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An Unexpected Journey

by Diana Parker

God moves in unexpected ways His wonders to perform

'Where did this come from? I've been having a dream that something good was going to come to PNG. Now I know what it is.'

These were the encouraging words of a Papua New Guinean (PNG) teacher after attending a workshop on using **Phonics in Colour**, an innovative method of teaching English. (See page 3)

As I reflect on the last five years I can see how God led us to introduce this method into primary schools in PNG.

The journey began **unexpectedly** for us. It started one morning in 2010 when I attended a seminar at Ashford Special School in South Australia, where our severely handicapped grandson was a student. Over morning tea, I was privileged to converse with 94-year-old Daphne Gum, a founder of the school. In the 1960s she spent two years in Rabaul as a teacher with the Methodist Overseas Missions—the very area where my husband Jim and I have served with Wycliffe since 1970. An arrangement was made to visit Daphne in her home to share each other's experiences, and it was on this, my second encounter with her, that the journey began.

Daphne went into a back room, returning with some coloured charts in her hands and a question on her lips; 'Have you ever seen these?' For the next few minutes she went on to explain that she had only ever used one method of teaching children to read in all her years of experience - with 100% success. No child had ever failed to learn.

The more I thought about it, the more excited I became. Surely, this approach would greatly assist teachers who were struggling in PNG. My enthusiasm to research and document the teaching method was soon matched and surpassed by Jim, who began setting in motion his computer skills.

By early 2011 we had enough materials prepared and were ready to run it by a few teachers whom we knew personally, with the idea of it being trialled in a couple of classes. One Sunday afternoon on our way home from church we stopped at our friend Pat's house, chatting about it with her. After a very short time she had grasped the concept well.

Pat was so enthusiastic to try it that a few days later she called to tell us that she had talked about it with the headmaster and 24 other teachers at her school. An IN SERVICE training seminar had already been arranged for us to present the material! I felt panicky – this was not what I had planned and I was lacking in confidence as to how to go about clearly presenting it to a large group of teachers... but,

ready or not, **Phonics in Colour** was launched with what we had. There was no turning back.

Later, Jim and an idea hibernated together for some time in his office, with his laptop. I could not imagine what he was doing. The result was brilliant - two different colour wheel charts, one for vowels and one for consonants, enabling the sounds and



colours to be easily drilled on a daily basis. (Both teachers and children are eager for accurate pronunciation.)

Inspired by another lady God brought across our path, Jim recorded a PowerPoint presentation on CD. In this way, teachers could have a permanent, illustrated sound resource they could listen to over and over again, enabling them to practise the correct pronunciation. This was copied onto USBs, and along with these, we published booklets that were reproductions of the PowerPoint. The first presentation taught the vowels and was received with much enthusiasm.

'You don't need to do anything more for us now, we have everything we need,' they told us, 'just leave it to us from here on, BUT...could you please do the same for the consonants while you are back in Australia'. Three months later, Jim had the work completed.

We were on a journey of developing a meaningful program that needed to be hand-tailored to fit the needs of PNG teachers and students, for many of whom English is a second, third or even fourth language. Then one day, while browsing through a book at a friend's place, a single paragraph caught my eye. It read something like this; 'Indigenisation is a cultural process in which indigenes attempt to take something borrowed from outside their culture and make it their own. This concept of indigenisation has important practical implications for an agent of change. If change agents are to be successful, they must advocate change in such a way that (Continued next page)



Editorial

by Yvonne Gillespie

Our Lord said; 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full,' (Jn 10:10). Have you ever wondered what *life to the full* looks like? Certainly not boring!

The people featured in this edition are living their lives to the full by doing the good works that God has prepared in advance for them to do.

Ephesians 2:10 is a great encouragement for those seeking to serve God. 'For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.'

Some good works involve skills learnt in a former career, others may come from *left field* and take us out of our comfort zone.

Our background does not limit God, but along with the necessary skills he also gives us a passion for the work he has prepared for us to do.

Therefore, when we are asked to do things that seem out of our comfort zone, we can take heart that if God has prepared good works in advance for us to do, He will, with the request also give us the passion and ability to see the project completed.

It has been said that God does not want our ability but our availability.

An Unexpected Journey (continued from front page)

members of the recipient society can readily indigenise it, making it their own. Unless this happens *acceptance* will only be superficial, and neither long lasting nor integrated into the society.'

This made a lot of sense, and so we began to see our role as providing the resources, but allowing the teachers freedom to use them in whatever way they chose. This was a significant milestone along the way.

