



The

# Storyboard

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## Ethnologue

### The Mum: A People of Two Minds by Michael Sweeney

In 1981, two single women surveyed an area in the foothills of the Adelbert Range, about sixty miles northwest of Madang. According to the language maps, the people spoke the Katiati language, named after a large village in the center of the language group. The people, however, called their language 'Mum' (pronounced *moom*), which means "what?" Most of the approximately three thousand Mum speakers were Catholic and had been since the early 1950s. Martha Wade and Judy Glaze hiked from village to village seeking answers to important questions: How would the people feel about a Bible translator settling among them? What were their attitudes about their own language? How many of the people had been educated enough to be considered literate? How did the leaders of the Catholic church feel about non-Catholic missionaries working in the Mum language?

In their survey report, Martha and Judy commented on the oppressive fear they sensed in the Mum people. Often they had to find their way from one village to another unassisted by guides because the people, claiming that they feared sorcerers, refused to leave their own territory. Now, years later, we have learned that they were also afraid of the two white women, whom they believed to be spirits of dead people. In the end, the *big men* met and decided that they

could not welcome Pioneer Bible Translators to their area. Such people might cause the community to divide, and the community's well-being was the highest value. They did not think they needed a Bible.

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***"They could worship the spirits of their ancestors during the week and worship the Christian God when they gathered on Sundays."***

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Only thirty-two years earlier, before the first Catholic missionary came to the area, the Mum speakers were much as they had been for centuries. They worshiped the same jungle spirits as their ancestors. In their spirit houses, men instructed young boys in the hidden arts of black magic. There was no such thing as an accidental death or injury; someone was behind every illness and injury that occurred. The men consulted the spirits of their own dead to determine the identity of the guilty party, all with the ultimate goal of revenge. Sin was anything that tore apart one's own community. "Good" was anything that enhanced community life, regardless of what it did to any other group of people.

With the introduction of Christianity through the Catholic Church, life changed, at least on the surface. The people tore down the spirit houses. Many of the magical arts were forgotten. People began to call themselves "Christians." Still, under the surface, the old beliefs reigned su-

preme. The people were of two minds. They could worship the spirits of their ancestors during the week and worship the Christian God when they gathered on Sundays.

In the past fifteen years, other church groups have made inroads among the Mum people. The Australian Church of Christ has established several congregations along the southern end of the language group. A Swiss evangelical mission recently started some church work in the village of Ulis. The Foursquare Church and the Seventh Day Adventists have gained a few adherents. Still, regardless of their church affiliation, most of the people remain of two minds.

Not all the Mum speakers are content to let things remain as they are, however. Young men from several of the church groups are realizing the futility of their old ways. Their fathers' divided loyalties have left them empty and dissatisfied. While they sought to provide for themselves spiritually by holding onto both their own gods and the Christian God, they found that the end result was hopelessness and confusion. You cannot serve two masters.

By the time Pioneer Bible Translators returned for a second survey in 1991, people in several villages were asking for someone to come to give them their own Bible. Their lives and culture are in transition. They are seeking ultimate answers, and many are now more willing than ever before to set aside the jungle spirits and open themselves to the Spirit

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## Church Growth Seminars By David Pryor and Wendell and Betty Broom

Why would a Bible translator be involved in teaching in a seminar on church growth for national pastors and church leaders? Although these are two entirely different tasks and areas of study, church growth is an area of necessary interest for a Bible translator. Bible translation is not an end in itself, but is linked very closely to church growth. The desired end is the expansion and strengthening of the Kingdom of God.

Bible translation is often on the front line of the expansion of the church into new areas, making it possible to communicate God's Word to those who have never heard. By the nature of the process of Bible translation, several groups of village people are exposed to the Scriptures:

- Informants initially teach the local language to the translators;
- Translation assistants are trained by teaching them familiarity with the Biblical text, comparison of English translations and elementary exegesis (comparing verse with verse to determine exact meanings);
- Selected village leaders are called to hear the language flow of the translated text, and to ensure comprehension by the average mother tongue speaker.

The association of the Christian translator with these different segments of village life creates a familiarity and an expectation which moves the people into a receptive attitude toward the translated Scriptures.

The Bible translation ministry is heavily involved in strengthening the church as it provides a translation of the Scriptures in the mother tongue of those who have heard only through a trade language. We are either creating or enlarging an audience for the gospel, or aiding in the nurture and discipling process by providing and encouraging the use of Scriptures in the language that communicates most clearly to the people.

