

Daring to Believe

Around this time last year I read *Daring to Believe* by the late Norm and Sheila Draper, just one of several books written by Global Interaction cross-cultural workers documenting the pioneering spirit of Kingdom building ministry in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Seton Arndell, who wrote the foreword to the book notes, “*The editors have performed a great service to the people of New Guinea and their friends in the wider world by recording these stories...*” Those words stuck with me as the book progressed. I too felt a great sense of gratitude that those compelling stories had been documented for generations to come, perhaps as a reminder that as we dare to believe, God can move mountains through the faith of His people.

At the time of my reading, Global Interaction was promoting an appeal to raise funds for the

publication of the revised translation of the Kyaka Enga Bible. The article ‘Hearing and Reading the Word of God’ (Vision, Winter 2018) received a generous and heartfelt response and soon after the project was on target and print production was in full swing! Hot off the press, the Bibles sailed across seas and journeyed over mountains headed for the Western Highlands of PNG. Against the odds, that precious cargo arrived right on time and the dedication of the Kyaka Enga Bible was a highlight during events that celebrated a history spanning 70 years of Australian Baptist witness.

Along with thousands of Kyaka Enga people, 24 people from Australia, mostly former workers, joined together to give thanks to God and to honour the legacy

of the first Baptist cross-cultural workers who ventured into the Western Highlands in 1949.

The significant contribution of Australian Baptists since then, continues this legacy of work today. The early Australian Baptist cross-cultural workers touched the lives of many individuals in the name of Jesus; together these individuals touched the lives of families, communities and eventually we have witnessed a movement of empowered followers of Jesus. Seventy years later and we celebrate that the Kyaka Enga people have the Word of God in their hearts and the Good News in their hands!

So, in the spirit of Seton Arndell’s words, I hope you will enjoy reading this brief compilation of excerpts as recorded in the Global Interaction archives and with these, excerpts of stories written by a few of those who attended the 70 year Celebrations. I hope you too, will dare to believe!

— Andrea Fleming
Partner Engagement and
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FROM THE ARCHIVES...

From the book *Building for God in Papua New Guinea* by Arthur and Jean Kelshaw, Arthur writes... *After World War II, chaplains and other Baptists returned home from military service in that country. They brought reports of untouched tribes who had never heard of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Various denominations had worked on the coast for many years but the wild mountainous Highlands were practically untouched. This was the challenge for Australian Baptists.*

Arthur and Jean Kelshaw served in PNG from 1951-1953 and 1955-1959.

September 1951 as recorded in *Vision* magazine... *Mark Telefomin on your map. Watch for news concerning this missionary outpost. It may well prove to be one of the important landmarks in the history of the Australian Baptist New Guinea Mission.*

From his book *Fire in their Bones* Tony Cupit writes... *Alan Prior, Arthur Kelshaw and others have described in vivid detail the momentous events that heralded the birth of the Church among the Enga people of PNG. Obviously those first baptismal services at Baiyer River in June 1956 and at Lumusa the following month were a powerful testimony to the commitment of the early missionaries, the responsiveness of the Enga people and to the power of the Gospel.*

Tony was a missionary linguist in PNG and with his wife Margaret served in PNG from 1965-1971.

REFLECTING ON CELEBRATIONS IN PNG JUNE 2019

Sally Burton writes... *The Bibles were shipped to Lae but then a series of obstacles seemed likely to threaten their arrival in time for the celebrations; wharfage issues, a truck breakdown, punctured tyres on the Highway and rain. However, we were holding on in faith that what we hoped for would actually happen. And it did... the large transport that had brought the Bibles from Lae rolled into Kumbareta – yes, just 24 hours before the planned dedication! And so for a new day as the people move into the next 70 years anticipating what God has for them, they have His Word in their ‘heart language.’ One Enga described it in this way, “God speaks loudest in our language.”*

Sally Burton served in PNG from 1967-1984 and was a key leader of the Bible Revision project.

Above: Sue Tidy, cross-cultural worker from 1973-1986, with adult literacy teachers.

Top left: Ken Osborne, cross-cultural worker from 1955-1972, with Enga leaders.

Above left: Meryl Smith, cross-cultural worker from 1965-1983, at the 70th anniversary celebrations.

Left: Maz Lord, cross-cultural worker from 1970-1976, with Lulusi.

Geoff Cramb writes... *A large number at the 70th Anniversary of the coming of Australian Baptists to the Baiyer Valley in the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea expressed deep appreciation that we were there celebrating with them – a crowd of over 2,000. “We are the fruit of what you have done.” They highlight their experience of freedom from the fear of failing to appease evil spirits. Now purpose, meaning and joy was obvious... All were joyful, some wailing, all expressing a mutual blessing of God...*

Geoff Cramb served in PNG from 1977-1981, and as the Global Interaction PNG consultant from 2007-2018.

Global Interaction has limited copies of the above mentioned books, each with an inspiring insight into a movement that has touched a nation, please be encouraged to purchase one today.

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