

Happy New Year

We have had a few issues in Wewak. We want to give you this update.

It has been a very difficult few months. Here are some of the highlights:

- Much tribal fighting in December leading up to Christmas. Lots of students had nothing to do. The government and education department closed down for this period. I attach a picture of the trouble spots below.



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- The naked body of a women after being raped was dumped outside Joel's settlement. He is one of our national workers. This caused a lot of tribal fighting.
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- The government could not afford to pay their workers, including the police. This resulted in major rioting.
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- The lack of police presence saw wholesale looting and shoplifting.
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- Our base had one attempted break in. No-one hurt. Talio, where we swim each day, had an armed robbery.
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- One pilot family, with small children, from another mission had their house broken into at night despite employing guards at their compound. Everything became too much for them. They leave at the end of January. Very sad to lose them.
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- On Christmas Eve, the army was called in to disperse the rioting between the settlements around our compound.
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- The corrugated fence around our compound is used as a war cry signal, a sign to gather for fighting. We have boarded up our bedroom windows to reduce the noise.

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- On New Year's Eve a body was dumped behind our compound. His belly was split open. This caused a lot of misunderstanding about whodunnit.
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- The confusion resulted in a lot of tribal fighting during New Year's Day. Fireworks were used as weapons. Many fireworks came into our compound.
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- At one point we decided to evacuate, but could not safely get out of our compound.
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- The following week, after New Year's Day, we saw a lot of peace talks take place. Things have quietened down since. But we are still on a high alert.

Twice we considered evacuating but wanted to stay.

Noise

An illegal bar and night club is based in the settlement nearby our compound is a big problem. The music, banging on our fence by drunken men and women, and loud shouting together make a lot of noise, sometimes through the night and still going when we set off to the airport next day.

Kadovar Volcano

Since New Year, a volcano on Kadovar island has erupted 60 miles along the shoreline from Wewak. It is ten miles off shore. We have been dealing with volcanic ash, which is dangerous to aircraft engines. We have developed a Tsunami evacuation plan. We are at 50% risk of a Tsunami.

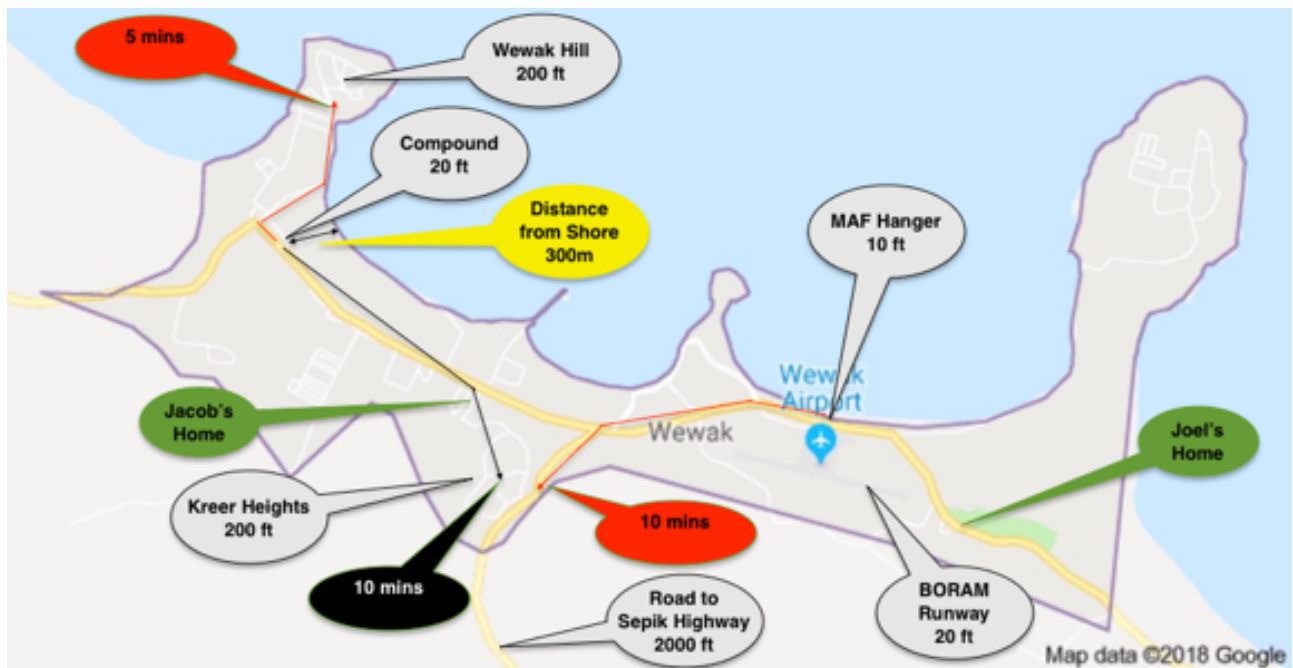
Below is a picture of Kadovar last Tuesday. The picture is taken from the Wewak plane. That is Boram Hospital below and Moam point farther out. Our airstrip is in-between on the right.

