

PERSONAL NEWS

Having stated at the beginning of last month’s News that we were back in PNG (which we were), we start this one by saying we’re back in the UK again! This visit was planned well in advance, where Michael’s last one to help Nicki back after her surgery, obviously wasn’t.

Two things to announce:

Firstly, Nicki’s recovery has been very straightforward and she is completely back to her normal self.

Secondly, our youngest grandchild, our second granddaughter, Ithaka Grace, is lovely! Ithaka is named after the Greek island where Richard & Bekah once spent a holiday and thought the name would be nice for a daughter. Several years later that thought has become reality.

This visit is only a brief one, we leave again on September 20th and arrive back in PNG on Friday 22nd. We don’t have any further trips planned until next year, so are expecting that we’ll both be in the same place for a while!

- Give thanks with us, and with Richard & Bekah, for Ithaka’s safe arrival.
- Give thanks as well for Nicki’s very straightforward recovery from her gall bladder surgery.

MAF NEWS

Michael’s very busy period of training and checking was completed, though not without some major challenges. The three-day Crew Resource Management course went well and benefited from input from two Nepalese pilots who are visiting for a couple of weeks to see how MAF trains pilots and operates Twin Otter aircraft.



While training Richie Axon as a Supervisory Pilot (a pilot who can check other pilots over routes and into airstrips they’ve not been to before) in Telefomin, there was a spectacular rainbow late one afternoon.



Sadly, not all medical evacuations have happy endings. Also while Michael was in Telefomin, Paul Woodington, a C208 pilot based in Wewak, brought in this young man from Yatoam. He was very weak and died a few days later.

The PNG aviation regulator, CASA PNG, has made some major changes in the way flight tests are conducted. In the longer term we can plan the changes into the way we do our training. In the shorter term they are causing us some problems as the changes will result in delays to our training schedule.

- Please pray that we’ll find ways to incorporate the changes into our training plans.

Almost immediately after getting back to PNG we will go to Telefomin again for a week so that Michael can help fly the Twin Otter based there.

- Please pray that we’ll have enough time to get over any jetlag and get ourselves organised before we go.

We are delighted that our new Country Director (previously called Programme Manager) and his wife, Todd & Connie Lou Aebischer, are due to arrive in the second half of this month. Everybody is very pleased that they have taken on leadership of the PNG programme, a role that has been vacant for over 15 months.



*Todd & Connie
Lou*

Todd has flown with the Nazarene Mission in Africa, and worked with them until recently in the Philippines, during which time he's visited PNG on a couple of occasions. In fact, Michael flew him to Dusingi during one visit a few years ago.

Also arriving are VP and Nirmala Philip from India. Both are doctors and with great experience in medical administration and management. VP will be involved in strategic development of the MAF PNG programme.

Two new pilots and families, Tim & Laura Neufeld from Canada, and Glenys and Jonny Watson from New Zealand, will also arrive this month.

- Please pray for these folk as they settle in to PNG, and as Nicki and others help with their orientation and language learning.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2018

We've had invitations to visit some churches during March to June next year as we look towards leaving PNG at the end of 2018 or early 2019. We would very much appreciate the opportunity to visit all the churches and individuals who have supported us for so long. If you would like us to visit, please let us know soon so that we can begin to put a timetable together.

Some ideas:

Would you like us to come on a Sunday and talk to the whole church?

Or would an evening meeting, maybe mid-week, work better?

What would you like us to talk about?

- Maybe a review of the last 24+ years with MAF in PNG?
- Or, maybe some of the things we've learnt over the years working cross-culturally?
- Or do you have some other ideas?
- Please pray that as we begin to hand over our responsibilities to other people the transition will go well.
- Please pray that the Lord will show us what comes next. From experience that is unlikely to be 18 months ahead of when we really need to know! Nonetheless, please pray that we will begin to see what lies ahead as the Lord starts to move all the pieces of the jigsaw into place.

With thanks for your prayers

Michael *Nicki*