



## You are invited!

Come and celebrate and give thanks to God with us. 5fish has been enabling people around the world to hear the story of Jesus in their own language for 10 years now. It is a wonderful tool equipping you to share the good news in over 6,700 languages and speech varieties.

Come and meet the team that created 5fish, hear from Rev. Kevin Murray, National Director of Australian Presbyterian World Mission, and hear about how 5fish has been used to help build God's kingdom around the world.

For further information contact  
02 9899 2211 or [au@globalrecordings.net](mailto:au@globalrecordings.net).

**Location:** Lilys Restaurant  
(Casablanca Room)  
5 Quinn Street,  
Seven Hills, NSW 2147

**When:** 16th July 2022  
**Time:** 6:00pm – 9:00pm  
**Cost:** \$75.00 per person  
(includes 3 course dinner)

**Bookings:**  
<https://www.trybooking.com/BXXVF>  
or use this QR code:



*Christine Platt*  
CEO



# Building Bridges in Columbia

Larry DeVilbiss, USA Centre Leader, returned to the Embena people 50 years after first meeting them...

In 1968 Larry was a young recordist who set his sights on the Embena people who lived at the headwaters of the Uva River, in the province of Choco in western Columbia, South America. There were no Christians amongst the tribe and only one man who spoke both Spanish and Embena. He was a shaman called Celestino.

A shaman is a witch doctor who tries to contact the spirit world while in a trance, or tries to use spirits to do magic, heal people or solve problems in the community. The Bible condemns spiritual and occult practices like these.

Larry travelled far and wide until he finally found Celestino. They sat down together, and Larry explained how important it was for him to talk to Celestino. He had come to record Bible stories in the Embena language, and he needed somebody who spoke both Spanish and Embena to translate. Would Celestino help him? Celestino knew the minute he saw Larry that he was supposed to work with him, in spite of the fact that he was a powerful shaman. From the very beginning they were connected and communicating on a spiritual level.

Celestino showed Larry his medicine sticks. Every one of the 11 sticks represented one of his primary helper spirits. Larry was very interested in each of the spirits. He asked about them. Celestino showed him the design that went with each spirit stick and sang the songs that went with each of those spirits when he needed to call them. Celestino's major, biggest, helper spirit was the bushmaster snake, the most feared and deadly force in

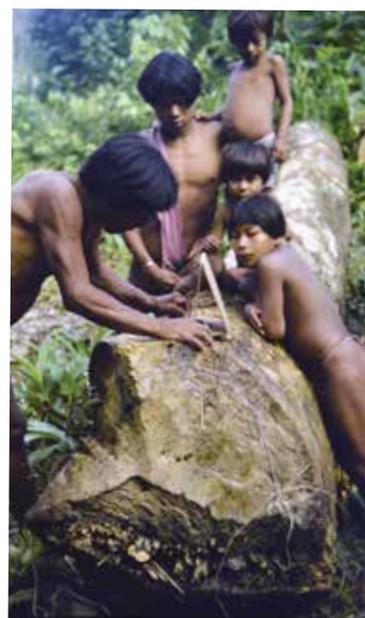


*Celestino making recordings*

that part of the jungle. His ability to heal people bitten by a bushmaster snake brought Celestino fame.

The Embena men spent daytime either fishing or hunting. At night they talked. One night Larry told Celestino the story about how his friend Elka, a shaman from among the Waiwai people of the Amazon Basin, had accepted God and rejected his spirits. That story was quite agitating to Celestino. He later understood that it was agitating the spirits that were in him. This was not good news for the spirits. Larry explained that he could bring a message of deliverance from bondage to those spirits.

Celestino agreed to start the process of translating the Bible stories. It took weeks. They talked almost every night discussing things about God. They discussed the world Celestino understood and inhabited. Celestino grew up in a Catholic boarding school. He had heard about this God and knew something about the outside world. He had questions about this God, this good God who loved the Embena and sent his own son to earth to walk with us. They talked



*Listening to the recordings on a Cardtalk*

about how it all fit together with the spirit world that he knew.