You can Google Kadovar Volcano for more information. <https://www.volcanodiscovery.com/kadovar/news.html>



Volcanic eruption on the island of Kadovar occurring since 5-January. Reports within the last 24-48 hours are that a lava dome is now visibly building. Residents of the 6 small islands in the group have been evacuated to the main land. Kandovar sits 106 kilometers east of Wewak, 223 kilometers NW of Madang.

Wewak Altitude Diagram



Shark Bite

Last Sunday, one of the Helicopter pilots was bitten by one of two White Tipped Sharks at Talio, just beyond the waves, where we all swim - especially Paul.

Paul is now the only one using Talio since. He want's to get a new tee shirt for swimming, "**Shark Bait.**"

We asked New Tribes Missionaries if there has been other shark sightings in the past. They said none they know of in the last twenty years.

The fish have been changing their habitat probably as a result of the hotter waters towards the Volcano.

Unusually, on Monday a pod of Dolphins where reported in the bay.

Water

The water supply in Wewak has turned yellow. The yellow water passes through the water filter. Paul, Clare, and Kiri and Aaron who visited over Christmas, has become ill from bad water.

Security Upgrade

Here is a picture our recent security upgrade at the base.



Busy Times

All this is happening at one of the busiest times of year for MAF in Wewak. We help many Bible Students to get to and from Bible college.

It is wet season, so the flying is tougher than the dry season. We continue to help the sick and disadvantaged. Also, Missionaries want a rest at this time. So it is busy time flying missionaries to and from their jungle based homes.

Already this year, we have sold 100 solar powered audio bibles from the plane along with several hundred Tok Pisin Bibles. We also sell solar lights from the plane. This year we have sold twenty units.

Things to look forward to

- A new pilot couple will be joining us in Wewak next week. Mike and Judith Dupuis from Canada. We are looking forward to their arrival. We have an established relationship with the Dupuis. Mike was my Caravan training instructor last year. Judith and Clare spent time in together in Hagen last year.
- Clare and I are taking a break in February in Cairns.
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- In July, Imogen - our youngest daughter is getting married near Cairns. After the Wedding, we will visit the UK.

We are thankful to the Lord looking after us during these troubled times.

Swamp on the wing

I took a snap of the mud covering my wing after taking off from Kalawari. I thought the Sepik Wet Season was almost over. The sun had been shining. The wind changed to a dry Easterly. But, a Christmas flight to Kalawari took me by surprise.



Kalawari sits alongside the Kalawari river. Underneath of the good looking airstrip lies lot of hidden water, a swamp.

The second generation missionary Dan Edmison and his family were almost **stuck** on the ground. But, the Cessna Caravan blasted through the mud and up into the skies. The Caravan was not getting bogged that day.



The Edmison family had spent Christmas at Munduku, a closed airstrip close to Kalawari where dan spent his childhood. Dan brought his family to PNG for their first time to find out if they would like to live in the Jungle for a few years and serve the people there. The answer was a resounding, “Yes”. We hope to see more of them later in the year.

Gerhart and Brigitte from Germany

Several times a year, Gerhart and Brigitte, German missionaries bring a team to the Sepik. This time they brought two dentists. During the two weeks they spent in April River and Morepote tribes Gerhart preached twenty two times.

The dentists treated 115 patients, most of them had broken teeth. Gerhart and Brigitte counselled over 100 people.



The new plane, Cessna Caravan

The new Cessna Caravan is a real blessing to the Sepik region. A fantastic gift from God. We are now helping three or four times the people than before.



Clare's Ministry

Clare made up Christmas gifts for all the remote agents who help Paul each day. Clare gave them a practical present, a bowl and dish, along with cookies and food things inside.



Our Wewak staff and their families at the Christmas get together.



Clare gets a Coffee grinder for Christmas

