



The Storyboard

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We hope you find this newsletter to be a rich and enjoyable addition to your correspondence with members on the field. It has long been the privilege and the desire of each of our teams to keep you informed and up to date with the progress of the various ministries of Pioneer Bible Translators here in Papua New Guinea. Up until now we have mainly relied on individual teams to accomplish this task and yes, such reliance will continue, because there is no substitute for direct communication. But we have also found that there is a growing interest in a broader communication. Many of you, who have been partners and fellow laborers in this ministry, are well aware of the team work required by the very nature of our work. Much of what each team does, has great impact on the ministry of other teams, and the decisions that we make as a branch often times have far reaching influence on the individual ministries. Because of this, we present to you *The STORYBOARD*. This newsletter is to be a team effort dedicated to bringing you a panoramic view of the exciting work, and some of the truly amazing things God is doing among us, in relation to our overall ministry, here in Papua New Guinea. We invite your comments, insights and suggestions and ask that you address them directly to us; c/o **THE STORYBOARD Editors / Pioneer Bible Translators / P. O. Box 178 / Madang / PAPUA NEW GUINEA.**

Ethnologue

The Aruamu by John Relyea

"Last night in my dream I saw a light. I knew it was God's light and it was coming to my people." These are the words of Aghuvari, one of the women of Tiap village, on the day that David Parrish, a fellow PBT member, and I first arrived in the **Aruamu** area to do a language survey. Her dream captures in a nutshell what God has been wanting to do among the Aruamu people — to bring His truth to light in the heart language of the Aruamus.

The 8500 or so Aruamus are scattered along the Northern tip of the Adelbert mountains on the North coast of Papua New Guinea. The Aruamu are hunter-gatherers and subsistence farmers who live in little hamlets scattered throughout the jungle. Like many people in PNG, the Aruamu have traditionally been animists — living in fear of spirits and devoting much time

to appeasing them. Sorcery, curses and ritual magic for nearly every aspect of life were characteristic of their lives.

In 1977 some of the Aruamu men were in Madang where they heard the gospel. They brought it back to their people and God birthed a peoples' movement that was marked by worship and a deep hunger for God's Word. In

"Everything from a whimpering baby to bending a nail while building a house were thought to be caused by spirits; and fear was never far from their minds."

1979 they began praying for a translator to come and translate "God's talk." Marsha and I began our training in translation in 1981. (I've often wondered who's prayers moved whom

in our coming to the Aruamu and their turning to God!)

In 1986 David Parrish and I did the survey of the Aruamu language. What we found was a large group who were very proud of their language. There was a core of believers struggling to grow in their faith, but they had no Bible in their own language. The trade language translation seemed to them of very limited value and they were in need of Bible teaching. As a result, that same year my family and I moved to the village of Tiap. We began the language and cultural learning crucial to effective translation work.

We also found that the traditional practices involving spirit worship were very much alive, creating a nearly suffocating challenge to the early believers and those who were interested in obeying God. The true Light that gives light to every man was beginning to shine there, but the kingdom of darkness was still seeking to destroy what God had begun. The Aruamu

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Every Tribe and Tongue and Nation by Bonita Pryor

How many of you participated in the Global Jesus March on June 25? Believe it or not, that event reached Papua New Guinea this year. Since our family was in Madang at the time, we were able to be a part of it. It was a special encouragement to us because of the reminder that we are a part of a big worldwide family of believers. It brought to mind Revelation 7:9 which tells about the day we can look forward to when people from every tribe and tongue and nation will all be assembled about the throne giving praise to our Lord. The reason we are here in PNG is to influence as many people as possible of the *Ap ma language to join us there around that throne.

An incident that happened to us a few months ago in Madang made us aware of the importance of our ministry of Bible translation. On the way home from Church one Sunday, we stopped at the local bakery. As I paid for our purchases, the clerk asked where we lived and what we did here in the country. I told her we lived in the East Sepik Province and were translating the Bible into one of the local languages. Her face lit up, and she asked what part of the Sepik were we from. When I said the name of the village, she eagerly told me the name of her home village, one that I recognized to be in our language group though they speak in a slightly different dialect. Then I began to speak to her in her language, instead of the trade language. I found out her name was Joanne and she had been living in Madang for a few years. She was so ecstatic that I was speaking to her in her language that she reached across the counter and gently grabbed my chin and hugged me, a very emotional gesture for our people and one of strong affection. When she found out the book of Luke had just been completed, she said, "I've got to have a copy."

I told her it wasn't published yet, but we had a copy of the Joseph story from the Old Testament that I could bring to her. She said, "Oh yes, I must have a copy."

"I'll bring it by next Sunday," I replied.

"Next Sunday?"

"Yes, next Sunday."

"God bless you. Here, please take these." And she gave me some fresh sweet bread rolls.

