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The newsletter of Paul and Jo Murrell
Working with SIL and Wycliffe Bible Translators, normally in the Central African Republic but for this year, in England on a year's home assignment

August 2011

Hello there!

We hope you are having a good summer, however and wherever you are spending it. We are all well, and such a lot has happened in the last few weeks that we thought we should write and tell you all about it.

A sad farewell....

At the end of June, we and the Festens said goodbye to Bilolo, which has been our home for six years (eleven years for the Festens). The goodbyes were especially poignant in light of the fragility of life for the Mpyemo people. When we say goodbye to friends in Eynsham, England, we are 99% certain we will see them next time we come back. With the threat of AIDS, other diseases and a life expectancy of only 50 years we could not say the same of our friends in Bilolo. We hope to visit in a couple of years' time, but who will still be there? It reminds us of the urgency for people to hear God's truths in the language they understand best.

We also had some nice treats just before we left. Paul and I took a day to walk 25km along the stretch of Mpyemo villages leading to Cameroon, enjoying the forest and saying goodbye to people in each village. Our good friends Ruth and David, with the help of both the Baptist and the Catholic churches, organised a *myena*, a good-bye party for us all. Around 500 people came, everyone ate goat stew with *kam* (manioc dumplings), choirs sang, and various people gave speeches. It was a really lovely event and a good way to mark our departure.

Handover Ceremony

Finally, the day before the Festens flew back to America, the Mpyemo team had their handover ceremony! Sadly, we were not able to hold it in Nola with a large number of Mpyemo people, as we had hoped, but it was a lovely occasion nevertheless, attended by SIL colleagues and ACATBA (the Wycliffe Organisation in CAR) translators. There were prayers and speeches and a traditional mpyemo ceremony symbolising the transfer of authority, shown in the photos here. Brad, seated on the higher stool and holding a chief's baton, was asked to stand up by the SIL director. He passed the baton to Pastor Mathurin and then sat down on the lower stool, while Mathurin was led to the higher seat, showing that Brad had passed the authority to lead the programme to him. It was a very meaningful and moving occasion for everybody present. Please pray for Pastor Mathurin as he assumes leadership of the Mpyemo translation programme.



Publication of Luke's Gospel.....

In addition to the handover ceremony, we had another reason to celebrate just before our return home. The Gospel of Luke was finished and printed! Initially we have only done a very small print run, as we expect the team will need to make minor changes, but we are all very excited that Mpyemo people will soon be able to buy and read the gospel for themselves.

And what now....?

On our way back to England from CAR, we took the opportunity to have a holiday in France, which was a lovely way to ease ourselves back into life in Europe! We hired a car and travelled through the Loire valley, and then joined some friends who had arranged a week's holiday for us at Le Pas Opton, the Spring Harvest Christian holiday site. It was a wonderful fortnight—thank you so much to those who had a hand in organising it.



Now we are back in the UK, our official assignment is to help in the Wycliffe European Training Programme, teaching newer missionaries the skills they need for their work. We also plan to visit churches who support our work, and spend time with family and friends. Robert and Karys will be attending Cassington School again from September, which they are very excited about. This past fortnight, Robert has had several medical check-ups, and all seems to be well at the moment, but he will need a palate re-repair operation later this year—more on that nearer the time.

Don't forget the Mpyemo team!

Please continue to remember the Mpyemo team (pictured below) in your prayers. Pray especially for wisdom, good health, courage and perseverance and for the gospel of Luke to be well received. Pray that the recording of the script for the Jesus film in September goes well and for literacy work to restart. There is a lot for them to do. They have seen how faithful you have been in prayer for this work over the years, and ask if you would keep on praying for and supporting the work of Bible translation among the Mpyemo people. Thank you!



Lots of love,

Paul, Jo, Robert and Karys.

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(financial gifts should be marked 'for the support of Paul and Jo Murrell'; gifts for the Mpyemo project should be marked 'for the support of CAG ACATBA Mpyemo 900053')

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