

Taylor Tidings

Matt and Christy Taylor

September 2003

Partners in Bible translation in Papua New Guinea

Dear Friends,

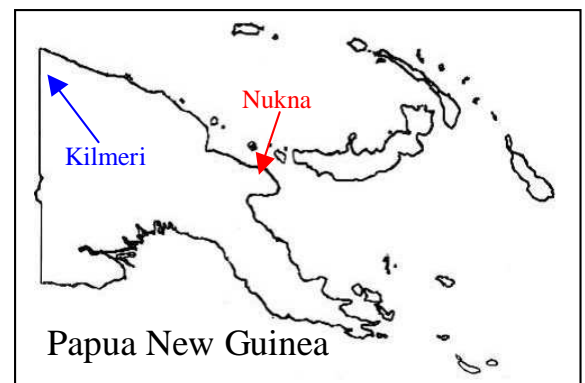
Over the last few months we have been working towards choosing a Papua New Guinean people group – a group we will one day live with and translate God’s word with. It’s been an exciting and difficult process as we’ve conducted research, read and re-read language reports and sought the Lord’s will. We’ve investigated over twenty languages, and narrowing the field down has been no easy task.

In the coming weeks, we will be visiting two Bibleless people groups, the Kilmeri and the Nukna, with the intention of choosing one of them to begin language work and Bible translation. These visits will allow us to ask questions, make contacts with key community and church leaders, and get a first-hand experience of each people group.



Kilmeri Visit –October 16-23

The Kilmeri language, located in the northwest corner of mainland PNG, is spoken by 2230 people in 15 villages. The land is comprised of flat, dense bush and has a hot, humid climate. There has never been any mission work conducted in the heart language of the people; only in Pidgin, the trade language. There is currently no Scripture translated into the Kilmeri language.



Nukna Visit – November 11-14

The Nukna language, spoken by 850 people, is located on the Huon peninsula on the north coast of PNG. Though near the ocean, most of the Nukna people live in the nearby mountains which rise to over 3,000 feet. The mountainous terrain means that the climate is cooler, but also makes transportation more difficult. Since there are no airstrips in the Nukna area, we will be flown to Hamelengan village by an SIL helicopter. There is currently no Scripture translated into the Nukna language.

We ask you to please pray for us during these important visits to Kilmeri and Nukna. Our few days’ stay in each language group will be a valuable time of information gathering, but ultimately we know that we will need to rely upon the Lord’s guidance as we make decisions that will have long-term and even eternal ramifications. Also, please pray for the hundreds of languages in PNG that are still without the Bible that we will not be able to choose. Please pray the God would send more translation and support teams to PNG so that all Papua New Guineans will have God’s Word in their own heart language.



Hamelengan, a village of the Nukna people group.

In the Meantime....

Besides researching possible language allocations and preparing for our two language visits, we've been involved with some other projects as well. In August we both attended an SIL Phonology Workshop. Phonology is the study of the sound systems of a language, and how those sounds are modified by their environments (i.e. other sounds). The workshop focused especially on the languages of Papua New Guinea, and we learned a lot! Since we are just starting out, it was a bit intimidating to see that the rest of the workshop attendees were experienced Bible translators. We were grateful for the opportunity to sharpen our linguistic skills before we begin translating ourselves.

Matt has also been involved in an important project of the SIL Aviation Department. New government regulations have required SIL Aviation to completely rewrite their operating and maintenance manuals – no small task! The project must be completed by October 15 and then approved by the PNG government, or SIL planes will be grounded. This would affect countless Bible translation teams. Many pilots and mechanics have been pulled from their normal duties to help write these new manuals. Matt has been assisting them by taking care of the many tricky formatting issues.

Please pray for the SIL Aviation manual rewrite project, that it would be completed on time and approved by the PNG government. Please also pray for the men and women of SIL Aviation who are being stretched thin by the extra workload this project has put on them. Finally, please pray that more experienced pilots and mechanics would be sent to Papua New Guinea, as SIL is currently understaffed in these areas.



Matt with some of the others working on the SIL Aviation manual rewrite

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Dawawa New Testament Dedication

In 1988, SIL translators Martin and Beate Knauber set foot in Boya Boya village, located in a narrow gorge tucked into the rugged mountains of Papua New Guinea. The Dawawa people lived in spiritual darkness and in bondage to animism. Over the next 15 years, the Dawawa people came to know the good news of Jesus Christ as the Knaubers translated the New Testament into the



Bible translators, Martin and Beate Knauber, along with their Dawawa co-translators, holding the newly dedicated New Testaments

Dawawa language. On August 10, 2003, the Dawawa New Testament was dedicated with thanksgiving and praise to God. As part of the dedication, the people publicly renounced their old practices of ritual and ancestor worship. A local leader proclaimed, "These Holy Scriptures are food for our souls and water for our spiritual life. What we have dreamed about in the past has today become a reality - the living Word in the Dawawa language." Praise God for his faithfulness to the Knaubers and to the Dawawa people, and for his Word, available for the first time in the Dawawa language! The Dawawa New Testament is the 140th New Testament completed in Papua New Guinea.

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