

April 2024

# M&M

# FLIGHTRECORDER



Newsletter from  
Mathias & Mandy Glass

No 63



### BIBLE BOX

Comic Bibles have recently been added to the range to appeal to the younger generation.

## DEAR FRIENDS,

**“I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever!  
And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”**

Revelation 1:18

The above Bible verse is the verse chosen by the Moravian church in Herrnhut watchword for this year’s Easter Sunday. Jesus died for our guilt and imperfection on the cross. And then he surprises the world of that time and all of us today: he came back to life, rose from the dead so that we can live forever - with him today and in eternity.

While companies and institutions in Germany and other Western countries presumably prepared their Easter greetings with colourful eggs and Easter bunnies in the media, we were amazed that Easter greetings on social media in this country from grocery shops, clothing shops and even the local aviation authority contained the Christian Easter message and

communicated Jesus’ death and his hope of resurrection graphically and in writing.

What do we communicate in our everyday lives? Where do we become bearers of hope in our environment? Mathias and other pilots carrying (flying...) the Bible box into the bush; Mandy carrying oven-warm sourdough bread and pickled curried courgettes as a welcome gift to new neighbours; Siobhain bringing us pizza in Telefomin when Mandy was sick and Mathias was flying all day. Many of you pray for us, donate to our ministry.

Hope has so many faces and expressions!

MAF’s vision is to bring help, hope and healing in the name of Jesus. We hope that the stories of our new Flight

Recorder will also bring you hope and inspiration to look in your everyday life where you can do good to others and where you can spread eternal hope.

Thank you very much for all your support!

Sunny greetings from PNG.

*Laikim yupela!*  
*Mandy & Mathias*





## Aviation fuel - a scarce and expensive resource!

Do you remember our report in last September's Flight Recorder, "We've never run out of fuel?"

**HERE** you can read it again...

In February, the situation became tight here in PNG as the only importer of aviation fuel turned off the tap. This fuel crisis has far-reaching effects, especially on remote regions of the country, as we as MAF have had to restrict and prioritise high impact flights in order to use our fuel supply wisely and for as long as possible.



The cost of fuel has risen sharply. MAF has had to consider expensive in-house imports from New Zealand to maintain operations. This has led to higher costs for flights, which has a negative impact on isolated communities. People in remote areas can no longer afford to fly, leading to financial losses and problems with healthcare and education.

At larger airports such as Mt Hagen, Goroka or Wewak, fuel can now again be purchased from tanker lorries again. The challenge for MAF is to supply our remote bases with fuel in drums in order to maintain flights to remote regions. There's just no drum aviation fuel available. To just pump it into drums, seal them and ship them is just not allowed...

"For us people in the remote areas, MAF is our lifeline. I thank MAF from the bottom of my heart for the kindness to deliver the rations for my teaching staff today. No other airline was willing to provide such a service during the fuel crisis, only MAF answered our call for help," said the headmaster of the Oksapmin Secondary School at Tekin.

## WHAT IT MEANS WHEN THE BIBLE BOX LANDS

**Many people in PNG live in remote areas where even essentials can be hard to come by. The biggest joy for many, however, is when the MAF pilots open up the Bible Box.**

*Story by Tajs Jespersen, one of Mandy's colleagues in the Communication Department*

In MAF, each pilot brings a Bible Box with them, when visiting remote PNG communities, giving the people there a unique opportunity to acquire Bibles at an affordable price. One such community is Guavi in Western Province. Our two pilots, Renee Brewer and Corné Noordhoek, brought the Bible Box.

"We don't fly into Guavi often, so they were excited we had a Bible Box. One elderly man ran back to his house to get money and was happy to buy an audio Bible," said Renee.

There is a variety of literature in the Bible Box. Bibles in different languages, audio Bibles and even comic Bibles to cater for the younger generation as well.

Mathias was flying to Mengau and was overwhelmed by the curiosity from the locals. The comic Bibles especially drew interest.