The following Sunday I took Joanne a copy of the "Joseph" book. Again she was thrilled and gave me another present of sweet rolls. She also asked where we were staying, as she wanted to bring her sister to talk to me. Later that evening she came by our house and we visited. During the course of the conversation, she told me she had gone home that afternoon and read the whole book of Joseph to her mother. (She has an eighth grade education in English, the national language and therefore is literate). I asked her if she had trouble reading the story, since this would have been her first time reading in the Ap ma language. Considering there are two additional letters in this alphabet which she would not have seen before, I thought she might have had some



Bonita sharing with Joanne the Joseph story in the Ap ma language

difficulty. However, Joanne was enthusiastic about the fact that she had read the story easily and understood it. She again expressed an interest in having a copy of Luke when it returns from the printer. She told me she was a Christian. Just like back in the States, not everyone here is excited about reading the Scriptures, but her eagerness in wanting to read the Scriptures in her heart language makes the long hours of our task melt away into pleasant satisfaction.

Several months had passed since I had been in Madang and met Joanne. Following our procession through town during the Jesus March, we assembled at the town council building for a time of singing, Scripture reading, and prayer. After the leader announced the prayer points, he asked us to divide up into small groups to pray. As people turned around to get into groups of five or six, Joanne looked back toward where John and I were standing and saw me about the same time I saw her. We were surprised to see each other. But when the leader told us to move to our groups, she came quickly to be with us. Again we hugged and greeted each other. Then we prayed together. Later I thought of the special blessing it will be when we are again together at God's throne praising Him. ***"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: 'Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.'"*** (Revelation 7:9, NIV)

Bonita and her husband, John, are PBT translators among the Ap ma people of PNG

* Previously mentioned as the Botin language.

What is a STORYBOARD? In times past, the Ap ma people did not have a way to record legends — they had no written language. In order to preserve history and legends, their "written" communication was done by carved stories, wooden *storyboards* passed down to their children. In keeping with this tradition we have chosen *The Storyboard* as a way of passing on our stories.

Searching for the Right Word by Martha Wade

In Bible college I enjoyed studying Paul's "wonderful classical Greek sentences" and doing word studies of the complex ideas that were found in one little Greek word. That was then, but now I wish that Paul would have had a bit more empathy for Bible translators working in Papua New Guinea who have no nice terms for sanctification, justification, holiness, righteousness, mercy, grace, etc.

Many languages in Papua New Guinea have a small core vocabulary that they use and reuse in a multitude of ways to communicate complex ideas. For instance, the Apal language uses the term "good" for righteous, "put good" for heal, "do good" for become well, and "see good" for being favorably disposed towards someone. If you have a "good ear" it means that you have the ability to think well and if you smell "good rotten" then you probably have on perfume or aftershave. But one thing the Apal translation doesn't use "good" for is the "good news." When we first tried using "good talk" for the good news, they said it was okay, but they weren't thrilled. Then after further discussion I learned that "good talk" is what politicians use — they say good things, but . . . I quickly decided that the Apal translation would probably not have "good talk" in it even though it was God's "good news" to the Apal speaking people.



Women from Martha's village reading Scripture translated in the Apal language

Now that I have introduced you to multiple usages of words, how many different ways do you think the term "liver" can be used in Apal? When you "stay liver" it means you feel sorry for someone and this is the term used for grace. Mary and Joseph "put liver" when they were anxious about their missing son and were searching for him while he was in the temple area. If your "liver gets up," then you must be expecting something to happen. If you "give liver talk," then you are begging for something. If you "do liver" or "hold liver," then you are involved in a type of mourning and if your liver says "tung tung," then you are really afraid.

To tell the truth, I'm a little "livered out" and "liver" shy after our first attempts to translate the story of the Widow of Nain in Luke 7:11-17. In this story, Jesus feels sorry for the widow and tells her to not cry. In Apal they "stay liver" for someone who is mourning and so we had Jesus "stay liver" for the widow. Everything went well in the preliminary checks that I had done in the village, but then a consultant asked a person who had just heard the text for the first time, "Why did Jesus 'stay liver' for the woman?" I hadn't thought to ask that question because everyone seemed to understand the story so well. You can imagine my surprise when he said that Jesus "stayed liver" for the woman because he wanted to marry her. I could have died at that moment and just wanted to crawl under the table when the consultant said something to the effect of, "You ARE going to change that aren't you?"

Later I discussed the problem with the village people and learned that it is okay for a woman to "stay liver" for a woman, a man to "stay liver" for a man, and an adult to "stay liver" for a child, but if a man "stays liver" for a woman, especially for a widow, then it can only mean one thing and it is not that the man wants to comfort her in her sorrow. So we quickly revised that passage. It now says that Jesus wanted to "hit her liver and make it go down and said, 'Don't cry.'" This activity involving the liver is specifically related to helping people who are mourning or sad and seems to have none of the wrong connotations. Sometimes I have wanted to advocate a "liver free" translation, but since there are no other terms to express these concepts that involve emotions we have to continue to use the term "liver". Now, however, I am very careful to make sure Jesus isn't trying to marry every woman he feels sorry for.

