



Camel riding in the Negev Desert



## Pitjantjatjara translators Journey to Israel

From the APY lands in South West SA to the Negev Desert, Israel we started our Holy Lands tour with 15 Pitjantjara translators and 7 Assistants. We met up with 12 PNG translation consultants and travelled for 10 days to over 45 sites of significance for Bible translators. It was a challenging tour from Beersheba in the South to Dan in the North. Caesarea to the west and the Dead Sea in the East. We travelled through the stories of the Bible starting with Abraham and Sarah's life as we camped in a Bedouin Oasis, rode camels and explored the well built by Abraham at Bethsheeba. Walked in King David's footsteps from his encounters with

Goliath at the Valley of Elah and Saul at EinGedi by the Dead Sea. Through the centre we visited Shiloh where Samuel was raised and the site of the first Tabernacle. To Qum Ran and the community of scribes that copied the Bible with such faith and dedication. The world of Herod at Caesarea and Herodium and then we entered the New Testament at the Shepherd's Field in Bethlehem, a Nazareen village and on to the Sea of Galilee. Most of our travels were through hilly country with intense heat so if we had not been fit at the start we certainly were by the end. To travel through an arid land with people also from desert country and to compare how different peoples have grappled with the incredible challenges of scarce resources was insightful. From a country of walls and fortresses where water must be protected from enemies to then enter into the world of Jesus, it was so revealing to see how radical his agenda was— to love your enemy and welcome the stranger and care for the widow and the orphan. This world of Jesus fits so comfortably with the culture of the Pitjantjatjara translators, it was a privilege to accompany them on this tour. A more Western style of touring gradually evolved into a more Pitjantjatjara style as they would sing at each site and then video each other telling the stories of that site and then

explore the place, coming together in fellowship and discussion at the end. Farewelling everyone in Jerusalem as new friendships have been formed and returning home with our heads, hearts, cameras and diaries full of so much that has to be processed. It has been an incredible opportunity.

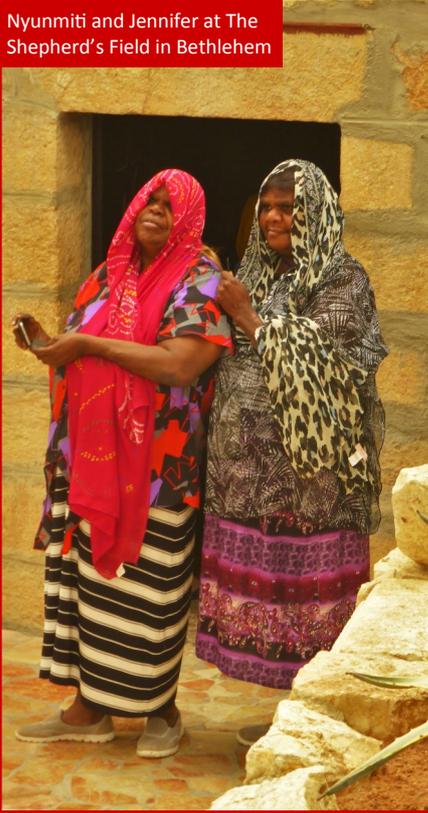
A PROJECT OF THE  
NORTHERN REGIONAL COUNCIL OF THE  
UNITING ABORIGINAL AND ISLANDER  
CHRISTIAN CONGRESS,  
AND THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA  
NORTHERN SYNOD



Archeological lesson at Elisha Spring Jericho

# Pitjantjatjara Bible translators Journey to Israel

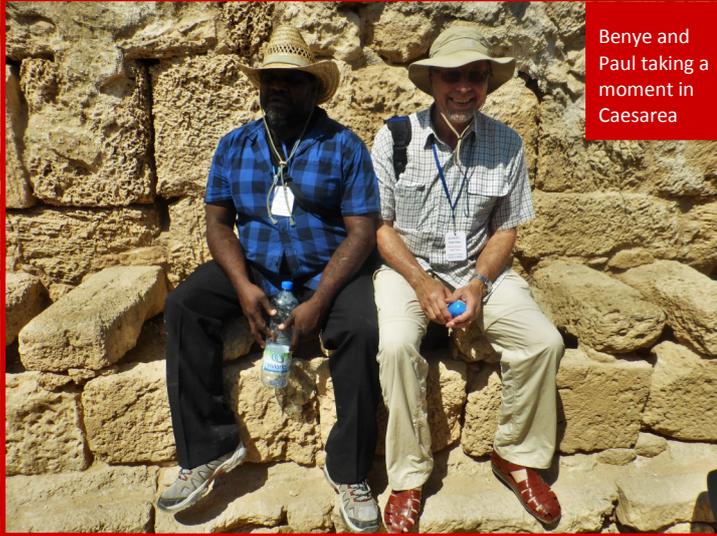
Nyunmiti and Jennifer at The Shepherd's Field in Bethlehem



