



Samban Wings of Christ

Mission Aviation Fellowship

Late in April on Wednesday evening, MAF Wewak pilot, Brad Venter, received a call from Jesse Pryor from Outreach International PNG. Jesse was in Wewak on the north coast of PNG, but his wife Karie was in Samban, a bush village in the East Sepik area. She had contacted him to arrange an urgent medical evacuation for a woman with a retained placenta after giving birth and Jesse was asking if MAF could fly out in the morning. So the next morning Brad prepared the aircraft (Airvan P2-MEW) and departed for Samban which is about a 30 minute flight away. With Brad was Paul Woodington, a MAF pilot new to the Wewak area.

Brad said, “We had been conducting area checks, and so this flight was a good opportunity for Paul to see the East Sepik. We arrived at Samban and were met by Karie Pryor. She was glad to see us. It had been a stressful night for her.”

Karie picks up the story from several months previous. “Since the village clinic’s opening in March this year, we are seeing more patients than ever before in the Samban Clinic. We now have a room to hold a patient overnight and people are traveling great distances to come to our nursing staff because of the assurance that there is a place and people to help them here. Since March we have had five patients who required one or more nights of care in our clinic; two were treated here and made a full recovery, while three had to be referred on to hospitals which could perform the necessary surgery or tests we cannot do in the village. I want to share with you one of their stories which is all too common.

Kindi is a mother of 7 from Kambuku village in the Angoram District of the East Sepik Province. When she arrived in the village last Friday the clinic had already closed its doors for the day. The nurses had already paddled the long trip home to their village of Laten 30 mins away. After pulling off my boots from working in the garden, some children ran to tell me there were people who needed help on the front porch of the clinic.

Kindi was lying on the floor, pale and unable to speak clearly. Near her mat her aunt held the new born baby boy. She had delivered the baby in the village early in the morning but the placenta had not been delivered and she was losing blood at an alarming rate. A friend who had walked up with me quickly set about asking if she might pray with the woman while I sent word for a motor canoe to go and bring back one of the nurses.

Just one week ago we hosted midwives from the group Living Child who held a training session with the women and midwives in the village about safe birthing procedures. The village midwife had done everything right but Kindi needed more help than she could give.

Mariana, our nurse, arrived and checked the blood

pressure, pulse and temperature I had recorded as she set a fast IV drip on Kindi. She worked through the night and was able to bring up Kindi's low vital signs and stop the bleeding, but Kindi needed surgical assistance. At dawn I emailed MAF, Mission Aviation Fellowship. MAF has helped us before when cases are time-sensitive and the patient is too critical to be moved by river and road, but my husband had already contacted Brad and plans were under way.



A plane was available and MAF arrived here by nine thirty to pick up Kindi, her husband, the baby and the aunt. When Kindi was in the plane, Mariana adjusted the IV drip while the MAF pilots, the villagers and I prayed for a safe flight and good care in Wewak's Boram Hospital. I shook hands with Otto, the scared husband, slipping some cash into his shaking palm. I could see the look of terror in his eyes. Was it the prospect of raising seven children alone or was it anticipation of his first ride in an airplane? I wasn't sure. I tried to reassure him by introducing him to Brad Venter, one of the MAF pilots our family has gotten to know in the past couple years. I got a shaky smile for my efforts and was satisfied that he wouldn't try to jump out mid-flight."



When Karie realised the complexity and urgency of the patient's situation, she asked Jesse to contact the "Living Child" midwives' organisation. They agreed to meet the plane in Wewak and accompany the patient to the hospital to ensure she was getting adequate care. Also, Jesse thought it a good idea to get the Samaritan Aviation ambulance to meet them, as the hospital ambulance often would not come and MAF only has a bus to transport people.



Karie continued, "Upon arrival in Wewak they were all there. A midwife from "Living Child" met Kindi. Samaritan Aviation provided an ambulance and took her to the hospital where she was admitted and treated. By midday we received word that the procedures were complete and Kindi was resting and recovering, and all her vital signs looked

promising.



I have listened to countless stories about the body of Christ. Often we are encouraged to be his hands and his feet, sometimes his ears and eyes. I am thankful today for those who choose to be the Wings of Christ; flying into remote outposts like ours, risking their lives on dirt and grass strips to bring the good news of Christ and the hope of life. Their flights demonstrate their faith and bring hope to people like ours who have no other road out when every minute matters.”