The Embena people knew about God. In fact, they had instances in their past when they believed that God appeared. He would come dressed in extremely formal old clothing. Once he appeared in a clearing by the headwaters, with a smell that was beautiful. It was unlike any smell they ever smelled before. They knew it had to be a good spirit.

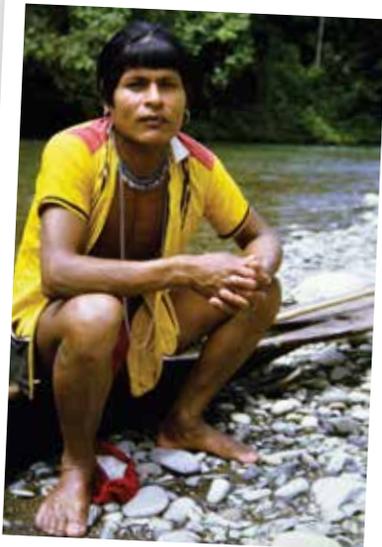
They translated and recorded the stories of creation, Noah and the flood, and the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus. They recorded a story about when Jesus is going to come back, the second coming, the story about the sickness of man, the rich man and Lazarus, and Paul and Silas. In all there was less than 25 minutes of recordings.

Larry left promising to return with the stories on records and cardboard record players. Everyone was going to be able to hear the stories Celestino translated, and even have a copy if they wanted.

When Celestino said goodbye to Larry, he told him that he would be welcome back anytime. Larry left Celestino with a lot to think about.

but now they followed Jesus. They agreed to pray and give it all to God. When they did, she was healed instantly.

Word got out that Celestino's wife had been healed of a bushmaster snakebite. Not healed by Shaman helper spirits, but by the power of God in the name of Jesus Christ. Just about everybody decided that they wanted to follow Jesus! This really changed things on the Uva river.



*Celestino's son Prisiliano*

It was over a year later when Larry returned to the Uva headwaters with heavy packs of records and the players to play them. The Embena could very clearly hear gospel stories in their language. This pleased Celestino because over the course of the year Celestino decided with his family to leave the business of witchcraft. In fact, he burned his sticks. When Larry got back with the records, Celestino told him that he had burned his sticks and no longer depended on his helper spirits.

As soon as Celestino decided to follow Jesus, he knew those sticks could not be in his home. Right after he renounced his helper spirits, his wife was bitten in the garden by a bushmaster snake. He knew this was not an ordinary encounter. It was revenge for leaving his helper spirit. She was bitten very badly. Celestino called the family together and they talked about what to do. They knew what had been done in the past and what the old way was,

Larry was thrilled to hear this news. He asked Celestino about the Embena that live on the other rivers. He wanted to take the records to those people, too. As Celestino was now free from his shaman duties he had time to accompany him to other rivers and leave gospel records with the people.

They went, mostly by canoe. They distributed the records and were always asked many questions. They saw people respond and saw their interest in the power of God, the person of God and the love of Jesus. Celestino told Larry that he heard about New Tribes missionaries teaching the Embena in Panama.



The missionaries had been there a while so the Panama Embena knew a lot about God. Could Larry go to Panama and ask them to send someone to come and teach them? Celestino offered to send his oldest son, Prisiliano, with him.

Six months later Larry and Prisiliano went to Panama. They met Blaudio, a converted Panama Embena shaman, who they invited to come and teach the Embena in Colombia. He came and ended up marrying one of Celestino's daughters. He spent the rest of his life travelling amongst the Embena of Colombia; preaching, teaching and discipling them.

Larry went back to the Embena in 2018, some 50 years later. Now, of course, Celestino is gone, but he reunited with Prisiliano. They were both so old they didn't recognize each other. But when Larry asked Prisiliano about their trip to Panama, he knew who he was.

Today many Embena people are believers. For nearly 50 years the Embena were on their own because a violent drug war moved into the jungle and forced Christians off their rivers and onto areas near the coast, where they now live. Today New Tribes Mission and Assembly of God churches work with the Embena.

This story continues to unfold. We are looking forward to going with the Embena people to yet another river where there is another dialect that still has not been translated after all these years. We hope to see this project happen very soon.

You can hear the recordings made with the Embena People here: [5fish.mobi/3224](https://5fish.mobi/3224).