Singing in the Bell caves near the Valley of Elah



Benye and Paul taking a moment in Caesarea



The Pauls



Julia explaining the olive press



Shiloh

Asher poles at Tel Gezar



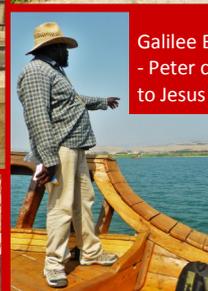
Pantitji Umatji Nyunmiti Benye Katrina at Caesarea



Gethsemane Ina Jill Julia Carol Benye



Galilee Benye - Peter calling to Jesus



Bedoin Camp Louise Katrina Jennifer and Angkaliya



Makinti at Gibeon



Jordan River angkaliya and Yangiyangi



Katrina filming Ina with Angkaliya Nazareth Village



Sea of Galilee baptism



# Prayer request: Cleaning the Gumatj Bible digital file

COORDN8 December 2015

Bible translation has been in progress in Australian languages for decades, so there is quite a bit of work done. It has been agreed by organizations producing Scriptures world wide, that all the work that has been done in the past should be digitised, to keep it safe. AuSIL is working towards this, and to this end, Stuart Cameron is working on the Gumatj files at the moment. While Stuart was working on these, it became evident that the files he had access to were not the same as the printed version. Because the printed version is the final and best version, work needs to be done to align the digital with the printed version. Stuart worked well towards this, but came to the point where Gumatj speakers themselves needed to check it through.

Since Gumatj speakers need to be reading Gumatj Scriptures and making the necessary emendations, the East Arnhem Scripture Use team took up the challenge. Margaret Miller and Mary Njandama went to Yirrkala to meet up with Bändil, a senior Gumatj woman who has enthusiastically agreed to the challenge. They went through the process, printing out the files that AuSIL have access to, and working through the process of comparing and correcting.

Now the work is in Bändil's hands. She has found two other Gumatj speakers to help her in this enormous task, Djalinda and Daylulu.

Please pray for these three women as they work their way through the entire New Testament. May the Lord give them alert minds to see even the smallest comma out of place! And may they be blessed by reading "their" New Testament like this. By Margaret Miller



Bändil with her well-used published New Testament, and the print out of the digital version to be corrected.



## The Wangurri Gospel of Mark is dedicated

by Mally McLellan

On a small homeland in remote North East Arnhem Land, there was a hive of activity over the weekend of the 7th and 8th of November 2015. This was the weekend that the Wangurri Gospel of Mark was dedicated with great joy.

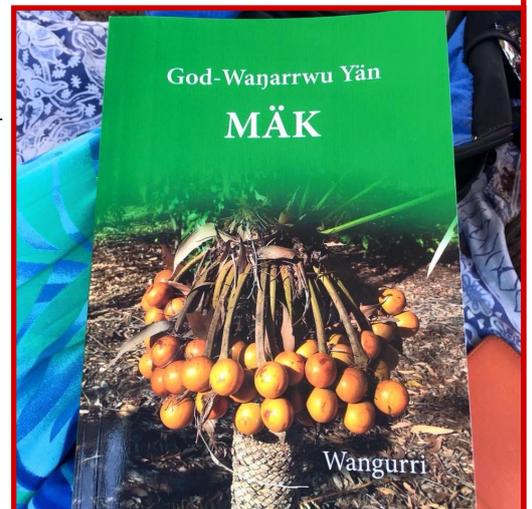
Dhälinybuy only has about a dozen homes, so an influx of 50 or 60 extra people filled them to overflowing. But the residents were welcoming and accommodating, because this was a cause for great celebration. This is the first book of the New Testament ever to be translated into the Wangurri language!

The translator, Yurranydjil Dhurrkay, is an experienced translator, as she was one of the team that translated the Djambarrpuyñu New Testament. But this translation is special to her, as she is a Wangurri woman, and this is her language..

In a moving ceremony, the boxes of Wangurri Mark were brought to the table prepared for them. As they approached the table, many Wangurri began to cry, with joy, but also with sadness at the many who have died while waiting for God's Word in Wangurri. After many hugs and handshakes, and a dance to gospel music, Yurranydjil read Mark 1: 14 & 15 while everyone listened in silence.

Following this ceremony, the whole community of people headed for the river for a baptismal service. Many family groups were baptised, some people for the first time, others as reaffirmation, but all seemed to be declaring: As for me and my family, we will serve the Lord, (See Joshua 24:15 NLT)

A moving communion service then followed back at the community, with special bread made from cycad nuts, which are of particular significance to Wangurri people, and juice made from wild honey. What a special time of worship and thanksgiving this was for all those present, especially the Wangurri.



