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Volume 2, Issue 1

Nov 2008—Feb 2009

Upcoming events:

- Studying for CASA exams
- Engineering
- Fixing up the Landcruiser
- Hopefully more hikes
- MAF ministry team

Matt's Prayer Points:

- Thanks for my Nan's successful treatment, operation and recovery so far
- Thanks for the opportunity and provision to return to Sydney for Christmas
- Spiritual growth
- MAF ministry team/Engineer's Bible Study
- Continue to grow as an Engineer
- For strength, to be teachable, for protection, health & wisdom
- Progress in my car's maintenance



Camping at Eden with close friends



MFU in pieces at the C check

Christmas in Sydney

Last October I received news that my Nan had been diagnosed with cancer. With the shock of this came the thought of the possibility of needing to return to Aus. Before leaving for PNG I made the choice of not returning for anything during my term except only in a family emergency. Come November I was encouraged by my manager to take time off to return to Sydney for Christmas. I really struggled and battled with the decision, as I wanted to have the right reasons for returning (so many reasons to return), that being only because of my Nan's situation. So in late November God made it clear to me to return for four weeks and made the decision. I was able to keep this a secret from everyone except my family and a few others. I was able to surprise everyone successfully at my Youth Group's formal dinner, the last Friday night event for the year. I found it hard re-

turning to Sydney. I had felt like a soldier returning from war, not knowing how to share what I had seen and experienced and was not talked about much. I also experienced a lot of culture shock on my return, despite spending



Christmas day with the family

the previous twenty four years in Sydney. Mainly in feeling disconnected and having a loss of appetite. I was able to experience a lot during my time in Aus, quality time with family, including Christmas day. Visiting my youth group and church, time with friends, seeing the new Batman movie at IMAX, beach trips, celebrating New Years with close friends and a week away

camping down the south coast at Eden, and can't forget being able to watch quality coverage of the cricket, to name a few. I was overwhelmed and reminded of the blessing it is to live in Australia and to have a strong support from family, friends and church. When it came to leave and return to PNG, I found it harder to leave than the first time. I really battled with emotions on another level than previously. But once on the plane and Sydney behind me, my excitement on returning returned. Once arriving in Mt Hagen I experienced no culture shock at all. The only things that stood out, was that I couldn't hide in a crowd anymore. But from this experience, I have come to release how much PNG has become home and is more like home after this trip. When I look back on that time away, I am blown away by God's goodness and provision. I was so blessed and refreshed during that time.

Update

The last four months again have been busy with a lot going on. I moved house again in the start of November, now sharing a place with two other single Engineers. One from Switzerland and the other from Germany. We continued with the MAF ministry team till the end of last year and hopefully will start up again this month. Out at the hanger we continue to have enough workload, particu-

lar late last year. Last October we started a C check



Engineering Department

on one of our Twin Otters (this is done every 500

flying hours). This Otter being the oldest aircraft in our fleet at forty years old. At times it was difficult managing with the workload as we had a large amount to do on the aircraft. But still had other aircraft coming in for scheduled or unscheduled maintenance. I remember one day we had six aircraft that we were working on at once. I found this time quite difficult as I had become quite



Fishing in Eden

"I am really amazed at how quickly I have settled into life here in PNG. Especially my trip to Australia and returning, realizing how much this has become home. I am really grateful for my transition and for God's strength, grace and goodness"



New transport to work



Mt Hagen Market



New residence in Mt Hagen

Update (cont)

close to burning out and the past two years catching up with me. And it worked out really well being able to have time off over Christmas. The Otter was finished around New Years. I have continued to be involved in running a bible study each Wednesday morning for the Engineering Department. And just last week, started showing a Christian video during Thursday lunch time, which

has had a positive response. car maintenance on the Landcruiser continues to be high and on going, making progress patiently. On my return to PNG, I brought up my mountain bike. I have been riding to work with another Engineer and going for a ride some Saturday mornings. I have to say riding here is like nothing I have ever experienced before. But it has been so good

to get out and do something that I love. I am still studying to sit CASA exams when I can. I am hopefully not too far off to getting licensed sometime in the second half of the year. I am finding it hard settling in to my local church. The one thing I really miss is the fellowship back home. I am hoping to do a few big hikes this year, once the weather clears. Life continues to be busy, but God continues to sustain me.

Uninvited Guest

Last December on a Sunday morning at 0600, I was peacefully in a deep sleep. To be awoken by a very loud crushing and crashing sound. Half awake at first I thought that someone had driven through our compound gate and we were under attack (even though this would be very unlikely). By the time I had awoken and made it outside, all my neighbours from my compound and neighbouring compound had made it outside. As I looked across the compound there was a PMV that had crashed through our compound fence and dropped off a high retaining wall, just missing our rain-water tank. Fortunately no one was injured in anyway. But the driver and those

inside were outside the vehicle walking around and were drunk. With a big hole in our compound fence, many peo-

ple were on looking at the accident just in as much amazement as we were in. After many attempts and in the end driving into town, we were able to notify the police and they came to the scene. What had happened in the end was that the PMV had left Madang (north coast of PNG) the previous afternoon, which is about ten hours of driving. They had travelled through the night and made it to Mt Hagen and dropped off their passengers. Almost home they came around a corner and lost control, swerving into our compound. The driver was so out of it, he thought that a few of us could push it back up off the retaining wall and he would be on his way. I think only later in the morning did he come to realise what had happened and how serious it could of been. So the next day a crane was called in to remove the van and the fence was repaired. We were really thankful that no was injured in the end.



PMV invasion



The compound fence, garden and onlookers



Our guard dog Roxie