

Wycliffe *today*



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www.facebook.com/wycliffeaustralia

Enquiries:

Editor, Wycliffe Today
Ph. 03 9712 2777

E: communications@wycliffe.org.au

Contributions:

Louise Bettison, Greg Conwell,
Belinda Fox, Craig Schneider,
Deb Tan

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COVER PICTURE

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EDITORIAL

We celebrate two New Testament dedications this May: the Gela New Testament (Solomon Islands) on 1 May and the Bunong New Testament (Cambodia) on 27-28 May. Behind these milestones is a wonderful team of people supporting our Wycliffe members from home.

In this edition of *Wycliffe Today*, we focus on these Bible dedications from the perspective of the supporters, who themselves are representative of the over 5,000 supporters of Wycliffe Australia.

May these stories encourage us and cause us all to reflect and appreciate that we can achieve so much more in working together than we can alone.

To all our wonderful friends who are a part of Wycliffe's story, thank you. You don't just contribute to our work - you make it possible.

Barry Borneman
Wycliffe Australia CEO



*Barry & Marg
Borneman*

Interested in literacy & education?

Did you resonate with the focus on literacy in the last *Wycliffe Today*? Are you interested in teaching overseas? To coincide with World Literacy Day on 8 September, we're holding a special literacy and education-focused evening in Melbourne and Sydney. If you'd be interested in such an event, please let us know by contacting literacy@wycliffe.org.au or teaching@wycliffe.org.au



EVERYTOWN DOWNUNDER DEAL ENDS 30 JUNE 2016

There is still time if you wish to buy this award-winning outback TV series starring Steve Grace. Enter the **promo code WYCLIFFE** when purchasing the series (for \$24.95) and 10% of your purchase will support Wycliffe Bible Translators. This deal ends 30 June 2016.

Go to www.everytowndownunder.com

Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia

National Office
70 Graham Road
Kangaroo Ground VIC 3097
ABN 22 004 705 953

Ph: 03 9712 2777
Fax: 03 9712 2799
Email: info@wycliffe.org.au
wycliffe.org.au

ACT / NSW
Ph: 02 8014 6487
E: nswro@wycliffe.org.au

QLD
Ph: 07 3256 1803
E: qldro@wycliffe.org.au

SA
E: saro@wycliffe.org.au

TAS
E: tasro@wycliffe.org.au

VIC
Ph: 03 9712 2720
E: vicro@wycliffe.org.au

WA
Ph: 08 9243 0486
E: waro@wycliffe.org.au

The GELA Story

By Craig Schneider

What a joy to celebrate the dedication of the Gela New Testament on 1 May 2016! The Coombe family - Bruce, Ali and their four children, Philip, Rachel, Timothy and Naomi - arrived in Polomuhu, Solomon Islands, to learn the language and culture of the Gela people in April 1999. They were excited to return as a family

to celebrate the completion of a project which has had its fair share of challenges and joys.

Every translation project is a community effort. Join us as we take a behind-the-scenes look at some of the folk who have been a part of the Gela story.



Piku
Solomon Islands

Bruce shares an example of the support he received from his friend Piku:

I remember an occasion when we were checking one of the Pauline epistles. We needed a Gela speaker who had not been involved in the translation work to check it for



Bruce & Ali Coombe
Translation Advisors for the Gela language, Solomon Islands

The dedication of the Gela New Testament is a culmination of 17 years of work, not to mention the many additional years of preparation before we got to the field. Some of our partners have been with us for all of that time! Without people praying and supporting us financially, the Gela New Testament translation would not have been possible.

An example of this came in 2011, when we had 75% of the Gela New Testament ready but were needing the finances for printing 10 copies. We prayed that if God wanted it to happen, He would provide the funds we needed in less than a month. Within a week we had three times what we needed in a quarter of the time, so we knew that God had confirmed He wanted us to go ahead with this!



