

# Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea

**Wycliffe**  
Bible Translators



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## Finally... we are back!

After some lengthy delays, and a few false starts, we are once again in Ukarumpa, and ready to serve in support of Bible translation. The waiting proved to be quite a trial, but God is faithful, and His ways are good.



## Revolving doors...

In June, we believed that a work permit and entry visa for Keith were the only obstacles to be overcome in returning to PNG. Mid-August saw us with both of these essential pieces of paper in hand... and a cloud of ill health hanging over us, delaying our travel plans for the following week. Through all of this, we remained free of covid, but still with repeated bouts of coughing and sneezing. Not ideal for international travel!

As our symptoms seemed to be settling down, we saw this as a door opening and booked tickets for Sunday, August 28. The door very quickly closed on the Friday night, with Keith's snuffle and cough deteriorating to a painful throat in quite dramatic circumstances, restricting his ability to eat solids and affecting his speech. After a week dining on soup – and occasionally ice-cream, which Keith claimed was very therapeutic – we decided that rebooking a flight before feeling 100% was potentially risky.

To use the time wisely, we revisited Keith's parents before heading south to help Hannah and Corey pack up to move house... **yet again!** Their rental has been sold and they have had to accept that continuing the idyllic farming life is proving difficult without the luxury of being able to own a property outright. We made ourselves useful, then boarded a train for Brisbane after booking a Sunday flight for September 18. Praise God... our original booking was credited in full!

The extra days in Australia did allow us to finalise some logistical matters before departing the country, and to see our little grand-daughter crawling around on the floor, but largely they were times of frustrating inactivity. We were disappointed at not being able to travel, but still assured that God was in control, and all things would work out in the end.



It is always tempting to be looking for God's purposes in these situations, if only to be able to later recount the awesome blessings which flowed out of circumstances that appeared to be setbacks. We *are* thankful for the timing of Keith's muscle spasm – were it to happen in the Brisbane airport boarding area, the implications are horrible to imagine. The challenge is to be content in life, without the clear insight as to what is going on.

At the time the risen Jesus reinstates Peter into the fold of His disciples, Peter turns to see John following them along the shore.

*When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me." John 21:21-22*

What the Lord intends for us, and for others, on this earth is not our primary concern. It is our job merely to follow wherever and whenever He leads. That is always the path of true joy and contentment.

## A whole lotta shakin' goin' on...

Many of you would be aware of the earthquake in PNG, either from our email update, or national media coverage. No expat or citizen colleagues had significant injuries, with the impact generally limited to collapsed water tanks, shattered crockery, and general disarray, although around a dozen buildings require structural and foundational repairs. A massive volunteer response cleared the aisles of our mission store from Sunday afternoon through to Monday morning, after half the shelf items were flung to the floor.

Personally, we only lost around a dozen glasses and mugs – a very pleasant surprise when we returned. Some dear friends even looked after the initial kitchen cleanup, and inspected our home for any structural damage.

Thankfully, PNG has not experienced widespread landslides such as occurred in 2018, which were responsible for the loss of many lives. One possible factor is that the highland region is fairly dry at present, with little rain over the preceding months – another case of a perceived hardship carrying blessings.



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## New connections...

Previously, we shared stories of Keith working in the yard with Pikawu (Newsletter 29, March 2019). Our relationship had been a real positive aspect of our weekly routine. Sadly, we returned to discover that tribal tensions near his village over recent months have prevented Pikawu from walking to Ukarumpa with any degree of safety. We cannot even get word to him of our disappointment, and that we are praying for him.

The yard certainly involves too much maintenance for Keith to handle on Saturdays, and as hiring a 'yard man' is expected within the community ... enter Tepi (pictured). This young man already had one day working for another Ukarumpa family, and is delighted to secure more work. He is already proud of the reworked vegetable garden patch, after our existing one died in the dry period, and a new water line to bring the hose within reach (hopefully drought-proofing our future garden).

Part of mission life for us so far has been a continual cycle of relationships – changing PNG staff, and expat missionaries on the furlough roundabout. Of the initial thirty adults in our 2014 orientation course, only six presently serve in PNG. Most are involved in other global mission fields; some have retired; one sister has gone home to glory. Thankfully, all incoming mission co-workers – whether returning from furlough or new to the country – are warmly welcomed and greatly appreciated. Such is the awareness of the pressing need, and the realisation that 'the workers are few', that every helper is valued.

