



President's Report KwaYa Australia Inc - 2019



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ACCOUNTANTS & TAXATION CONSULTANTS

Thanks to Brian Meldrum B.Bus CA JP (NSW) from Mayberry Meldrum Anderson - Accountants and Consultants for generously offering his services to undertake Kwaya's audit requirements as a registered charity.

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I present the following report for 2018/2019. It is now nine years since KwaYa's inception. We have just completed our 7th tour to Uganda and ACC/Ubuntu will commence its 5th tour of Australia in April next year.

Many said we couldn't do it, but we still remain an organisation that has no paid employees and allocates 100% of every dollar to the project for which it was raised.

Of course, we are nothing without our volunteers who now number over one thousand and spread from Mornington Peninsula, to S.E. Qld to Uganda Africa. We look forward to yet another year of adventure, triumph and success.

Marsha Gusti
President
KwaYa Australia

KwaYa # 7 - Tour – Sept/Oct 2019

KwaYa # 7 was the seventh group to visit Uganda. On September 28th, seventeen adventurers stepped onto a plane in Australia and two weeks later arrived home different people.



Seven of the 17 were repeat travellers. When asked why they were returning, replies varied from "to reconnect with my Ugandan family (the African Children's Choir)" to "I need to return to a place of gratitude," and "the trip feeds my soul on a human and musical level".

As one past KwaYa traveller said, "If your soul had a bucket list this (a KwaYa tour to Uganda) would fill it.

Each tour we introduce a new experience which also keeps past travellers returning. New projects were undertaken where funds raised by the KwaYa #7 team were directed.

In September 2020 we will be taking a team to Kenya for the first time.

1. CONCERTS

KwaYa # 7 consisted of mostly experienced choir singers and a few adventurous shower singers. With the help of members of Ubuntu 2 an impressive choir was formed which sang at churches and villages in Kampala and regional areas of Uganda. One particular performance elicited a standing ovation.

There were two members who did not want to perform. We cater to those who do not wish to participate in any aspect of the tour.



2. WORKSHOPS

One of the most popular and rewarding aspects of a KwaYa tour is the interactive workshops with the children. Both sides enjoy the interaction immensely. Each KwaYa participant is encouraged to tap into their artistic skills (obvious or latent) to lead fun, informative and uniquely Australian workshops for the children in the slums and remote villages. Workshops included song, drama, craft, and dance.



CRAFT

DANCE



Two “fix it/construction” teams committed to repainting Jace Primary School in the slum, as well as building a playground at the same school as well as The African Children’s Choir Primary School.



NEW PLAYGROUND AFRICAN CHILDREN’S CHOIR PRIMARY SCHOOL



NEW PLAYGROUND JACE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE SLUMS OF KAMPALA



NEW PAINT JOB JACE PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE SLUMS OF KAMPALA



**EMPOWER INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY
AFRICAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

The ACC/Empower secondary school is nearing completion. This is an exciting time being that many Aussies across Australia have contributed in some way to making this dream a reality.



Kwaya Stitch Me Warm Annual Report October 2019



At the Purple House, (Western Desert Dialysis), Alice Springs

This year we have received 100kgs of delightful handmade knits from 8 donor groups:

- Christine Ingram and friends, Melbourne VIC
- Colleen Yuke and the Gold Coast Knitters QLD

- Diane Bickett, Geelong VIC
- Diane Reken, WA
- Helen Boelens and the Dutch Knitters, THE NETHERLANDS
- Judith Buchanan and the Sebastopol Holy Trinity Knitters, VIC
- kogo (knit one give one), Melbourne VIC
- Mary Polidano, northern NSW



Diane Reken and kogo are two new contributors. Thank you! Three new submissions for membership were received through our website and we welcome all donations!

Staff members at the Alice Springs welfare office, The Salvation Army, receiving their second parcel this year.

Kwaya Stitch Me Warm received 20 parcel deliveries at the post office. Our recipients are the patients and their families at the Purple House (Western Desert Dialysis), and the Salvation Army. KSMW coordinator Jude Mapleson made 2 visits to the Salvos and 15 to Purple House!

The NGO Purple House offers remote dialysis, social support, aged-care services and runs a bush medicine enterprise. With 18 remote clinics and a mobile unit called the Purple Truck. patients are getting back home so that families and culture can remain strong

Some new initiatives:

- a newspaper article wrapping up the work of the Purple Truck and our knitting group
- tote bags and knits in footy colours, (AFL here), which were received with glee!





