

The

Storyboard

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Vision For the Future

by Dave Robinson

The work of Bible translation in Papua New Guinea has been going on for many years, even though Pioneer Bible Translators has only been here since 1977. Church sponsored missionaries near the beginning of the twentieth century produced the earliest translation efforts. SIL (a sister organization to Wycliffe

Bible Translators) began their work in the country in 1956. The Bible Society of Papua New Guinea has been assisting translation efforts since 1945. The Bible Translation Association of PNG was founded in 1977 to promote the involvement of Papua New Guineans in Bible translation. Still, in a country with more than 860 separate lan-

guages, the task is immense. Even with all our efforts in the last century, there are still more than 400 language groups with no translation work at all even begun. At the present rate of progress, it will take many more years to finish the work. All that time there will be men and women dying without ever having heard

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Erastus Otai robo

Erastus is from the Solomon Islands, but his wife is from Papua New Guinea. Erastus has worked in Bible translation in the Solomons since 1981, working primarily on the Solomon's Pijin New Testament. He and his family recently moved to PNG, and soon after he was approached about becoming National Coordinator for the translation Partnership. He will work to coordinate and facilitate translation efforts beginning in the Madang region. Erastus will work to promote translation awareness and help to initiate translation programs where they are desired. We will all work with him to provide appropriate resources where needed.



The Otai robo family – Erastus, his wife Lois, and their three children, Denise, Delwyn, and Elson.

New Video Release!!

KAM YUMI PUL!!

By Cindy Davis

The title of this new video probably doesn't make much sense to most of you, but we hope before this year is out, you will have a keen understanding of what the phrase expresses. These words are Melanesian Pidgin for "Come, let's pull (or work) together." The word *pul* actually connotes the act of paddling a boat (pulling an oar) and all the imagery that goes along with it. Paddling a boat is hard work any way you look at it, but single-handedly paddling a boat full of people is particularly difficult. *Yumi* refers to everyone present, involved, or within hearing. So it is a call for everyone to work; however, if everyone rows independently in different directions, the boat is not going to get anywhere soon and the rowers will eventually wear out. Obviously, it is important for everyone in the boat to pull the oars in the same direction and rhythm.

The Lord has been challenging us, as well as our colleagues in other translation organizations working here in PNG,

with new vision for the years ahead! He has been showing us that the translation job is not going to get done in this country of more than 860 languages

involved in the work of Bible translation.

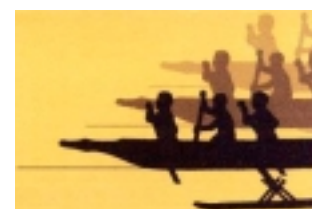
February 16th of this year was the premier showing of the video and it was quite an event. Community and church leaders from many language groups, as well as PNG nationals currently working on translations, were invited. A feast of typical Papua New Guinean food was provided by one of the churches here in



Madang. We were honored to have the Governor of Manus Island as our keynote speaker for the program. He is a Christian who has been translating the New Testament into his mother tongue as a "hobby." Other speakers followed Governor Pokawin after which the video was presented. If the response of those present is any indication, this video will have far reaching impact in the days to come.

in the conventional way— i.e. a missionary team spending years raising support and training, then coming for 10-20 years to do a New Testament in one language. It is an effort to start "thinking outside of the box" to find innovative and more efficient ways of accomplishing Bible translation and literacy in this linguistically diverse country. The *Kam, Yumi Pul* video was produced with the goal of involving PNG nationals to do the translation work, while missionaries take on more of a consultant role. It is basically a very compelling recruiting tool. This video was produced in Madang Province using Papua New Guinean actors and includes testimonials by nationals already

involved in the work of Bible translation. February 16th of this year was the premier showing of the video and it was quite an event. Community and church leaders from many language groups, as well as PNG nationals currently working on translations, were invited. A feast of typical Papua New Guinean food was provided by one of the churches here in



A NEW “READ” ON LITERACY PROJECTS

What would you do if your language was not in written form, but you wanted to teach the people of your language group to read and write? What would you do if there were no expatriates available to help you start a literacy program in your village? This was the dilemma facing Joe Baraghar and Michael Aghove, two men of the Akighim [Ahkug'-hum] dialect in the Sepen Language Group.