# International Meetings At Last



## *GRN International and European Leaders*

The GRN International Leadership Team was very thankful to finally meet together again in Switzerland. We were all able to attend although travelling was considerably more challenging than it was BC (Before COVID).

Joseph Ndiba (Cameroon) was a new member of the team. Larry DeVilbiss (US) attended his second meeting. We welcomed Sam Buiox (new European director) and Bill Cornthwaite (US board chair) as visitors. The rest of the team were experienced members: Graydon Colville (International Director), Surend, Philippe Tapernoux (Switzerland) and Christine Platt (Australia).

We met online during the pandemic, but it was a very poor substitute for meeting together in person. It was good to get to know one another better, to talk through issues that really could not be addressed virtually, to look at our centres and bases and seek to understand the situation of each location, and to consider how God is working in and through GRN globally.

As we considered our people around the world it was very apparent that the last couple of years has been challenging. Some countries have faced very difficult times, some have been able to carry on almost normally. Our online distribution really increased for a time with ten times the amount of

recordings downloaded. The retirement date of our International Director, Graydon Colville, is fast approaching. This will be a significant change for GRN and the selection committee needs much wisdom. Please pray for God's provision of a new International Director to start in 2023.

The European Team meeting followed straight after, and it was a joy to meet our European colleagues in person. Again it was their first face to face meeting in 2 years. It is very encouraging to see the potential of our European team and a joy and wonderful answer to prayer to see our new European Director, Sam Buiox, in place.

## **About Global Recordings Network**

*We exist to give everyone the opportunity to hear the story of Jesus in their own heart language.*

*Previous Names - Gospel Recordings and Language Recordings*

## **Our Vision**

*That people might hear and understand God's Word in their heart language, especially those who are oral communicators and those who do not have Scriptures in a form they can access.*

## **Our Mission**

*In partnership with the church, to effectively communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ by means of culturally appropriate audio and*

*audio-visual materials in every language.*

## **Subscribe**

*'Every Language' (newsletter) and 'Rejoice' (monthly prayer letter) are free publications of GRN Australia. To subscribe - please call us or visit: [www.globalrecordings.net/ausubscribe](http://www.globalrecordings.net/ausubscribe)*

## **Represent GRN in your church**

*Help your church connect with GRN by representing us in your church. To find out more - call us or visit: [www.globalrecordings.net/aurep](http://www.globalrecordings.net/aurep)*

## **Use our Resources**

*We want to serve you, by providing Bible teaching and evangelistic resources for you to use in your*

*ministry. Contact us for more information, or download them for free today [www.globalrecordings.net](http://www.globalrecordings.net) [www.5fish.mobi](http://www.5fish.mobi) (mobile apps)*

## **GRN Australia Office**

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## **GRN New Zealand Treasurer**

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Wellington 5028  
Phone: 4 232 6222*

*Thanks to Wendy Bytheway for editing.*

If you feel led to give



## Sponsor the Year of 5fish

In 2022 we hope to inform and educate the Christian public about GRN's 5fish app.

5fish gives people the confidence to share the good news confidently in almost any language. As it says in Romans, "Faith comes by hearing the message" and we have God's word in more than 6,700 languages and speech varieties.

This is going to take time and cost money! We plan to make videos, visit churches, organisations and conferences, write letters, make phone calls, equip volunteers, produce promotional materials and run advertising campaigns.

Please pray with us that God would provide the funds needed to help us get the word out about 5fish throughout Australia and around the world.

A bequest can change lives

Like many mission organisations, we can benefit greatly when friends make a final gift that continues to bless the ministries they have generously supported in life. Once you have made proper and primary provision for family and friends this can be a very effective way to go on making a difference to the church on earth when you have joined the church in glory! If you would like to consider this option in your Will please contact the GRN office on 02 9899 2211 or we have some information on our website: [www.globalrecordings.net/au-bequests](http://www.globalrecordings.net/au-bequests).

### Donate online

[www.globalrecordings.net/audonate](http://www.globalrecordings.net/audonate)  
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**Mail** - fill out form below.

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Where most needed (GRN General Fund)

Year of 5fish

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