

# The Journey of Hanna Joy

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## Hello All,

Last newsletter I had just decided which language and area to work in long term. This newsletter brings you news and photos of my first official trip to that area.

From Feb 18 to Mar 4 I visited Gulf Province to start connecting and building relationships. I started this time with four days at Kapuna Hospital. This is a mission hospital run by Gulf Christian Services. It is where my co-workers Robbie and Debbie are based and it will also be a



Arriving at Baimuru airstrip.  
Only half the cargo is mine! (D.Petterson)



Speaking at church in Kapuna before they prayed for me and sent me out to work among the Kope people. (D.Petterson)

base for me. The hospital staff gave me a warm welcome back and a very encouraging and prayerful sending the day I went to the village.

We (Robbie, Debbie and myself) spent a week in Ubuo village, connecting with the community. I was adopted into the Aumarie family, giving me an identity and place to belong in the village. We also spent time visiting some of the other Kope villages, so that they too would know who I was and know that although I was basing myself in one village, I intended to work alongside the whole Kope community.

My intent in this week was to build good foundations for relationships. Although I learnt some phrases and greetings in Kope and made some recordings to listen to away from the village, I did not focus on language learning. The language skill I was working on was hearing tone. I have had some training in tonal languages, but know that it will take me awhile to tune my ear to hear the tone well and even longer to be able to consistently remember and replicate it. Judging by the loving hugs on the day I left, relationships are off to a good start, even though the language will take time.



Ubuo village from the river. (H.Schulz)



From Ubuo I went on to Kikori, where the other mission hospital run by Gulf Christian Services is based and my friend Beth is the doctor. We had a weekend of reconnecting and sharing stories about our very different areas of ministry. Kikori is the town which Kope people are most likely to go to for market etc. This is an enormous blessing to me as it means I can fairly easily get out of the village and to the company of a friend when I need a break.

From Kikori it was back to Kapuna to sort through my things and pack them securely against rats for when I next return and to discuss important things like purchasing rainwater tanks and supplies for a composting toilet for the village. After a quick two weeks, I was back on a plane to the Highlands.



Spending time in the kitchen with some of the women in my village family and writing down some of the names of who is in the family. (D.Petterson)



Visiting Wouobo, another Kope village, with my village brother Robert. (D.Petterson)



Saying farewell to my new family as I left Ubuo. (D.Petterson)

Here in Ukarumpa, March is a month of meetings. This week (Mar 9-13) has been *Interact*, our linguistics conference. It was a week of sharing ideas about translation, literacy, language use and all sorts of matters that impact on our work. It was encouraging to hear from a variety of people about what they have found does and does not work in their area. I have plenty of things to think about for how they can be practically applied in my own situation.

One theme that has been discussed at *Interact* has been partnership and a common topic has been the benefit of SIL (the field organisation I serve with) being neutral territory when it comes to church denominations. SIL is a faith based Christian organisation, but is not tied to one denomination. This means that a wide range of local churches work with us and each other, when they would not have worked together otherwise.

A few times I have been asked why I am not working in a Lutheran area. I did look into translation work in these areas, but for various reasons they were not the right place for me. Rather, I have ended up in a United and Pentecostal area. Meanwhile, my Pentecostal friend works in a Lutheran area. I think this is a good example of how we can express the church as one body and the Bible as belonging to all Christians, when we each work outside our denomination, but within the family of God, to help people become disciples.



## River views

The next March meetings are our regional meetings (Mar 16-17). As I am now allocated to a project, I will join with others from Gulf, Western and Hela Province to share about our work so that we can encourage and pray for each other. Finally, there is our Branch conference (Mar 19-26), when all of my colleagues and I sit down to be spiritually challenged and encouraged, hear reports from regions and departments, and make administrative decisions.

I intend to return to Gulf Province from mid April until mid June. This is when the real language learning will start and when I will start working out what the translation side of things might look like with the Kope people. The community has set aside land to build me a house, and someone has said they will donate the posts. I do not expect this will be built by April, but that I will be living with my village family in one of their homes. This will be good for language learning, but personally challenging. I like a bit of space!

Another exciting event on the horizon is the dedication of the Jesus Film in Kope. Robbie and Debbie oversaw the translation and recording of this film and my role in joining the Kope is to keep the momentum of this work going with further translation. We are waiting for word from the media department when the film will be ready, but when it is, the community is planning a celebration to go with the first showing.

Thank you all for your prayers, letters, emails, and financial support. I am excited... and a little nervous... about all the things happening this year, but I am glad that I can share it with you. You really are a blessing to me.

*Blessi*

*Hanna*

PS My next newsletter will not be until July, after my next village trip.



## Who? Where? What?

Some definitions to help reduce confusion:

**Kope:** language group I will be working with, part of the Kiwaian language family. There are 1000-2000 Kope speakers, no one I have asked has had a more precise number.

**Ubuo:** the main village I will be living in.

**Kapuna and Kikori:** the two mission hospitals in Gulf Province run by Gulf Christian Services

**Baimuru:** the airstrip I use in dry season

**Purari and Teredau:** other airstrip options

**Ukarumpa:** our base in the Highlands and where I live when not in the village

**Lutheran Bible Translators Australia (LBTA):** One of my two sending agencies, part of the Lutheran Church Australia (LCA) Mission International department.

**Wycliffe Bible Translators Australia (WBTA):** My other sending agency, a non-denominational organisation committed to Bible translation.

**SIL:** the field organisation which LBTA and WBTA have sent me to work



When we arrived at Kapuna, there was a king tide. These two photos are taken in the same place. It pays to know where the bridges are!

## Prayer Points

**Praise:** for the good start to relationships on my recent trip to Gulf Province, for safe travel and good health.

**Kope people:** that God will be working in their lives to prepare them for the Jesus film and for our work together in translation.

**Language learning:** that I may be able to hear and reproduce Kope words and sentences, including the tone.

**Relationships:** for continued building of good and varied relationships in the village, language area and region.

**Meetings:** that we may be open to hear what God is saying to us through each other and that these meetings may lead to growth, not frustration.

For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father, who is over all and in all and living through all.

Eph 4:4-6



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