



HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM THE LINKLETERS

Dear friends, Happy Christmas from Uganda,

As we approach our eleventh and probably final Christmas in Uganda it is still hard to reconcile things here with feeling like Christmas. But as the lakes in the street recede with the end of the wet season, and the potholes dry out to red dust (It was 44C in the sun one day last week), we see sheep feeding in the streets and small plots of land being worked by hand, things are in reality much closer to how they were at that first Christmas.

"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."



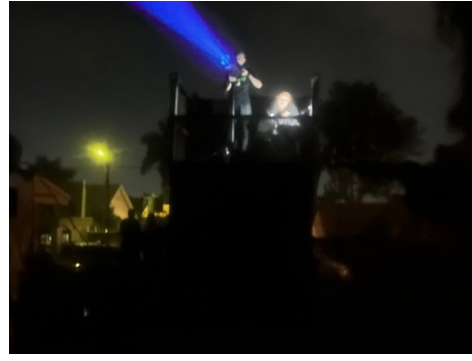
Sheep, Ugandan Style



This isn't a sheep!



School Production of Hamlet



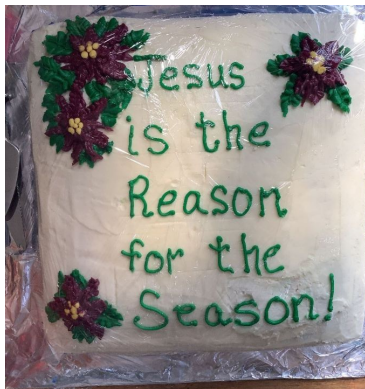
The Lighting Team at work

Highlights of our last few months have included:

- The Acaia school production of Hamlet, performed in the open air in a modern style with Mim Heading the lighting team (only the staff forgot their lines!) Geoff being taught to make Biltong (dried meat) by a South African friend. (Must have been okay, it was eaten enthusiastically if a little hard on the teeth!) The Pastor
- from our church, Pastor Martin, taking part in a series of training conferences for pastors in South Sudan and flying with MAF (He doesn't like flying!)
- Mim's mock exams (She doesn't think this was a highlight... but maybe her upcoming school trip to Mombasa will be!)
- The all age Christmas service and shared meal at our church (Geoff listened for once!)
- The MAF ladies Christmas cookie swap (give away all the gluten free cookies in exchange for yummy ones containing flour that only Geoff can eat!)
- The Kampala Amateur Dramatic Society Panto (Staring the mother of one of Mim's school friends as the pantomime dame!)

And we still have Carols by the pool to look forward to!

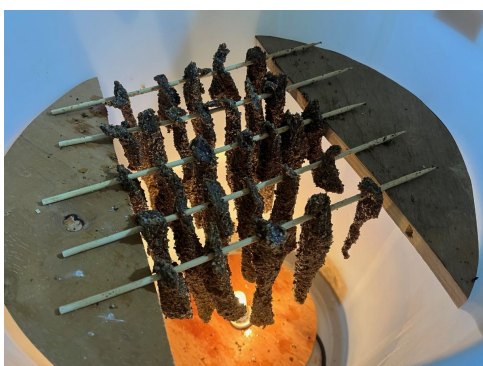
Christmas Blessings, **Geoff, Celia & Mim**



Christmas Cake - Uganda Style!



Celia and our Pastor's Wife helping with food for Church Christmas lunch



Making Biltong



Pastor Martin in South Sudan

The wet season in the rest of East Africa has been very disturbed with the more southerly countries receiving little rain and those further North including South Sudan and Chad receiving significantly more rain than normal. In South Sudan this has led to widespread flooding. Recently Pilots Gerbrand and Jono landed in Rubkona, 700 km from the capital Juba, to drop off supplies for the hospital which is currently almost unreachable by road.

'We flew almost 800 kilos of medicine into Rubkona, to serve the people in this area of South Sudan which is suffering from a Cholera outbreak,' Gerbrand shared with us.

Nearby Bentiu refugee camp is home to over 137,000 people - who live behind 77 miles of flood defences protecting them from 1.4 million acres of floodwater.



1.4 Million Acres of Flood Water



Unloading Medical Supplies

News from the Hangar

We have had a bit of a patchy few months in the Uganda hangar with work varying between rather quiet and humongously busy. Geoff and the hangar team completed major inspection work on the Cessna Caravan Aircraft, TT-BER, which belongs to MAF Chad including installing a new autopilot to replace one which was obsolete. A very important piece of equipment for aircraft which fly for hours over the pretty featureless desert. The team also wished goodbye to their oldest Caravan 5X-BIL which has been transferred to MAF in Tanzania to support some longer flights becoming necessary in that programme. Geoff's headaches included preparing the paperwork for the transfer especially the maintenance history from the whole 19 years it operated in Uganda.

Slightly outside the scope of the engineering department MAF also provided technical support for the re-opening of the airstrip at Kalongo. This airstrip has been closed since the COVID lockdown because of the poor condition of the runway. Pilots and members of the Operations team worked with the local community to determine what needed to be improved and see that it was carried out correctly. This means that MAF are once more able to support the Ambrosoli Hospital and other NGO's working in the area.

Watch this space for some further "exciting" developments on airstrips in Uganda!



Celebrating the re-opening of the airstrip at Kalongo

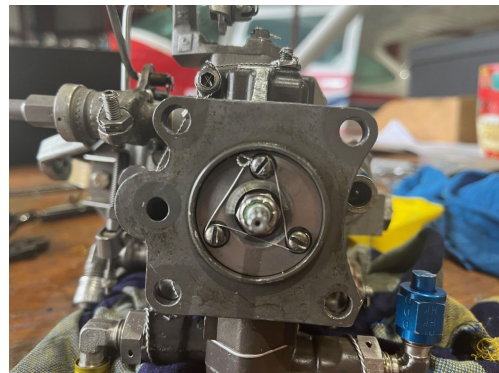


Loading the aircraft TT-BER for its return to Chad

One of the things which has been exciting for Geoff over the past year is seeing the development of some of the young Ugandan engineers who have been training with MAF. Several these guys are now now reaching the point where they are able to go out n their own to support other MAF programmes. Brian to Liberia, Johnmark to Madagascar and as we right this John is in Chad. David even traveled to Liberia to carry out some training for the team there.



Geoff's colleague David carrying out training in Liberia



Bonus point to anyone who knows what it is!



The wet season has been.....wet



.... And the sun came out and dried up all the rain

Please pray for

- Mim and her class mates who are going on a school trip to Mombasa, especially for safe travel.
- All our friends and colleagues traveling far and near to meet up with families over the Christmas season, that in the busyness and rush we would all be able to remember Christmas.
- The people in Rubkona and Bentiu suffering due to the flooding in South Sudan and the aid workers responding
- MAF Uganda as they continue to look for a replacement for Geoff.
- The Mpox outbreak in E Africa which is slowly spreading into parts of Uganda