

Farewell to the Ramseys

FD Nov-Dec 2009

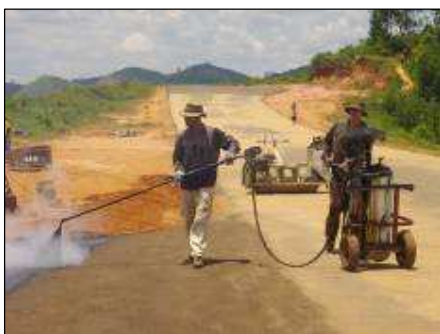
Carl and Michelle Ramsey have faithfully worked with MAF in Madagascar since 2004. After five years of service with MAF, they have decided to settle in New Zealand for the next exciting phase of their lives.



Carl, a Mechanical Engineer from Auckland, felt God calling him to work full time with MAF after visiting in 2004 to help with cyclone relief and organise the newly opened MAF garage. He returned to Madagascar later that year filling the position of Garage Manager. Michelle, from Durban, South Africa, came to

Madagascar in 2003 to teach in Vision Valley School which was started by her church. She has a diploma in Human Resources and Industrial Relations. Carl and Michelle were married in South Africa in 2006 and together served with MAF in Madagascar.

Carl and Michelle have 2 sons, Duncan, born 12th February 2007, and Nathan born 9th October 2009. Their term of secondment was due to finish in Dec '09, but in light of the political instability in Madagascar, they decided not to have the baby there and rather leave a little earlier for NZ to have the baby here. The Ramseys will officially be with MAF until the end of October, which has given them enough time to find their feet before baby Nathan arrived.



"We continue to be amazed and thrilled at how God takes the things we are passionate and interested in and allows us to use them to further His kingdom. Carl never imagined he would be using his engineering and design skills to design and fabricate equipment and machinery to build runways within Madagascar. Michelle didn't realise

she would be able to employ her HR skills in developing and managing various programmes within the MAF workplace, and her training skills in teaching at school, the church and the workplace."

A story from Carl

"I'm sure all of you have noticed the enormous amount of machinery that road contractors use? Well, after much research, I realised that most of that machinery is entirely necessary to seal a runway, which is essentially the same thing. Thus we found ourselves in need of a big heap of machinery. We already had a mini excavator, and we managed to hire a roller compactor and later a 4X4 truck. After purchasing a 2nd-hand Bobcat skid-steer loader from money generously donated by a church group in Australia, we were well on our way. Soon after, we discovered that importing the Grader and Ripper attachments that we needed for it would be way too expensive, and they wouldn't get here in time for the project, so...what to do? I decided that if you can't get something you need, then you've just got to build it yourself..."



While aircraft are an integral part of MAF's work, an airstrip is just as important! Carl has assisted in the development of new equipment for building new runways.



May '09 – “We've had some trials over the past few months with bad weather, machinery breakdowns and sickness hampering our progress. At one point a tropical cyclone passed directly over Ampasinambo, bringing a flood that left our camp and half the runway site completely under water! Fortunately, our two volunteers were

able to evacuate to higher ground minutes before the river broke its banks! Once the water dried up, we managed to drive a 4x4 to the village to rotate work teams. After driving 400km to the coast, the remaining 100km took a full two days on what is little more than a walking track. In total, we made two trips in and out, a total of almost 100 hrs of gruelling driving, trashing our poor hilux in the process. This has hardened our resolve to finish the airstrip so our aircraft can do the same two trips in less than 4 hrs!”

Aug '09 – “We opened the runway in Ampasinambo on Monday 13th July 2009, after an exhausting 2 weeks in the bush for me, having to cope with machine breakdowns, rain and mud, and only 3 other young guys to supervise the local volunteers. Praise God around 200 people turned up to



help on the Saturday, and we were able to get almost 500m of runway ready for the plane and ACM inspector on Monday. It was a wonderful day with almost 1000 people coming for the celebration! I was so blessed to be part of this before my return to NZ.”

“As we come to the end of our service with MAF, we would like to thank everyone for their support, encouragement and prayers over the years. The time we spent in Madagascar was full of many trial and challenges which we know we were able to overcome as a result of those prayers. We feel a real connection with Madagascar and MAF and believe we can continue to contribute to the work being done as God guides us. We are excited for the new opportunities that lie ahead.”

Carl and Michelle Ramsey have been an asset to MAF, and we commend them for their years of service and hard work, and wish them all God's best for the future.

Yours to help transform the world,

Mark Fox
Chief Executive

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...All you need is a bit of Engineering and a lot of Kiwi ingenuity! With the help of Thomas, a volunteer from Switzerland, we got to work. After a lot of head scratching, a few trips to the scrap dealer, even more measuring, cutting, grinding, welding, and, yes I'll admit it, bashing things with a great big hammer, we came up with some equipment that you might expect to see on TV shows like Junk yard wars, or Scrap heap challenge!



We also built a tar drum heater, a tar spray unit, an asphalt mixer, and took with us materials to build more stuff on site that we would need but had no time to finish. By plane it takes 45mins to get to Marolambo. By road it was 500km and 3 days. Twice we needed to unload the bobcat and use it pull its own trailer out of the mud. We eventually collapsed beside the runway the third afternoon. We had made it, and now we could start to do what we had begun to prepare for 6 months ago.”

