

Jackie is on the way.....from Minneapolis to Irian Jaya

May 29, 1991

Dear friends,

On Wednesday, May 29 at 4 p.m. I left for Irian Jaya, Indonesia, on perhaps the most dramatic, adventurous, physically demanding, and nostalgic journey of my life.

On June 10, the government of Irian Jaya along with the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) will dedicate a monument to honor the arrival in 1954 of the Gospel to the Baliem Valley in the interior of Irian Jaya.

Irian Jaya was ruled by the Netherlands until 1963. Representing the Dutch government and the C&MA, my Dad led a pioneering team along with fellow missionary Lloyd Van Stone into the Baliem valley in 1954, accompanied by two nationals, Elisa and Ruth Dobi. Today the region is 86% Christian, due to my father's obedience to the Lord, and the obedience of other pioneers who followed in his steps. The Dani, people of the Baliem Valley, were a stone age culture who had never seen a white man, had no knowledge of a wheel or even pottery. Some were cannibals. The men wear gourds, the women grass skirts. The Baliem has some of the most wild and inhospitable terrain on the surface of the earth. I have never been there, though my parents spent many years there.

The dedication date has been changed several times because the monument wasn't ready, and national and local officials were not available to attend. We have been on an emotional roller coaster with the repeated changes in dates and airline tickets, but praise the Lord, it is all settled now! However, the mission base in Irian Jaya cautioned us that even though arrangements have been made, few things go as planned. Besides dealing with Asian cultures, everything is subject to the weather in the interior regions. But they did promise us adventure! We were advised to bring good hiking shoes, a hat for sun and shelter, long sleeves and repellent for mosquitoes and flies, and rain wear.

When you get this letter, I will have already met the team in Los Angeles, and we will have left together for Indonesia at 9 p.m. May 29. The team consists of my brother Ron, his two daughters Pam (age 24) and Kim (age 22), and my sister Cindy's son Cabot (age 22). Together the five of us will represent our Mickelson family at the dedication honoring our father and grandfather. We will also tour the area that he impacted as a missionary.

The following is our itinerary. Bear in mind that everything within Irian Jaya is subject to change.

May 29, 4 p.m.: Left Minneapolis, changed planes in Salt Lake City, and arrived in Los Angeles at 7 p.m.
At 9 p.m, left for Indonesia.

May 31, Friday, 4:50 a.m.: Arrive in Biak, Irian Jaya. (We lose May 30 crossing the international date line) Biak is on an island off the coast of Irian Jaya. We may stay overnight here to overcome some jet lag. (They are 14 hours ahead of Mpls) We will then fly commercial airline to Nabire on the coast of Irian Jaya, and here spend another day or two resting, and seeing the mission work.
From Nabire on, all our flights will be by Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF) in small planes.

June 4, Tuesday: Pyramid. Cabot will celebrate his 22nd birthday here. (The last time my sister saw my father before he went to be with the Lord was on June 10, 22 years ago, right after Cabot's birth. It is special to her that June 10 is the day of the dedication of this monument)

One of the members of dad's original team, Elisa Obi, will be joining us along the way!

June 4-10: Baliem Valley. We will visit missionary John Wilson and his wife; John Wilson was a classmate of my husband John at St. Paul Bible College. We will visit places named Hetigima, Tulim, Pugima, Ibele, Silimo, and Tangma. Dr. Myron Bromley, linguist and peer of my father, will show us around the Baliem during the week. This will probably be a physically demanding time for me -- we anticipate a lot of hiking, hot sun, and insects.

Some of the MAF flights in the Baliem have a 700 lb limit (I had to fax our body weights to them...my weight made public!)

We will fly across high mountains and go through narrow passes, landing on small narrow air strips. We were told it may be

necessary to fly in with a change of shirt only, and MAYBE they can bring our luggage the next day! "You might have to rough it

just like us!", they said. So I have my hiking shoes, my Indiana Jones hat (with red scarf attached of course), my insect repellent,

my rain wear...and the grace of God in preparation for this adventure.

June 10, Monday: Wamena/Sinatma area. ***Dedication of the monument.

June 11: to Jayapura, mission headquarters. On this day we may fly to the Wissel lakes area where my father built a log house that

still stands. (He cut the trees down, and did everything else himself). Tourist visas are not issued for this region, but MAF thinks

they can land for an hour or so, and we see the area. (My sister lived here with my folks for three years.)
(over)

June 12, Wednesday: to Biak early a.m. At 7 p.m. leave Biak for Los Angeles. We will live Wednesday twice.
Arrive LA

Wednesday 6:10 p.m., 50 minutes before we left Biak! Stay overnight with my sister Cindy.

June 13, Thursday: Leave LA at 1:40 p.m., arrive Mpls. 10:17 p.m. Praise God!

I appreciate your prayer more than I can find words to express; I am reminded of my father's special verse: "We live as you stand fast in the Lord." (I Thess. 3:8) I think I understand better now why he chose that as his verse.

Pray:

*for the safety and health of us all.

*that I will be physically strong and have plenty of endurance.

*that we would be messengers of peace and encouragement.

*that each of us will be greatly impacted with the same missionary zeal that my father had.

*that we would have the same love for Jesus and obedience to Him as my father had.

*for the 4 large pieces of luggage we are taking with us for returning missionary Jim Sunde.

*and one large suitcase filled with gifts for the workers in Irian Jaya. (for their safety and passage through customs without duty)

*that the monument would speak to all who see it of the love of Jesus that compels men to go to the ends of the earth with the Good

News!

I want to thank those of you who gave to make this trip possible, and thank those who have been praying for this complex trip to come together...and thank you for your continuing prayer.

Now may the grace and peace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

Love,

Jackie Matthews

p.s. Later this year we are planning to take a prayer team to Aceh, Sumatra in Indonesia. Sumatra is as far north of the equator (5 degrees) as Irian Jaya is south of the equator (5 degrees). Sumatra is the most westerly part of Indonesia, while Irian Jaya is the most easterly. They are separated east to west by 13,500 islands of Indonesia, several seas, and 3,500 miles. Irian Jaya is just north of Australia, while Sumatra is just west of the peninsula of Malaysia. John and I believe that there is a significant reason we are "putting our feet on the land" at both extreme ends of that nation.