Celebrating end of consultant check 2014

accuracy and meaning. Our plans for this vital person had fallen through and our check couldn't go ahead until we found someone.

I was driving down the street in Honiara to buy food supplies, when I 'happened' to see my best friend from our village in Gela crossing the road. I shouted for him to stop and then I parked the car. When I explained to him the situation, he instantly changed his plans and jumped in the car to come back and help us.

He remained for the entire two weeks so that we could complete the check! Without God's faithful work through the Solomon Islanders, the Gela New Testament could not have been completed.



Ruth & Peter
Supporters, Victoria

I (Ruth) have always felt Bible translation is vital to the Great Commission. Bruce and Ali are good friends of ours through Home-Education. We've been supporting them for 18 years now.

Starting out, I felt the Lord ask me to give them \$10 a month. This was all we could afford from the family allowance. After a few years, I suddenly felt I should increase it to \$100 a month. This seemed impossible, but I thought that if God had really spoken to me, He would provide.

That same week, a woman who taught Christian Religious Education with me asked if I would teach her children music. She said she would pay me \$25 a week! Though I

hadn't advertised for any work, I was astounded that this was exactly the amount God had told me to give.

After we retired, Peter and I agreed to keep supporting the Coombes because it was obvious that the monetary support enabled them to continue. I'm so pleased that, after all the Coombes have endured, the New Testament is finally in the hands of the Gela people!



Johan Ernest
Supporter, Victoria

For 15 years we've been on the rollercoaster ride with Bruce, Ali and their children. My family and I often heard of the opposition to the translation: local tension, loss of property, conflict and fatigue. Yet God, in His divine timing, worked mightily - providing work, unexpected gifts from supporters, property and new friendships - to allow the New Testament to be completed.

Through praying and giving financial and practical support where we could, we've come to see that God surely works through His humble servants.

When we lent the Coombes our car, we never would have expected that they would in turn bless us by sending their girls out to look after our children when we were struggling to do so. We prayed alongside the Coombes family as, one-by-one, the books of the New Testament were completed. And we praised God with them as people were rebuilt, hearts were changed, and lives were transformed in the Gela islands.



David Wake
Wycliffe colleague, Melbourne

In 2000, I led a work team to the Solomon Islands to finish building the Coombes' house in Polomuhu. That experience showed me that I could make a direct impact on Bible translation by using my gifts and skills. I also realised how big a team it takes to translate the Bible. I'm so excited about the Gela people receiving the New Testament!

The stories included here are abbreviated versions. For the full stories, please go to wycliffe.org.au/the-gela-story



Coombes' house in Polomuhu

The BUNONG Story

By Louise Bettison

The celebrations will last two days in May, but the effects on people's lives will be eternal, when a decade of hope, prayer and hard work culminates in the dedication of the Bunong New Testament.

As long ago as the 1950s, the Bunong people had heard the gospel. But they were crying out for access to the Scriptures and for people to teach them.

When Wycliffe members Didi and MiMi K first visited the Cambodian Bunong in 1998, they expected to find few believers. But God had been moving amongst this people, and the church numbered 1,000. Today, that has grown to 3,500, buoyed by accessibility to God's Word.

They began by working with the community to develop a spelling system, which won government approval as the official Bunong alphabet in 2003. This paved the

way for teacher training and literacy classes, held at night so the Bunong people could attend after labouring on their farms.

The result? Today, 5,000 Bunong people are literate in their own language, and have access to more than 250 publications. And at the end of May, little more than a decade since the translation work began, the Bunong people will be able to immerse themselves in the entire New Testament in their heart language.



MiMi & Didi K
*Translation & Literacy facilitators,
Cambodia*

Knowing people are praying for us and supporting our work stops us from feeling isolated, as though we are the only ones carrying the load. It gives us a balanced perspective and is evidence of how the Body works - each with our own part to play. It reminds us, too, of the privilege and honour of serving God in this way.

