



Dear Friends,

### **Necessary endings...**

As you will be aware, our return to Bath in December represented the tying off of three major threads in the tapestry of our lives.

### **We have finished our time in Chad.**

From September to December the programme was busy with both flights and maintenance, which was done by a team of engineering colleagues from Kenya and Uganda. Mark, Daniel and Larry stayed for 3 weeks carrying out major inspections, fixing snags, and generally doing as much as they could to ensure the planes could safely operate until the next time they visit. It highlighted once again how challenging it is to run a flight operation without a resident chief engineer; we are incredibly grateful for the time and expertise they shared to support MAF Chad.

Some of the other work this quarter included several medevacs, one of which was the first we have done in partnership with Guinebor 2, a mission hospital on the outskirts of N'Djamena. We were able to help a young man with a broken leg from a motorcycle accident to access care that would not have been available in his home town, and as a result his leg was treated in good time and has healed well. Our pilots Becki and Phil also both spent a few days working with Sahara Conservation Fund to assist them in a wildlife count, something they have to do on a regular basis in order to monitor the success of their work. This requires carefully planned low-level flying, back and forth across a specific area of land, whilst observers look for animals. SCF were very happy with how it all went, and we were pleased to support this important activity.

Whilst Katie led English classes for our Chadian staff and finished off the donor reporting requirements for the year, Steve stayed at his desk and oversaw an audit, organised the redecoration of the hangar reception area and prepared handover notes for his successor. As a team we hosted two separate visits by Dutch engineers who gave up vacation time from their day jobs to come to N'Djamena and install solar panels on the roof of the hangar and in our residential compound. We had received all the parts for this project back in March 2020, but of course the pandemic had stopped any progress until October 2021. We were so pleased to see everything installed and ready for use.

Outside work, we continued helping with leading services and preaching at the International Fellowship we were attending; hosted a Bonfire Night celebration with our teammates and other friends; celebrated a big birthday, and attended a Remembrance Day service at the Commonwealth War Graves, where 4 British servicemen are buried. Steve borrowed a trumpet and dusted off his embouchure to play The Last Post and the Reveille, while Katie read a Psalm. We were also blessed by a British volunteer who helped out with all kinds of odd jobs around the hangar and the compound for a few weeks. We really appreciated his energy, enthusiasm and commitment.

Our final few weeks were mostly filled with sorting, packing, and crossing things out in the diary as our flights kept changing. In spite of our best efforts to finish well, a combination of Omicron, the UK government and Air France conspired to add significant drama to our last few days in Chad, and not a little stress to even our last few hours in the country. However we arrived back safely without catching Covid; our luggage was delivered a few days later and our freight about a week after that.

We have finished our time with MAF.

There are so many memories and many highlights (too many to list here!) from our years in Kenya and Chad. When we arrived in Nairobi to serve with the MAF team there in 2012, Steve was a full-time pilot on 5Y-PTL, the Cessna 206 which MAF Kenya had at the time. He frequently flew the weekly shuttle to Dadaab refugee camp, serving the many organisations working there to provide healthcare, education and other opportunities to people living in very challenging circumstances. He also got to know passengers from City of Hope in northern Tanzania, RedTribe in southern Kenya and Sauti Moja in the far north, who were all regular customers, as well the many other individuals and organisations who made use of MAF's services to move around the country. In 2013 Katie took up her part-time role as Communications Officer and was privileged to interact with many of our partners to hear about their work and ministries, and to share their reports and stories with donors and supporters in the wider MAF community. Despite being thrown in at the deep end (her first assignment was to interview the Archbishop of Canterbury on a flight from Kenya to Tanzania) it was a job she loved and was happy to continue doing. Over time Steve took on other roles within the team before moving into the Country Director role in 2015. We are grateful for all the opportunities we have had during our time with MAF and the many memories we treasure.

