



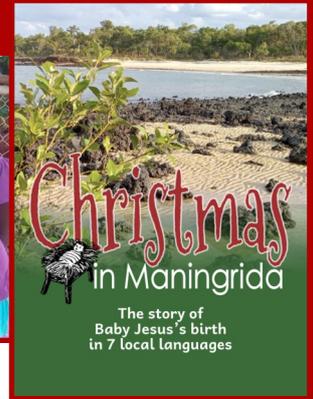
Christmas in Maningrida By Rachel Shipp and Louise Macdonald



Monica Wilton & Leanda Gibson, Ndjebbana translators



Leanda and family



Maningrida is one of the most multilingual places in

the world – ten plus completely distinct languages spoken every day amongst a population of 3000 people! Most of those languages didn't have any published Scripture until now. A few months ago, five different languages spoken in Maningrida translated seven verses of the Christmas story (we've written about this workshop in a previous newsletter).

We decided to put all these 'Maningrida languages' together into one picture book, along with two existing translations (one published, one previously unpublished), plus English, and illustrated it with line drawings of the Bible characters overlaid on top of photographs from our own country.

The idea is to bring the Bible message to life – bringing it off the page and into our everyday lives. We have Mary and Joseph walking through stone country, the shepherds tending their sheep on the floodplains, the wise men worshipping outside the Maningrida church building, and more.

We have just received the books back from the printer and are looking forward to sharing it! We pray that these translations and illustrations help people connect with Jesus' story this Christmas, and know that he was born for them, for all of us.

We also hope that this book will inspire speakers of other languages to have a go at translation. In November, some people in Jabiru did just that. —Rachel

We flew Rachel to Jabiru because of rising rivers and then negotiated Friday afternoon as the time to translate, having to fit around hunting and the following community cook up. Rachel played the audio recording of the Luke 2:6-12 passage read by Delia in Kuninjku and then I watched on as Julie and Joanne thought carefully about each phrase and then Rachel transcribed as they spoke. A back translation into English was checked at fellowship and then everyone agreed they wanted the text printed with hyphens to make it easier to read (Kunwinjku dialects have notoriously long words). The next tasks are a consultant

check, establishing a name for this dialect and printing in time for Christmas.

-Louise

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

Rachel Shipp, Joanne Sullivan and Julie Badwana



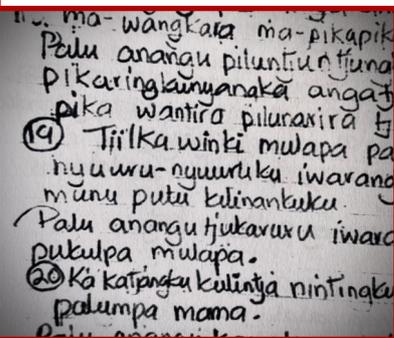
Keeping Words by Dave Barnett



Makinti Minurtjukur in Israel, explaining the story of Gideon

Makinti Minurtjukur has recently been translating the Book of Proverbs into Pitjantjatjara. As I was keyboarding her handwritten draft of Proverbs 15:19, I came across a Pitjantjatjara word I hadn't seen before. In English (NIV), Proverbs 15:19 reads, "The way of the sluggard is blocked with thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway." The English front translation that Makinti was translating from reads, "There are lots of prickles growing and covering a

lazy person's path..." For "sluggard" or "lazy person" Makinti had written "nyuuru-nyuuru". Unfamiliar with this word, I looked it up in the Pitjantjatjara dictionary, only to find it wasn't there. After a few phone calls to Makinti and other translators, I discovered the word means something like "sleepy", "lethargic" or "lazy". It can also have the sense of "apathetic", "half-hearted" or "unmotivated". In fact the only other occurrence of this word in the Pitjantjatjara Shorter Bible occurs in Revelation 3 to describe the Laodicean Church as "lukewarm".



