

# Woodington: 'Fire in the House', March 2012

UK Trip · Church Response · Bali Wash Out · Imogen starts University · Garthalala Outreach · Kiri in Melbourne · Visit to Goroka in PNG · Clare starts packing · Covering Presidential elections in East Timor · "Fire in the House"

A family bout of whooping cough ended 2011. In December, our long awaited furlough was underway. We had a frantic six weeks in the UK followed by a rainy two-week break in Bali. Cough! Cough!



It was great to meet up with family and share the Christmas celebrations. My mother gave me a 'telling' for not eating enough; you would have thought I had not left home!

**We had a tremendous** welcoming from the two Church's we visited, Welwyn Garden City Baptist Church and Christ Church Barnet. In the three services, we addressed over 700 church members in one long day. Our hosts were friends of long standing, some we have known for over 20 years. Our

financial support had a boost, enough for us to continue our journey to PNG this year.



**Our UK trip ended** with a theatre

night in London watching Hitchcock's classic 39 steps, and then a stroll around the West End. Pictured here are the boys standing next to the Olympic clock. Our furlough ended in Bali, which is on-route from the UK to north Australia. It was a much-needed break and a bonding time for the whole family despite the monsoon rainy season.



Olympic Clock, Trafalgar Square, London

**Our family disperses** in all directions once in Australia; Kiri to Melbourne (University), Imogen to Townsville in Queensland (University), Aaron to Cairns in Queensland (Boarding School), Clare, Tristan and I to Gove.



This is not our Girls in Bali



Clare in Bali



**Imogen in her first Nursing Uniform**

**Imogen worked especially** hard last year to secure a place at James Cook University in Townsville, Queensland. She is studying General Nursing followed by Midwifery. She was also able to secure accommodation on campus, which is great because there is a shortage.

**Back in Gove, we started an Outreach to the community of Garthalala.** The community is 19 minutes by air from Gove, 2.5 hours by car when the track is good. During the days of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, the Garthalala homeland works as a boarding school for late teen indigenous young men and women.



We plan that each Wednesday, a plane will be able to visit overnight and share the Gospels with the boarders and homeland people alike. Our first two sessions had almost 30 in attendance each time. Two or three other MAF pilots have shown an interest is continuing this even when we move to PNG.

**During March, I travelled to Melbourne** to welcome and speak to new MAF candidates for the Asia Pacific. It is very encouraging to see new faces, so keen and eager, to enter God’s ministry and what a brave and exciting adventure they are starting out on for the Glory of God.



**I took the opportunity to visit Kiri at Monash University** where she is in her third year of a BSc. This year she braved a move into a shared house. Whilst there, I visited Trevor and Leanne Ingamells who helped move our storage to a cheaper place run by a Christian family.



**Trevor with the Master Key**

**We continued from Melbourne to Goroka** in PNG. We were so grateful to get the opportunity to see where our new home would be. Tristan especially liked the MAF compound with five houses, and many boys of his age are there. Whilst you would not walk the streets alone in PNG, there is freedom in the compound where two guards and several dogs keep the place safe. The New Tribes Mission School is a real bonus. It runs on the American curriculum and everyone speak American – another new language to learn!



**New Tribes Mission School, Goroka**

Paul and Clare Woodington  
Cultural Development Officer and Pilot  
**MAF ARNHEM LAND, AUSTRALIA**  
Phone: +61 407 045 349  
[MAF\\_paul@woodington.com](mailto:MAF_paul@woodington.com)  
[www.woodington.com](http://www.woodington.com)



**Our plan is to arrive in Mt. Hagan** to start orientation and language learning, Tok Pisin, on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Six weeks later we plan to move to Goroka in time for Tristan to start school there at the beginning of the new American school year. It will be some time before we have a house of our own, maybe until the end of October. The building of our house has yet to commence! We are dependent on volunteers to come and help build it, which may take some time.

**From PNG Clare and Tristan returned to Gove** to start packing. We need a new home for our dog and three cats, and we have to sell many of the things accumulated over the last five years. We are moving to PNG in suitcases only! **We are very much looking forward to our move to PNG.** Our minds and thoughts have already moved. Now we need to work through the next six months of living our lives out of a suitcase.