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## Prayer points

### Personal

- Praise God for general safety during the earthquake. Pray also for those who are experiencing ongoing anxiety, particularly during frequent aftershocks.
- Pray for Hannah & Corey in their unexpected move. It makes the current TV news about homelessness very real for us.
- Praise God that Elisabeth and Shawn have found a great church family in Perth.
- Keep Keith's family in your prayers, as Dad cares for Mum in declining health. We are thankful that his sister, Helen, is able to spend more time with them.



blog: <http://campbellramblings.org>



## New roles...

Keith is now at the Aviation centre providing finance support, which commenced with the less than glamorous task of stocktake (end of financial year is Sept 30). It was interesting though, given that when provided with a part number and summary name, he didn't know whether it was smaller than a matchbox or larger than a shoebox! Who knew that so many parts go into an aircraft???

*I guess he does....* →



*Yep.... One more thing-a-me-bob*

Elsbeth also assumed a new role with the Learning and Development department (L&D), with a particular focus on preparing for the next Orientation Course scheduled for January to April 2023.

At this stage, up to twenty individuals will be undertaking the course as new arrivals to serve in PNG. **That is very exciting!**



Trainers will include experienced expats and Niuginians, covering issues such as Tok Pisin language learning; religion in PNG; the Melanesian worldview; multicultural teamwork; marriage and parenting in mission; maintaining spiritual health; physical health and wellbeing. The course aims to provide expat staff and families with the resources to thrive on the mission field. As the time draws nearer, we will be prompting you to pray for everyone involved. We will need it... it can be very challenging!

Elsbeth is enjoying working with the manager, Theresa (pictured). L&D also provide Childsafe training, professional development courses, Tok Pisin and English language training, etc., so the team is kept quite busy.



## ... and revamped old ones

As the L&D role is less than full-time, Elspeth will be able to continue supporting the Translation Office by tracking and recording the progress of each PNG translation project being managed within our organisation. The process is moving to full digitisation, with access through the cloud. (If that is confusing, ask someone under 30 what we mean.) Our internet service has been sporadic at best, so please be praying that Elspeth can find ways to keep the process rolling.

## Back to familiar ways ...

Certain things simply stick out as emphasising the fact that we *really* are back home in PNG.



*Keith's favourite local soft drink, during a Port Moresby stopover*

*Bananas, bananas, and more bananas from our garden*



*Our little cottage home... albeit with a half-dead garden*



Other familiarities are less than desirable. As noted above, we are struggling with very limited internet connectivity at present, due to infrastructure impacted by the earthquake. Simply publishing this newsletter has required significant alternative methods. The day-to-day functions of a modern mission agency are heavily reliant on global communications – for banking, training, security and logistics – so poor internet can add another layer of stress for all of our workforce.

## Finance update...

We will keep you posted on this topic, as it will determine our ability to remain working in PNG beyond June 2023, at least for a period. Wycliffe Australia require us to have 100% funding for our assignment, and we have been granted exemption to come for one year only due to the need for us to fill vacancies here in PNG. After June 2023, we need to return to Australia with a plan to make up the shortfall of our funding, currently around \$400 per month.

## Prayer points

### Ministry

- Pray that we both quickly settle in to new work roles, particularly relationships with expat and PNG co-workers.
- Praise God that Keith's previous work experience appear to have prepared him well for a specific role in Aviation.
- Pray for Elspeth to adapt to new procedures in administering the translation process across all PNG projects.
- Continue to pray for more workers to be sent, to PNG and elsewhere (Matthew 9:37-38).
- Pray that the internet issues will be resolved by our service providers, and that our community can be patient with our mission IT staff as they attempt to find effective ways to alleviate the inconvenience.
- Pray for the upcoming *Trauma Healing Workshops* to be held in Ukarumpa, October 3-6 and 18-21, which reach out to PNG locals often impacted by tribal unrest, domestic violence, and traditional spiritual oppression.

## How to partner with the Campbells...

At the Wycliffe Australia website <https://wycliffe.org.au/member/keith-elspeth> you will see links to receive our updates and send messages, and a link to our [campbellramblings.org](http://campbellramblings.org) website to access blogs and newsletters.

Support Keith & Elspeth Campbell in the Bible Translation Movement

Once Only	\$ 35	\$ 75	\$ 100	My Gift (Select an amount or enter your own) \$ 100.00
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\* indicates a required field

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Below this is the tool to make it easy to partner with us financially. If God is moving you to be a part of the work in this way, Wycliffe Australia can help with any questions or to arrange other support options. **Thanks for thinking of us.**