A thank you card from Kwaya Stitch Me Warm for Helen Boelens to distribute to the growing number of crafters who have heard of our organisation in the region of Mijdrecht in The Netherlands.

Cheers everyone! Thank you for all the good work you do.



Jude Mapleson
October 2019

Thanks, Jude, for your incredible work in co-ordinating this project and making sure all the goodies are directed to the neediest areas.
 We value and appreciate you!

HUMBLE HAMPERS

<https://www.kwaya.org/humble-hampers>

What is Christmas truly about?

“Not giving gifts of little use to those who have everything but giving essentials to those who have little to nothing.”

A campaign we launched in 2015 to help ACC deliver over 500 food hampers to families in the slums and remote villages of Uganda, has taken a firm foothold and is feeding hundreds of families every Christmas. One food hamper @ \$25 feeds a family for two weeks. Xmas 2018, 532 hampers were donated.

When the donor’s name is added to the accompanying gift card, it becomes a personal gift both for the recipient and the giver.



BIG HEARTS

<https://www.kwaya.org/big-hearts>

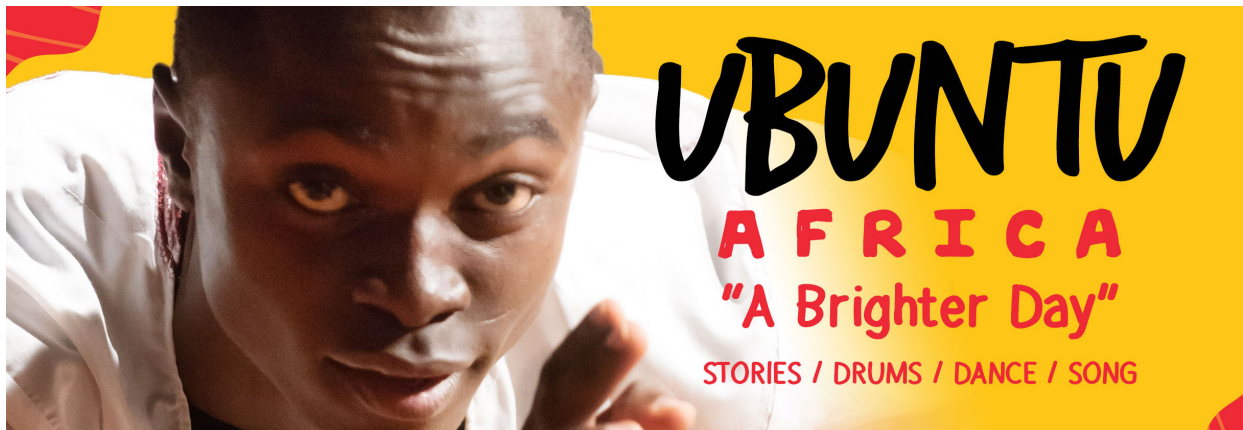
We are proud to continue our **program** to extend emergency medical assistance to include the ACC kid’s families **who live in the slums.**

Nine big-hearted Australians currently contribute \$2130 per annum.



UBUNBTU 3 TOUR – APRIL TO JULY 2020

<https://www.kwaya.org/a-brighter-day-tour>



The UBUNTU 3 KwaYa "A Brighter Day" Tour of Australia is purposefully designed with community participation as a priority. Communities benefit by working and performing alongside local and international artists as well as experiencing firsthand a social, cultural and musical interaction with the UBUNTU Africa performers from Uganda and Kenya.

Opportunities where three cultures come together to share music, dance and storytelling are rare in Australia especially in regional areas. Over the past seven years KwaYA has, via the arts, proved itself an innovative leader in the provision of valuable opportunities for progressive collaboration between diverse cultures both nationally and internationally. Research supports the theory that music is a great equalizer transcending racial, social, economic and language barriers.

Since 2013 KwaYa has hosted four 3-month tours to Australia where Australian community choirs and schools have the unique opportunity to host workshops and/or masterclasses and perform on stage in concerts, with UBUNTU Africa.

Residents in local communities are invited to participate in interactive cultural workshops and musical master classes jointly facilitated by African artists. Local choirs and schools are also encouraged to participate in spectacular concerts providing exceptional and unique opportunities that inspire and empower all involved.