Our work in literacy also goes hand in hand with church growth. God, in His wisdom, has provided His written Word. He has given numerous commands that His people should read His Word, and be able to "correctly handle the Word of truth."

Furthermore, every PBT translator is either involved in establishing a congregation of believers or assisting in an already established congregation through either preaching or teaching, as needs and opportunities arise. But the field of church growth encompasses so much more than its connection with Bible translation, and all who are working for the expansion and strengthening of the kingdom of God should familiarize themselves with the principles and means of church growth.

In October, PBT had the opportunity to help present a seminar on church growth in the village of Chungrebu for over twenty national church leaders with the Churches of Christ in Papua New Guinea. (*This seminar was conducted by visiting PBT Board member, Wendell Broom; PBT translator, David Pryor; Australian Missionary, Ian Hunt and the Director of Church Growth and Evangelism for the Conference of the Churches of Christ in Papua New Guinea, Yabru Jerry.*) A second training session was held in November at the village of Bunapas among leaders of churches in the lower Ramu River area. Lessons followed

the pattern of the Chungrebu workshop, with more emphasis on the local congregation and its membership.

Knowing how important it would be to lay a good foundation of the essentials, and at the same time, to make it a time of challenge, spiritual enrichment, encouragement, and equipping, we spent much time in prayer and preparation.



*Church growth seminar in Chungrebu*

These leaders were taught:

- how to stimulate personal faith and character growth among members;
- how to stimulate specialty ministries and ministers;
- how to collect information about their church groups that could be analyzed for ways to encourage growth in numbers of members and churches; and
- how to plant new congregations.

Emphasis was on the New Testament teachings about the nature of the church, its power in the Spirit and the presence of the Living Christ to provide the growth (1 Cor. 3) after men have planted and watered the seeds of faith.

It was exciting to see how the Lord made it all come together. The great unifying factor was that those who came for the course had hearts devoted to the Lord, His church, and the ministry of the Word. We really look forward to seeing the church grow through the ministries of these leaders.

Were these sessions on church growth as helpful as we prayed they would be? Time will tell as we have opportunity to observe the numerical and spiritual growth in the congregations these leaders serve. We were gratified by the positive feedback we received from those who attended and by their decision to have another seminar on church growth next year. It was inspiring to learn of the faith of these national church leaders and to see their commitment and desire to serve well. We appreciate each of them and are sincerely thankful to be co-laborers in their ministries.

Besides serving on the PBT board, Wendell Broom has served as professor of Missions and Church Growth at Abilene Christian University. He and his wife Betty have been involved in mission work in Nigeria and Hawaii and have made missions trips together to various places, including Siberia and PNG.

David and Sharran Pryor have been involved with Bible translation in PNG since they first entered the country in 1977, and they continue to live and serve in the village of Garati with their youngest daughter, Rachel. Their oldest daughter, Amy, is preparing to return to PNG with her husband, Rod, as support workers.



## Translation Work and the Growth of Churches in PNG

by Yabru Jerry

*God's Word is indeed active and powerful. The Churches of Christ in Papua New Guinea have been experiencing numerical growth. Throughout the Sepik and Ramu River areas many have been baptized into Christ. These new Christians have enthusiastically carried the message of the Gospel into neighboring areas. As we see God working in this spiritual awakening, we are challenged to continue promoting growth in spirituality by providing Scriptures in PNG languages and equipping people to read them. The following article shows how one Papua New Guinean church leader views our work and its impact on church growth in this country.*

If God has used translation work as a means of expanding His kingdom in the past centuries, then this same God of all languages will also do so in the modern world.

I have begun to realize the importance of Pioneer Bible Translators' role. I strongly believe in the impact their efforts will make if we, the national church leaders in each area occupied by these men and women committed to translating God's Word in our languages, support and encourage the Christians to use the translated portions of the Bible in our churches. The Pidgin language translation in many ways does not do a good job of explaining concepts and ideas that are in the Greek and English Bibles. People will read and understand the Bible better and make a commitment to it when they read it in their mother tongue.

Even in language groups where Bible translators are located, but the Bible is not preached as it should be, I believe the translation checking committees will

promote church growth. Representatives from different villages come to these checking sessions, and some of these men are key people in their villages. They learn more about the Bible and go home and share their new findings about God's Word with their own people. God will use this to open doors for church planting in these villages.

I believe that if this translation work continues in the next generation and churches use the printed portions of God's Word in their own languages to teach their people, God will use that to do something great.