God is no man's debtor. When he sets our feet on a path, he provides for all that is needed along the way. Most unexpectedly we received an email one day in early 2013 from a gentleman in USA. We didn't know him personally but his father was a Christian brother who had prayed for and mentored us through a few months of difficult times in Rabaul in 1982. He had then returned home to the US and we lost contact. On his death, his son contacted us to say that he was forwarding to us part of his father's estate for the Lord's work. *We now had sufficient funds for printing all the resources.*

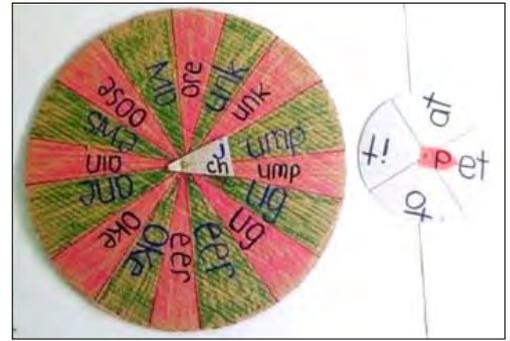


Now they are being used by scores of happy teachers and thousands of excited children in East and West New Britain Provinces of PNG. 'The children find Phonics in Colour most enjoyable, it is very meaningful for them. Their reading is very much improved.' said teacher Adolpha.

Training workshops mean that in one day or less teachers can receive enough training to make a start, especially now that we incorporate suggestions for them as to how to go about starting on the first day. A follow-up session is most valuable for discussion about what areas they are finding difficult.

Material Production workshops are all time favourites, where together they assemble

Jim and Diana Parker joined Wycliffe in 1970 and spent 37 years translating the New Testament for the Baining people in East New Britain, PNG. Although they are officially retired, they still return to PNG frequently working in community development and sharing God's love and power with the people.



teaching aids. Their creativity knows no ends. As long as we arrive with a ute load of cardboard cartons from stores in town, they can't be stopped!

In monolingual situations where a class of children and their teacher all have the same mother-tongue, it is easier to teach and explain Phonics. However in many parts of PNG today, especially the urban areas, a class of children represents many mother-tongue languages and often the teacher has a different one too. There has also been much transmigration of language groups as a result of the introduction of Palm Oil into the country as a cash crop. In such communities, the only common language is Pidgin English.

In an attempt to raise the literacy levels, the government leadership recently put forward a policy for compulsory introduction of English into the early grades of school. **Phonics in Colour** has made the teacher's task so much easier, and has produced results. Even Prep children, with a good teacher, are grasping the concept of reading in a very short time. Grade 2 graduates from one Elementary School, moved into the local Primary School this year, and amazed the Grade 3 teachers as every student was already literate.

As we were about to leave PNG again, an older man, the chairman of a school board, made a suggestion to us. 'I can see that you are getting older. If and when the time comes that you may not be able to return, we have reliable people here who could be agents to receive the resources to keep the program going.' What an encouraging thing to say!

We are still on the journey, only God knows the destination.



Phonics in Colour *by Diana Parker*

All the sounds in the English language fall into two categories—Vowels or Consonants. The English alphabet is traditionally accepted as having five vowels, namely A, E, I, O and U. But these are only the names of the vowels, not representing how these letters sound in



Helen using the 'silent teacher'

words. In actual fact there are 19 different vowel sounds and 26 consonant sounds in English words. When these are all represented by a different colour, they become colour coded. So we now have **SOUNDS** and **COLOURS**.

The short vowel sounds are as in pat, putt, pit, pet and pqt. Any combinations of letters that are used to represent or spell specific sounds are called **SIGNS**. For example the sign 'oo' represents four different sounds in the words flood, floor, food and foot. When these are colour coded, they are pronounced correctly.

Teachers work from a set of 28 large charts, the first 8 of which identify all the vowel and consonant sounds. The remaining 20 are word charts which gradually build in complexity as both vowel and consonant sounds are first



taught and then blended together into words. A key learning factor in the program is the use of a pointer called the **SILENT TEACHER**. As the teacher silently points to signs or words with the pointer, the children read them, speaking them aloud after the pointer is raised. It can be used to identify individual signs or whole words. Individual signs are first blended into words, then a series of words build into sentences which the children actually read rather than repeat in parrot fashion.

Internal Control Review 2015 *by Jenny Kleywegt*

The Internal Control Reviews John and I undertake have taken us to some very interesting locations and this year was no



John working with the Business Manager

exception; from the fringes of the 'Golden Triangle' to Chiang Mai in Thailand.

During the three-week assignment, auditing was done in the offices of MSEAG (Mainland South East Asia Group) with a brief visit to another office and a Literacy Training Centre.