There have been so many times when a word of encouragement, a prayer or a material gift has come at just the right moment. We are no better, more accomplished or precious in God's sight than anyone

else. And as Christians, we have a strength of purpose because of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, our calling to serve God, and the privilege of sharing His love for all people.





Roslyn Jones
Supporter, Melbourne

I started supporting the Bunong translation work about 16 years ago, and sometimes feel that MiMi and Didi have put more into me than I have into them. I make the sacrifice to support them financially, but that feels like a drop in the ocean compared to how they gave up their careers and lives here to go and serve.

I never get the feeling that they see it that way, though. They see it as a two-way partnership and care about what's going on in the lives of their supporters. And it is a privilege to get to play my part.

I know MiMi and Didi have faced a lot of challenges. But their heart for the Bunong and longing for their transformation is so apparent.

I'm grateful that the New Testament translation has now come to fruition after 15 years, with all credit to Didi and MiMi and, of course, God.



Graeme and Margaret Clark
Supporters, Melbourne

We started praying and financially supporting MiMi and Didi after hearing about the project and meeting them at our church in Doncaster.

It is a wonderful thing to give the Bible to people who have not had their language written down. We believe in this work and admire the courage of those who go.

MiMi is such a caring, loving person to everyone. But we still remember the time she got stuck in the mud. She'd

had enough! It exemplified the hardship they've faced. They have had to rough it but have been very patient.

There is now 'great rejoicing' in our pocket of Victoria as we join the Bunong people in celebrating the completion of their New Testament.



David Meadows
Supporter, Tasmania

I'm a project manager in the construction industry and have been a Wycliffe supporter for 50 years. I've been supporting the Bunong project about half of that time. I'm delighted with how God has made this Bunong New Testament happen, and give Him all the glory. I'm also so thankful for all the hard work put in by MiMi, Didi and many others.

What greater joy can there be but to read in your own language the wonderful words of God? And now the Bunong New Testament is completed, the next step is to get all the Psalms translated and, eventually, the whole Old Testament. As I pray, I remember how Jesus promised in John 14:14 that 'if you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.'





Jenny Flood
Supporter, United Kingdom

I've been supporting the work with the Bunong people from the very beginning and am very excited to know that the entire New Testament will be in the hands of the Bunong people this May!

MiMi and Didi have faced many challenges, but it has been a privilege to pray, give and encourage them where needed. I always look forward to their informative emails, but was also able to go and see the work for myself a few years ago. I

liked being able to sit down on the floor of their house and share a simple meal, and go to a small house meeting where pigs wandered in and out during the service.

I can't imagine life without my Bible. When I pray and see the Bunong people's faces and their hunger for God, I long for them to have more access to His Word, to become rooted in the knowledge of God, and to be more on fire for Him.

The stories included here are abbreviated versions. For the full stories, please go to wycliffe.org.au/the-bunong-story

From the bookroom

The BOOK TREE

INTERESTED IN READING MORE WYCLIFFE STORIES?

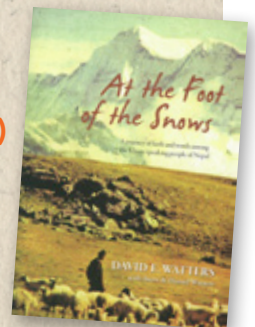
'SLEEPING COCONUTS'
by John & Bonnie Nystrom
\$25.00 (+ postage)

In *Sleeping Coconuts*, the Nystroms share their story of tragedy, teamwork and transformation, and the incredible way that God used a tsunami to change the face of Bible translation in the Arop community of Papua New Guinea. What began in the late 1980s as a single project to translate the Bible into one of PNG's many languages, expanded to become multi-language projects in a much larger area involving many more people.



'AT THE FOOT OF THE SNOWS'
by David E Watters with Steve & Daniel Watters
\$29.50 (+ postage)

Through years of study and hard work, the Watters, along with some of the Kham Magor people of Nepal, translated Scripture into the Kham language. Despite persecution over many years, interest in the gospel developed and, through it all, David and Nancy Watters struggled to demonstrate the gospel to these people.



