

# Campbell Ramblings

Keith & Elspeth Campbell

Equipping translation work in Papua New Guinea

**Wycliffe**  
Bible Translators



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March already? It can't be! So much has changed in our mission community since Christmas that we need to share with you all. We have also updated our banner photo on the right.

*(Keith – What gives? My hair has turned fully grey, while Elspeth's has doubled in volume!)*



## Calling all cars...

*...an old police radio dispatch call for all radio patrol cars to assist a fellow officer...*

The critical deadlines of last October have now become the critical deadlines of June 1, after a brief period as the critical deadlines of April 1 (and that wasn't a joke). The key issues are time and personnel, given that there is much to do, and only a few people to do it. A senior Finance colleague is on leave from late March until the end of April, adding to Keith's load the monitoring of two email accounts and a number of daily and several end-of-month tasks.

Please be seriously praying for an influx of qualified people into our mission community. We hope to have a new Chief Finance Officer arrive in PNG by August, and yet another five or six financially-minded personnel could slot straight into roles needing to be filled.

*(Keith – I would **love** to have an assistant!)*

## A crisis of confidence...

We have previously issued a general call to pray in regard to the current crisis surrounding aviation fuel supplies in PNG. The implications for ministry are certainly being felt. Several PNG and international personnel were unable to attend our biennial Conference this month due to doubts over the availability of air travel, opting to connect via internet video instead. (Our fibre internet connection also went down on Thursday.)

Elspeth has been helping prepare for the next TTC (Translator Training Course) in April, but there are doubts now that many of the participants will be able to travel to Ukarumpa, and get home again. Such an enterprise is difficult to pull together at the last moment, **if** aviation fuel becomes readily available.

Thankfully, our SIL Aviation operation had bulk fuel storage of around 40,000 litres when supply was interrupted. At the beginning of March, that was down to 30,000, which is a little over one month supply under normal operations. We managed to source some fuel from an alternative supplier, but the cost is around 160% greater than our current stock, and just enough for an additional three weeks of flying.

Before you give up on this rather sombre newsletter entirely, pray through the sidebar, then turn the page (or scroll further).... **There is plenty of great news ahead!**

## Prayer points

*Trust in Him at all times, you people;  
pour out your hearts to Him;  
for God is our refuge. Psalm 62:8*

- Pray that God would raise up more co-workers, either from overseas or within PNG.
- Pray for those deciding on a direction for TTC - and other activities planned for April / May – that God would lead them to a good outcome.
- Pray for smaller aviation ministry operations in PNG with limited or no access to fuel, that they can maintain safety and essential work.
- Pray that we be spared unplanned needs for air travel – medevacs, relocating supplies, and emergency responses – so that we can maximise our services to core ministry.
- Praise God that this present trouble is only temporary, and pray that we 'look to things unseen'. 2 Cor 4:18

## Cause to celebrate...

Mid-March is the time for our mission's six-day biennial Conference, and the grand finale is always a celebration of the translated Scriptures and other resources completed during the previous two years.

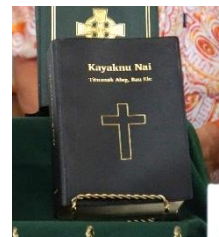
In all, 56 items from 45 language groups - in either print, audio or digital form - were brought up to a display table by PNG staff, many wearing outfits representing the PNG Provinces, and always held high with great joy, giving glory to God.



This year was particularly emotional for many of us when the complete Nobnob Bible was brought in. One of the translation team, our friend Verna Aeschliman, went home to glory in December 2022. Verna and her husband Ulyss had returned to PNG after a furlough in the US while the typesetting and printing was finalised, and were preparing for the January celebration – the culmination of almost 50 years

The Nobnob community chose to delay the Bible dedication until October this year, allowing time for both the family and the community to grieve the loss.

Verna and Ulyss are one of many senior couples who have encouraged us through their commitment and humble service.



*Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Cor 15:58*

## Time to Interact...

Prior to the Conference, Interact draws together translation, literacy, and training personnel for four days focusing on linguistics, as they share techniques and disseminate new practices in the field of Bible Translation and Literacy.



Presentations of the latest resources, such as online applications and academic studies, together with testimonies from linguistic teams of the outcomes of certain processes, ensure that our people are benefiting from current information in their field.



## Kaluli scripture dedication...

On February 17 the Kaluli New Testament was publicly dedicated in a joyous celebration hosted by the Kaluli Church. SIL Aviation had flown out to the community at the beginning of the week with cartons of NT translations, but even through a celebratory feast, the people left the boxes unopened prior to the main celebration. Three more flights brought participants and guests to the village over ensuing days.



↑ God sustained the original Kaluli translation team for over 30 years – not one was lost. This is a remarkable blessing!

Visiting communities came in their hundreds, some hiking ↑ several days to join the celebration. They entered the village in single file, with the welcoming party clapping in joy.

