

Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea



The last three months have had moments of joy (strengthened relationships), frustration (vehicle troubles), heartache (regions hit by drought), and toothache (refer the previous blog).

Fairly routine stuff, actually.....



Lae connections ...

Late July, a mission couple from Australia stayed with us as guests and met with several women interested in a KYB (Know Your Bible) study group. I casually mentioned that I was part of one for a time in Australia many years ago... and two weeks later, I led the group meeting!

The focus of KYB is to study the Bible together, learning how to share our faith and lead lives which enable us to be effective in our service of the Lord.

Local women gather at a local University conference room and split into two study groups, with my group currently working through Philippians. After four weeks, the themes which have impacted me are how joyful Paul was even when he was being persecuted; Paul praying for his persecutors (would I do the same?) to know God as their Creator and Saviour; and how unity within the church affects our witness to non-believers.

Please pray that I avoid being the missionary with all the answers, and that I can build good friendships with these women from various churches in Lae.



We also met one night with University students from EBC (Evangelical Brotherhood Church) to share about our journey into mission work.



Prayer points

There have been many blessings in response to past prayer points. Thank you for faithfully labouring with us in this way.

Ministry

- Praise God for the opportunities which have arisen for us to connect with local Christian groups
- That we be creative in providing practical support to our regional translation teams
- For our staff to maintain their focus on serving Christ in all that they do
- Thanks for the blessing that comes from showing that little extra hospitality – having folk to our home for meals or to watch the Origin football matches continues to produce fruit in terms of closer relationships
- For discernment in preparing for some major building maintenance in 2016, that the right expertise be available.

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In God's perfect timing...

The Lae Centre was in need of a replacement vehicle, and one Thursday afternoon in July our new Toyota Hiace 16-seat van arrived replacing the temporary dual cab utility.

Next morning, at 7am, there were smiles all round for our first group of seven passengers making the 50 minute journey to the airport for a flight back to Manus Island. They had all just completed a training course for translation workers in Ukarumpa.

The biggest smile was on the face of this relieved Manager who had been wondering how to get everyone to their flight in time. Once again, God had it all worked out!



All in a day's work ...

It was time for a PNG icon to make way. This 'average-sized' coconut (around 17 metres) was leaning over the neighbour's fence and posed a risk from dropping nuts or branches. We called in an expert climber, harvested the usable nuts, and dropped it with a thud. It was a joy to see our staff getting into the green coconut water (*kulau*) and soft flesh – coastal PNG folk have an affinity for *kokonas*. When you taste *kulau* straight from a freshly felled coconut you understand why. It is much better than any commercial energy drink, and really refreshes after a hard day's work or a long hike.

During our POC days, staff told us of studies that show you can quite effectively live off just coconut and fish, as it provides all the nutrients needed daily. God has certainly blessed PNG with an abundance of both – at least on the coast and islands anyhow.





Photo by Jay Lomu, CARE International

A call to pray ...

A state of emergency has been declared across much of PNG, with a combination of drought and unseasonal cold weather decimating crops. Entire food garden areas have been wiped out by frost in the highlands, and all regions are suffering from an extended dry period. Creeks have ceased flowing, tanks have run dry, and people have to travel distances to access water. In many situations, these secondary sources of water are of inferior quality and the risk of illness is heightened.

The local media is reporting deaths related to the conditions, and there are fears it will be worse than the last drought in 1997. The impact from this will be felt for many months to come, as the newly planted crops that have now failed will leave severe shortages in the new year.

Here in Lae, we are still receiving light rain several nights each week. Our lawn is green, the tanks are virtually full, and the impact is limited to some shortages at the food markets. Our staff lament that there is little they can do for their people suffering so badly, so we do what we can – we pray each morning for some relief to come, and for wisdom for those in authority trying to address the needs in an effective way.

Please pray with us.

In the early hours of Friday morning, 19 September, my father, Ken, passed into eternity.

Please pray ...

- *that the travel arrangements work out as I travel to Australia on Sunday to join my family as we grieve his passing but rejoice that he is now with His Saviour.*
- *for my mum, Innes, as she now mourns the loss of her husband of 59 years.*
- *for Keith as he continues working at the Regional Centre in Lae.*

Prayer points

Family

- Hannah – that she find a balance between work, rest, and time for enjoying life.
- That God continue to guide her in His purposes.
- Elisabeth & Shawn – for some certainty in their work contracts into 2016.
- Keith's brother-in-law (Phil) is preparing for a trial cancer treatment. Pray for strength to continue. Elspeth's brother-in-law (Ross) opted to cease further chemotherapy. Please pray for God's grace at this time and His hand to be at work in Ross's life, and for this to be seen by all who comfort and minister to him now.

Personal

- That Keith was able to have a painful tooth extracted this month, and there were no complications.
- A couple of POC friends returned to the USA to have their first baby in November. Stephen had a CT scan after numbness in one foot, and doctors have noted a brain abnormality – a formal diagnosis is still pending. Please pray for the many issues this raises, including peace for the mum-to-be and to seek God's leading in terms of future translation work.



The living word ...

Every 3 to 4 months, 2 week workshops are conducted at the Lae Regional Centre where Wycliffe translators work intensively with co-workers of four language groups from the Huon Gulf region, south of Lae. This article focuses on one of these projects.



Language group: Hote (Malei people)
Location: Huon Gulf, Morobe Province
Population: 2,300
Translation: NT completed. Progressing audio recordings and OT portions

In the Malei village of Devo where the New Testament has been completed, when they read from the New Testament, they always use Malei. People often take turns reading the Scriptures at their services and readers are much more eager to read in Malei than in Tok Pisin. During the services, almost everyone has a Malei New Testament.

Yawesing, one of the Devo leaders, is now working with Elisa, an experienced translation co-worker, making audio recordings of the Malei New Testament **and translating Scriptures from the Old Testament to be used in church readings.**

Prayer Points...

- for Elisa as he continues to help and encourage the Malei people to use their New Testaments.
- that the recording of the New Testament would continue to progress smoothly.
- also for the new Malei translators - Yapiana, Yawesing, Alex and Gideon – that the community support them in their training, and giving time to the OT translation.

"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, yes, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10

The life changing word ...

We received a very encouraging prayer bulletin from one of the translation groups. Many young men of the Wagi people have started confessing and apologising for their acts of violence and robbery. They are also destroying the equipment used in making home brew.

Prayer Points...

- that the Wagi people continue to repent and turn back to God in practical ways.
- that the translation work be an effective instrument in evangelising others.