UBUNTU Africa is a group of young adults from Uganda and Kenya. The group is made up of fourteen former members of The African Children's Choir. They toured the world as youngsters performing for the Queen and with celebrities such as Bono and Josh Groban. The ACC program promotes, around the world, the beauty, dignity and unlimited ability of the African child being a voice for the millions of suffering children who cannot speak for themselves. The program provides for the children's wellbeing and quality education, utilizing the transformative power of music.

Based on results of previous tours it has been proven that communities benefit when cultures and the arts are exchanged at a grass roots level between Africans and ordinary Australians.

During the three-month tour (5 April to 5 July 2020), eighteen locations will be visited. They include Mornington Peninsula, Melbourne, New Gisborne, Canberra, Vincentia, Sydney, Blue Mountains, Erina, Taree, Mullumbimby, Gold Coast, St Lucia, Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Crows Nest, Caloundra and Maleny.

KwaYa tours to regional communities have consistently achieved remarkable outcomes both artistically and socially.

Participants engage in an exciting, stimulating and transformative experience. They come away from the project with significantly enhanced art skills, broadened cultural and artistic knowledge, boosted confidence and a heightened capacity to reflect on their achievements

Coming together to work towards a high-end performance and/or engaging in a cultural workshop, creates an environment where participants felt empowered and valued within their local communities. All aspects of the project, including event management, marketing, stage production, photography, videography etc enabled a large portion of the community to actively and collectively contribute to the artistic betterment of their community in a palpable and meaningful way.

Local Musical Directors and facilitators indicate that working closely with internationally recognised artists such as UBUNTU Africa, has a positive, developmental effect on their practice.

“One of our goals as Musical Directors is to immerse ourselves in something new each year and meet our goals professionally. Having UBUNTU Africa return (with an entirely new program) to our regional communities is exciting for everyone involved. After having heard from past participants how much fun the project is, the attendance has grown each time UBUNTU Africa visits. I am thrilled KwaYa has chosen to include Stanthorpe in the 2020 tour.”
Elaine Coates – KwaYa S.E. Qld Regional Co-ordinator and Musical Director Women in Harmony Choir, Toowoomba.

Cultural exchange workshops prove to be extremely popular with local residents. People of all ages, skills and backgrounds are encouraged to engage in cultural and artistic activities. Town folk, who had never touched a drum or attempted singing a few phrases of an African song, were for one hour transported on a journey of self-discovery.

Self-conscious participants are seen to slowly emerge from chairs to find their bodies involuntarily and surprisingly move to an unfamiliar beat. As hips (wrapped in traditional African costume) moved, voices sang out, drum beats and raucous laughter echoed through community halls where local groups normally gather for scones and tea. Participants express joy and ask when UBUNTU Africa would be returning so they could bring family and friends.

One of the most culturally satisfying components of the visit is the billeting of the African team by local residents. Hosting an African provides an opportunity for both sides to explore other cultures, traditions, customs, beliefs, societies, languages and much more. Hence, such opportunities allowed participants to view the world with a different lens. This provided alternative perspectives. It broadens local resident's horizons and increases the tendency of acceptance.

The impact UBUNTU Africa has when visiting regional communities is palpable and powerful. Presenting a high calibre and interactive artistic opportunity to small communities has proven to be beneficial to all residents not only artistically and culturally but also in addressing important areas such as social inclusion and indigenous acceptance and mindfulness.

OUR BUS

This will be the 4th tour for the KwaYa bus since receiving the grant in 2013.

Amanda and Adam Pollard babysat the bus on their property in Ipswich since the end of the 2018 tour up until Darren collected it early October. Thanks Amanda and Adam!

Whilst Darren Hooper was kindly transporting the bus from Ipswich to Melbourne to prepare for the arrival of UBUNTU 3, it broke down. Darren had it towed and had a new clutch installed so it could complete its journey. We'd like to thank Darren for his selfless service to KwaYa and UBUNTU.

The bus is now at her second home in New Gisborne awaiting the arrival of UBUNTU 3. A big thank you to Lisa and Andrew Peake for taking her in and looking after her.



We have applied for three grants to Gambling Community Benefits Fund to upgrade the bus but with no luck so far. If we aren't successful in getting a grant, we will continue to use the old girl. A reversing camera is one of the essentials we feel we need to add before we embark on our tour in April.

Thanks again to all who give of themselves so that we can continue our very important work in Africa. We couldn't do it without you.

Marsha Gusti