Nyuuru-nyuuru is one of many old Pitjantjatjara words that are no longer in common use among Pitjantjatjara speakers, and if it weren't for the fact that we have put it in the Pitjantjatjara Scriptures, it would probably be lost forever. One of the by-products of translating the Bible has been the steady collection and preservation of old words, that, with the passing of another generation, would otherwise soon be extinct. In a checking workshop of 1 Samuel earlier in the year

I discovered "nyultju", an adjective to describe the Israelites' "blunt" instruments, and a word not currently in the Pitjantjatjara dictionary. "Kaltara" is another word missing from the dictionary, but present throughout the Pitjantjatjara Bible, meaning something like "clear" or "clean" – probably traditionally used to describe clear or clean water found in a rock-hole, but now used to describe anything from David's "beautiful eyes" (1 Samuel 16:12) to the Apostle John's vision of a "sea of glass" (Revelation 15:2).



Margaret Dagg, Inawinytji Stanley & Anne Jack

Keeping Words continued by Dave Barnett

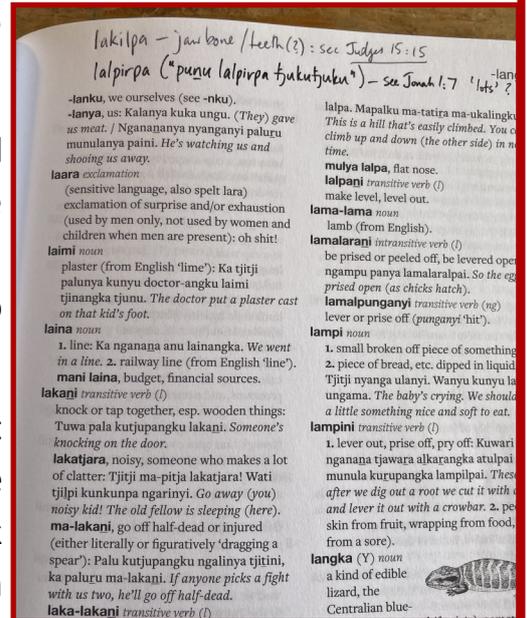
Coordinate Issue #32 December 2021

And just as Samson unexpectedly stumbled across the jawbone of a donkey (Judges 15:15-17), so we rather fortuitously stumbled across “lakilpa” (“jawbone”) while translating this section of the book of Judges. An initial draft of Judges 15:15 had Samson fighting the Philistines with a donkey’s *tooth*, but it was only later in a group check of this chapter – when the translators were discussing with each other and trying to picture Samson fighting off 1,000 men with a tooth! – that one of them remembered this older word for jawbone. Lakilpa was another word that was not previously in the Pitjantjatjara dictionary, until now.

At last count we have recorded twenty-seven old Pitjantjatjara words over the last 5 or 6 years that are in the Pitjantjatjara Bible, but not in the Pitjantjatjara dictionary. We still have perhaps 40% of the Old Testament to translate, so who knows how many more words we’ll come across?

Of course the Bible not only preserves old words, but creates new ones. For example, “Loving-kindness” only came into the English language because Bible translators had to work out how to translate the Hebrew “*hesed*”, and in certain contexts the English terms “love”, “mercy” or “kindness” didn’t always do the Hebrew word justice. As mentioned above “*laitji*” is now commonly used by Pitjantjatjara people for “lazy”. And previously there was no single Pitjantjatjara word that corresponded to the English word “thanks” or “thankyou”, but as this is such a common term in the Bible, Pitjantjatjara people are frequently heard transliterating this term with “*tjantju*” – especially in their prayers. And so now there is a Pitjantjatjara word for “thankyou”!

We give thanks to God for the gift and variety of languages he has given us to make more



sense of his world, and we look forward to that day when we will join with that “great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the *Lama-lama*.” (Revelation 7:9).



Margaret Dagg, Anne Jack, Katrina Tjitayi and David Barnett
Note Banana in the foreground is panana in Pitjantjatjara - another new word!

It is amazing how the Lord works around a pandemic!

