

From our street to yours ...
Glyn, Susan, Maeyken, Adriaena
June 2005 #2.3

Snippets of the last little while ...

The last few weeks have been busy with different types of activities. Let me give you a picture of what's been happening in addition to the regular work

Mennonite Central Committee's departure. The reality of MCC leaving Botswana has really hit home. At the end of May we helped the MCCer's with the final garage sale and sorting through the contents of two households. We had our final MM Botswana gathering recently. It was a fun gathering enhanced with five MMBots Alumni joining us. (Bryan Born, Jonathan & Mary Kay Larson and Art & Ruth Thiessen)

Preparing the Guesthouse/Office. We have given up the office/guesthouse that has housed MMBots for years and are changing the African Inter Mennonite Mission (AIMM) owned house next to our house into an office/guesthouse. Some painting has already happened, more will come. We realized that the roof to the shed needed to be replaced, but got a better deal when we moved an MCC shed. It was bigger and better so Glyn and a bunch of guys spent a day taking the old one down and putting the new one up. Bryan Born (Former AIMMer) is here for a short visit so we used his expertise with succulents to transplant some of the plants from his old house to the gardens next door. It was a fun day with someone who knows lots about succulent gardening!

Explaining our Work. In mid May a couple who wanted to know more about Mennonite work in Southern Africa visited Botswana. We took them to Francistown to see the work there. We enjoyed visiting with them and talking about the work here and life in general for mission workers. We were challenged in the area of work with HIV/Aids since health is their speciality.

Short Term Mission Workers. Bryan Born returned to do some research and brought with him three students from Columbia Bible College who are placed in different locations in the country. Glyn and I were with them during some of their orientation. We both found it energizing to be around these young adults who are so full of a desire to serve and grow in their relationship with God!

Understanding Other AIMM Work. In the midst of this Glyn took a quick trip to Lesotho with Jonathan Larson. There they met Brian Dyck (AIMM worker from Umtata, SA). Brian introduced them to the work in Lesotho and to some of AIMM's partners there. All of the AIC work in the various locations have taken on very distinctive characteristics of their own so it was good to see Lesotho hands on before Brian and his family leave at the end of this year.

Susan



Bryan Born with students Alexa and Susan at Kolobeng the site of David Livingstone's mission

North American Assignment

We have our tickets. We will be leaving Botswana on July 28, returning on October 12. We will be spending the first while in North America with our families. After that we are in congregations on the weekends and willing to meet with people, committees or other organizations during the weeks.

Susan's family will celebrate her parents 50th Wedding Anniversary while we are in Ontario. On August 15th all her siblings, spouses and nieces and nephews will be together with her parents for the day. Then on the Thanksgiving Weekend the family is planning a Come and Go Tea.

If you wish to connect with us while we are in North America this email address will still be active.

You can also try Susan's parents home (519-986-2577) or Jim and Ingrid Loepp Thiessen (519-579-1726). We will try to keep them informed of our comings and goings so we can be tracked down!

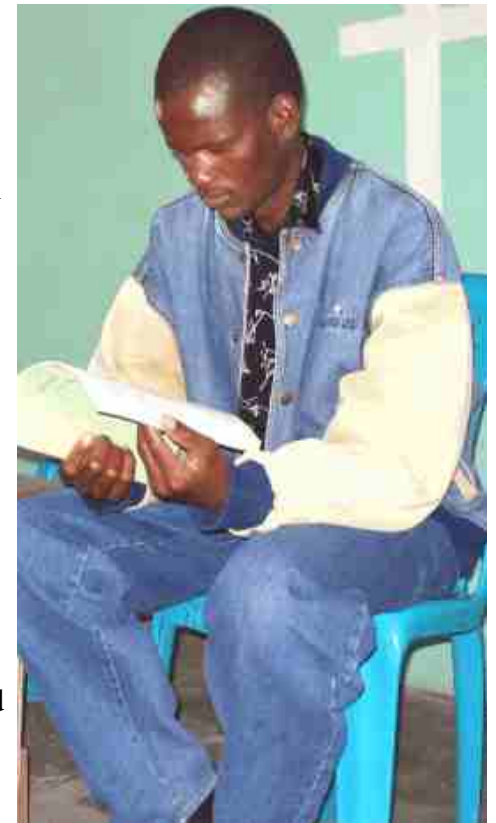
And a few more ...

The **Brethren in Christ Church** (BIC) a branch of the Mennonite church, has many congregations in Zambia and Zimbabwe. People from those areas have moved to Gaborone and established a BIC church. We have had a couple of meetings with the leadership of this church to establish good relationships and to explore ways we can help one another's ministries. We have also worshipped with them. Part of the visit to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe in July is to continue to build bridges with this church.

Last month we were invited to a **Spiritual Healing Church in Lobotse** where the pastor was interesting in starting a Bible class. He had visited a sister congregation here in Gaborone the night they had a Bible class, and was so excited he asked us to come out right away. He was a bit disappointed that we could not come the first Sunday after he invited us but we were able to go the next Sunday. We had a good meeting with the church leaders, and then worshipped with them. This is a congregation that usually meets for 1½ hours on a Sunday. That Sunday they went for 3 hours and it was not the long winded preacher (me). I was short. Usually I am translated, which gives time for thought as the translation is happening. That Sunday I did some in Setswana but for time reasons they decided not to translate what I did in English. Instead the pastor enlarged on some of what I said after the sermon. So I had to think on my feet without the usual pauses for thought (or translation, depending on your perspective). Most of the 1½ hours of overtime was spent in an offering (and singing and dancing) and Susan and I did not hear anyone making noise about the overtime.