There were audio and digital scriptures available, together with the printed → New Testaments. Helpers guided people in finding reading glasses if needed.



The expatriate translators shared with an SIL pilot what traveling to the village entails, without the benefit of mission aircraft services...

- Day 1: Drive from Ukarumpa to Mt. Hagen (4-5 hours, depending on road conditions) - overnight at a guesthouse.
- Day 2: Drive from Mt. Hagen to Kutubu (6 hours) - overnight at a guesthouse.
- Day 3: Hire transport from Kutubu to Waro, the “end of the road” (3-4 hrs) – overnight with a pastor friend.
- Day 4: Hike from Waro to the Kikori River, find a dugout canoe or dinghy to cross the river. At times the river is running too swiftly to cross, so it may require waiting - overnight at Fogomaiyu.
- Day 5: Hike from Fogomaiyu to Telesou, about 5 hours over mountainous, muddy terrain - overnight with pastor friend.
- Day 6: Hike from Telesou to Yalubese. (4-5 hrs) This requires a river crossing, swimming while holding any belongings above your head. It is too wide for log bridges and there are no canoes in the area since the river isn't navigable.
- Day 7: Hike from Yalubese to Didesa/Bosavi airstrip. (4 hours)
- Alternatively.... the flight from Ukarumpa takes around 90 minutes, including a fuel stop in Mt Hagen when carrying a load of Bibles!

## Prayer points

- Praise God for the Kaluli people's hunger for His word.
- Praise God that the audio players sold out, and orders for 200 more were received.
- Pray for this community as God's word saturates their hearts and minds. May they walk deeply with Him for generations to come.
- Pray that the visiting communities who witnessed the dedication would be encouraged, as some are anticipating their own *tok ples* scriptures in the future.



## On your mark...

A Bible dedication marks the completion of decades of work, and Elspeth had the opportunity to contribute to a translation team at the other end of that process.

The Initial Skills Course (ISC) is an introduction to English study skills, such as grammar, comprehension, critical thinking, and pronunciation, with a major project which practically draws together all of the newly acquired skills. The course is delivered twice a year to encourage beginning translators, equipping them with the academic skills needed to undertake higher level Bible translation courses.

The four Neme men came from the far Western Province (adjacent to the Indonesian Papuan border), and we thank God that their community and families supported the team in spending five weeks at Ukarumpa Training Centre (UTC). The three teachers represented a multicultural team - Olga from Russia, Andrea from Germany, and Elspeth from Australia – and we all agreed that it was a pleasure to teach such eager students in their first experience of a Western style classroom.

Please pray for their plans to return in 2025 to undertake the first Translator's Training Course (TTC1).



The Neme students – Mege, Francis, Willy & Dick – with Andrea, Olga & a pleased Course Coordinator

## A Christmas gift...

Two of our home group friends (see December 2023 newsletter) are translators with the Kamano-Kafe language, and Rich spoke at a local Christmas Camp where the complete Bible was dedicated following a New Testament revision and completion of the Old Testament.

They are praising God that around 400 items were sold during the week - printed and audio Bibles and hymnbooks – subsidised through the generosity of donors.



## Prayer points

- Praise God that the Neme churches and communities are supportive of this Bible translation task. Pray that these men would remain faithful and united in purpose throughout the decades-long task of Bible translation.
- Pray for Elspeth in her training role at UTC, and praise God for the relationships established with PNG translation teams.
- Pray for the ongoing ministry amongst the 283 Kamano-Kafe village communities in regard to literacy development – including early reader books – and Scripture Engagement through the Jesus Film and other resources.



## Church visit...

We were invited to join a local village church one January Sunday morning as they were setting apart all of the students about to commence a new academic year – everyone from those starting Grade 1 through to young adults returning to University and Bible College.

Keith was pleased to catch up with a former colleague, now retired, before a celebratory lunch was laid out.



## And some visitors...

A contact from our Christian Students connections with James Cook University, Townsville, paid us a visit in January. Cameron has completed veterinary studies and was examining what future mission service would look like in his chosen profession. Jayson formed a friendship with Cameron while undertaking PhD studies in Townsville, and now lectures in Organic Chemistry in Lae, PNG.



Cameron was able to put his vet training, and Jayson his muscles to good use helping out at the pony club, and they both enjoyed hearing from translation and literacy workers over a cuppa. Perhaps their combined talents were a little underutilised washing a friend's car Keith is fixing up while she is on furlough, but their servant hearts were appreciated.



If anyone would like to visit Ukarumpa and experience a slice of mission life, and see what opportunities exist to serve, we would **love** to hear from you. You don't even need to be a vet or an organic chemist!

## How to partner with the Campbell's....

At the Wycliffe Australia website [wycliffe.org.au/member/keith-elspeth](http://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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