Joe and Michael had heard that Thomas Dukun, a national literacy supervisor working with PBT, would conduct a Writer's Workshop in their area in November 2000. They went to the leaders of their village to obtain permission, as well as the necessary funds, to attend the workshop. Thomas worked with Martha Wade, a PBT translator, to develop orthography (an alphabet) for the language. Using this orthography, Joe and Michael produced two stories during the workshop, making a handwritten first draft of them on stencils and printing them by the use of a silkscreen. This is a small wooden

hinged frame with a sheet of silk gauze attached to one side. When the stencil is fitted onto the frame and the gauze is inked, reproductions of the stencil can be made on paper or other materials. It is, in effect, a rudimentary printing press—a portable one that can be used just about anywhere.

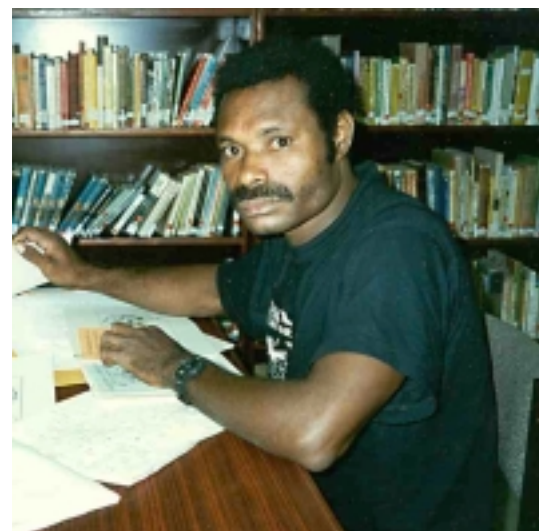
Meanwhile, Thomas Dukun was communicating the need for literacy materials for the Akighim project to Ellen Rohrer, a PBT literacy specialist and project advisor who had just returned to PNG for her second term. Thomas and Ellen both knew that the orthography of the language needed testing before time and money were invested in producing teaching and reading materials, so they encouraged Joe and Michael to meet with them in February to make alphabet charts. The alphabet will be tested in all the villages of the language group for a period of five weeks. Afterward, sometime in early April, Thomas and Ellen will do revision, if necessary, and design a Spelling Guide and a Beginner's Primer.

Please pray for this pilot project of the Translation and Literacy Partnership. Pray for wisdom and insight for Thomas and Ellen, as Thomas works with these prospective teachers out in the bush and Ellen works on production of literacy materials in Madang. Please pray for Joe and Michael and three other men who are attending a Teacher Training Workshop during the month of March. Above all, thank God for the love and enthusiasm that prompted these national men to say, “Even though we don't have a *whiteskin* working in our language group, we want our people to be able to read and write their mother tongue!”



*What
would you
do if your
language
was not in
written form*

? ? ?



Thomas Dukun, Literacy Supervisor for the Akighim group

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Bringing the Word to Life



Above is a map of Madang Province. The shaded areas represent those people groups where New Testament translations have been completed or where work is now in progress. As you can see, there are still many people groups who do not have one word of Scripture in their mother tongue.

We're on the web!!
www.pioneerbible.org.pg

Did You Know...

- ...Papua New Guinea has more languages than any other country in the world? (Over 860)
- ...Madang Province has more languages than any other province in PNG? (Over 175)
- ...PBT has translation projects in 10 of those languages?

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the gospel in their own heart language.

Now PBT is part of a cooperative effort to begin translation projects in every language group in Papua New Guinea that needs it within the next few decades. We realize that this will require a change of strategy, to say the least. We believe it will take all of us working together, and will especially require that Papua New Guineans be trained and motivated and aided to carry out translation projects in their own languages, without having a foreign missionary or transla-

tor living among them. We will still be available as advisors and consultants, but if the work is going to get done, more Papua New Guineans will have to be involved in doing it.

PBT, SIL, BTA, and the Bible Society of PNG have agreed to work cooperatively in training, advising and enabling Papua New Guineans in every way possible to begin and carry out translation projects in every language in PNG. Together we have produced a new video presentation entitled *Kam, Yumi Pul*. This video is intended to

promote vernacular translation in PNG. We have also called a man to serve as coordinator for our efforts. Erastus Otai-robo will work with all four Bible translation agencies, as well as with interested churches, to ensure that our resources are used to the fullest. Pray with us that the Lord will greatly multiply the harvest through these efforts, and that soon more and more men, women and children will be able to read and hear His word in their own language.