A few weeks ago **I visited 10 churches** (or was it 11, hard to remember exactly). This is my personal record, my previous best was 15 in two days (in Egypt). I was in Molepolole, a town about a ¾ hour from Gaborone with 4 people from the Bible teaching committee. We were visiting congregations to invite them to a meeting to discuss starting a class in Molepolole. We left Gaborone in time to visit churches meeting at 11am. We started a bit late but upon arriving found few or no people at the first few churches we visited. At about 12:30 we began to meet in congregations where things were happening. Much of the travel between congregations was on foot and at one point we were walking beside a plot where it was obvious that worship was happening. We had not planned on visiting here but Mosweu, the chair of the committee, decided to enter and invite them to join us at the meeting. As it turned out, this was a branch (congregation) of the church that one of the people we were with belonged to. They came to the meeting. I still keep contrasting what we can do here versus what would happen in North America. Later Mosweu heard that about 50 people were interested in a class. The day the class started only 5 showed up, but that was also the day the Africa Cup qualifying soccer match between Botswana and Tunisia was held here. Competition hard to ignore! The next week there were ten at the class, but not those first five. We will see where all this leads.

Glyn



Mosweu preparing for a class

Present and Future Activities

- June 25 - July 5 Caralee Good here.
June 30 - July 10 Brian Dyck, Lynell Bergen and family here.
July 2-5 Glyn and Caralee and Brian to Zimbabwe coming home via Francistown.
July 28 Leave for North America

North American Assignment

August:

- 14 First Mennonite, Wadsworth, OH
19 Hawksville Mennonite
21 Wilmot Mennonite
28 Shantz Mennonite & Living Water Fellowship

September:

- 11 Bethany Mennonite
18 Nith Valley & Waterloo North
20 Rockway Mennonite Collegiate
21 Conrad Grebel College - PACS students and community supper
23 Conrad Grebel College - MTS students
25 Breslau Mennonite

October:

- 2 Wellesley Mennonite
9 Markdale Church of the Nazarene

The Family

This has been a “quieter” term for the girls. Maeyken intentionally signed up for fewer afternoon activities just to have some more time to do other things. Some days we really wonder if the other things basically entails spending time with her friends! Not many weekends have gone by when we haven’t had an extra girl here or Maeyken is off somewhere. Adriaena has been enjoying learning the sport of Netball (somewhat like basketball).

She was quite pleased the other day when she won a book for a library program. They were to bring in something that represented one of their favorite books. I had just found a slab of fruit cake in the fridge that had been left here by one of the AIMM people who left over a year ago. So she took it well covered in saran wrap along with one of her favourite books “*Junie B. Jones and the Yucky Blucky Fruit Cake*”. The children in her class voted it to be the best example!



Maeyken wearing Zebra’s shirt (Botswana’s national football team) and Botswana toque.

We have hired our household helper full time as of June 1st. Mavis was working for another woman two days a week who no longer needed her services. With our involvement in ministry activities increasing and the addition of the guesthouse/office to keep clean we decided that having Mavis here 5 days a week would be helpful. She has a wonderful way of keeping the house both clean and organized! When we were negotiating our understanding with her we put some items into the contract that before gave her additional money. I told her that I would do my best to be “fair” to her if the work exceeded her normal working hours. Her comment back, “You must be fair... you are a Christian.” Mavis is also a Christian so it is good to know it works both ways! It was also a good reminder that our Christian values must shine through in everything we do.

Contact us

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hours earlier than Ontario time)

Our web site:

which includes pictures and
previous newsletters:
<http://www.thegatheringsite.ca/susanglyn/>

Please Pray for...

... the **Bible teaching ministry** among the African Indigenous Churches (AICs) and for the wonderful people who are dedicated to leading classes in a variety of locations. Pray for us as we discern ways that we can be most helpful in nurturing these leaders. Pray for the leaders and the classes who will continue on in our absence while we are in North America. While classes can run quite independent of us people appreciate our presence and support.

... the **people of Botswana** as they continue to live with the daily reality of HIV and AIDS. Our recent visitors who specialize in Health Care have given us opportunity to learn more about the disease itself as well as the resources that are available to people. Stigma and behaviour still play a major role in this epidemic. When we return in October we want to be much more intentional about looking at what we can do within our context of ministry here.

... us as we prepare for our **North American Assignment**. Continue to pray that God would direct and guide our thoughts and planning. Also pray for safety as we travel both internationally and in North America. Please also pray for congregations who are considering forming an official partnership with us and the ministry here in Botswana. One of our tasks when we are in North America will be work with these congregations to determine partnership possibilities.

...for a **UCCSA pastor** who has a heart for young adults who lack employable skills and a high school diploma. With her excellent vision and leadership a center offering training in specific areas (cuisine, sewing, pottery etc) has been developed. They are outgrowing their space and are currently looking for a better location. Funding is also a constant challenge for the organization.

...please pray for the people who **struggle to make enough money** to meet all of their monthly obligations. A couple of weeks ago the government devalued the Pula. Prices in stores went up overnight by 12 percent. Salaries have not increased. Many people are struggling to make ends meet.

...for the people of our neighbouring country of **Zimbabwe**. The situation there continues to get worse with fuel and food shortages. Pray especially for our brothers and sisters in the BIC church.



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Witness

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