




Mission Aviation Fellowship

# Dupuis Dispatch

## October 2017

### Back in Maramuni August 2017

While piloting a flight from Mt. Hagen to the remote village of Maramuni, one passenger, an old man who never told me his name, was obviously suffering intense pain even though he had just been released from hospital. I could hear him moaning and crying out as two men helped him into the aircraft.

He was in agony climbing the stairs and bending down to get into his seat just inches from the exit. He was complaining bitterly in his local tribal language to the men trying to help him sit. I helped him to put on his seat belt, but he was not happy that he had to wear a seat belt. I was not carrying a stretcher, so sitting securely was his only option. I tried to console him, but he did not speak Tok Pisin so I asked the man who was travelling with him what was causing him pain. "Bacsait bilong em I bugarap tru" he told me. In other words, his back was bad.

Sumpela bun i bruk? (broken bones?) I asked. He went on to tell me that this man had no broken bones, so the doctors could do nothing for him. I tried to explain that I had experienced a bad back in the past. I could understand his pain and would do my best to make the flight as smooth as possible. I started the flight with a short prayer for calm air and healing for the suffering man. All nine passengers joined in on the AMEN.

In 1990, I experienced a herniated disk that put me in the hospital for nearly two weeks. I was in traction where I received treatment for the pain and had some of the best doctors assessing my condition making recommendations for treatment and a follow-up of extensive rehabilitation, exercise, and education. I never did require surgery and though, on rare occasions, I have minor flare-ups of



*Maramuni has a one-way airstrip on top of a ridge half-way up a mountain*



*Old man being helped from the airstrip*



*A spectacular view from Maramuni*

lower back pain, it is manageable through exercise and stretching. When I do struggle with back pain, it is a reminder for grace and understanding to those who are suffering. After landing at Maramuni, I helped a few men remove the village elder from the aircraft and watched with sadness as they helped him painfully walk away from the airstrip. I had no idea how far he had to go, as many people live miles from the airstrip and must travel along steep and narrow mountain trails.

On the return flight, I thought about the helplessness of the situation and how difficult and far removed PNG people are from our civilized health care. Would this man have to live with pain for the remainder of his life? I suddenly felt angry for not having at least taken some time to pray with the man and to offer him some hope for healing. Silently, I began to pray for him. The next day I presented the situation to our Mt. Hagen base staff at our morning devotion. We all prayed that he would find relief from his pain and healing for his back.

When I flew again to Maramuni about a week later, I enquired about the man and was told that he had "bigpela pain yet". I asked our local helper at the airstrip to pass a message to the man that MAF staff members were praying for him.

About four weeks later on a regular flight to Maramuni, I was carrying my Bible Box so I could sell a few to

some villagers who had asked for some on my previous trip. Within a few short minutes, I had sold everything that I had; about 20 Bibles. I made a promise to bring more. While selling the Bibles, there was quite a commotion behind the aircraft. I could hear a man yelling loudly at everyone within earshot. He was speaking in the local language which I cannot understand, but I could tell by the tone of his voice that he was very serious and people were listening to him. At some of the airstrips it is not uncommon to hear someone call out loudly and say strange things. These people are often mentally ill and are laughed at or scorned. This was not the case with the man approaching.

Our local MAF agent came up to me and explained that the old man who was speaking to the crowd was the same man who had been suffering with the bad back. He was standing straight and strong and was telling everyone that it is no good to just buy Bibles; they must read them, pray to God, and believe in Jesus.

The old man came around from behind the aircraft and waved at me. He smiled and walked away. The LORD was holding him upright. Amen!

What an amazing privilege to see God miraculously intervene in such a powerful way!

Thank you for your support of this ministry that makes miracles like these possible!

*Mike & Judi*



*Local children at the airstrip*



*Pulling out boxes of Bibles*



*Passengers ready to go to Mt. Hagen*

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