



Matt & Becki Dillingham in Tanzania

Joining MAF Tanzania

In August, we started a new chapter with MAF, joining the Tanzania program in Arusha. The time has flown by and we have settled very well into our new surroundings. For the first 2 weeks we were staying in a temporary house while work was being done to get our eventual home ready for us. Unlike in Chad, there isn't a MAF compound and we had a choice of where to live. We decided on a house, from a few available options in the area we wanted to live, while we were in England so having only seen photos, it was great to go and visit it a few days after arriving. The house is a 10 minute walk from the children's school, along a quiet track, which is ideal. It hadn't been lived in for a while so there was a lot of improvements and repairs to be made but there were a team of people working on it and we didn't have to wait long until we could move in. The garden is bigger than we thought but we are excited by it's potential and the plants and animals that are here make it a beautiful place to live. We gradually acquired appliances and furniture to make it more comfortable and we are looking forward to our boxes arriving so that it really feels like our home.

Together with our colleague Roshan, we are doing Swahili lessons twice a week, which are going well. We are able to have simple conversations with our neighbours and buy fruit at the market. Becki is working full-time from home, studying the different subjects that could come up in her exam, which she needs to pass in order to obtain her Tanzanian pilot's licence and to get a work permit. Until she obtains a work permit, we will need to leave the country every 3 months to renew our visas and cannot receive our belongings. so she is hoping to pass it as soon as possible. The material that she can be tested on is vast and much of it is not relevant to flying small aircraft in Africa so passing the exam will be "changamoto kubwa" (a big challenge)!. Her first attempt will be on Thursday 26th September, in Dar es Salaam.

We have been welcomed into the MAF Tanzania team by the other families who all live close by. They have been very helpful, particularly when we first arrived with their hospitality and also by sharing their experience of living in Arusha. Many of the team here enjoy watching Formula 1 so it has been fun to join them on Sunday

afternoons to watch races. We have been to two churches, one that meets at a maternity hospital close to our house, which the other MAF families go to and are actively involved in the services. The other, which is called Arusha Community Church, has a larger Tanzanian congregation and is also really good.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the rest of the MAF Tanzania team.

Stewart and Michelle Ayling (from UK). Stewart is the program manager
Mark and Lorraine Liprini (from South Africa). Mark is the flight operations manager and pilot

Peter and Paivi Griffin (from Finland). Peter is a pilot and Paivi is helping out with communications

Roshan Stephen (from India) is a pilot.

Emmanuel Mollel (from Tanzania) is flight operations assistant

Mary Herman (from Tanzania) is finance and administration officer

Francis Remji (from Tanzania) is the ground operations manager





(Top left) Stewart, Mark, Peter, Roshan, Mary, Emmanuel, Francis, Paivi

A Race Down the Mountain



Medical clinic at Olemilei

Every month MAF Tanzania flies a medical team to a remote village called Olemilei, which is situated high on a mountaintop that reaches an altitude of 6000ft. The descent down the mountain is very steep and prevented the community from accessing a health clinic at the bottom of the mountain. So, in 2023, a partnership between MAF and an NGO operating in the Malambo region, known as Help for the Maasai, was set up to allow government medical staff to reach this isolated community by air.

At the beginning of September, pilot Peter Griffin flew Benedicto Thadeus, a doctor from the health clinic in Malambo, along with a team of nurses and equipment, to the village of Olemilei. They administered vaccinations and carried out medical check-ups of pregnant women and mothers of young children. At the end of the day, Peter noticed a problem with the aircraft. “During the taxiing out for the last flight of the day to transport the team of medical staff down the mountain after the clinic was over, I noticed the left main tyre felt off. Upon reaching my head out of the pilot side window to take a closer look, I could see the tyre was as flat as it possibly could be,” Peter recalled.

After trying to reinflate the flat tyre, Peter had to inform his passengers that they were stuck on the mountain. With less than two hours until sunset, it was evident that there could be no rescue mission that day. The stock of vaccinations were in an insulated case but would only last a maximum of 24 hours without refrigeration, after which they would be spoiled and there would be none available for the following day's clinic. With a repair unlikely before then, Peter and the medical staff agreed that the best option was to take the supplies down the mountain on foot.