### **We have finished our time with MAF.**

There are so many memories and many highlights (too many to list here!) from our years in Kenya and Chad. When we arrived in Nairobi to serve with the MAF team there in 2012, Steve was a full-time pilot on 5Y-PTL, the Cessna 206 which MAF Kenya had at the time. He frequently flew the weekly shuttle to Dadaab refugee camp, serving the many organisations working there to provide healthcare, education and other opportunities to people living in very challenging circumstances. He also got to know passengers from City of Hope in northern Tanzania, RedTribe in southern Kenya and Sauti Moja in the far north, who were all regular customers, as well the many other individuals and organisations who made use of MAF's services to move around the country. In 2013 Katie took up her part-time role as Communications Officer and was privileged to interact with many of our partners to hear about their work and ministries, and to share their reports and stories with donors and supporters in the wider MAF community. Despite being thrown in at the deep end (her first assignment was to interview the Archbishop of Canterbury on a flight from Kenya to Tanzania) it was a job she loved and was happy to continue doing. Over time Steve took on other roles within the team before moving into the Country Director role in 2015. We are grateful for all the opportunities we have had during our time with MAF and the many memories we treasure.

---

### **We have finished our time living overseas.**

This whole adventure started over 20 years ago when we were accepted for service with Africa Inland Mission after our 2 years training at All Nations Christian College. We went first to Paris for 6 months language study before going to the Comoros Islands with 3 year old Jack and 3 month old Toby. After 2 years in team administration we headed back to the UK, not knowing what we would do next. An unexpected meeting in Nairobi airport on the way led to an opportunity with AimAir in Kenya, where Steve subsequently worked as the Finance Controller and we added Ethan to the family. As that contract came to an end, a helpful conversation with an old friend guided us towards the possibility of fulfilling Steve's long-held dream to be a missionary pilot. We spent the next four years in the UK as he studied, trained, passed exams and assessments, and built hours. We finished with AIM, joined MAF and Steve got ready for his new role.

### **...and new beginnings**

We were so glad to get back to the UK in time for Christmas, and enjoyed school and church carol services and time with extended family. In January we both started new jobs. Steve has returned to his old profession, working as a Patent Attorney at a firm in the centre of Bath. He is grateful that he has not been forced to work from home as he enjoys the company of his colleagues, and the support of others around him as he gets to grips with how the job has changed in the past 20 years. He cycles to the office and back every day; we live at the top of a hill so one of those journeys is a bit longer than the other!

Katie is delighted to be doing part-time work back at the local primary school where she worked when we lived here before. She has a one-to-one Teaching Assistant role, supporting a child with extra needs. She enjoys a 5 minute walk to work, and having some spare time in the afternoons to meet up with people and explore other opportunities in our community.

Jack is getting settled into life and work (and badminton) in Wolverhampton; Toby continues to study hard and play plenty of hockey in Winchester; and Ethan is enjoying coxing the first VIII and getting to grips with his A level subjects at Monkton. Having already been able to host some family in our guest room, make two trips to the orthodontist, spend an afternoon in a Minor Injuries Unit, and support the rowing crew in a 'Head of the River' race since we got back, we feel sure that we have made the right decision, and are very happy to be home.

Many of you reading this have travelled the entire journey with us, sticking with us even after we changed organisations and ministry focus. Others have joined along the way; we are grateful to each of you in ways that words on a page can never adequately express. Both overseas and during our times in the UK, your love and care for us has been overwhelming and has been shown in so many ways: letters, cards and packages, lifts to and from the airport, the loan of suitcases for our luggage and the provision of storage for our bigger belongings, help with childcare, words of wisdom and advice, the loan of cars and even houses, endless meals and generous-hearted interest in our family and our work. And so much more!

One thing NOT coming to an end at this point is our friendship with all of you; we look forward to welcoming you here to Bath, or meeting up with you in other places.

Thank you again for everything.

With our love,

Steve, Katie, Jack, Toby and Ethan

Our UK mobile and WhatsApp numbers are:

S: 07508 940807

K: 07432 508232

Please stay in touch!



Finally, here's a photo from our first Missionary Newsletter back in 2001....

As we mentioned previously concerning financial support, if you do wish to continue giving to MAF, you can allocate your funds to a specific family/individual, or it can go into the general pot. But there is no obligation. Please send your questions to Adam Pope at [adam.pope@maf-uk.org](mailto:adam.pope@maf-uk.org) and he will help you sort things out.