

Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea



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Ukarumpa may now be home, but we found ourselves back in Lae again! Elspeth has been covering the Regional Centre Manager vacancy since mid-November, and Keith is visiting for the Christmas / New Year break. We managed to experience a bit of a 'holiday break' in spits and spurts, but there has been plenty to keep us busy most days. So busy that our Christmas / New Year newsletter is coming out in February!



Settling in...

The move to Finance Office has been affirmed as the right decision, with Keith finding many opportunities to apply his skills and experience. It has not been without challenges, particularly as the arrival coincided with the departure of three full-time staff.



In the photo above, taken at a joint retirement party for five PNG staff, one couple from the US (centre, rear) were here on a short-term visit assisting with our end of financial year processes; Andrea (right, rear) left in November; Judy (right, front) in December; and Ompasi (centre, front) retired just before Christmas after 32 years of service.

Our remaining staff of seven – three expat and four PNG employees – are doing their best to keep on top of the present work load, making a priority for Keith of recruiting and training three additional employees as soon as possible.

The departure of the two expat accountants is a significant loss. Please be praying for more capable people to join the ranks of those serving in PNG, and discernment for Keith, and others, working to fill the immediate needs in our administration teams.

Prayer points

*O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, **for your own sake**, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.* Daniel 9:19

Our prayers, our work, our lives, are to be to the glory of God.

Ministry

- Praise God for his good timing in placing Keith in a role which can have such an impact on the ministry here in PNG, and that the experiences of the past 20 years have prepared him for the task.
- Pray for Ompasi, and four other senior PNG staff who retired before Christmas, that they adjust to life outside of the mission organisation and re-establish themselves within their home communities.
- Give thanks for the great working relationships within the Finance team, and the way in which everyone is responding to a fresh approach and some new ideas.
- Pray for Keith as he deals graciously with the, "That's how we always did it in the past" approach.

Focus on training...

Meanwhile, Elspeth is also putting her experience to use after being invited to work with the Ukarumpa Training Centre (UTC) kitchen staff in developing hygiene standards and future planning. UTC is focussed on training Papua New Guineans to undertake the momentous task of Bible translation. Participants can access accommodation and meals during courses ranging from 1-7 weeks.



Over six weeks, Elspeth used videos and written material to share hygiene standards, work safety, and menu planning. To overcome some language barriers, role plays and visual demonstrations were needed, which the ladies found helpful and challenging... but often hilarious!



The ladies encouraged and corrected Elspeth's Tok Pisin (local trade language) skills, as they came to terms with concepts that they hadn't come across before. The staff were willing to listen, consider, and talk through the ideas presented in the videos and other material.

The staff received certificates to acknowledge their new skills, and Elspeth gained seven new friendships within the community.



Prayer points

Ministry (cont.)

- Praise God for the way he has prepared us for service here, through so many experiences in our lives.
- Pray that we be able to develop relationships within the local community, and be a blessing to those we work alongside.
- Give thanks for these women, advancing Bible translation through their willingness to serve.
- Pray for the Kitchen Supervisor, Joy, as she adapts to a new approach to planning meals, and encourages her staff to continue developing their work methods.
- Pray for the students undertaking various training courses at UTC. This may involve extended times away from family, and poses challenges to them as they adapt to a classroom schedule, and, for many from the coast and islands, a different living environment in the often chilly mountains of Ukarumpa.



The more things change ...

In late October, we had some of our old Lae contacts – translation workers from the Kapin language group - come to Ukarumpa for a consultant check of the Gospel of Mark. This being the first complete book of their tokples (heart language) Scriptures, the group were enthusiastic about the task, but apprehensive about having their hard work 'put under the spotlight' as it were.

As the regular translation project managers were out of the country at the time, they asked Elspeth to step in as a familiar face who could help the team settle in to their accommodation, obtain keys for a work space, and arrange for some initial supplies.



We had the group around for a Sunday lunch, and were basically there to do whatever was needed during their two-week stay. Arranging funds for food and travel; providing umbrellas when the rain set in; responding to an emergency when the men accidentally purchased tinned beetroot instead of tuna from the local store (the tins did look slightly similar). For us, it was all part of 'the job', but the team were so appreciative of the help we provided, and being able to just focus on the task at hand.

'Holiday' in Lae

We had several highlights during our Christmas / New Year / 30th Anniversary in Lae. There were opportunities for social meals, boardgames and enjoying the neighbours' fireworks for New Year.

Also, times to farewell several missionary friends – sadly a reality which we have all become accustomed to – and to farewell our beloved Lae staff for the last time.

