



The

Storyboard

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Compelled by Christ by Todd Owen

Occasionally, the Lord brings someone our way who draws our attention beyond the work at hand to the greatness of the salvation we have in Christ. To my great pleasure I have found one such man in Uria village.

Kisauma Amos Ligai, or Amos, was born in the late 1960's. In 1973, when he was about six years old, his mother died. Amos' father was a clan leader who mixed the worship of bush gods (demons) and the practice of black magic with Christianity. The practice of black magic, by its very nature (revenge, curses, etc.), creates many enemies. He died in 1989, Amos says, as a direct result of his lifestyle. Having grown up with such an example, one might expect Amos to be confused, wayward, self-absorbed, driven by the demons of his past. However, that couldn't be further from the truth.

In 1983 Amos finished grade ten with a desire to go on to Bible College. He wanted to come back to live with the Somau Garia people and do the work of an evangelist and pastor: preaching Christ and strengthening the church. The elders decided that he should work among them and in the church first — then they would send him to Bible College. Even though he could have gone into politics or business, Amos came back from high school to work in the churches.

It was during this time that the Holy Spirit began prompting him with questions like, "Does the Pidgin Bible really pierce the Somau Garia heart?" Also during this time, PBT sent a survey team to the area to assess the need for a Bible translation. Amos became convinced that God's Word in Somau Garia is what

would best help his people. The deepest need of his people sparked the kindling of Amos' heart and the Holy Spirit fanned it to flame. When God puts "fire in the bones," it is impossible to snuff it out.

God has used Amos' education, gifts, abilities, and desires for the glory of the Lord. Amos serves faithfully as program coordinator of the Somau Garia Translation, Literacy, and Awareness Program. In this role he has worked night and day alongside committee members

and teachers, producing literacy materials, setting up schools, working on community development projects (such as a fresh water supply), and serving as a liaison to government agencies and non-governmental organizations (such as PBT). He regularly preaches in the churches and works hard to get the various churches and villages to cooperate to further the work in Bible translation.

Amos and his co-workers work diligently to bring this vision of the Bible in Somau Garia to fruition. While the Melanesian culture is generally easy going, these men work with fierce determination to lay the foundation of

literacy among the people, so that when the New Testament is finished, the people will be able to read, understand, and be transformed by God's Word.

I have met few with such a deep and genuine concern for the eternal welfare of his people. To work day by day alongside such men as these strengthens my faith and reminds me how completely God's salvation transforms the hearts of those who receive it.



Amos, Program Coordinator of the Somau Garia Translation, Literacy, and Awareness Program

Todd and Angela, translators working with the Somau Garia people, are the parents of Abigail, just born in December, Andrew and Samuel.



World Mission Builders Update

In our last issue, we featured some exciting news about upcoming building projects in PNG. World Mission Builders (WMB) is partnering with us to see these become reality. We want to update you regularly so that you can be informed as to how to pray and contribute financially if you feel led to do so.

Since our last report, representatives from PBT and WMB met together once again to further plan for these projects. "Phase 1" is scheduled to take place at the end of October and the first few days of November this year. The work teams are coming together and approximately US\$15,000 has been designated thus far. Information letters are in the mail from PNG to some churches and friends. A few locations around the country are being pegged for banquets or programs as avenues in which to present this need. If you hear of one in your area, please consider yourself invited. If you would be interested in hosting such a meeting or

getting further information, please contact **William Butler (PBT) Phone: 423-983-2443, Email: psepik@aol.com;** or **Edwin Thomas (WMB) at 918-542-7220.** If you would like to contribute towards the high cost of supplies and other miscellaneous building expenses, please designate any monies towards, "*PBT-PNG Building Projects*" and send it to **Pioneer Bible Translators, SIL Box 255, 7500 West Camp Wisdom Road, Dallas TX 75236.**

It is very exciting for us to see things begin to come together after many years of being short of space; however, we still lack US\$50,000 of needed funding for this endeavor. Please join with us in undergirding all of these activities with prayer.



GOD'S BANANA LEAF BY MARSHA RELYEA



Aruamu Translation and Literacy Committee

What can you do with a banana leaf and a thorn?

You can —

- make a great village umbrella;*
- make a steamer to roast vegetables in over a fire;*
- make a disposable plate and a toothpick.*

Or you can —

- enable whole cultures and languages to be preserved;*
- give a third world people group access to 21st century technology and knowledge;*
- give people access to God's Word in written form.*

Okay, so this was a trick question! You see, in the Aruamu language the terms for "banana leaf" and for "thorn" have extended meanings. The Aruamu word for paper is *akunafarim* or "banana leaf," and the word for pencil is *funfunim* or "thorn." The ability to use a banana leaf and a thorn — that is to read and write, is a powerful, enabling skill.

The Aruamu Translation and Literacy Committee is a group of men, which oversees the Bible translation and literacy work in the Aruamu language group, where John and Marsha Relyea and Bobbye Eiland work. Like most other Aruamu men, these men are subsistence farmers, they hunt most of their families' meat from the rain forest, and they live in houses made with leaf roofs and bamboo walls. But these men are also the respected leaders in their different villages. They are "the movers and the shakers" of Aruamu society. They make things happen.

They are committed to the task of translating "God's Banana Leaf," the Bible, into the Aruamu language, and of enabling people to read it. They are full partners with John, Marsha and Bobbye in the translation/literacy ministry.

Pray for them, and for the 9,000 speakers of the Aruamu language, that "God's Banana Leaf" will impact their lives and that His Spirit will move among them in a mighty way to draw them to Himself.

