who heads up SIM Malawi’s Sunday School Teacher Training work*



Jim and other leaders sorting an answer out

organisation because everyone working for STUM does so as a volunteer. This means we will still need to support with financial and other resources to help it get off the ground.”

But the link with STUM is not the only new development in this ministry which is part of the SIM Malawi ‘Reach Children and Youth’ focus area. A recent four-day training course held in Kasungu, two hours north of Lilongwe, was run by Bible Centred Ministries (BCM). BCM was set up in 1936 as the Bible Club Movement in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Currently it has 700 missionaries worldwide and looks to work in the areas of church planting and children’s ministry.

“Being Children’s Ministry Co-ordinator for Africa with BCM, my work is to make contact with people in different countries and organisations to see how we can work together,” said Pat Govender, speaking at Kasungu where she and colleague Pat Black, BCM’s Lead Trainer, were the course facilitators.

“BCM does not want to work alone; our vision is to work with churches and partners like SIM Malawi and STUM to strengthen existing ministries. In training events such as this one we offer

our ‘In Step with the Master’ programme to train trainers who can then go back to their own churches and communities and train children’s workers and Sunday School teachers there. By working this way we can reach even more children with the Gospel.”

With new partnerships coming on board, the future for this aspect of SIM Malawi’s work is looking exciting, as both Jim and John explained.

“God is into giving surprises!” said Jim.

“So only God knows really, but it is exciting whatever the next step may be – time will tell!” he said.

“I see the relationship between STUM and SIM Malawi like a baby and its mother,” said John.

“STUM is the baby being held by its mother. SIM Malawi wants to see that baby grow and so do we; we are sure that one day the baby will be able to run on its own but for now we are grateful for the partnership we have.”

If you would like to support SIM Malawi’s Sunday School Teacher Training Programme please quote Project Reference MW 96556 ‘Christian Education Resources’



Prayer for STA support

We have two young ladies who are pulling support together to allow them come out to Malawi and join ministries in Lilongwe and Blantyre.

Alicia Oakley (below) is a recently qualified nurse from Canada. She is looking to come to work in the ward of Partners in Hope, SIM Malawi’s partner medical centre in Lilongwe.

Shelby Walden (top) is from the USA and is looking to join SIM Malawi’s children’s work.

Both are hoping to be out here in June but are still trying to get the funds together. Please pray that they will be successful in this. If you are able to help with financial support please contact:

www.sim.ca for Alicia and www.simusa.org for Shelby

