

Capital lawyer helps Ethiopia

Wellington lawyer Professor Kim Lovegrove has a passion to help the children of Ethiopia.

That is, perhaps, no surprise because he spent his childhood living in Africa. Professor Lovegrove was brought up in Malawi, Zambia, Swaziland and Ethiopia in the 1960s.

The link is much stronger, too. Professor Lovegrove is married to Ethiopian Tsigereda Gebrehana, a former Miss Universe Ethiopia, and has an 11-year-old Ethiopian son Wezoor.

His grandfather, the late Norman Lovegrove, held a senior UNESCO position in Addis Ababa. Among other things, he had dealings, "very positive dealings" Professor Lovegrove says, with the country's famous former emperor, Haile Selasse.

The link continues in what Professor Lovegrove describes as an "exciting and hugely worthwhile pro bono contribution".

Professor Lovegrove and trans-Tasman law firm Lovegrove Solicitors support the Hope for Children (HFC) initiative.

HFC focuses on helping Ethiopian children affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Today in Ethiopia there are approximately 4.6 million orphan children. The parents of many of these children have died from HIV/AIDS. HFC is dedicated to empowering the most desperate and vulnerable children to live with dignity and develop self-sufficiency and independence.

It has established an orphanage that provides a home and sustenance for some 600 children affected by the epidemic. It also provides a large number of home carers who are domiciled with small groups of children with the view to providing those children with quasi-familial support, kindness and opportunity.

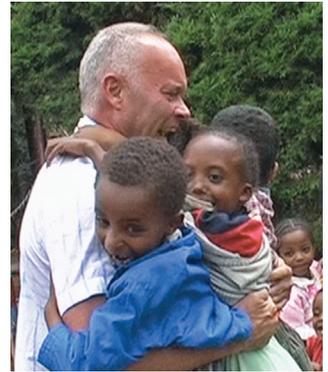
One of the most critical tasks performed by the organisation is child advocacy. Over the last few years Lovegrove Solicitors has sponsored the retainer and salary of HFC lawyer Rahel.

"Rahel's work is critical," Professor Lovegrove says. "She looks after all the legal needs of HFC. Those could range from ensuring that a child's inheritance is protected to representing children."

Some of these children "have been subjected to serious physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse. She deals with all of the manifestations of the legal issues that visit themselves upon orphaned children from an HIV paradigm," he says.

"Lovegrove Solicitors is privileged to back her noble and humanitarian mission and the wonderful work that HFC does." Professor Lovegrove has also collaborated in making a

*Exciting and
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contribution*



Professor Lovegrove during a recent visit to Ethiopia

documentary on HFC and the HIV epidemic with New Zealand filmmaker David Lawn. The film is on You Tube.

"Lovegrove Solicitors are committed to helping those who have been afforded less blessings than that which those in our profession take for granted," he adds.

Professor Lovegrove has an interesting pedigree, one that crosses international boundaries. As well as his UN delegate grandfather, his father, the late Dr Malcolm Lovegrove, also worked in Africa where he was a professor of education at Lusaka University in Zambia.

He is also the nephew of retired New Zealand Judge Barry Lovegrove, who was once a lawyer with the International Labor Organisation and was based in Malawi in the late sixties. Judge Lovegrove is now a Parole Board panel member.

A New Zealander, Professor Lovegrove began practising in Australia. Lovegrove Solicitors has offices in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra and an affiliate office in Ethiopia. Late last year, Professor Lovegrove established a practice in Wellington, specialising in construction law and misconduct advocacy. He is Conjoint Professor of Building Regulation and Certification at the University Of Newcastle, New South Wales and has written a number of building law texts. ■

People

Items for this column should be sent to the Writer, LawTalk, DX SP20202 or PO Box 5041, Lambton Quay, Wellington 6145, fax (04) 463 2985, email editorial.lawtalk@lawsociety.org.nz

John Billington QC has been appointed a Judge of the Court Martial Appeal Court. Mr Billington joined the New Zealand Army as a second lieutenant in 1969. He later graduated from Victoria University with an LLB, joined the independent bar in 1989 and was appointed a Queen's Counsel in 1996. His principal areas of practice include administrative law, corporate and commercial, defamation and serious fraud. He also has extensive experience in criminal law. Mr Billington is a member of the Arbitrators' and Mediators' Institute of New Zealand. ■



John Billington QC



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