

## ***Dear Friends,***

We were hoping to get this letter to you as soon as we could as Hans-Georg was about to set out on his travels again!  
In the meantime he has arrived back safely...

We are so glad to be able to share our lives and our experiences with you again. May this 'BURGENLAND UPDATE' encourage you particularly to pray with us.

Here are the main points:

- It was ten years ago...
- 2009 got off to a hectic start!
- What else has been keeping us busy since the start of the year...
- What is coming up for us: for your immediate attention – and for your prayers
- Family news

If you've managed to read it all (or even if you haven't!), then please send us a quick note. We suggest something like the following:

- 'Lovely to hear from you again'
- 'Many thanks'
- 'Keep it going!'
- 'We would love to continue praying for you'
- 'Please come and see us'
- 'We would like to visit you'
- 'Thank you for sharing with us up till now, but we do not wish to continue receiving your newsletter'
- 'We wish you God's blessing for the future'

OR whatever else you would like to say!

We would WILLINGLY pray for you – please share your prayer requests with us – thank you!

Below you will find our newsletter – to be printed out and passed on – PLEASE share it with your prayer partners.

We look forward to your reply.

THANK YOU for your interest and we hope you enjoy reading it. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes

***The Hoprichs***

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**BURGENLAND UPDATE**  
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Early February 2009

Dear Friends

We are sending this with much gratitude: thank you for all your replies to our previous letter – it meant so much to us. Thank you to all those who have been so generous and have given us practical support in our ministry! Yes, it really gives us heart to know that we are not out on a limb here, but together with you we are establishing the Kingdom of God in many different places!

**To put it simply: thank you from the bottom of our hearts!!**

After Hans-Georg's eventful journey to Central Asia there was much to catch up with here, as well as numerous preaching engagements! We thought that December would be a bit quieter – far from it! Suddenly our timetable for the weeks before and after Christmas became very full.

It was ten years ago...

...that we started taking funerals for people without a church connection. It was on the **6<sup>th</sup> of December 1998** totally out of the blue that we had a **telephone call** from a funeral director in Eisenstadt **asking us to take a funeral**. We thought we should commemorate this and we invited the funeral director and his wife to a Swabian dinner with us.

We reminisced about that first unforgettable meeting and about the countless funerals that we have taken together with them since then. We could write a book about all we have experienced on the fringes and right in the middle of things.

**The day before Christmas Eve** we had another **appointment to arrange a funeral** which was held straight after the holiday. This was followed by another in January and both times we witnessed the heart-breaking scenes of a family saying goodbye to a relatively young father.

**PLEASE PRAY** that the comfort and hope of the Gospel would touch the hearts of the mourners.

**GIVE THANKS** also for the many, many opportunities at the funerals for sharing the Gospel in a suitable but clear way! We could **never** have dreamt up this particular way of spreading the word!

2009 got off to a hectic start!

Among our many visitors was an **older couple (M & S) from our neighbourhood**. The wife turned up on our doorstep in tears and apologised for bringing her problems with her. Being able to talk things through was evidently a great relief for her.

Soon afterwards Margret rang up a **friend who is a dental nurse** to get an emergency appointment for Hans-Georg as he had an inflamed molar (the root treatment has now been completed!) and in the course of the phone call was told about this lady's personal problems in her partnership. We offered to help them and to our surprise they turned up together on our doorstep the very next day. They stayed all afternoon and late into the evening and shared about far-reaching hurts from childhood that had never been dealt with which were having a great effect on interpersonal relationships today. We agreed on a course of action and would like to meet B & A again early in March.

**In the last few days S** who had been converted 2 years ago **turned up unexpectedly**. Many attempts to get her to go to church with us or to read the Bible with her have failed and we could do no more than pray for her. She was in such despair and was finding painful childhood memories coming back to her.

In all 3 very different situations we were aware that there were no quick or simple solutions and how much we needed God to move. Our offer to pray together with them in closing was willingly taken up. It was a completely new experience for them! They left deeply moved and without saying much more.

Their trust has grown to the extent that they felt able to ring us up a few days later.

It is certainly a **long-term process**, but we trust that our efforts are not in vain.

What else has been keeping us busy since the start of the year...

Early in January we had a visit from **Martin**, an Austrian helicopter pilot to make enquiries about how he could get involved on the mission field.

