MARCH 2018

TRANSLATION *Matters*



BLESSED ARE THE FEET

Shortly after sending out Prayer Matters in January, we received the news that Keith Forster had gone to be with the Lord. As we look back on his life, we celebrate the invaluable contribution he has made to countless lives by having the Bible in their own language. In this month's edition of Translation Matters, we pay tribute to Keith, the very first Wycliffe Bible translator sent out from South Africa. God's signature upon his life was his unwavering devotion to the Lord and the body of Christ, through the ministry of Bible translation.

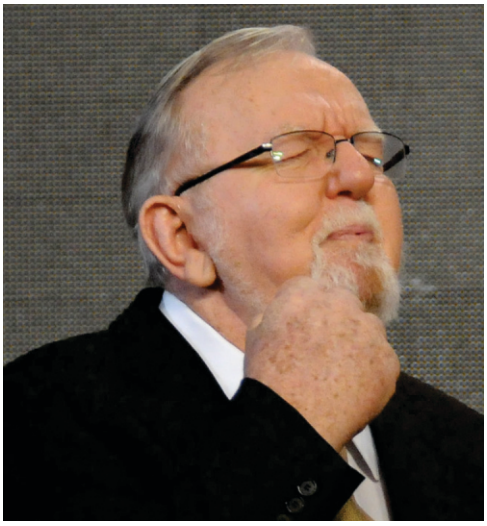
My husband, Sebastian, and I experienced Keith's gift of encouragement first-hand. One day he called us to express his delight in hearing that God had opened a door for Bible translation to begin in Angola. He asked many questions, and motivated us to press on, despite many challenges. It meant so much to us that he took such a personal interest in the work in Angola.

A few weeks ago, Wilma shared with me how that even before Keith's training in Bible translation, he had felt drawn to Angola. In 1968, Keith and Wilma flew from South Africa to South America, stopping in Luanda to refuel. “As we sat on the tarmac”, Wilma recalls, “we prayed for the translation needs of Angola, and asked the Lord if someday we could return to that country to work with a group there.” In the providence of God, He had another assignment for Keith and Wilma, and they have felt privileged to work in Latin America all these years.

When God confirmed Keith's calling was to Panama, he never stopped praying for the door to open into Angola at the right time. Angola remained on Keith's heart, and he never stopped praying. 50 years later, he called to say how thrilled he was to hear the news of work starting in Angola!

Today, more than 13 translation projects are underway in Angola, and we thank God for Keith's faithfulness in prayer.
Please join me in giving thanks to God for a life poured out so that many could receive the gift of eternal life through the translated Word of God into the language of their hearts.

Karen Floor, CEO



A TRIBUTE TO DENIS KEITH FORSTER

Keith was born 7 February 1939 in Grahamstown, South Africa and met the Lord Jesus Christ face-to-face on 31 January 2018 after battling a difficult illness. He was surrounded by his family as he entered into eternity. He is survived by his wife Wilma of 49 years and their three children, Wendy, Valerie and Stephen, their spouses and five grandchildren.

As the son of a Baptist minister, Keith lived in several cities in South Africa where his father pastored. It was during his high school years in Welkom that God planted a seed in his heart regarding the need for Bible translation. After graduating with a degree in chartered accountancy from the University of the Witwatersrand, God used 1 Chronicles 28:20 to confirm Keith's call to become involved in Bible translation.

Keith pursued biblical studies at Columbia International University (CIU) in South Carolina, where he met Wilma, who became his wife and co-labourer on the mission field. After graduation they joined Wycliffe Bible Translators. In September 1971, Keith, Wilma and their three-month old daughter Wendy, moved to the Border Kuna village of Paya, located in the jungle rainforest on the Panama side of the Panama/Colombia border. The village chief assigned a young teenager, Ricardo Bastidas, to teach Keith and Wilma to speak their language.

Ricardo, brother-in-Christ, friend, teacher and co-translator, worked with them faithfully from those early days until 1993 when they rejoiced together to witness the publication of the Border Kuna New Testament. Meanwhile, early in 1980, while concurrently working on the Border Kuna translation, Keith and San Blas Kuna pastor Lino Smith began work translating the New Testament for the San Blas Kuna people, which was published in 1995.

