

Photo Credit: Lindsay Keats



Stefan's post-op flight

After a night in hospital for a routine tonsillectomy operation at Hutt Hospital, four-year-old Stefan and Mum Joanne were discharged home to the Wairarapa.

Joanne recalls the medical team did warn of side effects such as post tonsillectomy bleeds that may happen around day 10, but reassured her that these weren't very common, with a 1 in 100 chance this could happen.

Stefan had been home with his siblings for a couple of

days when he came over to his Mum to ask for a snack, Joanne could see blood in his mouth, Stefan told her he kept spitting blood.

Joanne wasted no time in phoning their GP, who said to take Stefan straight to hospital. She quickly loaded Stefan and his baby sister



Stefan ready to board the Westpac Rescue Helicopter

into the car and headed to Masterton Hospital.

Soon after arriving in A&E, Joanne heard the medical team discussing that it would be quicker to get the Westpac Rescue Helicopter rather than risk travelling via

Continued over >



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Thanks to you here is Stefan arriving at Wellington Hospital

road ambulance and getting stuck in traffic.

Joanne heard the call being made requesting the helicopter, she said it felt like 10 to 15 minutes and the Life Flight crew were there in the room with them.

Joanne recalls she panicked as had her baby with her who was fully breastfed, she thought she was going to have to choose between Stefan and her young daughter. The crew were amazing and reassured

Living in the Wairarapa, Life Flight's service is much needed, we're very grateful.

Joanne that she could bring her baby too and went and found some earmuffs for her. They gave Stefan some pain relief and made sure Joanne and both children were calm

before they took off for Wellington.

Stefan spent four days in Wellington Hospital, his pain levels increased significantly, and he suffered high temperatures, it took some time to get him eating again, but thankfully no further surgery was required.

"The way the crew composed themselves really helped. They were calm and thorough. They were kind to us. The fact that they let me bring my baby too, saved a lot of stress and heartache."
Joanne.

Supporting Life Flight

without cheques

In preparation for this time, we have been looking into how our wonderful supporters can continue to support Life Flight without using a cheque book.

However you choose to donate, thank you for your amazing support of The Life Flight Trust.

Have you considered giving online?



Donate on Life Flight's Website

You can make your donation using your credit card on our website: www.lifeflight.org.nz/donate



Donate via Online Banking

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Please remember to pop your Life Flight Supporter Number in the reference field so we can make sure we get your tax receipt to you. Once this has been set up you can donate at any time that suits you.



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Visit your local bank branch, the staff will be able to advise you of alternative ways you can donate to Life Flight.

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With borders closed, this summer there will be more New Zealanders travelling around this beautiful country of ours.



Life Flight's rescue crews have been busy with improved weather and people out and about enjoying their summer holidays in Aotearoa.



Not a bad spot to rest up!

It is hugely important when exploring the outdoors, to ensure you are well prepared and equipped. Because medical emergencies occur, and accidents happen.

Colin Thomson was on a tramping trip when he became lost. An experienced trumper, Colin was reluctant to set off his Personal Locator Beacon (PLB). After much thought and deliberation, he came to

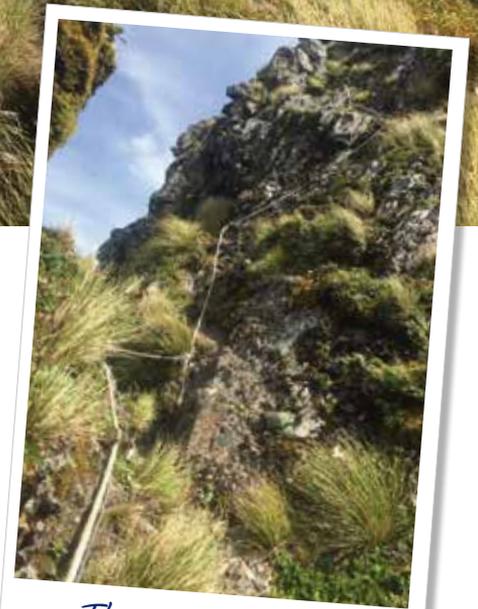
the realisation that he was lost, tired after tramping over difficult terrain for two days (the second day in which he had tramped for 16 hours), extremely disoriented, nighttime was fast approaching, and he had no cell phone coverage.

Decision made, Colin set off his PLB and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter was tasked to find him.

"One of the crewmen pointed out to me that if I had taken a small number of steps in one direction, I would have fallen down a substantial cliff, the outcome would have been very different".

Having a PLB certainly made the rescue crew's job much easier, Colin was found and winched on board the Westpac Rescue Helicopter and returned safely to his family. However it became noticeably clear after Colin was safely in the Helicopter that the outcome could have been very, very different.

Colin feels incredibly lucky to have the outcome that he did.



The type of terrain Colin was exploring

This highlighted to both Colin and the Westpac Rescue Helicopter team the dangers of becoming disoriented while out tramping in New Zealand's great outdoors and the importance of carrying a personal locator beacon.



