



Bible Study Session in Yirrkala.

L-R: Margaret Miller, Mary Nandama, Marrpaḷawuy Marika, Nyälun Wunungmurra

## “God is not outside our world...”

### North East Arnhem Land

By Hannah Harper

One windy weekend in May, after many months of planning and anticipation, Yolŋu from several communities in North East Arnhem Land gathered in Yirrkala. Together, Yolŋu church leaders and CSIS-EA Scripture-in-Use workers had organised the workshop for ‘Marŋgithirr Yuṭa Manikaywu mala ga God-Wāṇarrwu Dhäruk’ - learning new songs and God’s Word. Marrpaḷawuy Marika and Gapany were instrumental in the planning and running of the weekend, with support from Maratja Dhamarraṇdji (NRCC East Arnhem Support Worker) and Margaret Miller (CSIS-EA Scripture-in-Use Facilitator). Mary Beth and Todd

Saurman (AuSIL) were also available to share experiences from their music work with Indigenous people groups around the world. Over the weekend, 25 youth and adults participated in workshop sessions, and many more shared in worship services.

In an interview, Gapany tells how the workshop addressed questions and needs in the Christian community. “The more we discussed together over the weekend, the more it became clear to us what this music workshop was providing for everyone.”

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West Arnhem



West Kimberley



Central Australia

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



(from page 1)

Maratja continues, "This music workshop brought to us greater issues than just music in worship - we found ourselves exploring the idea that God is everywhere."

One key Scripture was 1 Corinthians 14:7-19, in which Paul writes, *"There are doubtless many different languages in the world, and none is without meaning, but if I do not know the meaning of the language, I will be a foreigner to the speaker and the speaker a foreigner to me. So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church."*

Workshop participants were able to read and discuss these Scriptures in Djambarrpuyngu and Gumatj. Maratja reflects, "At the first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down and gave people the ability to worship the LORD as one. He gave many languages to do that, and we can worship him also through all the varieties of languages and musical styles of our clans and people groups."

Many favourite songs were shared throughout the weekend, original music written by Yolŋu Christians, or translated from English hymns / choruses. There also emerged a real sense of unity, liberty and prayerfulness. People of all ages and backgrounds converged on the church to worship in song and dance, also using keyboard, guitar, yidaki (didgeridoo) and bilma

(clapsticks). Maratja explains, "It is good to learn other styles of music and to use these for our worship too; they help us also to express worship and we can use these in our own way to express our faith. However, there is in our hearts the way we have been created from the beginning of time

**"Can we find those styles of music that can be for worship and yet express our aboriginality? We need to examine these things, so it can become a lifestyle for us. A way of worship and praise to our Heavenly Father, a way of expressing our joy, sorrow, and heart issues directly to him from here in this place."**

**Maratja Dhamarrandji**

that is unique. We need God the Father and Holy Spirit to help us find those tunes that express ourselves from our hearts, the way that the Creator has made us. God is not outside our world, or even on the periphery. God needs to be in the centre of our whole world and life."

In a previous issue of CoordN8, Gapany wrote, "I have been looking at the power and importance of music in carrying the message. Also how music brings people together in unity, how music touches people's feelings. I have noticed how people don't always read from the page, but sing from the heart." As a member of the CSIS-EA Scripture-in-Use team, Gapany is keen to develop this service with Yolŋu congregations and communities. "We do not want to just start these discussions and forget them. These music workshops need to be ongoing."



**"I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also."**

**1 Corinthians 14:15**



*Thank God for the stimulating and encouraging workshop in Yirrkala, especially that so many Yolŋu could participate.*

*Thank God for the many helpers: Mary Beth and Todd Saurman, and Mary Skidmore (AuSIL), Peter Higham & MAF, Bruce and Alison Patterson (Yirrkala Banana Farm), and the Lamboa family.*

*Pray for more music workshop opportunities.*



# Translation workshops & God's Word at work... Central Australia



The Pitjantjatjara Old Testament Project is moving ahead with translation workshops running in school holiday breaks. As CoordN8 #8 goes to print, Anangu Christians are sharing training and dedicated translation time with Paul Eckert, in Amata and Pukatja (2-6 July). At a recent CSIS Reference Committee meeting, Peter Greenwood and Yanyi Bandiche (NRCC) presented a moving account of the project launch at Easter in Mimili.

The logo (above) was designed by translators, who wanted to connect the past and future work by carrying the central graphic from the 2002 Shorter Bible. Anangu translators are continuing work in the Old Testament books of Psalms, Joshua, Numbers and Song of Songs.

