

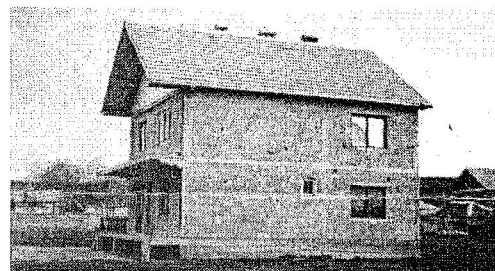
## **New hope in Kosovo**

The country looked magnificent with lush green fields, beautiful flowering trees, European style homes. It could have been Switzerland, but it wasn't. Behind us was an area marked off as a mass grave, with a huge sign reading 'Graves of National Martyrs'. One KFOR tank rolled over the broken up roads and UN peace keeping troops were on standby.

In the city of Prishtina there were more troops and it was a challenge to recognise the flags worn on their uniforms. Some that we saw were from Norway, Italy, Britain, USA, Pakistan, Ireland, Germany, Sweden, Poland, Greece and France.

On 10 June 1999, the Yugoslavian armed forces began withdrawing from the province of Kosovo and NATO ceased their bombing campaign. Within days, refugees began returning to their homes, and, within a few weeks, nearly all of them had returned to their cities, towns and villages.

Since that time hundreds of NGOs



*New home to replace one destroyed*

have been working in an endeavour to rebuild homes, remove land mines, provide medical treatment, assist in counselling and provision of materials to help these people rebuild their lives. The United Nations are having to establish totally new systems as everything had gone. There were no telephones, no post offices, no banks, no garbage collections, no sanitation, no registration of cars, or payment of taxes. All previous structures had collapsed.

Many people had given generously to HADA and the funds were forwarded

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### ***Inside this Issue...***

- On-site in Kosovo with the Youngs
- Briefing on the Kazakhstan work
- The latest on training in Nepal
- Thanks from Turkey & Kosovo

## **The challenge of Kazakhstan**

The Kazak government chose boldly to move the capital of Kazakhstan from Almaty to Astana in 1998. The reasons given were national security as Almaty is close to the Chinese border and the fact that it is prone to earthquakes. In comparison, Astana is colder and in winter it is not uncommon to have temperatures below -20 C and even as low as -40C. Moving the capital has meant that huge amounts of capital have been invested in the city. Outwardly there is the appearance of a city rapidly moving forward, but inwardly the city still faces the same problems of most cities of the

HADA has three major opportunities. The first is to provide expertise to the government and local industry. The former Soviet Union was relatively isolated from Western know-how and technology. Use of computers is still very limited. There is a great deal of interest in learning foreign languages as a means of reaching into the world especially English. HADA can bring in people to provide training in all kinds of fields - medicine, education, management, agriculture for short term periods or for longer terms. We regularly get

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**KOSOVO** (continued from page 1)

*"It is spring, and  
the trees are in  
new leaf, with  
fresh flowers,  
and fruit to  
come.  
So, too, for  
the people of  
Kosovo,  
new hope, fresh  
opportunities  
and the rising up  
of a new nation."*

to Margaret Reid who was working in Albania where many of the refugees had fled to. Relationships were formed with the people in the tent cities, as they visited them daily with fresh vegetables and milk, providing them with cooking utensils as well as clothing and personal items.

After the refugees returned to their villages in Kosovo there were work teams of builders who travelled from Albania to help rebuild homes for the refugees they had formed relationships with. Margaret worked alongside World Relief, which is the North American equivalent of Tear Fund. Much of the HADA money went into their 'pot' to replace roofs and have people housed before the onset of winter.

In the villages of Milosheva and Pestov we were able to see homes totally rebuilt with HADA funding. Most had been destroyed by their Serbian neighbours who reportedly took everything, their personal papers, clothes and furniture, before setting the houses on fire. These ordinary village people were all so grateful for the assistance given, and many of them wanted to show us their photographs showing how grim the situation had been on their return.

There were so many distressing stories. The people continue to hurt and grieve the loss of their men-folk, be they fathers, husbands, brothers, children, grandchildren. One lady shared how she had lost her father and husband, and how many of the Serbian soldiers were on drugs. She thinks no-one with a clear mind could have done such atrocities. Another widow had been married 5 months. When she was in Albania as a refugee she heard of her husband's death and soon after lost their unborn child.

In the village of Ostrazub we spent time with a 40-year old widow. How her life has changed. She now must wear the brown head

scarf of a widow, and never leave her home unless escorted by her young son or a male member of her husband's family. In this small village there were 50 widows. World Relief repaired homes for 36. Housing was the first step. This was followed by gifts of cooking utensils and clothing, and later with provision of laying chickens, and in some

cases a cow with some receiving additional calves, depending on the number of children the widows had.

We realised how quickly and permanently situations changed for these women. One day they are able to go to the markets, have friends around, mix socially, and the next, because of the loss of a husband, their own lives cut off as well. Many visits are being made to these widows by foreign staff from NGOs in an effort to assist them to adjust.

We met Adelina, a young single lady in Prishtina. Their home had been in a nearby village, but it was now totally flattened, and someone has given them an apartment in the city to use. Adelina has a tumour on her face that cannot be treated in Kosovo. After many months of paperwork Margaret was able to arrange through UNHCR for her to fly to Switzerland where she is able to obtain free hospital treatment. HADA is assisting with some of the transportation costs and also medications required after the operation.

