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M&M

FLIGHTRECORDER



Newsletter from  
Mathias & Mandy Glass

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Joyful and traditional:  
Telefomin welcomes former missionaries and celebrates 70 years of the Baptist Church

## DEAR FRIENDS

**Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Hebrew 12:1-2a**

Two days full of joy and singing, sharing of memories and experiences from about 50 years ago, catching up with old and new friends, praising and worshipping God! At the end of June, Telefomin and the Min people celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the Baptist work in the Min tribe of PNG.

Guests of honour were Lindsay and Meryl Smith, who lived amongst the Min people from 1964 to 1979. Now, 40 years later, God provided the strength and opportunity to come back to where they spent "the best 15 years of their life" as they said at one point. Mandy attended the celebrations, getting to know the Smiths, listening to the anecdotes of yesterday. What a privilege!

As part of the celebrations, Lindsay presented the Min people with 100 copies of his Tok Pisin book "Wokabaut Long Rot Wantaim God Long Telefomin: God i givim laip long husat i bilip." "Every Step of the Way: Strengthened and Led by God's Mighty Hand." [The books are available at <https://www.goodreads.com>]

Encounters with pioneer missionaries like the Smiths are so valuable, very special and impactful, but also becoming more and more rare. They encourage us, and spur us on to faithfully continue one's own calling and ministry to build God's kingdom and to win people for eternity, through the clear message of God's love for us as human beings, his

suffering and death on the cross, but also being a witness in practical ways such as helping and training people to pursue a better life. Lindsay and Meryl did this by constructing new runways, preaching the Gospel and setting up Bible schools, teaching all sorts of craftsmanship skills and hygiene, listening to and praying with people, giving Godly guidance in tribal or marriage conflicts to name a few.

Thank you for inspiring us through your prayers, donations and personal encouragement! In return, let this newsletter encourage you to face the challenges of your everyday life with faithfulness and perseverance, and to master them with God's help.

*Lukim yu, Mathias & Mandy*



## HOW WAS YOUR TRIP TO PAPUA NEW GUINEA?

**A question which can't be answered in a couple of sentences...**

"How was it in PNG?" was the question my teacher colleagues greeted me with after my holiday. To just answer with "Nice!" is only partially true. Therefore, my second answer was "How much time do you give me?" as I couldn't squeeze my answer in one sentence.

PNG is different. Not just the pot-holes, which are nearly as big as the Grand Canyon; also the shopping, which is an overwhelming experience at the different markets; the electricity, which is as unreliable as our weather forecast. The people are friendly and seem happy, they were happy to greet us, to shake hands and even hug us strangers. They seem happy and content, even though they have much less than we do.

Back in Germany: on the first day of school after the holidays, everyone pulls a face because they have to go back to school; no gratitude at all for the happy holidays.

Back to PNG again. There are other challenges: the perspective between mine and yours blurs in this culture, the frustration limit is very low for many, mixed with drugs and alcohol trouble is inevitable. The missionaries, and not just they, live on a fenced plot because there is no other way to have some security.

The land is green, has a wonderful flora and fauna, great produce, beautiful birds. It was absolutely exciting to get to experience parts of the country and the people up close and also get some first-hand insights of the work MAF is doing, as well as meeting other missionaries and getting some glimpses of their work. MAF's air service is so important, because how else do people get out and back into their remote villages; how do fresh fruit and vegetables travel to sustain missionaries on outstations where

things barely grow; how can sick people get to the hospital; how do diesel, frozen chicken or even Maggi noodles, medical or school supplies etc. travel to the people living in villages that can otherwise only be reached on foot or by canoe?

The work MAF does is also very challenging; flexibility is very important, because the pilot is dependent on the weather, flying by sight. So often plans have to be readjusted, reorganised. It is also challenging because the locals sometimes have a different working attitude compared with us hard-working and efficient, precise and punctual Germans. It is also difficult that fewer missionary families come with a long term perspective, commit only for one term or so, which creates constant changes; new team members have to be constantly trained. Nevertheless, people work together to get the planes in the air to be a blessing to the remote communities, and for this you need many people with different skills.

Myself being a teacher and able to visit a small bush school was a special experience. In Germany we talk about digitisation, in PNG teachers and students would be happy to have tables, chairs and books.



I am grateful for what I saw during our short visit in PNG, what I've experienced and got to see.

An Australian missionary told me to thank my congregation for supporting Mathias and Mandy because their work is so important; Mandy holds a lot together and is an ace in organising, Mathias is so important as a pilot and trainer. I had the privilege to see that!

With a thankful heart I flew home. For one thing, because I was allowed to experience so much including a flight on a MAF plane! On the other hand, to realise how privileged we are as these missionaries give up a lot of comfort and freedom, out of love and for the benefit of the people of PNG.



# A SCHOOL IN THE PLANE

## Challenges for good education in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea



A school in the plane, well, not the school as such, but what you need in a school to teach: exercise books, glue, erasers, pencils, pens and crayons, games, modelling clay, educational posters, smaller sports equipment and even first aid kits are just a few of the items that, packed in cardboard boxes, our planes currently fly to many regions in the Highlands. Several flights were needed to transport parcels for about 10 schools in the catchment area of the airstrip of Kol. This means that the boxes weighing up to 25 kg often had to be carried several kilometres from the airstrip to the school. We wonder, whether in Germany, UK, Canada or Australia, the students would happily and voluntarily help to carry their teaching materials several miles to school?