By Yousif Kunda and Vivian Ajawin

Language helpers gather to plan for recording



Here is a story of what God has been up to in East Arnhem Land by Yousif Kunda and Vivian Ajawin, of Global Recordings Network. They have been able to meet the recording needs of Coordinate in Yolŋu lands in 2021. They write:

*"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever."
Psalms 118:1(NIV).*

Sydney NSW: The idea of leaving Sydney and heading to Arnhem Land Northern Territory, NT to live and work amongst Yolŋu people for 5-6 months in Elcho Island, Galiwin'ku, were not our thoughts or plans. However, as COVID-19 travel restrictions closed all International Borders, we were not able to travel to Uganda in East Africa as our original plan. God opened another door in NT to attend Katherine Christian Convention (KCC) in early May. It was a good time to learn, reflect and build relationships with Indigenous people and missionaries as preparation to live and serve on the Island. We still wonder and didn't know how that happened, but we know and understand that it was God's intervention and his opportunity. Paul writes: *"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."* Romans 8:28 (NIV).

Arnhem Land: We stayed at Margaret Miller's home and enjoyed her beautiful garden. We thank God for internet access at Bible Translation Centre. We really appreciate and thank God for her partnership with GRN Australia.

Relationships: As soon as we settled on the Island, we started building relationships and friendships with local Yolŋu Church leaders, community leaders, missionaries, Government and other organizations. Although we faced many challenges, we were still able to establish relationships & partnerships.

Learning opportunity: We are so blessed to relate to the locals (Yolŋu). Observe, learn the language, culture & respect their way of living and how they see things as a part of their Yolŋu worldview. I believe, it's not enough to read and watch a documentary about the Yolŋu people, but worthwhile to meet them in person, love them genuinely and serve them faithfully.

Pioneer families ready to assist Yousif and Vivian's visit on Elcho



Musicians, singers and recordists at the local school

Adoption & Social Networks: Yousif was adopted by *Gandangu* clan/tribe of Galawarra and his Aboriginal skin name is 'gunda' which means (rock or stone). Vivian was adopted by *Dhamarrandji* clan/tribe and her skin name is 'walu' which means (sun or time).

Languages: Yolŋu speak many languages (Yolŋu Matha). *Djambarrpuyŋu* is the Wider Communication Language (WCL) beside other tribal/clan languages.

Audio Recording & Training: We recorded Mark's Gospel in Djambarrpuyŋu, songs & music in Djambarrpuyŋu, English & Golpa. Global Recordings Network GRN had planned to run Audio Recordists Workshop in August 2021 at Gove NT but it has been postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Nonetheless, an idea came up to train Prabhu Pothula in basic audio recording & editing at Galiwin'ku. Prabhu served with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) as a Pilot and is currently serving with Pioneers.



Vivian with Yolŋu sister, Mälku

Yousif with his Yolŋu nephew, Trevor and wife Vivian



Return Home: Vivian flew back home in early August through Brisbane. Yousif then arrived back home in Sydney, NSW on Thursday 30th of September, where he reconnected with his family and returned back to work. From Monday to Tuesday he worked at the studio, and from Wednesday to Friday he worked from home, where he set up his speakers for editing the recordings.

Together to record Gospel Music at the local school Music room



Vale Rosemary B. Burarrwaja (1949-1921)

By Margaret Miller

Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his faithful servants. Psalm 116:15

Rosemary on her beloved homeland



It was with sadness that on Tuesday 9th November, I received the news that our dear Gumatj sister in the Lord, Rosemary had passed away. Rosemary valued her Gumatj scriptures. She would read them aloud at fellowship gatherings and pore over them in her own devotional times. Her worn copies showed signs of being loved and well used. So it is no surprise that when facing the dilemma of no more fresh copies of the 1985 Gumatj New Testament edition, she was keen to see more available. She was to initiate the checking process for her people,... and what a task that would be for her!