**Wolfgang** came to us with a call to go to the Congo – it's not easy to find an opportunity to serve there. We had to make contact with a new missionary organisation. But Wolffi is now on his way out there! Following the preparation work with us, there was a wonderful valedictory service in his home church, the evangelical church in Rutzenmoos (East Austria), during which Hans-Georg was able to share some thoughts about world mission and also bless Wolffi. On the evening before, 2 youth groups from the region came together to hear more about our path to the mission field. As an introduction, there were some freshly cooked New Guinea dishes to sample. The young people then stayed till the early hours.

**Livia** returned to Austria in good health and enthusiastic, having spent 15 months in Peru. She came to us for debriefing together with **Gudrun** who'd been to Romania. Most of the 'short-termers' then spend the night with us.

A particular highlight was the visit from our **long-term missionaries who had been in Central Asia**. We spent much time in fellowship and conversation over several days and we thanked God for HIS safekeeping. They took two services at our church in Siegendorf, and one at a new house fellowship for young adults here in Eisenstadt. These brought in a number of interested listeners, including a lady doctor from their country of work who now has Austrian citizenship. It is not clear whether they can return to that country. We prayed with them for direction.

Also in January we were unexpectedly asked to give **2 talks – here in Eisenstadt!** That is always something very special for us! In one of them Hans-Georg talked about his **trip to Central Asia** using a Power Point presentation in the function room of the re-named coffee house. Quite a large number of guests came along.

On the other occasion we met the very young citizens of Eisenstadt at the **municipal nursery school**. They paid close attention as we showed them our pictures of Papua New Guinea. Using the crucifix hanging on the wall in their hall we were able to present Jesus as their friend.

**Further talks/lectures are planned and we are willing to have further invitations!**

The last weekend of January there was the meeting in Vienna of the European branch of PIONEERS ([www.actionpartners.org.uk](http://www.actionpartners.org.uk)). On mission-net ([www.mission-net.org/](http://www.mission-net.org/)) Hans-Georg was asked to man the PIONEERS information stand at the big missionary conference in Oldenburg at Easter.

**What is coming up for us: for your immediate attention – and for your prayers**

**4<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> February:** Hans-Georg is taking part in a **workshop for 'New Missionary Movements' in Accra, Ghana** at the invitation of our partner mission SIM ([www.sim.org/](http://www.sim.org/)). Towards the end of his stay he would like to visit the place where the missionary Johannes Zimmermann worked. He was from Hans-Georg's home town, Gerlingen (near Stuttgart, S. Germany) ([http://www.johannes-rebmann-stiftung.de/en/traces\\_zimmermann\\_j.html](http://www.johannes-rebmann-stiftung.de/en/traces_zimmermann_j.html))

**21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> February: Meeting of the Foreign Missions Department** in St Veit (Carinthia), **preaching** at a service in Spittal/Drau, **debriefings** with David ((community work placement (as an alternative to military service)) in PNG) and Simone (Ethiopia). Both are from Carinthia.

**26<sup>th</sup> Feb. – 1<sup>st</sup> Mar.:** Margret is leading a **workshop ('Caring for the Elderly')** at the eastern region ladies' conference in Frankenfels/Pielachtal.

This year the **Women's World Day of Prayer** has been prepared by the women of Papua New Guinea. Margret was invited by 4 different committees to assist at 4 different events. We decided to take up the offer from **Weissach near Leonberg** (S. Germany) where we have some dear friends who have been following our progress for a long time. On 5<sup>th</sup> March Margret will speak at a ladies' breakfast meeting in Weissach and take part in the World Day of Prayer on the 6<sup>th</sup>.

**We are available to take services and speak at meetings in this region on Sat 7<sup>th</sup> and Sun 8<sup>th</sup> March and we are hoping to meet up with old friends.**

## Family News

THANK YOU for your faithful prayers, especially for our children!

**BENJAMIN & MARIA:** We are going to be grandparents again! The next little Hoprich is due to arrive at the end of July...

**SEBASTIAN:** is now involved with the music for the children's meeting at his church in Neusiedl.

**MANUEL** has many non-Christian friends and doesn't hesitate to talk to them about Jesus!

**DAVID, CLAUDIA & LITTLE TIMO** are still looking for a spiritual home!

**ANNIKA** is gradually improving at the grammar school and is currently studying Schiller.

With many greetings from Eisenstadt, which is celebrating 'Haydn Year' this year,

Wishing you God's richest blessings,