Colin with his family at his son's graduation thanks to you

Life Flight Open Day

Sunday 14th March

A day to say 'thanks' to you



Join us at our Air Rescue Base in Rongotai between 10am-2.30pm for another amazing day of action, entertainment, prizes and delicious food.

Get up-close with a dozen emergency services and watch our Westpac Chopper demonstrate a live winch rescue. Come along and you could even win a chopper ride!

It's a great way for us to say thanks, meet you - our wonderful supporters - and raise life-saving funds to help keep us flying. It's an action packed day for you, your family and friends!

Entry by koha to Life Flight.

Visit our Facebook page or lifeflight.org.nz/openday for more info.

Thank you to our Event Partner Interislander for supporting Life Flight and helping make this day happen!



Westpac Chopper Street Appeal – Friday 21 May

Across Marlborough and Greater Wellington in partnership with our Principal Sponsor Westpac.

Interested in volunteering? We'd love to hear from you!

Please email: events@lifeflight.org.nz or phone 04 920 2242.



Did you know that individuals can claim a tax refund of up to 33% of their donation? For more information, visit IRD's website, give us a call on 04 920 2242 or email info@lifeflight.org.nz.

A big shout out to all who helped with this newsletter

Like everything we do here at the rescue base, this newsletter was made possible with a generous team effort. We send sincere appreciation to Fuji Xerox for donating printer paper, NZ Post for discounted postage, photographers who donated images, and the wonderful patients who volunteered time and shared their remarkable stories.

Thank you!

Meet the Team – Scott Palmer

What is your job with Life Flight?

Rescue Helicopter Crewman

How long have you worked for Life Flight?

I started as a casual Air Ambulance Crewman in 2012 and moved onto the Westpac Rescue Helicopter full time in August 2020.

What work did you do before coming to Life Flight?

Farming, retail, IT and emergency services. Most recently I was a Firefighter and Chief Fire Officer of the Wellington Airport Fire Service.

What attracted you to this job?

My earliest childhood career aspiration was to be a Helicopter Pilot, although I took a different career path, I've always wanted to work on helicopters. Making a real difference in the community, working shift work and being challenged to put my skills to good use make this my dream job.

What is the best part of the job?

Being able to help someone in their time of need while flying in a helicopter with great colleagues.

What is the hardest part of your job?

We often face adverse situations where a combination of time, weather, location, patient condition and emotion all need to be considered. Knowledge, experience and teamwork combine to get the job done.

What was the main thing that stood out for you when you started working here?

I remember back in 2012 being amazed by the absolute commitment to our patients. Having a corporate background I expected a charity to have to focus on the dollars, it was refreshing to find that the patient is always the priority. This is made possible by the tireless effort of our amazing fundraising, marketing and support teams and you, our supporters.

What do you do when you're not at work?

I live on a lifestyle block near Carterton, volunteer in the Carterton Volunteer Fire Brigade, ride a Ducati Superbike and love to travel – usually much further abroad than 2020 allowed!

What would you like to say to our wonderful supporters?

Thank you for enabling us to help so many people. Every dollar, every volunteered minute, every social media share makes a difference – we couldn't do what we do without your support.



Lives you have touched

Because of you, hundreds of people have been helped in the second half of 2020.

Thank You!

Statistics: Jul' - Dec' 2020

People helped
695

For each person helped there is a ripple effect that goes on to touch their family, friends and neighbours. Thank you for saving lives and keeping whānau together. You're amazing!



A routine ultrasound for Mum-to-be Rebekah had a different outcome than expected...

It was supposed to be a routine ultrasound for mum-to-be Rebekah; however, it was soon discovered that twins Charlotte and Eleanor were wanting to be born at just 24 weeks; 16 weeks early.

Rebekah quickly drove to Palmerston North hospital, where everything started to happen very quickly.

"The nurses told me a plane was on its way to take me to Wellington Hospital".

To add to the tension, Rebekah's husband was not able to be with her as this was



Crewman Ian loads the precious cargo for the trip home

in the tail-end of the Covid-19 lockdown last year. It would be a nerve-wracking time for any Mum, but Rebekah said *"the Life Flight crew were just really kind and caring and supportive in a very stressful situation"*.

"There was one crewman, Ian – he was so particular about getting everything right [for the twins] – it was quite amazing!"

Admitted to Wellington Hospital, doctors were able to delay the labour for almost four weeks, with the twins being born at 27 ½ weeks. Charlotte and Eleanor had some hurdles to go through being born so early, but *"they were in the very best place for them"*.

Three weeks after their birth, Rebekah was able to bring her twins back to Palmerston North via Life Flight's air ambulance plane, where they



Eleanor and Charlotte have just had their first Christmas with family thanks to your support

spent another nine weeks in hospital.

The flight home was more relaxed for Rebekah, her precious cargo was handled with absolute care and precision.

Now bubbly, 8 ½ month-old babies (corrected age – 5 ½ months), Charlotte and Eleanor have experienced their first Christmas with family.

"Thank you. Your donations go to something so valuable. If people weren't so generous and kind, then stories like ours could have a very different outcome".

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