Because the first Gumatj Scriptures were published before computer technology, Bible Society needed to digitise them in order to have them reproduced. It was Rosemary who decided to offer herself to the detailed checking of those digitised OCR copies of her New Testament. That work was a delight to her, as she shared how the words and their message gave her spiritual nourishment along the way.



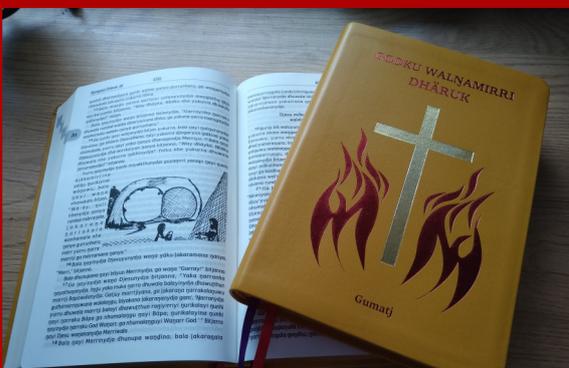
With the 1985 Gumatj New Testament edition

Later, each time we crossed paths, she would want to know when 'the book' would be ready. But that was not going to happen quickly. It required many other skilled workers to prepare the illustrations and maps, end pages, cover design, layout and many other necessary tasks in order to have a print-ready copy for Amity Press in China, ...and that all happening in these latter years with COVID19 challenges. How wonderful to hear from Bible Society on the 5th November, that the newly printed copies had finally arrived in Sydney! ... but the news came too late for Rosemary... in that same week, she had gone

ahead to be with the Lord. She had been struggling for some time with the effects of a severe stroke. She has surely been a significant part of a team of people that has left the greatest treasure possible in her own language!

Anticipation is mounting in the far north-eastern corner of the Northern Territory for the Gumatj New Testament's arrival. Pray that many Gumatj people and their Yolŋu relatives will come to love these scriptures and the treasures found within, just as Rosemary did.

2021 Gumatj New Testament edition



JOHN 12:24A "Listen carefully to this picture story. A wheat seed has to fall into the ground and die, so that it can make a big mob of new seeds. If it never dies, and if it never gets buried, it will never make new seeds." (PEV)

"Märr-yuwalk dhuwala ŋarra nhumalangu lakaramanydja yukurra. Nunhi ŋuli ŋatha maŋutji dholkuma munatha'ilinydja, ŋäthilinydja ŋayi ŋuli ŋunhi rakunydhirri, ga ŋulinuruyi rakunydhinyaranuru yurru walma yuṭana walŋa. Ga ŋunhi yurru maŋutji ŋatha yakanydja rakunydhirri, ŋayinydja yurru gänana ŋorra yukurra ŋunhiyi wanganydja maŋutji." (Gumatj)

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Celebrating the Diploma in Translation Graduation



Sandra Makurlngu, Rosemary Jinmauliya Brown, Justine Gawinygawiny, Ruth Nalmakarra, Mätjarra Garrawurra, Yurranydjil Dhurrkay and Djawut Gondarra

Yurranydjil Dhurrkay

I come from Galiwin'ku. I normally speak my mother's language, but I'm a Wangurri woman. It's been three long years, but we did it by God's grace. I also want to thank our teachers: Mally, Lizz, and Ben.

Dwajut Gondarra

As I was going through this study, it was like showing me the way, and giving me the strength.

Mätjarra Garrawurra

It will help me with my work as a translator, doing Bible translation in my language, Liya-gawumirr. Language is us. Language is our land. Language is our people. It's a very important and interesting thing to do. It's a healing for everyone who can read and write in their own languages.

Justine Gawinygawiny

This course has taught me how to tell or give the message to people in right or good ways.

Sandra Makurlngu

I'm a translator, and my heart's desire is to continue to be a Bible translator.

Ruth Nalmakarra

So here I am. I have done it, to the finish of the course.

Rosemary Jinmauliya Brown

We took part in our studies, but it's not yet the end. There will be another journey, and it is yet to come.

Mätjarra Garrawurra and Moderator Tony Goodluck



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