We were warmly welcomed and looked after at all the offices and the Training Centre. We love the opportunity to work with those in the offices of Wycliffe who work behind the scenes making it possible for those working on translation projects to effectively and successfully achieve their goals. Everyone is happy when finances and administration run smoothly.

Our role while on assignment - to quote from Dave Cram the International Audit Coordinator is, 'To assure that Wycliffe offices properly steward and account for the resources they have, Wycliffe recruits volunteers to do internal control reviews of its financial operations and those of its partner organisations.' We follow a well prescribed guide and Dave issues the report.

We look forward to meeting Dave Cram in December. He is coming to Australia (and to our home city, Hobart) to promote this work and encourage more volunteers to carry out financial reviews in the Pacific and South-East Asia region.

We are currently the only financial auditors volunteering for Wycliffe in Australia and New Zealand. We can fully recommend this short-term mission work if you are an accountant or have worked

as an accountant. It is rewarding and contributes towards God's Great Commission.

Our understanding of the Wycliffe network continues to deepen and thus be more effective. We feel it is a privilege to be part of Wycliffe and the Bible translation work using John's financial skills he built up through many years in the workforce. I do not have a financial background but I bring a skill set that compliments John's and I am learning quickly. We enjoy this unique opportunity to work together and know the Lord uses these skills to grow the gospel. So far, these reviews have taken us to West Papua, The Philippines, Australia, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Indonesia.

We look forward to our assignment next year at offices in West Timor and Darwin.



Jenny tries Durian for the first time

HELP NEEDED

Every January the Wycliffe National Centre at Kangaroo Ground is alive with families, couples and singles undertaking the six week Summer School.

It is basic training for anyone seeking to be a member of Wycliffe or anyone wanting to gain understanding of translation and literacy. For some it is the beginning of the full year course.

To help parents during this six-week intensive a child minding facility is provided.

Helpers are needed, particularly in looking after energetic teenagers. Can you volunteer for any or all of the time?

There is also a need for an experienced coordinator to plan a roster, supervise the program and keep in touch with volunteers. Travel assistance is available if a coordinator is from interstate.

Contact: Greg Conwell Phone: 0409 975 702
Email: greg_conwell@wycliffe.org.au



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WANTED — ACCOUNTANTS

Wycliffe needs accountants to carry out audits in the Pacific Area. If you have skills in auditing and review and would like to help

contact: John and Jenny Kleywegt

mob: 0412 861 495 (John)

0412 531 455 (Jenny)

or the Wycliffe National Office at Kangaroo Ground Ph: 03 9712 2777

USED STAMPS

Continue to send stamps to Ann Wiggins at her home address: 6/26 Jackson Street, Croydon, Vic 3136, or to the Wycliffe Office at Kangaroo Ground.

Ann's email address is ann_wiggins@wycliffe.org



Teaching in Ukarumpa *by Judy Carpenter*

Some years ago, a Korean mission student who worshipped where I did, gave me her prayer card and asked me to pray for her. This I did, and prayed the same five prayer points for other people on my daily prayer list as well. They seemed to me to be very relevant prayer points. Point five was: 'May I know the mission field where God wants me to go and [that] I will obey.'

Years later, by which time the mission student was in the field and I was still praying the five points; my son (serving with Wycliffe in PNG) and his family were staying with us and my daughter-in-law commented that Ukarumpa needed teachers. My husband Wes, is a good-natured very subtle stirrer, and smiling, said that

he was sure I'd love the job! I replied that I'd made my 40 plus years' contribution to primary education. Adults yes, children, no!!

Some months later, our daughter-in-law commented that the Grade 3 teacher at Ukarumpa Primary School had badly broken her arm, and the school needed a relief teacher. Wes, smiling, again said that he was sure I'd love the job. I replied that I had done my time...!

Days later, when praying point five, a thought came into my head, that I should check with Wycliffe at Kangaroo Ground if Ukarumpa still needed a teacher—even one of my ancient vintage. The result of that inquiry placed me quickly into the primary school at Ukarumpa.

It was a significant challenge to get there, the obstacles kept getting bigger, but God kept knocking them down.

When I arrived in Ukarumpa, I taught 14 delightful Grade 4 students with the help of another teacher. The curriculum was top rate and so were the facilities. Wes came after six weeks, and stayed till I had only one week to go. He spent most of his time meeting his latest grandson. After initial strong misgivings, the said grandson decided he liked the hairy face.

For me, the people I met was the highlight of the trip. They are all such a great bunch. My advice to others contemplating this type of work is to pray about the matter. If God wants you somewhere to do something, Ukarumpa may be your place.

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