### I continued on to East

**Timor to cover the presidential elections** there. I had just received a security text message from the UN to stay indoors when we received a call to transport six people from the mountains into Dili so they could vote. The heavy rains had damaged the roads. Timorese people take their voting very seriously. I did not want them to think that MAF had let them down in any way, so I took on the flight. I had to duck under the clouds in-between the mountains to get there, and the return flight was bumpy. Nevertheless, they were able to get their vote in and the whole election so far has been peaceful – praise God.



Voters in Same Boarding Aircraft for Dili

**The next day, the day after voting, was not so good.** At 7am Sunday morning, I got a call for a MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) from the mountain village of Suai. On previous trips to Suai, I had come across several victims of gunshot wounds to MEDEVAC, but nothing had forearmed me as to what was to come. The flight was in bad weather and it took an extra 15 minutes to get around it. When I landed, the crowds around both sides of the plane were unprecedented.



Concerned Crowds Surround Aircraft in Suai

I struggled with the crowd until the blanket, used as a stretcher, came into view. In it, I saw the burnt body of a teenage girl. Not one part of her had escaped the ravage of fire. Overnight, the house she was sleeping in caught alight and fire rained upon her from the ceiling –the result of a back draft. She looked half mummified in bandages, unmoving, and I thought I would have my first death in flight.



Fire Victim Arrives in Dili, but no Ambulance!

**After a short prayer for the girl's safe passage to Dili**, that she would survive the flight, we got underway. However, on arrival in Dili after manoeuvring around the bad weather, the ambulance failed to arrive. MAF has a small UTE (car with a small flatbed tray). I sized up the stretcher with the back of the UTE and worked out a way of fixing the stretcher to the flatbed, but the tailgate would need to be down. We were within minutes of setting to, when the ambulance arrived.



**Stretcher Fails to Come out of Ambulance**  
The young girl shown here is on the MAF Aircraft Stretcher

**The Ambulances, gifted to East Timor by Australia**, have fallen short of maintenance over the years. This time the Ambulance's stretcher would not come out. To keep things going, we transferred the patient from the aircraft's stretcher via a small portable stretcher and then onto the Ambulance stretcher stuck in the Ambulance.

**The Ambulance was so crowded**, that three people had to share the front two seats with the driver.

**Helping this poor girl reinforced** my commitment to the work MAF does in East Timor and elsewhere around the world. She would have surely died on any road transport. Praise God for MAF.

### Praise Points

- Praise God for the provision of MAF and the service it provides world wide
- Praise for safety whilst travelling so far in the past few months
- Praise for Imogen's university placement
- Praise for commencement of the Garthalala outreach
- Praise for the peaceful elections in East Timor

### Prayer Points

- For the full recovery of the fire victim in East Timor
- For continued safety as we make our way to Goroka
- For new homes for our pets
- For the easy selling of our belongings in Australia
- For the Garthalala outreach to flourish
- For safety whilst we fly in the service of our Lord for His Glory
- For our ability to learn Tok Pisin, the national PNG language
- That Tristan and Clare will settle in their new home
- That our move to PNG will be according to God's plan and His will.



**Paradise Guest House, Mt. Hagan**



**We are actively seeking more support** for our work here in the Asia Pacific so that we can continue to serve the Lord through MAF. If you would like to support us in our ministry with MAF, to make a donation or simply to pray for us, please contact us.

Supporter Relations  
PO Box 1099 Cairns  
QLD 4870  
Australia +61 (0)2 8014 6450  
[Lolina.fernandez@maf.org.au](mailto:Lolina.fernandez@maf.org.au)  
Free Phone: 1800 650 169  
[www.maf.org.au](http://www.maf.org.au)

Debbie Martin  
Supporter Relations  
MAF UK  
+44 (0)845 850 505  
[Deborah.Martin@maf-uk.org](mailto:Deborah.Martin@maf-uk.org)  
[www.maf.co.uk](http://www.maf.co.uk)

Please visit our website at  
[www.woodington.com](http://www.woodington.com)  
Watch our Mission Movie  
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View of Goroka from the air



Paul and Clare Woodington  
Cultural Development Officer and Pilot  
**MAF ARNHEM LAND, AUSTRALIA**  
Phone: +61 407 045 349  
[MAF\\_paul@woodington.com](mailto:MAF_paul@woodington.com)  
[www.woodington.com](http://www.woodington.com)