Retreats@Wycliffe
A reflective space

Retreats@Wycliffe provides a unique space for church and mission groups while financially supporting the upkeep and development of the Wycliffe National Centre. For more information go to wycliffe.org.au/retreats or email retreats@wycliffe.org.au



Philip, Guinevere, Soren, Reuben and Autumn Swan
Translation facilitators, South-East Asia

We needed to return from the field suddenly because of a medical emergency. Housing at the Wycliffe National Centre was God's perfect provision for us; somewhere affordable and stable to live.

The community, as well as the beautiful and peaceful surroundings here at the centre in Kangaroo Ground, have been an enormous blessing to us - particularly our children, as they've adjusted to Australian life and school. We are now ready to return to the field.

- Philip & Guinevere Swan

PROJECT UPDATE:

Bustle To Bush (K Literacy & Health Training, South Asia)*

2016 Target: \$5,600 - 3% funded
(as of 22 April 2016)

Food security, power availability, water proximity and reliability, lack of schools and materials, remoteness from transport... Heart-wrenching themes that are all too familiar from my own experiences in Pacific communities. But so was the warm welcome we received.

Getting to the K community of South Asia certainly had its challenges. First we had to apply for special permission to go there, which we received miraculously and quickly. Then a twelve-hour bus trip took us from the chaos of the capital, constantly weaving amongst the thousands of trucks, buses and rickshaws determined to create lanes where there were none; convinced that divided highway signs were not relevant for their particular vehicle.



By Greg Conwell

The purpose of my recent trip to South Asia was to sit in on part of the training workshop designed to preserve the language, culture and way of life of the K people. The students I met at the workshop were full of energy and enthusiasm. But they lead very busy lives and many are also facing land ownership issues. These communities are under pressure and deserving of our support.

Wycliffe Australia is contributing staff and collaborating with other funders to train K students. And the workshops are creating

much interest! Another language group also attended the workshop for the first time while I was visiting. As they would also benefit greatly from participating in this vital training, we are considering ways we can get behind this group in the future too.

To support this project, go to:
<http://projects.wycliffe.org.au/8130-k/>

**Name of language group withheld for security reasons*

NEW PROJECT:

Basnami Translation (Cameroon)*

2016 Target: \$6,700

I had never understood the meaning of the text in Luke 1:57-80... It was when this passage was read in church, in Basnami, that I understood. - Suzanne Godam.

Try to imagine for a moment what it must be like speaking one language at home, another one in the marketplace, and a different one altogether at school and church. Speakers of the Basnami language of northern Cameroon may get by with their limited French in school and Fulfude

in the marketplace, but Basnami is the language that speaks to their hearts.

Since its publication in March 2015, the Gospel of Luke in Basnami has been used in almost all the local churches and many home Bible study groups. And the impact of having Scripture in their mother tongue is very clear, as people begin to understand the meaning of God's Word for themselves.

Basnami believers are passionate about their own translated Scriptures. Many of them are playing their part in the work by providing their time, financial and material resources, as well as spiritual support.

The funds for this project will go towards paying part of their salaries (for four local translators and one literacy worker), purchasing literacy materials, and covering office expenses for testing translation drafts.

The team's aim for 2016 is to finish Acts, draft Matthew, and expand their 11 literacy classes currently operating in the community. So that many more Basnami people will gain an understanding of God's Word for themselves and be changed by it.

To support this project, go to:
<http://projects.wycliffe.org.au/8311-basnami/>

**pseudonym*



To support a project

Go to projects.wycliffe.org.au or email projects@wycliffe.org.au
Or fill out and mail the enclosed response form

If we receive more than the target amount, the extra funds will be transferred to another project, unless you tell us otherwise.

INTERESTED IN OTHER TYPES OF PROJECTS AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD?

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