



"4 Golf" departing Kajjansi, Uganda for a test flight after installing a new engine.

HAPPY EASTER FROM THE LINKLETTERS

Since Christmas, someone seems to have pressed the fast forward button and Geoff claims that we are suddenly approaching Easter before he has finished his Christmas dinner.

The biggest event which has happened for everyone in Uganda in this time was the re-opening of schools for in person learning after two years of lockdown, one of the world's longest school closures. As few of the local kids have been able to do very much in the way of distance learning this has had a huge impact on everyone. Most of the other COVID restrictions have gone too. In reality the Omicron variant of the virus has probably gone through a large portion of the population without too much affect, many people reporting having "flu" around Christmas time. The economy is starting to pick up again but many people in very low paid jobs are still struggling to find work, resulting in a new exodus of people looking for work in places such as Dubai.

Since we last gave an update as to what we have been up to as a family, Mim is continuing to develop her creative talents, experimenting with all kinds of different technologies. At one end of the scale she has been practicing using a three D printer to make small plastic figures. At the other extreme she has been experimenting with trying to forge some bits of steel. We cobbled together a little forge using charcoal and an improvised blower. The results took a lot of patience but she has potential as a black smith. At school she is enjoying her history lessons and English. Library and English staff organised a day for people to go dressed as a book character. Mim decided she was going as some obscure evil druid from a King Arthur story. Celia went as Eleanor of Aquitaine and won a prize in the staff category.

Celia continues to volunteer at school. She started of the year doing some English language coaching for several students who don't speak it at home. However following the loss of one of the English department staff she has graduated to having to teach an English Language and an English literature class. The first time she has done it for ??? years. No stress there then. She is managing to keep one lesson ahead of the kids.



Left: Blacksmith in the making

Right: School Book Day
An evil druid!



At home we have been suffering from frustration over some issues with our house with damp and crumbling bricks. The repairs are significant and seem impractical while we are actually living in the place. So we have all agreed that we are going to move house. Knowing what Ugandan houses are like, this has a significant probability that we are exchanging a series of problems we know for an equal set of problems that we don't know. The house we are moving to has significant issues with the plumbing, but apparently they will all be fixed by the time we move in! Has anyone heard that one before? Mim is excited about the move, Celia is frantically packing and Geoff is looking aghast at the amount of junk we seem to have collected in the time we have lived here. Watch this space for some pictures of our new home.

Aside from moving house, as we approach Easter we think about the violence and suffering we see in so many countries around us: The horror in Ukraine, fighting in South Sudan, militia's in Eastern Congo, kidnappings in Burkina Faso, killings in Sudan, conflict in C.A.R. human rights abuses in Northern Mozambique, suffering in Yemen, suffering in Tigray: And we are thankful for the hope that Easter brings us.

Easter Blessings,

Love

Geoff, Celia & Mim



School Staff on Book Day



Sleeping in the aircraft?

A New MAF Programme in Guinea

Following three years of research, MAF is setting up its latest operation in Guinea, West Africa. The presence of a local air service will greatly enhance development and support the work of aid agencies and Christian ministry in the country.

Guinea is ranked 178 out of 189 countries on the UN's Human Development Index, life expectancy is 61 years of age and one in every 20 children will not survive their first birthday. According to the World Health Organisation, there is barely one doctor for every 1,000 people.

A third of the population does not have access to clean water and according to the World Food Programme, 55% of the population live below the bread line. Nearly 100,000 children under five suffer from severe malnutrition and nationally, a quarter of the population does not have enough food to eat. 70% of the population are illiterate.....

The country is about the size of the UK but with a wet tropical climate and only about 3,000 miles of paved roads travel away from the capital city of Conakry is challenging. According to one organisation, the journey from the capital to Nzerekore in the south (approx. 500 miles) can easily take two days.

So there is plenty of scope for MAF to help



Ouch!



Traditional Guinea village

Our part so far

In order to start the new programme MAF needed an aircraft capable of operating in the very wet tropical conditions of Guinea, i.e. suitable for IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) and it was decided by the management team that one of the old Cessna 208B aircraft could be released from the far East to support this work. It flew first to Europe where it was re-painted and re-registered as N2114G. Inevitably it has quickly become known as as "Four golf" or even "4G" . From there it was flown through Southern Europe, across the Mediteranean and on to Uganda which is where we come into the story.



Geoff's colleague, Emil, shows some of the place MAF's partners would like to fly in Guinea



"4G" en-route to Conakry

Having worked hard for its keep in its previous life "4 golf" was in need of some TLC and its engine had reached the end of its life. Geoff and the team in the hangar removed the engine and installed a newly overhauled Pratt and Whitney PT6, replaced the landing gear springs, serviced the brakes, fitted new tyres, mended the weather radar and changed some gearings which were showing signs of wear. In addition this a lot of scheduled inspections carried out to ensure that the whole air frame was in the best possible condition, and several manufacturers service bulletins were complied with.

Once everything was complete a successful test flight was carried out and following a few minor adjustments the aircraft was put into service for training of the pilots who will initially fly in Guinea. For this programme they need to practice specific techniques and drills that are required for operation under the various rules and regulations which apply.

The work went so well that Geoff's colleague, Emil Kuendig, who is leading the team in Guinea even bought them pizza to celebrate. On the 26 January we wished the aircraft goodbye on the start of its ferry flight to Guinea where it arrived safely on 30th via CAR, Cameroon, and Liberia. We look forward to seeing how this aircraft can help meet then needs of the people and mission community in Guinea.



Final leg to Guinea



Arrived Safely

- MAF ministered in more than 25 countries.
- MAF has around 120 aircraft serving in these countries
- MAF flew more than 32,500 hours during 2021.
- More than 42,000 flight legs were carried out by MAF in 2021, flying around 101,000 passengers and 4 million kg of freight
- MAF flew more than 5.7 million kilometres in 2021 – more than 143 times around the equator.
- MAF has more than 1,200 staff serving around the world.
- MAF flights serve around 1,400 organisations MAF flew to around 1,000 destinations worldwide in 2021.

Please pray for

Pray for the new programme in Guinea, that all the necessary licences and permissions will come together quickly so that operational flying can commence.

Here in MAF Uganda we have several key staff moving away, please pray for the right people to take up the vacant positions.

Our friends Mark and Lorraine are moving from Uganda to take up a pilot job in MAF Tanzania.

Please pray for a smooth transition for them especially in terms of visas and paperwork.

Several of the apprentice engineers in the hangar are taking exams to become qualified. Please pray that the exams will actually happen as they can be very erratic and that the guys will do justice the hard work they have put in.

Pray for Geoff's parents who have both been struggling with health issues.

Our house move.

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