Yabru Jerry graduated from the Christian Leadership Training College near Mount Hagen and served an internship with an aboriginal mission in Australia. He has served as pastor/elder in the church at Garati, and is now pastor of the Church of Christ in the town of Madang. He is also Director of Church Growth and Evangelism for the Conference of Churches of Christ.

## Prayers Yield Fruit Among the Tay People

by Rhonda Hayward

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (Psalm 119:105).*

Being married to a Bible translator, I've often imagined what it would be like to have the Bible only in a language other than my own. Such is the plight of thousands of people in the world. Imagine what it would be like if those people finally began to have access to God's Word in their language and were still unable to read it or weren't motivated enough to go through the challenging task of learning to read. Such was our experience with the Tay people with whom we work...until recently.

After many years of living with the Tay, translating Scripture into their language and having good teaching methods and good materials for them to read, we knew too painfully the truth of the proverb, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." Even though the Tay seemed eager to have God's Word in their own language, they were not willing to give the necessary time and effort to learn to read it.

During our furlough in 1992, our plea was for committed prayer warriors in the United States to help us pray down this wall that loomed seemingly high and impenetrable in our ministry.

It is no coincidence that this past term we've seen an unprecedented interest and desire among the Tay to read in their own language. It started in the beginning of 1995



Steve (center) checking Scripture with two Tay men and Mike Sweeney

when Amil, the preacher at our village, looked around at unused literacy materials in Steve's office and said, "Look at all these books. We need to be using them! I'll help

teach people to read!" (Yes, Lord!) Amil began teaching a beginners' reading class. How exciting to see people in the class begin teaching others to read in their homes! The Melanesian Pidgin school three hours from us also started teaching the children to read in Tay as well as in the trade language. As the Tay people became more fluent, we held three different week-long fluency courses over an eighteen month period that generated more enthusiasm for reading. Then a Tuesday and Thursday evening Bible study and fluency class began, using the newly printed book of *Luke*. It was taught alternately by Amil and myself. The ladies in my Scripture memory class on Tuesday morning enjoyed seeing the Scriptures written on the board and began making steps toward reading. We took note that these things began to take place as people in the States made a commitment to pray specifically for God to give the Tay an insatiable hunger to read His Word.

Do you feel a burden for the Bibleless peoples of the world, yet don't know what you can do to help bring God's Word to them? You really **can** be a vital, essential part of the task of changing lives through the translated Word. How? By your faithful, fervent prayers. Without your prayers, we may work for years without people responding to God's Word. You are the farmers, tilling and fertilizing the soil so that God's Word won't fall on hard or stony ground, but on rich soil where it can "produce a crop yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." **You** are on the front lines. We have the privilege of coming behind and gathering up the fruit of your prayers! Thank you and **PRAY ON!**

Rhonda and Steve live high in the Schrader Mountains at the edge of the Yimnalem airstrip. They helped build the airstrip to facilitate their work and the transportation and health needs of the Tay people, for whom they are eagerly translating the New Testament.



## Music—A Reflection of Church Growth

by Faye and Janice Rostvit

The night was dark. Only the dim light from a kerosene lantern hanging in a nearby shelter cast light onto the faces of all the men who sang. Seven or eight of them beat rhythmically on intricately carved *kundu* drums. These hour-glass shaped drums swayed back and forth as the men danced. The steady throbs resounded against the backdrop of the dense rain forest. The song told about Jesus dying.

Suddenly the music came to an abrupt halt as one man had dropped motionless to the ground. For several seconds there was complete silence. Then the man leaped to his feet singing. The rest exuberantly joined in, lifting their drums high above their heads. We were caught up in the enthusiasm of this musical expression demonstrating Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

Music—how can the joy of Christianity be better expressed? With periodic visits to Papua New Guinea my sister and I have noted that music in the church has undergone subtle changes over the past decade.

Since our ministry is one of music, we always make an effort to learn songs in the local languages. On our first trip here, in 1984, most of the songs given to us were translated choruses.

In 1985 a great revival broke out and hundreds of people were being converted. The change in music was remarkably noticeable. New songs were being created, both in the trade language and in the local languages. Now, each time we come the churches are singing new songs, a good sign of continual spiritual growth.

