



Hans and Melissa Cools in Mareeba



Happy New Year. Here is a little update from us all at the Flight Training Centre (FTC) in Mareeba. We have had a wonderful Christmas break, and everything has gone back to normal, or at least to the new normal. We would first and foremost like to extend God's blessings to you for 2019 and show our gratitude for your support.



It has been another 3 months and life is busy on this side of the world. Whether it is Melissa and the children at home or me at work at the FTC. At the end of last year we celebrated our beautiful Ameiah's 3rd birthday. We are so thankful for how many of you sent your well wishes to her for her birthday. It is so amazing to have such great support, even when we are so many miles away from home. Fast forward to the end of January, Olivia started Prep (which is the first grade of primary school here in Australia). She's got a lovely teacher and is enjoying it very much. Melissa has been able to take a break from her degree over the Christmas semester, which has been a great blessing to just be able to enjoy each others company over the Christmas holidays. In the Beginning of January, we also celebrated Hans' birthday.



WE WILL BE COMING ON FURLOUGH AT THE END OF THIS YEAR.

If you or your church would be interested in hosting us to talk about what MAF is doing in Mareeba and world wide, please get in touch with us. We would love to come and reconnect with you while we are back in Europe. We will be in the UK from early October for a family wedding, and staying until Christmas. We will also be visiting Belgium in that time.

At the end of 2018, right before the Christmas break, Hans was able to renew his Instrument Rating. The hope was that he would then be able to use this to visit one of the very remote towns to the north (Coen), which he visited during the Safari last year. He made connections and started building relationships with the local church in this town.

Two weekends ago Hans was able to take 3 of the flight training students out to Coen, where they were able to encourage the pastors there who have been working up there by themselves for over 15 years. The church in Coen has slimmed down a lot in recent years, and exists out of a handful older indigenous people, and some children. Over the course of the weekend they were able to share fellowship and testimonies and prayed for one another.

On the Sunday morning they were able to lead the church service, which allowed the students and Hans to step into ministry roles they wouldn't usually fill. After the service they shared a lunch with the church. While the students hung out with the kids, Hans was able to connect to some of the elders in the community who come to church.



Hans has been tasked with setting up the new local outreaches around the Far North Queensland area that the Flight Training Centre will be participating in.

Our hope is to encourage and connect with these very remote communities, and are planning about 3 trips like this a year. We are currently working on visiting Cooktown, a slightly bigger town about 3 hours drive to the north of Mareeba.

We have some contacts with a Christian college, where we will be able to share what MAF does and why the students are training to be pilots. We might get the opportunity to go and visit and help out in one of the smaller local indigenous communities that is close to Cooktown on the Saturday, and will help out at the church in Cooktown as much as possible.

We are really happy to be able to include these kind of trips into the flight training, as at the end of the day we are not just here to train them as pilots, but also to train them to reach out in whatever capacity God has placed talents in them.

We are also looking at going back to Georgetown where we visited last year, in the second half of the year.



SOME VERY EXCITING NEW THINGS FOR THE FLIGHT TRAINING CENTRE:

We have recently been approved as a Papua New Guinea flight training school. This means that we will be able to train PNG nationals in Mareeba towards their PNG pilot's license. We are now accepting PNG nationals to come train with us, and at the end of their training they will get a bit of experience flying in their own country before they are released into the local aviation industry there. We will be the only flight training school to be able to train towards PNG licences. We are hoping to have the first intake of 4 students starting in May.

Prayer Request:

1. Please pray for the pastors in Coen, they are pretty burned out and they are looking at retirement.
2. Please pray that they will find a suitable church group or couple to buy the church building from them (as they own it, and would need to sell it to move on)
3. Please pray for our upcoming trip at the end of March to Cooktown, that we will be able to serve the local community in the way that is best needed.
4. Please pray for the new PNG flying school starting here in Mareeba, that we will be able to find the best suited candidates for the first intake.

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