Translation work began on the San Blas Kuna Old Testament in 1999. A team of five men: Teobaldo Martínez, Jaime Rios, Hernán Smith, Lino Smith and Amalio Vergara, finished translation of the complete San Blas Kuna Bible which was dedicated in 2014. At the time of Keith's death, more than 15,000 copies of the San Blas Kuna Bible were in print. From 2014 until his recent illness limited his direct involvement, Keith sought to be actively involved in encouraging the wide distribution and use of Kuna Scriptures.

At the dedication of the San Blas Kuna Bible in 2014, Keith reflected on the culmination of his life's work: "The verse I was given that day (the day he was commissioned by a group of seasoned missionaries to follow after the call of God on his life) was 1 Chronicles 28:20: **Be strong and courageous and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished.** In 1963 this verse was 100% promise. Now I gratefully testify that the verse is 100% testimony to God's faithfulness. He has been with us. He has not failed us and He has given us the privilege of finishing all the work to which He called us to do. We serve an incredible God."

Compiled by Kathy Marais



The early days of pencil and paper before computers

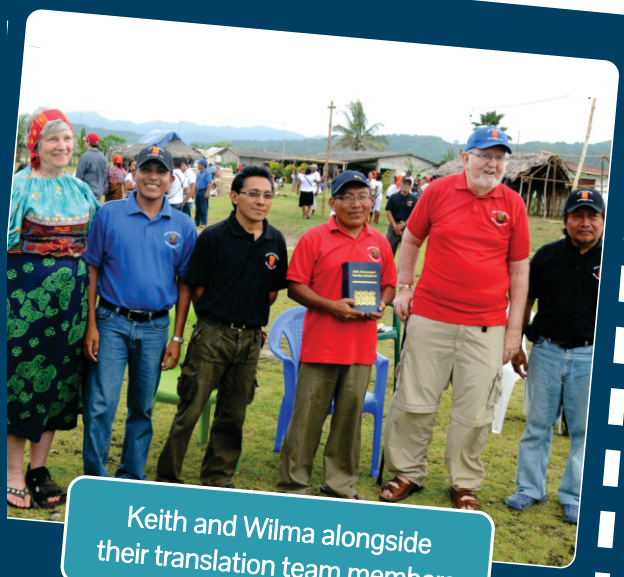


Derek Fivaz, former Chairperson of the Wycliffe South Africa Board, joins the city dedication celebration

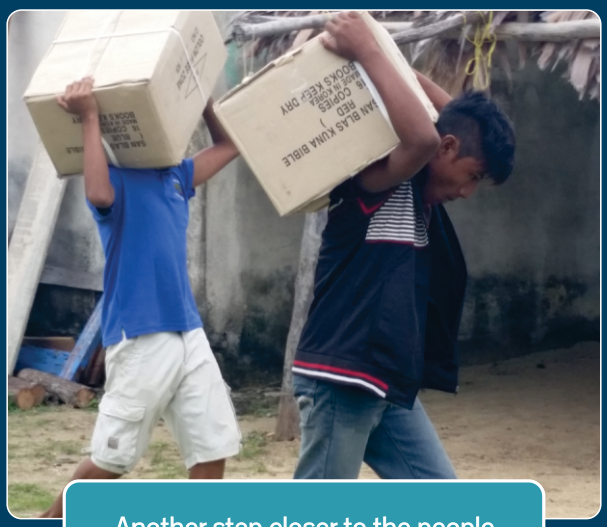
DEDICATION OF THE 531ST FULL BIBLE IN 2014



Boxes of brand new Bibles arrive by boat



Keith and Wilma alongside their translation team members



Another step closer to the people



Taking in the truth in their own heart language



Proudly parading the Bible through the streets of the village



Huge turnout for the city dedication celebration

Be strong and courageous and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord God is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work for the service of the temple of the Lord is finished.
1 Chronicles 28:20



Memorial gifts in honour of Keith may be sent to San Blas Kuna Scripture Publications at:

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Branch: Kempton Park
Branch code: 012442
Account number: 020263309
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