June 23, 2015

Mandy Glass
MAF Assistant Communications Officer



The Year of Official Openings

The day of June 18, 2015 was a big day in Samban history. It was also one for us as well. Since the opening of our new clinic facility, we have been involved in a different construction project. We were asked by the Local Level Government of Angoram district (LLG) to be the designated contractor and build the Samban Primary School classroom. It has been a long and difficult process of milling timber and transporting material up and down the river to get it to Samban. Once it arrived, the construction process could take place. To say it has been a challenge would be an understatement. There have been many setbacks. Some days it was the weather, other times it was equipment breaking down.

A lot of guys in the village put in some long hours in the heat, humidity, and scorching sun. Yet on the 18th of June, it was complete. Many dignitaries from all over the country came to the opening. In fact, Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare, the governor for the East Speik Province (former Prime Minister) came for the event. There were many speeches given and the ribbon was cut for the new building. Sir Michael said that Samban village had the first 4 in 1 (four classrooms in one structure) ever constructed in a rural area in the entire country. He noted that not only is this four-in-one-rooms in one building, but you have one for the elementary that OIPNG built as well. He was very impressed with our work and has committed to supporting us financially with some other projects.

Because of the new clinic opening and the classroom opening, this year has been one for the record books of Samban history. Our neighbor in Samban has said that 2015 is "the year of the openings."

An Area of Concern and Opportunity, written June 28, 2015

Every once in a while we run into a situation that leaves us with more questions than answers. As many of you know, about a year ago some of our national coworkers (being transported in our canoe with a motor) were attacked and taken hostage for several hours on the Keram and then Sepik Rivers. While there was no loss of life, many things were stolen from them and from us. They also sustained bodily harm at the hands of the assailants. Many items were damaged in the canoe, especially the outboard motor. We never found out the reasoning behind this senseless attack, and probably never will. We asked for the help of the local police and thought that given time the attackers would be apprehended, but nearly a year has passed. At this time there are no signs that any action will be taken against the young men by the authorities.

The reason we are revisiting this story is because of what's happening this Monday. We have experienced a lot of firsts this year. We opened the doors on our new clinic in

March. On June 18th we celebrated the opening of a four-in-one classroom for the Samban Primary School. (Jesse was contracted by the government for this build).

After arriving in town last week, we got a call the following morning from someone who lives in Angoram. Someone he knows and trusts came to him and informed him that there was a different group of men planning on staging a holdup on the river again when we returned home to Samban. He believed it to be credible and wanted to make sure we took steps to avoid it. After prayer and discussion both Karie and I decided that we would take as many steps as possible to avoid it. We are flying back to Samban on Monday. This is a first for our family, mainly because of the cost. We have always traveled back and forth from Wewak to Samban via PMV (Public Motor Vehicle) and boat/canoe. There are several PMV flatbed trucks that operate between Angoram and Wewak. This route has been how all our building materials and supplies have gotten from town out to the village. Going via road and river is considerably cheaper than flying.

The problems with Public Motor Vehicles are varied. We have to book them many days in advance. This means that anyone can ask the operators who or what they are carrying and without knowing they are giving away information that could endanger us. We also pay about \$500 per trip but the fuel only costs about \$90. Also there is no set "schedule" for the PMV's, so they come and go at odd hours making them difficult to use. They are always overloaded which isn't good when transporting the sick or injured as we often need to.

The solution seems easy: If we just buy our own vehicle, then we can reduce the cost of our travel expenses, travel on our own schedule, reduce the number of people to know about our travel plans and thus lessen the risk of hold up on the road and water. The problem is the road ends in Angoram. We have to continue on to the village by taking a canoe or boat. So what happens with the truck? Up to this point this is where our plan failed. After talking with some missionary friends in Wewak town they urged us to visit the lands office and see if there were any government-owned properties that could be "given" to us for our use in Angoram. We didn't know that that was even a possibility, but they had heard of it happening before. Sure enough, ask and you shall receive. While it isn't final yet, we are working together with the district administrator of Angoram to acquire a small lot of ground to be leased to OIPNG for 99 years for our use in Angoram. With this lease complete, we plan to fence in the lot and bring in two 20-foot shipping containers and build a deck above them to form a sort of car port. A small thatch house will also be constructed to house a local family who will be able to keep watch over the compound while we are in the village. These fears and opportunities were not present when we set our budget for this year. God has been good and the acquisition of the land seems that it will only cost us \$1250 but will necessitate fencing and construction materials. The vehicle is a different story. We will not shop for it until the land is ours and we have funds to purchase it. We ask that you keep the safety of our family and our workers in your prayers and give thanks to God for the opportunities he has presented to us. We pray for wisdom that we may make decisions that honor God.