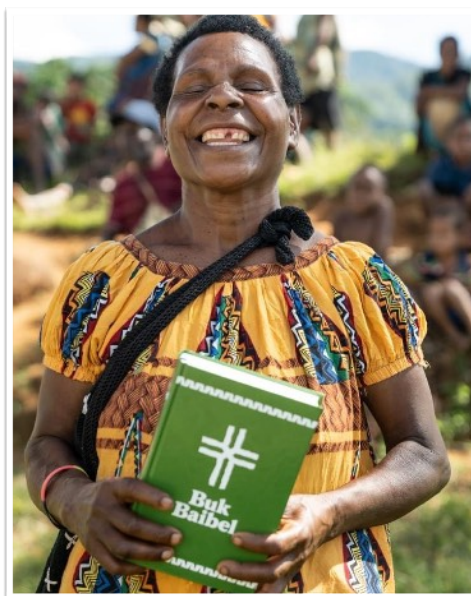
"It's incredible, it's amazing. There are so many people and they come close to you to see what is in the box," said Mathias. "They always ask, bring more, bring more, we need more of these things."

To the pilots it becomes clear that there is a huge demand in the remote places for Bibles.

That is what pilot Jan Ivar Andresen experienced when he flew to Wetap in West Sepik Province.

"We sold eleven Bibles in Wetap. Ten smaller Tok Pisin Bibles and one large one," said Jan Ivar.

While the demand is big, it also highlights other challenges for the remote population of PNG. Pilot Brandon Van Saane had managed to bring some helpful items to go along



the Bible Box, when he was in Birem, Western Province.

"The people were very excited to see the Bible Box and I sold one Pidgin Bible and a few pairs of reading glasses," said Brandon.

The reading glasses are sold for five Kina, and can open up a new world especially for the older generation.





# AN UNEXPECTED SHORTCUT - AND AN UNEXPECTED REUNION

## When unexpected detours lead to special opportunities

We were confronted with unfavourable weather on the way to Telefomin. Thick rain clouds and poor visibility made the planned route impassable. The weather report from the Telefomin MAF station also confirmed this: No visibility of the mountains, everything covered in clouds and rain in the valley.

Mathias skilfully navigated the plane through the cloud gaps back into the neighbouring valley and landed safely in Eliptamin. It was lunchtime when we arrived and only a few people were at the airfield

While we waited in Eliptamin, the rain started to fall there too. Would we be forced to spend the night here?

At some point we received a message from Telefomin: the aerodrome circuit was open again, the rain had subsided.

To our surprise, another passenger turned up, a teacher called Justin. He wanted to walk the arduous route to Telefomin on the same day and suddenly the MAF aircraft arrived!

"I flew from Eliptamin to Telefomin in less than 10 minutes. It takes several hours to get here on foot and I thank MAF for getting me here safely. I decided to come for the weekend and at the same time as we closed school, the plane arrived. It was a good thing," he said after landing in Telefomin.

Justin is a graduate of Oksapmin High School in Tekin and later completed his teaching degree at Goroka University. His decision to become a teacher was influenced by his own school days and his teacher Glenda Giles.

For us, meeting Justin was one of those unexpected moments when the past meets the present. Justin's eyes lit



up when he introduced himself to us and mentioned the 2014 graduation ceremony in Tekin, where we were guests of honour and Mathias presented him with his certificate.

MAF plays a big role in supporting the Oksapmin High School in Tekin, since its foundation in 2007 until today, MAF flies teaching materials and food supplies for the boarding students as well as teaching staff and students to this remote village in the middle of the mountains.

People like Justin could not be the people and professionals they are if MAF did not provide flight services to rural communities! Meeting people who are pursuing their dreams, learning from their teachers and mentors, and then teaching and inspiring the next generation is very encouraging for us.

## MOVING AROUND QUITE A BIT

### Supporting the remote Telefomin base

We like to think of Germany and imagine how nature awakens again after hibernation during winter and now, spring is there and new life begins. In PNG there are no seasons, the country is too close to the equator for that. Over Christmas, it is summer in the southern hemisphere and traditionally the rainy season here in PNG.

