

Campbell Ramblings

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Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea

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This is the second newsletter published from the mission base in Ukarumpa, Eastern Highlands – the first being back in December 2014! However, over the past three months we have spent around seven weeks in Lae, four in Ukarumpa, one in Port Moresby and five days in Australia. The nomadic life is a bit unsettling!



The ministry melting pot...

Other than the formal farewells, (see our blog [A fitting end....](#) from September 1) we also said goodbye to a number of friends from other ministries based in Lae.



We met regularly with couples from (left to right) the Salvation Army School, Lutheran Seminary, Evangelical Brotherhood Church and Living Water Christian School (absent from photo). With the mix of cultural views from Canada, America, Germany, PNG and Australia, it was occasionally confusing but always interesting. The differences did not mean that much as we studied the bible together, shared our joys and struggles and prayed for one another. We praise God for providing these brothers and sisters to encourage us in our life and ministry, and look forward to renewing friendships as some of the group members are expected to travel up our way in the coming months.

Prayer points

Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens. Your faithfulness endures to all generations.

Psalms 119:89-90a

Ministry

- Praise God for the gift of fellow Christians who encourage us in our walk and our kingdom work.
- Pray for us in adjusting to changes in our day-to-day schedule. From working together all day, we now head in different directions for 10 hours. Pray that we appreciate the simple joy of coming together to exchange the day's highs and lows.
- Give thanks for the preparation that serving in Lae has been for Keith's new role in Finance Office, giving an understanding of the challenges that Regional staff face daily.
- Praise God for the fellowship and the effectiveness of the recent Regional Centre meetings.
- Pray for Elspeth to discern a future role for herself next year, once the relief role in Lae has concluded.



Working all things...

Right to the very end, God was arranging for us to finish well in Lae.

We sat at the PMV bus stop the morning prior to our departure date, waiting for a suitable Hiace van (13-passenger) to arrive, with the intention of arranging a 7:30 pick up the following morning. **None turned up!** Several larger and older Hino buses (25-passenger) slowed to ask if we were looking for a trip to Kainantu or Goroka, but we felt that these were unsuitable for our need of a private charter.

Eventually, after waiting for almost an hour, we agreed to speak with the next one who asked, just to see what the situation was. This was when Moxie turned up in his clean and fairly new bus. After explaining we wanted a vehicle just for us and our cargo, not mixing our crates, boxes and bags with other passenger cargo, and also a drop off at our door in Ukarumpa, Moxie explained that he could do that for not much more than our anticipated van.

The bus turned up on time, and our staff were there earlier than usual and provided a send-off. **All of our packaged cargo**, not just the priority items, were able to be loaded on-board. [*By the way, in our planning on a smaller vehicle we had been prepared to send the surplus on our scheduled truck the following week. This truck was then delayed because of equipment issues and other priority loads, so there was no general cargo service prior to our departure for Australia two weeks later – God knew this, and provided in advance of this event what we needed.*]

The five hour trip up to Ukarumpa passed easily, as Moxie and his crew man Matyu chatted with us, pointed out interesting sights, the places belonging to their family, and threw in some gossip about local politicians for good measure. With the unloading completed at our new home, Moxie had us stand with him for Matyu to take photos, and we saved the phone number of our new first choice for travel between Ukarumpa and Lae.

You would think by now that we would be beyond being surprised by God!

Prayer points

Personal

- Praise God that Elspeth has much relief following the cortisone injection to her shoulder. Also that the numbness in her left fingers has been diagnosed as carpal tunnel syndrome, and she can now take steps to minimise the problem.
- Pray that we will be able to establish supportive relationships within the Ukarumpa community, and find avenues to serve others in the same way.
- Give thanks for the house made available for us to rent, and pray that we find something to replace it next March that fits our love for hospitality.
- Uphold us during our time apart with Elspeth managing Lae Regional Centre, around three weeks from late November until Christmas, then possibly four weeks from mid-January onwards. We will update this prayer need closer to the time.

Friendships continue...

We also have many Lae friendships which can now be continued in Ukarumpa. One of our regulars, Eyvind, was our last meal guest in Lae the night before we departed, and our first guest in Ukarumpa. He recorded the feat in our visitor book, declaring himself, "the omega and the alpha.... the last and the first". We enjoyed Saturday morning breakfast on the back deck taking in the glorious valley view.



