

Momentous and Mountainous

Description

Early this week we headed back out to the Kevin Rohan Memorial Eco Foundation. We took a young couple from the US that we met at church to show them around and were also able to check up on the progress on the clinic and see some of the equipment that they ordered. It was a beautiful day and the first time we were able to see the mountains from that location. What an impressive view on a relatively clear day.

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Mountain views beyond the Monastery

KRMEF is very grateful and excited about the equipment that has arrived and are looking forward to receiving the rest of it. We know they will be able to do a lot of good in their community and the nearby leper colony as well as other areas through their health camps. It has been a monumental task reaching this point and feels great to see the beginning of this investment benefitting thousands of people and lives.

As we make plans for returning home and are getting everything in order we are also trying to visit the

“must see” places of Nepal. One of these is Mt. Everest. We knew hiking to base camp was out as was climbing the mountain itself, but we *were* able to take a helicopter mountain flight! We flew out of Kathmandu over villages and along the Himalayas to Lukla, the main starting point of the Everest Base Camp (EBC) trek. It has an amazing airport. The runway is nestled into the steep mountainside and is only 527 meters long making it one of the shortest runways in the world. Since we were in a helicopter it wasn’t a particularly scary landing.

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After unloading some fuel so that the helicopter would be lighter and better able to fly at that altitude we headed toward Mt. Everest. Rick and I were dropped off at a flat spot to wait while the other three passengers flew around the point, over EBC and got a good look at the highest mountain in the world at 8849 meters or 29,032 feet. It felt strange to just be left there alone in the middle of the mountains. Fortunately our pilot returned, dropped the other passengers and then took us for a pretty close view of Everest. It was amazing although Everest is not as impressive as we imagined it would be. It is set back and just a triangle shape without a lot of snow. We saw other mountains that were more imposing. The Nepali name for Everest is Sagarmatha which according to one source means, “the Head of the Earth touching the Heaven,” however it can be translated a little differently depending on the source.

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The “wait for your turn” landing spot



Mt. Everest with the base camp site below. It is the off season so EBC isn't set up.

We landed to pick up our fellow travelers and then flew to the Hotel Everest View. It is the highest hotel in the world at 3880 meters (12,729 ft). We spent at least an hour there just walking around, talking with people, and taking pictures because we opted not to enjoy the \$33 per person breakfast. While wandering we saw half a yak! Well, it was actually a dzo which is a cross between a yak and a domestic cow. Still cool. It was funny because the dzo just kind of walked into the clearing, posed for a few photos and then turned around and left.

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Hotel Everest View landing site









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The Dzo

After church and choir practice on Saturday we traveled part way to Lamjung where we would attend a ceremony turning over an addition to the school (funded by D?Terra) and the furniture LDSC donated. We got up early on Sunday and finished the drive arriving with time to visit the members of the community that have created a co-op to be able to sell their buffalo milk to Kathmandu. They needed a chilling vat and we were able to provide that and they will build a shed to house it. They have improved the road so the truck can make the pick up. Hopefully this will help the community to provide a better life for themselves.



Me with some of the village women

The school “handover” ceremony was long and hot but good. There were many speakers and the students performed traditional dances. I was asked to speak and so shared a few words about choices determining the course of our lives. I quoted a little Dr. Seuss. “You have brains in your head, you have feet in your shoes, you can steer yourself any direction you choose.” I’m afraid it lost something in the translation though. I felt inspired by the local “boom band” that played as we walked in a little parade from the area of the chilling vat down to the school.

<http://firstthreeodds.org/wpcontent/uploads/2024/03/boom-band-playing-tj-dancing.mp4>

On this momentous occasion as I officially turned over the keys for the school building it was the culmination of a lot of work done in this community over the last five years. Latter-day Saint Charities

and CHOICE provided water for the community, cow sheds, poly houses, agricultural training and school furniture. D?Terra and CHOICE provided water for the school and six new classrooms. During this time there has been a tremendous amount of growth in these people and for their prospects in life.

I have to say that Mt. Everest is impressive and I am thrilled that we could see it so close but seeing the people blossom is so much more rewarding. They were some of the poorest of the poor and are now able to provide for themselves, send their children to school and look to even better things in the future.

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Cute Kids



A young woman performing a traditional dance













Kathmandu as we were approaching the helipad

Now that we are back from our trip with our feet on solid ground we are ready to make the most of our last week before our replacements arrive. Yikes! Our time here is rapidly coming to a close.

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