Yurranydjil reading in Wangurri



Here are some things people said about the Wangurri translation of the Gospel of Mark:

Hearing these stories in good Wangurri like this makes the stories so exciting – the kind of excitement you feel as a young man.

Hearing these stories in Wangurri brings to mind the picture of a tree that was planted long ago – that is now beginning to bear fruit.

I see this picture of an egg being broken open from the inside, and something new and alive coming out that will grow and become strong.

The translation makes these stories come alive – you can feel them.



This is how it all happened: The translation began in June 2014, and over the ensuing 14 months, Yurranydjil and advisor Mally McLellan, worked together for 8 sessions of a fortnight each, before presenting it for the consultant check in August 2015.

In that time, the Gosel of Mark was drafted, checked, read through by people who were not involved in the

translation (just to make sure it made sense), corrected, and then back translated into English, so the consultant could assess exactly what it was saying. So, as with any Bible translation, there are actually 2 translations done: one into the language, and then a translation from that language back into English so the consultant can

## Celebrations at Dhälinbuy with baptism communion and dedication



Matjara Yurranydjil and Mally celebrating



Mark 1:16-17  
Wangurri

### Djesuyu gaḍayman guya djämaminy warrany malthundawu nhangu

<sup>16</sup>Wanganymiyum nhan gayḅan Djesum ḅarran ḅunha wuḍuy-djakawarruwan guḷungu Galaliwuywu. Ga banhalayam nhan maḷḅ'ḅhuman yolḅuny yäkuny Djäymannhan ga gutha'miḅuny nhangu Wanduruny. Banhalaya dhupal nyin ḅarirri guwatharan ganybuyu. Banhayan ḷinygu dhupalingu djämam.<sup>17</sup>Bala nhan Djesum guykuyuwanan dhupalingu bitjanan, "Wäy, warapulay, gu! Malthuwan wulay nyäkun. ḅayam ḅarru nhumaliny marḅgikum nhuma ḅarru gayḅa gaḅḅhuman yolḅunhan warrany."

English Back Translation

### Jesus asked-to-accompany fish workers for following him

<sup>16</sup>One time he Jesus went there taking the shoreline route [Lit: edge take] of Lake Galilee. And at that place he found a person named Simon and his younger brother Andrew. They (dual) were there catching fish with a net. That was their work.  
<sup>17</sup>Then he Jesus called-to-come them (dual) thus, "Wäy, you two, come! You (dual) follow me. I will teach you, you will collect/catch people."

### Baptisms at Dhälinbuy



# Stories making sense: Discourse Analysis Workshop, Alice Springs, by Hannah Harper

COORDINATOR December

Many years ago, Jesus met an important man named Jairus. Responding to Jairus' plea, Jesus makes his way to visit Jairus' dying daughter.

You may know this story from Mark's Gospel, and I am introducing it here as a good demonstration of story grammar, or discourse.

Because of the large crowd, Jesus and Jairus are pressured by many bodies, but one particular touch catches Jesus' attention. A lady of suffering and shame has desperately reached out to him. Jesus notices her healing, and he takes time to talk with her.

A messenger from Jairus' household arrives with bad news, and Jesus continues on to Jairus' house to bring the little girl back from death.

I asked  
Carla a  
lot of  
questions



Carla  
teaching



Loving my story



This passage from Mark 5 teaches us a lot about Jesus' power and care. For Bible translators, there are plenty of places the plot and characters could get jumbled so that the meaning is lost altogether. Nyälun̄ is translating from the newly published Wangurri Gospel into Dhuwaya, a Yolŋu language of the Gove Peninsula. With one slip of the demonstrative and the absence of any other marking features, the audience could easily infer that the lady in the crowd is Jairus' daughter, which would create confusion about the rest of the story! If we stick too closely to English or even Wangurri features, this story could end in nuisance, or worse ... nonsense.

This is one story with two episodes, where one episode is an interruption to the other. There is rising tension in both episodes with plenty of direct speech, for example, Jesus' question, "Who touched me?" When Jesus arrives at Jairus' house, the crowd is first mourning, and then mocking. "Talitha koum!" is an especially dramatic quote - direct and original. How can we effectively describe the prominent peaks in this two-headed story using the story grammar of Yolŋu language? Interestingly, Jairus is quiet during the intervening episode. How should we carefully reactivate this character when Jesus gets on track to see the daughter? This passage fits into a bigger story narrated by Mark, and it is introduced in English by Jesus' crossing "to the other side of the lake". How can we aptly show the setting of this story amongst others in Jesus' historic, travelling ministry? These are just a few of the discourse considerations in translating a story. In a few months, I expect that Nyälun̄ and I will get some constructive feedback from Dr Chuck Grimes, in the course of an exegetical consultant check!