Martha is a PBT translator among the Apal people of PNG

Taking God's Word to Men's Souls by Rhonda Hayward

The fog swirled around the trail in front of me, allowing me to see only a few feet ahead on the narrow, rocky trail that went steeply up the hillside. I knew there was a small thatched roof house up there in the fog somewhere, and that was where I was heading for a women's meeting. In one hand I carried a computer printout of the story of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection found in Luke 22-24. I had heard the wonderful account countless times growing up and as an adult, but this was to be a special reading today. This was going to be the first time ever that these women would hear this precious story in their own language.

As I sat on the ground outside the hut and read the story, I found myself frequently interrupted as the women

looked at each other and said, "Did you hear that? She said . . ." and they would jabber on excitedly about what they were hearing. I found great joy in sharing their excitement! This was the reason Steve and I were here in this remote jungle village in Papua New Guinea — to bring the Tay people God's Word in their heart language.

That is the ministry and desire of all the members of Pioneer Bible Translators — to bring God's Word to bibleless groups of people in the language they learned while at their mothers' breasts. I remember listening to a short radio program on Bible translation before we came to Papua New Guinea. One statement has stuck with me

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Taking God's Word... continued

ever since. The man on the broadcast said, "There are really only two things that will last forever, . . . men's souls and God's Word." God has said, "*Heaven and earth will pass away, but my Word will never pass away.*" (Matt. 24:35) The ministry of Bible translation is especially exciting to us, because it combines those two eternal things.

Bible translation involves years of patient and painstaking language learning. It involves careful study of God's Word in English and Greek. It involves years of working with the national co-translators to translate God's Word into their heart language. But it is worth it when we see the people's eyes light up. For example, my husband Steve and I saw this excitement just recently as I was working with two translation helpers on parts of Luke. One of the men was a veteran co-translator. The other was new to the work. As they were translating and I was reading back to them what we had just done, Yuwolim, the younger translator, with eyes shining out of pure delight in hearing God's Word in Tay, kept laughing and making a clicking sound of amazement and wonderment with his tongue. God's Word was hitting home clearly and forcefully in a way it had not done before. These moments motivate us to keep going through the long process of translating God's Word.

This story could be multiplied by many other members of Pioneer Bible Translators. You may not be able to be a Bible translator in Papua New Guinea, but you can be a real part in this work by praying for God's Spirit to work in the hearts of the people here through his Word. There are walls that only will come down through faithful intercession, as all of us have found out many times already. You can also be a part of this work by sending money for helping to publish the Scriptures. Many translators do not have the money themselves to pay for the great expense of publishing large portions of Scripture or the New Testament, and so PBT is building a Translation Publishing Fund to help members with publishing expenses when they occur.

We know that those of you reading this article have a real heart and burden for these bibleless peoples to receive God's Word in their own language. Also many of you have for years given of your finances to help further this ministry and have spent countless hours interceding on behalf of those involved in Bible translation. How we praise God for your partnership in taking God's Good News to the people of Papua New Guinea!

Rhonda and Steve are PBT translators among the Tay people in the mountains of PNG. Steve is also currently serving as Assistant Director of Language Affairs

Contributions for PBT's **Papua New Guinea Translation Publishing Fund** should be designated as such and sent to:

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culture, like many cultures around the world, understood the need for spiritual power. The source they had tapped into, however, was not the good power of God but the stolen, illegitimate, and abusive power of the Adversary; thus the fear of the spirits permeated every aspect of Aruamu life. Everything from a whimpering baby to bending a nail while building a house were thought to be caused by spirits; and fear was never far from their minds.

Since our allocation among the Aruamu, we have learned to speak their language, analyzed the grammatical system and the sound system of the language, and developed a written alphabet. We have taught a core of people how to read and write in Aruamu. They have become the authors who have produced Aruamu literature and the teachers who are teaching other Aruamus, both adults and children, how to read. Currently a 15-man literacy team enthusiastically promotes literacy and the value of reading through the entire language group. Working with the Aruamus we have trained a 5-man translation team, which has done initial drafts of Mark and Luke, and is now working on I Thessalonians and Acts. We've been able to teach in many of the Aruamu villages, with the number of Aruamu believers and churches growing.

Sunday afternoon usually finds us checking the initial drafts, which were translated during the week, with the checking committee. These questions and responses during those times are a miniature of the changes going on in Aruamu life — "**Jesus' power IS greater than Satan's!**"; "**Jesus calls US His friends?!**"; "**Look how gentle Jesus is with children!**"; "**When I hear God's talk in Aruamu, my head is full of thoughts about God!**"; "**With Jesus our time of shame is finished!**"

We stand in awe of our loving God, who is moving powerfully among the Aruamu. We are thrilled to be part of bringing His light to these beautiful people.

John and Marsha are PBT translators among the Aruamu people of PNG



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