This year, we started the year with a change of location and spent several weeks in February and March at MAF's remote outstation in Telefomin. We supported a pilot and his wife, who are also good friends of ours, who have been stationed there alone since December. The second pilot family unfortunately had to leave MAF for family reasons.

Mathias enjoyed meeting up with old local friends in a familiar bush airstrips and helping out with the scheduled flight service.

Mandy was busy with camera and microphone, interviewed and photographed many passengers and recorded special stories in writing.

As MAF's flight operations cannot be

managed with just one pilot in Telefomin, further trips are planned for us in Telefomin this year.

But in April, Mandy will fly to the Netherlands to take part in a MAF conference for communication, marketing and fundraising, followed by a short visit at her parents place.

Mathias will stay back in PNG. As deputy training manager, he currently has additional responsibility for pilot training as well as the flight simulator, including all the paperwork.



### Thank God with us

- ▶ for the gift of being able to celebrate Easter: God loved the world so much that he had his Son nailed to the cross for our sins. And through his resurrection we can have eternal life. Hallelujah!
- ▶ for the great interest in God's Word in the remote communities
- ▶ for new neighbours - the van der Merwe family from New Zealand.

### Please pray with us

- ▶ for new colleagues to support Mandy as Communication Officer in the office.
- ▶ for a stable fuel supply so that MAF can continue to fly planes and help the people in the remote communities who otherwise would be cut off.
- ▶ for Mathias. He is expecting training flights with younger pilots. Please pray that the new pilots will learn and absorb things well so that they can fly safely in PNG and for Mathias that he can pass on his knowledge in a good way.
- ▶ for Mandy's trip to the conference in the Netherlands.
- ▶ for health. Mandy is often ill with flu-like infections which take very long to get over with.

# SNIPPETS FROM THE OFFICE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

Everyday challenges, not only for us, but also nationwide in PNG



In February and March we spent 10 days in Telefomin. Mandy often set up her **open-air office** on the veranda with a view of the Telefomin airstrip to see all aircraft take off and land.

MAF's work at Telefomin offers many options for interviews: Health workers and pastors often fly with MAF. In March, she documented her friend Siobhain's workshop on the menstrual cycle for 12th graders at the secondary school.



This is Ashley, a student from Canada. She was **in PNG for 6 months** and helped out in Mandy's team. She wanted to get to know MAF and put her journalism and marketing skills into practice. It was really enriching, especially her posts on Instagram and Facebook. If you know anyone who would like to do a similar assignment, get in touch!

**HERE** you can read about Ashley's short term mission experience.



This is Tajs, who has also been a colleague of Mandy's for a year. However, he and his wife moved back to Denmark in March because they are expecting a baby. It's great to **work as a team** and learn from each other!

Now Mandy is alone again for the time being. However, the plan is to hire a local person. The job advertisement is in progress and a large flood of applicants is expected.



On Palm Sunday we were woken up by a **magnitude 6.9 earthquake** in Telefomin. The epicentre was in the Sepik plain. In Germany, houses would collapse in rows. The pile construction in PNG protects many houses. Nevertheless, there were a few deaths and injuries. There were landslides in the highlands. The ground is soaked from all the rain and the tremors caused slopes to slide and houses to collapse.



Mandy was out of the house filming. Meanwhile, there was an **explosion** in the house: spare camera batteries exploded in the charging station! The living room was covered in black dust, melted plastic was hanging in the curtains and the remains of the batteries were 3 metres away from the charger. It could have ended very differently! We are grateful that neither the house was burnt down nor was anyone hit by the projectiles...



The **rainy season** is exceptionally heavy this year. Airfields are soggy, sometimes flooded. If the water stands for a long time, the grass rots and the ground becomes unstable. After the flood, the grass roots no longer hold the soil together and every further rain washes away soil. Erosion damage is the result.

It takes weeks before new grass grows and the airfield can be reopened.

## STAY CONNECTED

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