The whole country is adjusting. A year ago it was disaster, and now Prishtina is almost a thriving business centre. There are shops everywhere and money is flowing freely. It is almost an artificial situation with huge levels of funding being poured into the community with aid, as well as the day to day spending of the tens of thousands of troops and foreign workers. How will they fare when the aid ceases and the troops go home? Already a number of NGOs are pulling out as they see their aid and relief tasks coming to an end.

The people from this area of Kosovo are now surging forward. Instead of flattened and blackened ruins, they now have nice looking homes. They may not have much by way of furniture, but they all have very large television sets and sound equipment with the satellite dish up on the roof. Relatives in Germany always seem to be able to provide the essentials - a large television set! They were a proud and relatively wealthy people brought low, but now working industriously to regain their standard of living.

*Neil and Jeanie Young*



*Kosovar widow*

## Kazakhstan (continued from page 1)

requests for assistance - the AIDS clinic would like us to help with informing the public about the threat of this and other sexually transmitted diseases. The department of education is interested in consultancy on how to teach foreign languages more effectively. The Institute of Management is interested in a course on business ethics.

The second way HADA can help is to bring in physical aid. Much of the Soviet technology is outdated especially in the medical area. At the same time while there is huge interest in foreign languages there is very little literature available in these languages.

Perhaps the largest area HADA can work in is with people having social needs. The largest consumer product is alcohol. The level of alcoholism among men is enormous due to the abuse of vodka. The effects

on families are numerous - domestic violence, poverty, poor health, to name a few.

At the same time for every three people getting married, two are getting divorced. The alcoholism may well be related to the joblessness of many of the men, although one asks which came first, the alcoholism or the unemployment?

The challenge for HADA in Astana is not to judge the problems but to serve the people as best we are able. This will mean the purchase of some property to start a centre (or centres) where we can run programs that will help aid families in crisis. This will include alcohol rehabilitation, work creation schemes and counselling services. The collapse of communism has left enormous social issues and it is our hope that HADA will be a major player in helping Kazakhstan to experience a better future.

*Bruce and Edith Hanke*

*"The difference perhaps between Australia's social problems and those of Astana is the availability of services to help people in crisis and looking for ways out of the issues that are at hand."*

## Update from Nepal

Say the word 'Tibet' to anyone and ask them what images come to mind. You will probably find that, for the majority, they'll come up with smiling, sun-tanned faces with rosy cheeks, shaved-headed monks in maroon robes, colorful temples set in breath-taking scenery - the kind of Shangri-La image set forth in the stories.

Well sadly, the reality is very different! Here in Kathmandu, we at Hope International Training Center are working to improve the prospects of those Tibetans who have had to make Nepal their home. The majority of these people get by at close to subsistence level, working long hours in carpet factories or other small businesses if they are lucky enough to have any work at all. It is our desire to help these people reach their potential and to succeed in an environment where the odds are stacked against them.

Hope International is registered under the Social Welfare Council of Nepal as a vocational training center. Because of visa restrictions, the majority of the teachers are volunteers who give their time to serve the local community through the teaching of English, computer literacy, typing, or occa-

sionally cooking. The center also employs a local tailoring teacher.

Since our last up-date in the January edition of the HADA newsletter, we have continued to be encouraged by the constant stream of students who seek our help. Currently we have two English classes running - one at beginner's level, and another at intermediate level. Both classes are bursting at the seams and the students seem to be really valuing the opportunity to learn English from native speakers of the language. Computer literacy training has really taken off since we purchased the computers by means of a generous donation from the USA last year.

The waiting list for this skill is growing all the time - so please, if you are in any way competent in the use of a PC, then we could use you! We have just been given computer software which is a 'teach yourself typing' kit. This is a great bonus to us, as it does not require a trained typing teacher, just someone familiar with the Windows environment on a PC - it could be you!



*Tibetan child in Nepal*

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# HADA Newsletter

Issue 7, May 2000

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## VISION:

*To see medical, literacy, education,  
agricultural & sanitation  
programmes established  
in countries as needed*

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## Nepal (continued from page 3)

We are just about to kick off a new type of tailoring class in May. 'Income Generation Tailoring' will teach the students how to make items such as cushion covers, oven gloves, napkins and the like, anything that might appeal to Nepal's tourist market. We trust that this skill will give some students a tool with which they may be able to supplement their income.

If you feel interested in serving the Tibetan people in any way, I trust that

you will remember the work of Hope International Training Center and perhaps contact our friends at HADA for further information. We value your support, welcome enquiries for voluntary teaching, and your donations are crucial in enabling us to continue providing affordable training, and that glimmer of hope for the poor around us.

*Gareth McCormick*

**HADA wishes to thank Anthony Smith & Associates, Gold Coast, Australia for their assistance with photocopying and mailing this newsletter**

## Gleanings from the fields

### Turkey

With the money - US\$3000 - the Turkish Protestant church was able to buy four winterised tents for people who otherwise would have had to stay in flimsy makeshift tents throughout the cold winter days. There has been a lot of snow this winter. When the tents were handed over to the families the Christians prayed for those who would live in each tent. We believe that it has been so good to be able to show love to our needy Turkish friends. Please accept our grateful thanks.

*HADA friends in Izmit*

### Kosovo

This is a heartfelt thank you on behalf of the Kosovar people who have benefited from your generous gifts and your prayers. Many refugees were fed, burnt-out houses repaired, and sick people given medical help through your giving. I am thankful that this help has forged close relationships with Kosovar people as it is primarily through these relationships and seeing love and compassion in action that they will understand that their Creator is alive and is interested in them.

*Margaret Reid*