

## Link Letter No.1 December 2010

### Dear praying friends,

We have had several important visitors this year. During October we were pleased to welcome Henry Scriven to Rio Verde. Henry drove up to the Chaco with me from Asuncion in the new vehicle donated by the World Mission Group and friends at St Andrews, Oxford. In Rio Verde, Henry was able to visit the Enxet Bible translators, Juan, Martin and Asuncion. We gave Henry an update on the progress we are making on the translation and a demonstration of the Paratext 7 computer programme used by Bible translators around the world.

There was also time to visit the historic church in Makxawaya with Ed Brice, and for a trip round some of the Enxet communities in El Estribo with Chris Hawksbee. The translators are descended from some of the first Enxet Christians in the Chaco, reminding us that they too were "commended for their faith" along with their counterparts, mentioned in Hebrews 11:39.

The team was also delighted to welcome Peter and Pat Sanderson to the Chaco at the end of October. We met up in Makxawaya,

**Tim y readers - Tim and youngsters improving their reading in Enxet in the translation office, evening class**



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**Tim Curtis**  
CMS mission partner  
**Paraguayan Chaco**

where they attended the Sunday morning communion service, and met members of the congregation.

We visited Anita Severo, who is about 100 years old. She and some of the older folk remembered Peter who was brought up in the Chaco until he was seven. His father, the late Jack Sanderson, worked in the Anglican Mission in the 1930, 40s and early 50s. Peter was sent back to the UK in 1949. His late grandfather William Sanderson also worked as a missionary on various Anglican mission stations in the Chaco and was a colleague of the pioneer missionary Wilfrid Barbrooke Grubb.

The Sandersons have very kindly donated a number of fascinating indigenous artifacts to the church, including ceremonial headdresses with roseate spoonbill feathers, wooden pipes, brightly coloured necklaces, and small clay pots for carrying water and a wooden comb. There were also some very interesting Enxet (Lengua) grammar and phrase books for newly arrived missionaries, as well as a hardback edition of the book of *Genesis en Enxet* from the early 1900s, and a prayer book. The translators were absolutely fascinated to see these objects for the first time. We have created a display in a cupboard with a glass front, and the translation office has in effect become a small museum!

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## Young people reading God's word in their own language

We continue to be encouraged by the importance given to the public reading of the Scriptures in the Enxet churches, particularly in Makxawaya where new readers, and young readers of both sexes, are encouraged to come up to the front with their prepared Bible readings.

Nearer home in Rio Verde, Enxet speaking youngsters from Yatnata village, about 5km away often come and practice their reading with texts recently completed by the translators. An evening meal and DVD film is often included after the reading session. This may explain why they are so popular!

Many of the Enxet people spend much of the year away from their communities in the Mennonite Colonies. During September we were able to visit a small group of young people from Makxawaya who are working in the Mennonite town of Loma Plata. The urban setting can be somewhat disconcerting for newcomers, so we were there to reassure them of our thoughts and prayers.

## Rain at last

We finally had some long awaited heavy rain during the middle of October, with a total of about 110mm in the Rio Verde area. After the rain, the Chaco woodlands suddenly heave and pulsate with new life. Frogs, having slept in the dust of the earth for months, start up a frenzied chorus of chanting and croaking. The birds bath noisily in the puddles and spring flowers such as the Chaco crocus appear.

All of us give thanks for the rain and for the Lord's provision during the long drought. This year, as in other years, we greatly appreciated the water donated by St Andrew's College in Asunción and which we were able to bring up by vehicle.

## Points for prayer and praise

- Give thanks for the rain.
- Give thanks for the checking on Martin's draft of Jeremiah.
- Give thanks for ways to help more Enxet young people to improve their reading. This is a real challenge!

- Give thanks for safety during visits to the different Enxet speaking churches.
- Give thanks for my home ministry and visits to link churches in 2011.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year from Tim and the team.

*Tim*



**Top: Visita Enrique y equipo - Henry Scriven  
visiting the Enxet translation team in Paraguay in  
October  
Bottom: Easter Saturday**