

# Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea



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The first few months of active service in Lae have flown by! Time flies when you are having fun... *and* when you are constantly on the go. The role of Regional Centre Manager is an involved one, and we are being tested in terms of our communication, organisation, and our flexibility when unforeseen events come our way. Thankfully, God overrules all our inadequacies in every way!



## Communication...

We are quickly learning the principles of effective communication in PNG.

### **Rule 1 – a mediator can open doors.**

Often an employee will broach some issue through another staff member.

A senior staff member may come to us with a '*tok save, tasol*' [just a bit of information] representing a fellow employee. On occasion, the employee may be there with them, but the mediator does much of the talking. We respect this by communicating as often as possible with the whole team, particularly during daily morning prayer times and breaks.

### **Rule 2 – relationship is critical.**

God really brought blessing from a difficulty with one employee. The hectic schedule led to limits on the time Keith was able to spend **with one** of our key employees for a week or so. The impact was noticeable on the quality and commitment of an otherwise exceptional worker. After a heartfelt talk, and praying together, the relationship has grown better than ever! It was a valuable lesson that it pays to invest in relationships rather than pursuing schedules.

### **Rule 3 – silence is golden.**

Our Western thinking tends to feel awkward if conversation lags for a moment. Not so in PNG. They are quite content to sit, contemplate, and just value being together. It tests our patience at times – but the result is always worth the wait.

### **Rule 4 – let them eat cake!**

Everyone likes Elspeth's '*swit kai*' at morning tea breaks.

## Prayer points

We cannot stress too much, that our relationship with the team is critical to what we can do in our service of God – and prayer is critical to our unity in Christ as the foundation of that relationship.

### **Ministry**

- Give thanks that our staff desire to honour God in their work. Pray that we also model that as Managers.
- For time to work on projects together and the valuable training opportunities this provides.
- For our new Housekeeper to fit in quickly. Thankful for her obvious Christian character.
- Protection for the physical health of our workers – there have been several instances of Malaria this year.
- Regional Centre Management planning meetings to be helpful in developing our service of Bible translation in PNG.

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## Organisation...

Things are running more smoothly here now that we have sorted out our distinct roles - Keith as Operations Manager and Elspeth Guesthouse Manager.

The roles suit our natural tendencies towards trouble-shooting (Keith) and organisation (Elspeth).

Every now and then, there is an occurrence which throws the organisation into frenzy! We are learning, however, that it is at those moments when God displays His sovereignty in action.

*Example...* the above-ground pool was scheduled for replacement in May, and Keith was getting ready to advertise the old one for sale while still operational, in order to maximise value and offset construction costs. Then, late February, the pool took on an unhealthy green colour, resisting all attempts to rectify the problem.



The carefully scheduled work became a scramble to get the new pool in place. Deconstruction soon revealed that the old pool was unsaleable – the liner disintegrated as we folded it! The ‘setback’ had spared us the potential problem of selling an item which would later prove worthless. This could have led to damaged relationships within the local community – or the demand to provide an alternative at great cost!



## Unforeseen events...

Though we have not been directly impacted, our guests' travel plans often are disrupted by road conditions. Stormy weather in February and March has resulted in several washouts and landslides between Ukarumpa and Lae. The dramatic photo below occurred higher up the highland road between Goroka and Mt Hagen.



## Prayer points

### Family

- Hannah – that God continue to reveal His glory, in the midst of her busy life.
- That she have positive friendships to draw on for support and encouragement
- Elisabeth & Shawn – praise for E's new job at Townsville Hospital
- For the opportunities to serve and be served in Northside Presbyterian, with youth work and bible study
- For the health of Elspeth's parents, now in their mid-80's.
- Keith's brother-in-law (Phil) continues cancer treatment (pancreas). Pray for Keith's parents as they minister to the family through the ordeal.

### Personal

- For opportunities for Elspeth to develop her Tok Pisin language use outside of the office environment.
- Thanks for the way in which God has strengthened our marriage, as we support each other daily and work closely together.
- That we be able to foster some solid relationships in the local church we are attending.

## Alan Kohler and mission work in PNG...

You may be wondering what the connection could be – if so, the attention grabbing headline worked!

The generally confusing finance segment in the ABC news takes on a new perspective for missionaries serving overseas. Exchange rates are now a part of our everyday life. Contributions from Australia are converted to US dollars before being allocated to each SIL account, covering purchases which are often in PNG Kina. Still confused?

Suffice to say, that from the heady days of July 2014 the Aussie dollar has dropped around 15% - good news for exporters and mortgage payers, but not so good for Aussies overseas. Thankfully, being based in Lae reduces our expenses to a degree, and God has provided for our day-to-day needs. It is possible to live cheaply here if you are sensible about it.



### Prayer points...

- that we be wise with the funds which God has graciously provided
- for us to always trust Him for our daily needs
- for continued support for Aussies serving mission overseas, in PNG and elsewhere
- that all believers would focus on our treasure in heaven



**Bruce & Joan Hooley (Australia)**  
**Mose (Buang co-worker)**



Bruce came to PNG in 1958 to work amongst the Central Buang people. The NT was completed in 1978, and used in churches across ten villages, with a revision published in 2003.

Following the release of the Jesus film in a neighbouring language, the Central Buang people saw the potential for this format – literacy rates are positive, but still around 50-75% at best.

The script, based on Luke's gospel, has been drafted over the past year, and the team are now preparing the final edit for recording. This poses some challenges, fitting Central Buang phrases to scenes timed with English in mind! The word 'King' translates as 'a man who has fame with great reputation'; 'a rich man' is 'a person who gathers many things'.



**David, Shelley & Cadi Midkiff**

An update on one of our POC families.

The Midkiffs have commenced work amongst the Middle Watut language in the mountains west of Lae. Later this month, some of the villagers will be coming to Lae to purchase building materials for their new house.

Pray that God would richly bless their relationships with the people, and provide suitable co-workers to advance this new translation work in its early stages.

### Prayer Points

- For housing and support for those journeying to Lae for the script reading (up to 30 actors are needed)
- Approval for the rough edit mid-April, enabling a release to the community by late 2015.
- That the film would impact the community, to seek to know Jesus.
- The Hooleys expect this is their last visit to PNG. Praise God for His faithfulness over more than 50 years of service, and that He sustain them in good health in the future.