Wake Goi, the Member of Parliament for the Jimi district, subsidises charter flights to Kol and three other airstrips in his district. What a great investment in the future generation of his government district!

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# INFLIGHT CHANGE OF PLANS

## Challenges for people in remote communities to get timely medical assistance

*The Swiss pilot couple, Joël and Andrea Rominger, spent a week with us at Wewak for Joël to observe flying operations in the Sepik Provinces. Here, Andrea shares her experience of her flight back to Mt Hagen:*

I thought we would be flying back from Wewak smoothly with only one landing at Maramuni only. But ...

In flight, pilot Mathias Glass received a message about two medevac patients he would have to pick up on the way. Fuel was being calculated and Mathias decided that it was possible to do the medevac. Landing in Maramuni, we picked up one sick child and his father. Instead of continuing to Mt Hagen, we were now heading to Kol where two sick women needed to be medevac'd. The story of one of them left me speechless: her husband told me, that she gave birth to their baby two weeks... wait, three weeks ago. Her placenta hadn't come out yet and that is why she can barely walk. I thought I heard wrongly! This woman is definitely a strong person! We took her on board and with the other patient and their caregivers, all seats were occupied. And off we went with that full load to Mt Hagen.

Arriving at Mt Hagen, our MAF staff

got a trolley to get her to the gate.

Our ground staff already called for an ambulance to take the patients to the hospital; however, it was busy somewhere in Mt Hagen. I was shivering and getting stressed when I realised there was nothing available to take her to the hospital, considering her circumstances. We had to get her to the hospital as soon as possible! She shouldn't even have had to wait for three long weeks! My husband, Joël, got permission to take one of our MAF vehicles and drove her, her husband and the baby, as well as a family friend to Kudjip Hospital. In a desperate situation like this one, we didn't want to lose time!

The doctor at Kudjip confirmed that every minute counted for this woman. Considering the time of birth and the retained placenta this was life-threatening for her.

A few days later, we visited the woman at the hospital. The doctors had done surgery on her. Actually, she did not have a retained placenta; however, her uterus was full of pus. So when the surgeons opened her womb, they realised what was happening and removed what pus they were could without destroying her uterus. She did look better, although, she was still only able to walk with assistance. We hope she will continue to recover well.



# PRECIOUS FREIGHT IN THE CARGO POD OF THE CESSNA CARAVAN

## Selling Bibles out of the plane

"It was a beautiful day in north-western Papua New Guinea. We flew along the Coastal Ranges approaching the steepest airstrip of the region, Sibilanga. This old missionary station from the Christian Brethren Church (CBC) welcomed us with a lot of people. Most of them were waiting for our cargo: malaria treatment medication and vaccines.

Other people were waiting for some different precious cargo in the belly of our Cessna Caravan: I was asked whether we have some Bibles on board for sale. Happily surprised by the request I grabbed the "Bible Box" and started selling. In the box were reading glasses, solar powered audio-Bibles and English Bibles, concordances and Bible commentaries. But what the local people wanted the most was the Bible in Tok Pisin, the Buk Baibel. It was amazing to see how the Sibilanga people hunger for the Word of God and love to possess a Bible of their own."

Joël Rominger, a pilot from Switzerland, spent a week with Mathias at Wewak observing flying operations in the two Sepik Provinces. He had to refill the Bible Box several times!



### Thank God with us

- ▶ for a beautiful vacation time for Angelika (Mathias' sister) and Meike - and us
- ▶ for 70 years of Baptist Church ministries in the Telefomin region
- ▶ for the continued hunger for God's Word among people in the remote communities

### Pray with us

- ▶ for safety and perseverance during the training flights in the coming months
- ▶ for a refreshing and encouraging retreat with our Liebenzeller friends; especially for Brigitte processing the loss of her dear husband
- ▶ for our home assignment preparations

## WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE SECOND HALF OF 2019?

### Australia

Oases are places to refuel and restore before the journey continues. We expect a similar effect in early August in Cairns, when we meet for a retreat with our German friends of the Liebenzeller Mission who also serve in PNG. Processing the loss of our dear friend Gerhard, sharing experiences and challenges of life



and work in PNG, spiritual rejuvenation, and recreation are planned and intended to strengthen us

for the rest of 2019. Until then, Mathias will be heavily involved in the training process of several pilots on the Cessna Caravan.

### Germany

In about five months Christmas fragrances will be travelling through Germany. We will be too!

From about mid-December, we plan to be in Germany, visiting family, friends, supporting church groups and sharing about our work with MAF in PNG. Please let us know as soon as possible, if you are interested in us coming and visiting your fellowship group, youth or senior group etc., your

school or flight club, so that we can plan our tour through Germany in detail. However, we only have dates available in January and February 2020.

Also, we are only as flexible and mobile if we have a winter-proof car. If you can help us with this in any way, please let us know as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance!

And in March? We will fly back to PNG to, God willing, serve for another four year term here with MAF.



## STAY CONNECTED

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