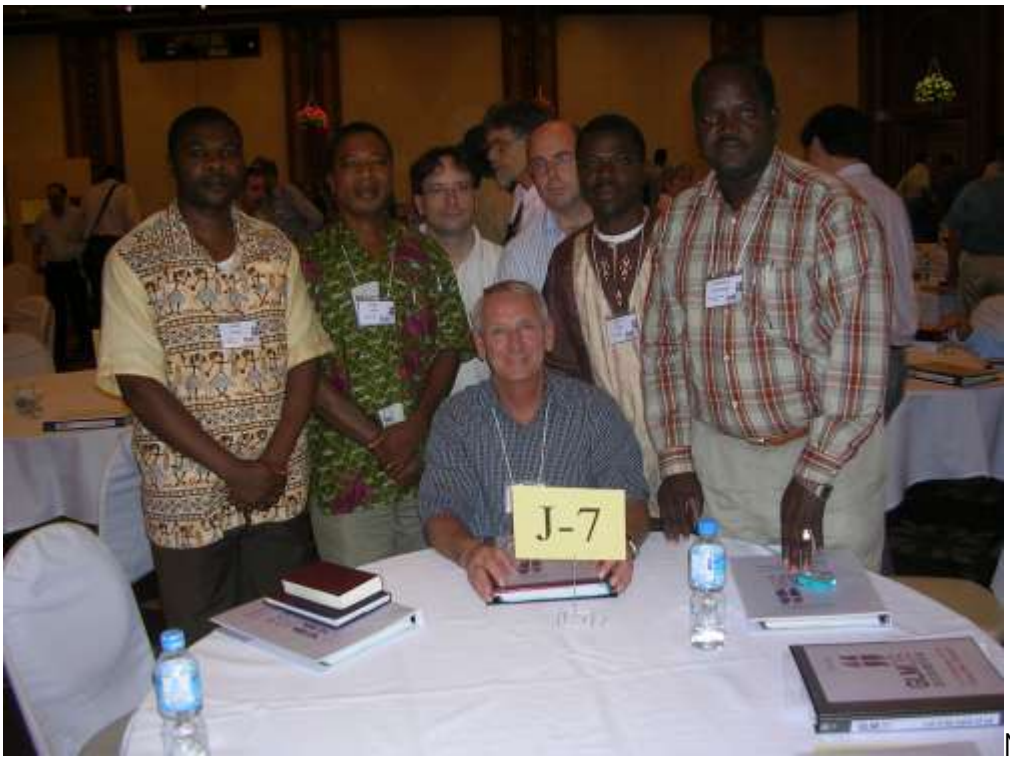
TRANSLATION LEADERS' CONFERENCE

Posted on November 24, 2006 by Eddie

Categories: Africa, Bible Translation



My ten days in Thailand at a Bible Translation Leaders' conference were very interesting. Part of my job was to lead a table discussion group in French, mainly for participants from Francophone Africa. These guys grew up speaking a local language (or three) were educated in French and then picked up English somewhere on the way. They are all able to listen to follow the conference presentations in English, but providing them the facility to discuss the issues and give feedback in French means that they get a lot more out of the conference. It is also a theological issue - we believe in linguistic diversity and the contribution that each language created by God has to make - and so we make it possible for speakers of as many languages as possible to contribute as easily as possible.

Here I am with the group that I was leading most of the time. The members come from France, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Togo, Benin and the US (2). All in all, a nice bunch of folks.


For a couple of the Africa sessions I led some of the meetings from the front, helping the Africa Area director work out how to make sure that the presentations and subsequent decisions were leading in the right direction. There were some good discussions on how to make expatriate organisations more friendly to partnership with African translators and churches. Good stuff. As always, much of the business of the conference took place at coffee break and over the lunch table. The day where I had a breakfast meeting and had to help plan the afternoon discussions

over lunch as well has having meetings at coffee and tea break was the longest. *I don't like breakfast meetings!*



I ended up sharing a room with my friend Tim from Mali. Tim was on his way home for furlough to the US and had this rather impressive suit made for him by a tailor close to the hotel where we were meeting. It only took the tailor two days to run up the suit and a new shirt. Tim had to celebrate by wearing it during the next day's meetings. I've never seen him look smart before - very impressive.



One of the good things about these conferences is bumping into old friends (and making new ones). I first met Bob Creson about twenty years ago when we first went to Cameroon. These days he is the president of Wycliffe Bible Translators in the US and also a blogger (though I wish he would blog more often because his stuff is always excellent). I see he's just put up a new post today!

We also got to do some touristy stuff on our day off including white water rafting and a ride on an elephant. We capsized the raft, but fortunately the elephant stayed upright. I also visited a Thai temple on my first day, but I can't seem to get the pictures to load up - perhaps they are as jetlagged as I was at the time.