Home sweet home, for now

We are thankful for the house which has been made available for us to rent, particularly the fireplace on chilly days. We have strategically placed a few personal items around the place to feel at home, but most of our belongings are still stored away ready for the possible move next March.



With the house comes a housekeeper (Suzi, below) and mother and daughter yard workers (Eggio and Gelsie, left), all working a half day each week. Skilled workers tend to have multiple 'clients' around the community, and PNG staff are generally inherited by renters, so that



they will still be there when the owners return. We certainly don't mind keeping up their wages and providing something for morning tea, and these gracious women were quick to welcome us.... particularly Eggio who loves extended hugs!



A delayed takeoff...

After our settling in period, Keith headed off to work for the first time as the permanent Finance Office Manager on September 2. Elspeth lived up to expectations as 'mama bilong Finance Office' and sent along some home-baked biscuits.... which didn't last long.

The new daily schedule did not last long either, as two days later we were flying to Townsville for Elspeth to seek treatment for a troublesome shoulder pain, extending down her left arm and giving numbness in several fingers. The Ukarumpa Clinic doctor suggested an impingement on a nerve, but further scans and a specialist diagnosis was called for.

Again, the Lord provides in all circumstances, and there were two seats available on a mission flight leaving September 4. Add to this that an orthopaedic surgeon is now attending our home church, and agreed to see us the following day, outside of regular consultation schedule. He referred Elspeth for two MRI scans to the shoulder and spine – rushed through on Friday – then an injection to the affected shoulder, which was completed Sunday. Five stages of medical consultation and treatment in just four days, all with far less than the usual required waiting times! But then, our God doesn't work by 'usual' means.

Coming together....

September 9 saw us returning to Port Moresby for meetings with Regional managers and Jerry Walker, our Senior Manager for Regional Centres. Over three days we discussed challenges, prayer needs, future staffing, and financial restructuring – with Keith switching hats to his new Finance Office role. Having had experience in Lae certainly puts Keith in a better position to assist Regional managers in this way. It was encouraging to interact with our PNG national managers from Wewak, Madang and Port Moresby, and to hear their comments on management challenges from a Melanesian cultural perspective.

Notable that the relief manager and Alotau managers will retire next year, adding to the pressure on Jerry to find more managers to commit to serving in PNG. **Please pray for this desperate need!** Elspeth will return to Lae before Christmas to manage through to mid-February to ease some of the load.



Lilia (POM), Jude (Relief Mgr), Heather (Alotau), Thomas (Madang), Eva (Wewak), Jerry (SMRC), Campbell's, Joe (Alotau)

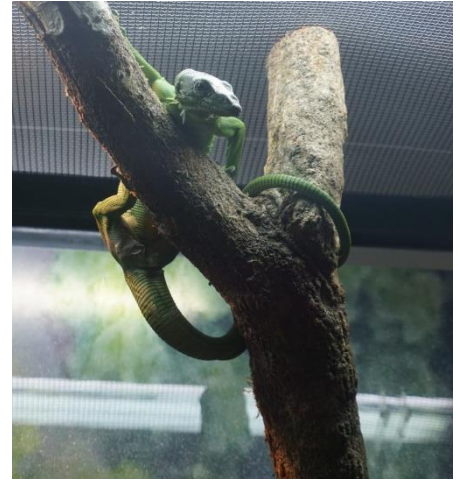


All work and no play...

While in Port Moresby, our Regional team took some time off and visited the local Nature Park.



[left] This parrot took a liking to Keith's bilum bag decoration, no doubt because of the familiar colour. The staff affirmed that he is an attention seeker... the parrot, that is.



[below] God is simply awesome!



All work and no play...

Elsbeth snapped this one from the co-pilot's seat during the flight back to Ukarumpa. She wasn't helping to fly the plane, it just happens to be one of 9 passenger seats in the Kodiak aircraft. We were cruising at 10,400 feet, just above a blanket of cloud, and yes.... those are mountain tops poking through the cloud. For some perspective, Mount Kosciuszko is Australia's highest peak at 7,310 feet.

