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Upcoming events:

- Settling into life in Mt Hagen
- Looking for a church to commit to
- Studying for CASA exams

Matt's Prayer Points:

- Thanks for the learning experience at POC & for a good cultural transition so far
- Spiritual growth
- Settling into Mt Hagen
- Developing new relationships & maintaining old ones back home
- Find a local church
- Refresh/equip/grow in skills for Engineering
- For strength, to be teachable, for protection, health & wisdom
- Provision of a car here



POC Students & Staff



POC Wasfamili (Host family)



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Pacific Orientation Course (POC)

After being in the country for less than a week, I was off to Madang on the north coast for SIL's Pacific Orientation Course. I knew very little about the course and did not know what to expect. The two goals I had prior to going was to learn as much as I could of Tok Pisin and of the PNG culture. Yet I did not know that what I would experience and learn would be so much more than that. The course started off at a steady pace, with it growing in pace, but also in difficulty of learning. Putting us more and more out of our comfort zones. The theory and practical activities included; learning Tok Pisin with a national teacher, developing relationships with nationals, weekly visiting a national family in a village, building a Haus Kauk (outside kitchen area) which we used each weekend for our

meals, fitness including hiking and swimming, PNG culture studies and other practical skills just to name a few. All of these increasing the learning curve preparing us for our time in village living. Where we would live as the



Sunrise at POC, Madang

nationals do. No luxuries of any kind. I spent five nights in a village about thirty minutes out of Madang. Interesting enough, this would not be my highlight of my time at POC. What was suppose to be a six week course, would turn into seven weeks. I think the main lesson I

take away from it is being able to be put into any situation and being able to deal with it. That I grew in the area of flexibility and adapting to new surroundings and situations. But I also gained a great respect for the lifestyle and work of Bible Translators. It is such an awesome experience to go out to a village, but to know that I am able to survive there is a great thing. It was also really good to develop friendships outside of MAF with other people from all over the globe from different Mission organizations. Being the first MAF member to attend POC, I am so grateful for the opportunity I had to do the course. It was such a valuable learning experience and a great adventure, one that I really believe that will allow me to live and minister here much more effectively on a long term basis.

Village Living

After completing five weeks of POC, came the time for my six days in a village. For me there was a lot of build up before going and I was eager to get it underway. I spent my time in a place called Dogea on the coast, which is right on the beach, but is separated by a swamp. So it was either a 10min canoe ride down a river or a 20-30 min walk to the beach. It was a great opportunity to use what I had learned at POC. Not just the practical skills, theory, but practicing Tok Pisin and building relationships.

It was a very exhausting time while in the village. Speaking really no English, but constantly in Tok Pisin.



My Wasfamili's House

But my host family (Wasfamili) had a large extended family. They and the rest of the village wanted to see this tall

white man, but also hear him speak. So I would be constantly asked to stori (tell a story). At night time a crowd of up to twenty people or so would gather on our balcony to hear me speak. My Tok Pisin was and still is basic. But I was able to share my testimony twice which I had prepared prior to going. And I was able to share plenty of other stories and things. Experiences from POC, things about Australia and stories from back home. I managed the living conditions okay. There were no basic luxuries at all. All



The Transport Crew, SIL builder & SIL Translator

The last two months has covered A LOT of experiences and travelling to different places. But despite all the changes and different experiences and challenges. I have had a good cultural transition so far. Thanks to God who continues to enable me to adapt to all the changes and challenges I face.



My Wasfamili Family



Towing the Dyna through a River

Village Living (cont)

cooking was done on a fire, drinking water was either rain water or from a well. The toilet was a hole in the ground and washing oneself was in the river. There were plenty of mosquito's and sand flies too. I was able to experience day to day life in the village to some point. A few things I got to do included going fishing, playing volleyball, attending the

village church and the school students had a singsing (traditional dancing & singing) one night. My last night in the village my host family had a bung kai, which is where the whole extended family got together and had dinner, since I was leaving the following day. It was an interesting experience and I learnt a lot about the culture. But my time in the vil-

lage was properly the hardest time during POC. Due to my expectations from the course and past experiences of being hosted were not even close to my village experience. So it was a difficult time, one that sketched my patience a lot! It was also an exhausting experience, but well worth the experience.

Three Day Hike

After completing POC, I was due to head back to Mt Hagen and the students doing the fourteen week course were about to start a three day hike that Wednesday. Something that I wanted to do. But instead an interesting situation arose. An SIL translator off the Rhy Coast about three hours from Madang was in difficulty. He had a team from his home church coming from America that Sunday to help construct a home kit over ten days. But because of his isolation and the rain we had experienced, this kit was stuck in another village on the coast. So the three day hike turned into a three day adventure, which I was

granted by my Engineering Manager to stay on and participate in. We left POC early Wednesday morning with a four tonne Truck, a Hilux &



One of many River Crossings

trailer, a 4WD tractor and a motorbike. All to transport this nine tonne home kit from one village to another across rough terrain, through rivers and roads

that aren't roads. Just getting to the village where the kit was located was adventurous enough. Over two days we were able to transport all of the kit, which included the wooden structure to the bathroom sink. The turnaround time for one load was two and a half to three hours. It was a great accomplishment and team work. On the Thursday we were able to help out on house construction as well. We left Friday carrying close to 1.4 tonne of Cocoa out of the village into Madang. It was an amazing village experience and crossing so many rivers the way we did. This time together and accomplishing what we did, is by far my highlight of POC.



My Tok Pisin class



Haus Kauk Weekend



Some of the fishing crew