Marsha is the Literacy Coordinator for PBT and works with her husband John in the Aruamu language group.

Stepping up to Literacy

by Bobbye Eiland

What is “STEP”? It is an acronym for the Supervisors’ Tokples Education Program. *Tokples* means “in the local language”—whether it is Aruamu, Kire or Mboore, or any of the more than 850 other languages in PNG. The



Bobbye and Orobi at the STEP course. Orobi is an Aruamu supervisor.

basic aim of the program is to train men and women to be able to direct the literacy development in their own respective language groups. The STEP program, sponsored by The Summer Institute of Linguistics, provides training in designing and improving the curriculum for *tokples* village pre-schools, and for adult literacy. It also includes topics such as community involvement and techniques, the training and supervision of teachers, production of books, management skills, budgeting literacy funds, program planning, and communicating with both government and non-government agencies.

STEP is an intensive and exciting two year training program that is divided into five modules. The modules are each for one month’s duration and are usually held at intervals of approximately six months. Practical village assignments are required during these intervals.

Would you like to attend a session at STEP? You would see interesting stories with cultural art illustrations in the making, and watch many kinds of books being

produced. You would hear a lot of laughter and singing, and you could be a part of our daily devotions and weekly Bible studies. We might have you join us in an “on the spot” drama! You might even feel one of our regular tropical rainstorms coming through the screened windows. And what could be more fun and unexpected than some highland sheep wandering into our midst in the classroom? You could even eat your fill at a wonderful closing day *mumu*, in which squash, taro, *kau kau* (a kind of potato), *aibika* (greens), and chunks of chicken or pork are covered in coconut milk and banana leaves, and then steamed in a bed of hot stones for several hours.

Those of us in PBT, like Marsha Relyea, David and Sharran Pryor, myself, and others have considered it a real privilege and thrill to be able to mentor or be “on staff” with these supervisor-trainees. As mentors we must attend each of the five modules so that we can assist the trainees in understanding the material presented. Checking their work assignments both during the training



David Pryor and two Kire supervisors, Waisi and Francis.

module and back in the village community setting is also a big job. It is very helpful if the mentor has knowledge of the language, especially in relation to the production of pre-school and adult literacy class books.

What methods as staff and mentors do we use to train? Briefly:

- We model how we want the trainees to teach.

- We have them practice teaching with one another.
- We invite constant feedback as we train.
- We never assume that they already know or understand something.
- We give consistent encouragement.
- We make a long-term commitment to these trainees until they are able to train others.



David is the other Aruamu supervisor.

Finally, when STEP is over you might be among those who will cry! I know this is going to happen next September, because it will be the fifth and last module for us in the Aruamu language group. Our two “supervisors” and I have made lasting friendships with men and women from many different provinces, towns and villages in PNG, and it is possible we won’t be able to meet again at least on *this* ground. However, we know for a certainty that we are bonded together by God’s love and by the commitment that our people will be able to read their translated Bibles in their own heart language. This is the goal for our literacy thrust in Papua New Guinea.

Bobbye is a Literacy Specialist for PBT currently working with the Aruamu language group.



Our Goal - Scripture in USE

by Marsha Relyea and Bobbye Eiland

Regardless of the careful scholarship with which the Bible is translated into any language, its accuracy and naturalness of expression, the resources expended over the years, the commitment and sacrifice of the translator, and the personal cost to all those involved in the translation process, that translation of the Scriptures is *useless, unless people can read it.*



On a very hot day, the preschoolers are happy to come outside and work on some creative writing and picture stories.

Because of this, and the progress we are making in translation, literacy work is now a major priority. It is a daunting thing to even *think* of taking a whole society that is illiterate in its mother tongue to the place where reading is a value. Our strategy has *not* been that we should attempt to teach all 9,000 Aruamu speakers to read, but to teach a core group of key people first. These people have become the literacy committee members, authors, and teachers who teach others. We want to enable the Aruamu themselves to carry on the task of teaching their people to read. Part of this involves helping them to develop the necessary materials and the crucial infrastructure, so that such a work can be effective and on-going.

The education reform policy of the PNG government asks that each language group teach the children to read and write in their own mother tongue for the first few years of schooling. Young children begin their education in thatch-roofed and locally run preschools. Then the students may transfer to the

government run elementary prep program for two years. The plan is that English instruction should begin during the second half of year two. Full instruction in English will then be taught starting with Community School grade three and continuing through high school. Many students do not progress beyond grade six and may remain in the village to garden and to hunt as their ancestors have done for centuries.

The Aruamu are working hard on awareness programs, curriculum development and teacher training for our preschools. To further local awareness of educational possibilities, we often hike to remote jungle villages on patrols. We tell them that in the near future they will have the Aruamu Bible and they will be able to read it!

Just recently, twenty-three new village authors wrote and illustrated some wonderful local tales and stories which are being used in locally produced books. These sixty-five stories were hand silk screened and then bound into storybooks for children. The village supervisors, preschool teachers and literacy workers have developed and produced materials for a full school year .

The supervisors also conducted three teacher training courses this year to equip fourteen new preschool teachers with the skills they need. It has been rewarding to see four preschools start classes this year.

We have now duplicated and are distributing the books of First John and Galatians. We are encouraging people to attend fluency classes to allow the Aruamu to gain practice in reading these newly translated scriptures. Because literacy work has been made a priority, our goal of scripture in use is being accomplished.



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P.O. Box 178
Madang 511
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Phone 675-852-2440 FAX 675-852-2506
E-Mail pbtpng@global.net.pg

Editorial Staff: Eunice Messersmith **Artwork:** David Parrish **Typesetting:** Lori Witham