Songs from new Christians reflected their change of allegiance and how God's power had overcome Satan's power. The messages of some songs were, "Go away Satan, we no longer serve you. We serve our big brother Jesus." Others said, "When Jesus died Satan was very happy, but when Jesus was resurrected, Satan became as rubbish." It was exhilarating to hear the indigenous tunes and sense the people's joy. Besides using kundus for rhythm, many had ukuleles or occasionally a flute. Most churches also had a "bamboo band," a series of bamboo poles of varying

lengths which sounded out different tones when the ends were hit with a rubber thong. These rich, jungle-style pipe organs could be heard from a great distance.

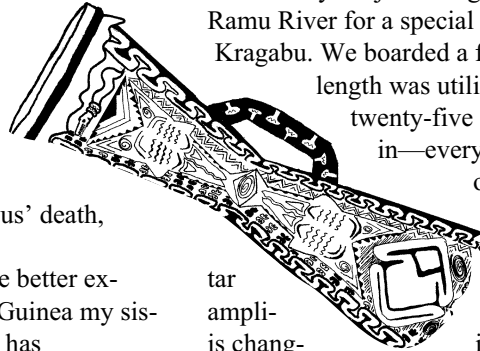
The instruments are changing over the years. Young men now buy guitars—abandoning their hand-carved ukuleles to the termites. Only on rare occasions is a bamboo band heard anymore.

Recently we joined a group of nationals going up the Ramu River for a special baptismal service at the village of Kragabu. We boarded a forty foot dugout canoe. The full length was utilized as we counted at least twenty-five on board. Cargo was also stacked in—everyone's personal belongings for an overnight stay. It seemed out of place to see one man load into the canoe an electric bass guitar with a large battery-operated amplifier, and a keyboard. Yes, music is changing here. As economic progress reaches into these regions, the changes are bound to come. It is all good as long as all is used to the praise and glory of God.

At Kragabu more than two hundred people gathered. As the full moon rose, shining between the palm trees and glistening across the waters of the Ramu River, joyous music rang out loud and clear. With the exception of periods when rain drove the people into shelters, singing and preaching continued until dawn. After sunrise the crowd lined the banks of the river and sang as five were baptized.

Later when we headed downstream, the songs still rang in our heads—their lyrics expressing gratitude to God for His mercy. James 5:13 reads, "Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms." The Papua New Guinean believers know how to express their joy and lift up the name of Jesus. Their music reflects sincere growth in the Lord's body.

Faye and Janice are talented musicians with real servant hearts. They recently made their fifth visit to PNG. They have traveled throughout the world for over twenty years singing songs in many languages and providing encouragement to missionaries and Christians of many different nationalities.



### Ethnologue continued from front page

of God. If the Gospel is not made available, then they will find something else to fill the gap.

It has been exactly five years since PBT came to work among the Mum people. We still see a great deal of the "two minds" at work. Even those who are trying to commit themselves totally to Christ find that the old spirits tug at them and strive to pull them back. Gradually though, as the people hear and learn to read God's Word, lives are changing. *Pray that in the near future the Mum speakers will become a single-minded people, loving God with all their heart, mind and strength. Pray that God's Word in their own language will become a tool that the Holy Spirit can use to lead them away from their past bondage and into the freedom that is available in Christ.*

Mike, Linda, and their two boys Christopher and Ryan, live in the village of Katiati where their translation work in the Mum language is centered.



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# A call for help

As we anticipate the arrival of new workers beginning with three new teams early in 1997, we in the Papua New Guinea Branch must prepare to meet this expansion. The expected growth is exciting, but it also means work. In order to stay ahead of the swell, we will need to increase our ability to house new teams in Madang. We have looked at a number of options but have decided that the least expensive way to start preparing to meet the housing needs is to build a two-bedroom apartment underneath a house we already own. This house is built on cement posts so building under it will not be difficult. That will also mean we can gain the additional housing for less than half the cost of building elsewhere and about a quarter the cost of buying.

We need to obtain ten percent of the construction costs before we can begin. This amounts to \$5,000.00. We have decided to share this information with you because we want you to know what our needs are. We want to ask you to pray for us, that God will lead us and help us to be prepared for what He wants to do. We also want to ask those of you who are looking for ways to participate actively in the expansion of the Bible Translation ministry to please consider this effort a high priority. If you would like to contribute financially, please send your contributions to our International Service Center marked for "*Crescent House Construction.*"

Pioneer Bible Translators  
SIL Box 255  
7500 West Camp Wisdom Road  
Dallas TX 75236

All funds received above the amount stated will be applied to reducing the amount of a construction loan.

Thank you for your continuing love and prayers.

Your friend and servant in Christ,

David K. Parrish  
Director PBT/PNG

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