Grace, one of the nurses was nervous as the walk required great care and good stamina. “You can’t walk down, it’s impossible!” she said. But Peter was determined to find his way down so he secured the aircraft and along with Benedictus and a young man from Olemilei called Joshua, who offered to be their guide, set off with just some drinking water and the bulky vaccination case. The rest of the party remained in the village overnight, until another aircraft could fly in to the airstrip the following day repair the flat tyre.

The unfamiliar trekkers noticed the fast pace of their local guide. He was not only used to difficult terrain, but he was also aware of the position of the sun indicating the hours left before sunset. Even the locals would not dream of journeying down the mountain in the darkness!

Joshua kept encouraging his companions: “It’s just around the corner from here” he would say with a cheerful grin. MAF Tanzania’s longstanding partner evangelist, Elisha, was able to arrange transport for the trekkers when they got down the mountain. “It is not unusual for lions to be spotted in the Malambo region,” he explained. They had trekked 700m vertically downwards during the 7km journey, but made it just before nightfall, in time for the vaccines to be safely stored in the clinic’s fridge.

Credit: Much of this story is taken from an article written by Paivi Griffin for MAF International.



*(Left) Peter Griffin (pilot) with Joshua and Benedicto
(Right) Walking down the mountain at dusk.*

Home Assignment

It was great to visit most of our supporting churches and many of our supporters and friends this summer. We are especially thankful to those who opened up their

homes for us to stay, lent us a car to travel around or invited us to share meals with them. We arrived in the UK physically and emotionally tired from a busy year and all that is involved with moving countries. But the time spent in the UK was the change that we needed to recharge our batteries ready for our move to Tanzania. Highlights for us this year include a BBQ in the sunshine with the "mission team" at Martock Christian Fellowship, returning to Milton Combe church after a few years away and an afternoon at the potter's wheel in the garden shed of a friend in Buckland Monachorum. We were sorry not to be able to see friends and supporters who live further north, but we are hoping to travel further afield next year and are looking forward to catching up with people then.



*(left) Becki doing a church presentation at Bovey Baptist Church
(right) Luke at the potter's wheel*

Praise

- We have all had a good start to life in Arusha. Bethan and Luke are enjoying school and have made friends.
- We have a lovely house and beautiful garden, in an ideal location.
- We were blessed in so many ways by the people we met over the summer, and all the travelling and logistics of home assignment went according to plan. We appreciated having some extra time in the UK

compared to a normal home assignment, meaning we arrived in Tanzania feeling well-rested.

- Luke had some medical tests during the summer after experiencing abnormalities in his vision. Thankfully they didn't show anything untoward and his vision has returned to normal so we were able to fly to Tanzania as planned.

Prayer

- That Becki will be encouraged by the first attempt at sitting her exams. Pray for questions that are clear and relevant and that she will be able to retain the information that she has revised.
 - We will soon be able to get a work permit so that we can receive our belongings, which are currently being stored in Uganda.
 - Bethan is finding certain subjects challenging, especially Swahili lessons as the other children in her class are ahead of her. Luke doesn't particularly enjoy the compulsory after-school clubs so we pray that he will find something that appeals to him.
 - Matt is hoping to volunteer with a charity called Heshima, which has a school and workshops for teaching textiles and carpentry close to where we live. A meeting to discuss this will happen in November. Sufficient Swahili will be needed and permissions will need to be obtained from the authorities before starting.
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Bethan's Blog

Hello from Tanzania! I am in year 8 at Braeburn International School. It is very different from Wellspring Academy in Chad as we have to go to different classrooms for different subjects and school finishes between 3-5pm depending on what clubs I've got. I've signed up for the production of "A Big Life" and will be going to Nairobi and Dar es Salaam to do performances in February. I haven't started horse riding yet as I have been very busy with homework. Hopefully, when I have saved up, I can get a horse as we have a big barn in the garden and lots of space to ride where we live.



A Letter from Luke

My favourite thing we did on home assignment was going to Skomer because we saw hundreds of puffins. I also liked seeing some of my friends from Chad who live in England and Wales now. It was my birthday last week and I got some new headphones and a Nintendo Switch game where you swim around looking for fish! I like my new house, it has lots of windows so you can watch all the colourful birds outside. Did you know that we have a volcano very close to us? It hasn't erupted for over 100 years but I'm keeping an eye on it anyway.