Amata Translation Workshop I, 2011  
L-R: Deborah, David and Alicia, Jennifer



David and Alicia Barnett, school staff based in Pukatja, are also coming alongside this project. "From very early on, we have wanted to put our 'roots' down here, and live in Ernabella for an extended length of time. This has stemmed from a great desire to see God's Word at work in the hearts and lives of the local people; that we might be a mutual encouragement to one another. In January and February this year we completed the 'Equip Training' at Wycliffe's summer school in Melbourne, as part of the process of becoming members of Wycliffe. It was an intense time, but God certainly increased in us a sense of wonder at His gift of language." God-willing, Dave and Alicia will undertake further studies in theology and translation principles in coming years. "It's so good that people from far and wide are able to read about what's happening and keep the project and people here in their prayers... We're excited about the power of God to transform individual lives and entire communities through His Word, as *'...faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.'* (Romans 10:17)."



## "Little by little" with Mary Skidmore Elcho Island, North East Arnhem Land

by Wängarr Dhamarrandji

Little by little, since the end of 2009, in between my different jobs in the Translation Centre office, I have been working on the Power Point presentations for Bible studies to share in the communities. But I cannot go everywhere to talk with the power points. So I am learning how to convert my power points into DVDs that will have my voice recorded to go with the pictures. I am also learning how to use the Publisher program so that I can print out easy Bible Study booklets (12 to 16 pages) to go with the DVDs to help the Bible study leaders. I am learning with Märi, Mary Skidmore (AuSIL).

Please *pray* that there will not be too many more interruptions to our learning time so that we can have some finished packages before Mary has to leave. We have had some very sad times with funerals for young people. Please *pray* for the community, both Yolngu and Balanda. Please especially *pray* for the eight youths in my family who have been affected by mental illness.

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## around the regions...

### Position Vacant...

#### West Kimberley

NRCC Resource Worker Steve Orme advises that the position of Support Worker in West Kimberley remains vacant. There is an urgent need for a staff person to work alongside the church in Mowanjum and the region around Derby. Please *pray* for God's provision in this area- specifically that in time the church would be able to reengage with the Kimberley communities in Worrorra and other local languages.

### Other Events

- *Thank God* for time spent together in the annual Northern Synod meetings, Darwin, 22-26 June.
- *Pray* for the United Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in Alice Springs, 6-12 July. Marrpalawuy is leading studies, and readings will be available in Djambarrpuyngu and Pitjantjatjara.
- *Pray* for the wider church gathered at the UCA National Assembly in Adelaide, 15-21 July.

### Maung Workshop in Waruwi

#### West Arnhem Land

by Heather Hewett

Rosemary, Sandra and Nancy lead busy lives with family and work programs. Translation is a voluntary labour of love and often hard to fit into daily life. *Pray* that the ladies will be able to find consistent time to give to the valuable work. At present they are working on the Gospel of Mark.

*Thank God* that David Glasgow (AuSIL) is working on the Simplified English Version of Mark; what is available is helpful in the translation process for Maung. *Pray* that the translation will become available as needed.

*Praise God* for Heather Hewitt's month with the Maung translation team, translation advisor Mally McLellan, and NRCC Support Worker Lindsay Parkhill. *Pray* for continued health, and safe travel back to Victoria.

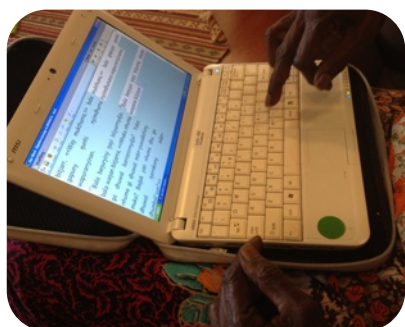


Above: Rosemary & Heather working together at the 2011 'OurWord' Workshop.

## A gift for Nyälun North East Arnhem Land

"2 years ago, I decided to retire from my job, and do the translation of Dhuwaya for my kids and the community. Dhuwaya is a beautiful, simple, starting point language, before the children speak their own tribal languages. I've finished the book of Mark, first draft, in Dhuwaya. It needs to be checked with the community, church leaders and translation experts. And now I am doing the Djapu language, it's my own language, for my clan, but anyone can read it. I'm doing Mark, then Acts."

Nyälun Dündiwuy Wunungmurra



"Seeing the commitment of Nyälun and the CSIS team to translating the Word of God into Yolngu Matha languages has inspired us. Nyälun was translating on a tiny 13 inch screen. We decided to take the story of her work back to New Zealand, and present it to our supporting church (Orewa Baptist). We encouraged people to consider the difficult task that Nyälun is doing, and to pray, and to support her. We were overwhelmed with genuine interest. Donations were received that enabled the purchase of a new laptop for her work, and for travel to Darwin for 'Translation Workshops'. It was a great privilege for us to hand this new laptop over to Nyälun at the recent Pentecost Sunday celebrations at Yirrkala Uniting Church. The smile on Nyälun's face was something that we won't forget. We believe in faith that God will use this translation of the Word of God in Djapu & Dhuwaya for true and lasting transformation."

Peter & Tiina Higham

Peter Higham flies with MAF, and works for the 'Learning Technologies' branch. CSIS thanks MAF and Orewa Baptist for their generous partnership in Scripture translation.