In my studies of linguistics, I have had a strong interest in discourse analysis. I imagine it as an artistic palette of human language that draws from the sound system, grammatical features, and personal creativity. In every language, we use different discourse conventions to make our communication effective *and* interesting.

Naturally, I was thrilled to be invited by AuSIL to attend an intensive workshop on this topic, lead by seasoned expert Carla Bartsch! At the end of September, I joined linguists in Alice Springs for two weeks. Together we studied natural stories in many different languages to learn more about narrative discourse. Carla's decades of experience in America and Asia were fascinating and inspirational. The data and phenomena that we found in discourse analysis were pointed towards Bible translation. All of the participants presented their observations at the end of the workshop, and it was clear that even very experienced translators had expanded their discourse kit for use in Biblical narrative. I had so much fun working with a fantastic story from World War II in Gumatj, that sometimes it was difficult to contain my excitement. I am very grateful to my Yolŋu Mukul Băpa, Djerrkŋu, who told me the story, and to my husband, family and church who made it possible for me to attend the workshop. I thank Dick and Carla Bartsch for coming all the way from America, the AuSIL team for their hospitality, and the other participants for their wonderful company throughout. It is a privilege to share my interest and continuous learning with Nyälun̄ and others in the Bible translation process.



## Coordinate Reference Committee Meeting at Riyala by Louise Macdonald

At the last Reference Committee meeting in March this year it was decided that I should travel to each region and talk to people about their needs for supporting and resourcing Scripture in Use projects. I started at Galiwin'ku where we spent a lot of time exploring their passion to share their Scripture in Use materials and their experience with other communities in East Arnhem. The next journey was to Alice Springs and Pukatja in the APY lands of South Australia where excitement about their imminent study tour to Israel rubbed off on me and I joined them in Jerusalem—for the ultimate Scripture in Use experience. Two trips into West Arnhem, firstly a car and boat trip out to Waruwi Goulburn Island to consult with the translators and church community about how they want their Gospel of Mark to look, to be printed for dedication next June by Bible Society. Followed by a trip out to the Kuninjku translators at Manmoyi which was sadly shortened because of a very recent death in the family. The final journey for the year was out to Mowanjum in the West Kimberly where a lot of excitement was felt at the prospect of attempting to illustrate a children's book using Worrorra and English—as a language reclamation project.

Through all these travels, it became apparent that people are very keen to network between all the regions so we embarked on ensuring that our meeting in October would include as many indigenous translation and SIU workers as possible. Given the many challenges that face these workers, this was a logistical struggle. Gathering people from remote locations when communication, transport and health, work and family responsibilities all add up to the need for considerable persistence and patience to maximise attendance.

The effort was worth it, and we all arrived at Riyala, South of Darwin for a fabulous time of sharing. Each day began with worship followed by the necessary work of getting to know each other and trying to untangle how we all relate to each other across the various regions.

For our agenda we set ourselves the tasks of looking at translation, SIU and Communication.



We started with translation, exploring how each area has designed their projects, and then were able to share the strengths and challenges of each region with each other. We also spent a lot of time exploring how communities choose what they are going to translate. This was a fruitful discussion and revealed the many ways in which translators and church communities are listening to the call of God as they continue with this work.

# Coordinate Reference Committee

## Meeting held at Riyala

COORDN8 December 2015



Paul, Lilian, Ina, Muna and David working on describing the Pitjantjatjara project

We moved onto Scripture in Use with help from Margaret Mekin from AuSIL. Margaret shared the wealth of experience and resources from Kriol country and everyone reported their own SIU activities. We were treated to examples of the audio visual expertise of Wängarr Dhamarrandji and Margaret Miller as they told their stories of travelling to mainland communities to share all these resources, with help from Peter Higham at Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF).



Wängarr and Margaret concentrating on their devices

Finally we looked at communication and technology, attempting to untangle how people in communities are using their technological devices such as mobile phones, lap tops and tablets. The meeting ended with communion and commitments to attempt a similar gathering next year with more time to spend together networking, sharing ideas and enabling communities and scripture workers to convey their passions and aspirations for this vitalwork.



Djawut, Yur-ranydjil, Wängarr Sandra and Rosemary presenting the many language groups of East Arnhemland

YES...

### I want to Support Indigenous Scriptures

Facilitating Bible translation and Scripture in Use programs in Arnhemland, Central Australia and Kimberley, through NRCC (Northern Regional Council of Congress) and the Northern Synod of UCA.

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