

Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea



Wycliffe Australia
70 Graham Road
Kangaroo Ground 3097

We have had a busy few months, and are looking forward to the Christmas period. With less turnover of guests, we can afford time to work on specific projects, and time to relax with the ministry families that come for a holiday.



What were we thinking !

The first week in November had our Guesthouse staff buzzing around more than any time since our arrival last December. On Wednesday, a group from the Ukarumpa Store staff came to Lae for a Christian music concert – a well earned ‘Thank you’ from the Store manager after a hectic end-of-September stocktake. After that overnighter, we hosted a two-day field trip by the Ukarumpa International School (UIS) 6-8 graders.

All told, our hard working housekeeping team cleaned 24 rooms, making 78 beds in two days, then backed up on Saturday with another 11 rooms and 44 beds. We praise God for their servant hearts!

We accepted these multiple bookings knowing it would be tough. What were we thinking?.....

Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace...
1 Peter 4:9-10

God then provided a true blessing. The nearby Botanic Gardens have been closed to allow for restoration over the past six months. To show the community the progress so far they held a half-day public opening.... starting 1pm Friday, just as we had a quiet period before the UIS group departed Saturday morning.

We rewarded our staff with an early finish and spent the afternoon wandering the shady pathways and appreciating our awesome God – both for His creativity and perfect timing.



Prayer points

Please pray...

.. thoughtfully *1 Cor 14:15*

.. unceasingly *Col 1:9*

.. earnestly *1 Thes 3:10*

.. that we be worthy of God's calling, and that the word of the Lord be honoured *2 Thes 1:11, 3:1*

Ministry

- We had opportunities to host two translation work teams this quarter. Praise God that the Centre is able to fill this role.

- The relationships with several PNG National led ministry groups are strengthening.

BTAPNG – Bible Translation Assoc. of PNG

CLTC – Christian Leadership Training Centre
Rhema Bible College

Pray that we be effective in supporting kingdom work whenever possible.

- For wisdom in managing our building renovations in 2016, and for God to provide some additional hands with the right skills for the job.

... [continued page 3]

Staff Family Weekend...



For a few days we closed to guest bookings and welcomed our staff and their families to stay on site, enjoying the grounds, swimming pool, and just being together. Friday night was a blend of Aussie and PNG *mumu* (shared feast) – with lamb chops on the barbie replacing the traditional whole pig cooked on buried coals. It was a fitting celebration of our first year in PNG.... may there be many more!



What do you think ?...

In a country with over eight hundred language groups, there are many which are steadily declining into disuse. It is a challenge when assessing the viability of a translation work amongst a community asking for the scriptures in their *tokples* (vernacular language).

Others have less than one thousand first language speakers, and it raises the question of whether a decade or two of concerted effort is a good use of the resources to provide them with a translation.

We heard of a pointed response from a translator working amongst a small isolated language group for the past 15 years. On a church visitation before heading to PNG to continue the translation work, he was asked, "Do you believe it is worth it doing all that work for just several hundred people?" He responded with, "How many people in your congregation? How many pastors do you have?" The answer.... around five hundred members with three pastors.



What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. Matthew 18:12-14

Lord of the harvest...

Now that we have been here in Lae for over one year, we have seen for ourselves the shortage of "labourers for the harvest". There are constantly vacancies in finance, education, IT and maintenance, and of course many regions still awaiting translation and literacy teams.

We have made the decision to pursue a return to PNG in 2017, after a six-month period of furlough back in Australia. In saying that, we know that it is all God's doing that we have been able to serve in this way, and should we return, it will all be through His enabling and to His glory.

Prayer points

Family

- Hannah – that God continue to speak to her heart.
 - for health and rest through the busy Christmas trade
- Elisabeth & Shawn – that preparations for a January visit to PNG can be finalised in good time.
- Keith's brother-in-law (Phil) is not responding to the trial cancer treatment as was hoped. Pray for grace amidst the daily challenge of pain management.

Personal

- We enjoyed a gathering with other ex-pats serving in ministry in Lae, including a couple of Aussies managing the local Salvation Army School. Their centre is a short walk from us, and we intend regular social events.
- Thoroughly enjoying Ryle's Expository Thoughts (Matthew) in our morning devotions. It sets the course of the day on track!
- We have settled into a local church, worshipping with them most Sundays (we still schedule visits to others). Pray that we patiently build relationships within the congregation.
- We have had amazing good health since coming to Lae. Praise God for this!



Trans-pacific-lation ...

Bible translation projects commonly face the issue of sustaining work through periods of separation. Over the many years needed to complete the work, the ex-patriot translator may be called on to spend many months or more away from village co-workers. Many projects now benefit from the use of laptops and email, enabling communications and consultative work to continue.



In the Mato region, however, there is no internet coverage, no phone connection.... just a UHF radio. Hatayanga and Unganing came to our Lae Centre to continue work on the Mato NT. Scot Stober and his wife, Cherie, had returned home to care for family, and there had been no contact with the village for over a month – unaware the radio had ceased working! Scot arrived from the USA on Thursday, November 5, hopeful for his long-term co-workers to join him for a four-week intensive workshop to first draft the letters of Peter, John and Jude. Several days passed and no sign of the men, until the following Tuesday when they were able to finally complete the journey. Hatayanga later shared the story....



They had walked to the coast, only to find that the pre-arranged boat had a busted motor. Another friend had a motor which might do... but this took another day to collect and fit to the boat. The trip to Madang took longer with the smaller outboard, but eventually they found a bus travelling the 6 hours to Lae... except that local unrest at this end had temporarily closed the roads and made travelling unsafe, meaning another day lost! These faithful men went to great lengths to be a part of this work in Lae.

The translation work commenced, having lost precious days. Three weeks later, the three men shared with our staff how God had blessed their time together. Not only had they worked through the intended books, but also drafts of Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and Philippians.



The LORD said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand..." Judges 7:2

God is never limited by our limited resources. At times, it seems, He needs to increase the odds to remind us of that!

Prayer Points...

- thankful that the Mato churches are already being blessed by drafted scripture portions and translated Sunday School lesson material
- pray for those that commit much time and energy to assist the translation work – often leaving families, gardens and other responsibilities
- that qualified people be found for the involved process of checking the translation drafts
- for Scot and Cherie, that God would answer prayers for their extended family in the US
- for wisdom in knowing when to return to PNG, and the contentment to wait on God's perfect timing

Language:	Mato
Location:	Huon Peninsula, Morobe Province
Population:	700
Translation:	NT drafted, awaiting revision and checking.