

# Asia Christian Services UPDATE!

3rd Quarter, 2016

Formerly: South East Asia Evangelizing Mission • LaVerne & Lois Morse, Founders



## LaVerne Morse January 4, 1929 - August 2, 2016

The last day of LaVerne Morse's life on earth was a great day. He spent some time in his chair at his desk in his office in his family's home. He watched old videos of his travels in Cambodia. A few travelers that were with him were Norman Stanley, Bill McClure and Ken and Jinnie Helm. He also watched a video of the Hallelujah Chorus sung by a Lisu choir in Communist

China. The afternoon was spent with Lois into the dinner hour. They ate together in the dining hall at the Mason Christian Village. Near the close of their evening meal, LaVerne passed quietly into the presence of our dear Lord.

LaVerne and Lois had been married 63 years. Their life together had been marked by embracing the leading they felt God had called out in their lives. It has been one of great adventure, diversity, wonder and amazement, hardship, joy and thankfulness. Some of you have followed LaVerne's writings in Horizons Magazine and the Christian Standard since 1956.

LaVerne and Lois served God and ministered to people in a very remote part of the world, the land where China, Tibet and Burma meet. Upper Burma on the Southeast corner of Tibet was a land which had very little opportunity to hear the Gospel Message. An old magazine said, "This area bound by the General Stillwell Road on the South, the Hump Ranges of West China on the East, the India Naga Hills on the west and the Snow Capped Tibetan mountain peaks on the north was a jungle land and one of the remaining lands of mystery."

All of his life, LaVerne faithfully served the people of this area, teaching them about the God who made them. Much joy, celebration, singing and thankfulness was the outcome of all this work. The joy of finally knowing who their Maker was put a spirit into the people that has been reflected in their lives and outlook which has in turn aided in spreading the good news of the Gospel.

Thousands of people in different parts of the world, particularly Asia, are



LaVerne and Lois, 1954



Muladi Plain



Putao Plain



Rawang Mountain Church



sharing in the sense of loss felt by the Morse family. Many called him M. PHA YO SUH (Teacher Joseph in Lisu) or Grandfather or they referred to him as their Spiritual Father.

*We are deeply sorry for the loss of our Spiritual Father LaVerne, teacher Joseph. He is a humble servant of God and always thinking for expanding God's kingdom and thinking of his fellow workers. He gave best example of Christ for us." -- Simon Thaung from Burma*

*His spirit and inspiration messages are still living in our heart. It will never die. His great faith, encouragement, example of humility, loving God and neighbors and lost souls are working among us." -- from India*

*Few Indian Lisu's have seen LaVerne. But ALL of us love him. He is a Hero and a loving icon for us all. He has made an immense contribution to the Kingdom work in this part of the world by his loving leadership and inspiring model. Even now MOST OF THE CHURCH LEADERS are his children as he raised us up. This he did by preparing a nest for us near Shillong. Many leaders emerged from that nest. And today these leaders are leading the work here." -- Mapha Aphu A-BI-Yv from India*

*We wouldn't have been able to serve the Lord today without him. He taught, trained, guided us just like his own children.... His humbleness, sacrifices, dedication, loving, caring, visionary, planning, and unity were remarkable and will be engraved in our memories forever." -- from Ahdi Mark and Tasanee from Thailand*



Rawang Mountain Home

## Early Years

LaVerne served as a Christian Missionary for the people of Communist China, Burma (Myanmar), North East India, Thailand, Cambodia, and Communist Laos. Throughout the years, his wife Lois has been a loving companion and fellow missionary.

LaVerne's parents first went to outer Tibet in 1921 with veteran missionary Dr. Albert Shelton. Dr. Shelton was returning to the edge of Tibet at Batang, the mission station, trying to get entry into that land. Dr. Shelton was accidentally killed by bandits upon re-entry into the country. Though grief stricken, J. Russell and Gertrude Morse, stayed on the Tibetan Border for a time and then moved into regions of western China where they labored for 20 years until WW II.

They came back to the USA in 1927. LaVerne was born in Los Angeles, California on January 4, 1929. When he was six months old his parents returned to Yunnan province, south-west China together with his two elder brothers Eugene and Robert. His younger sister Ruth Margaret was born in 1935. Also, the Morse's adopted two sisters, Anzie and Drama Esther. The children grew up in China and learned to speak the Chinese, Lisu and Tibetan languages in addition to English in their home. Later LaVerne was able to speak six Languages.



LaVerne, age 9

Because of political turmoil they were not able to return to Tibet and instead settled in the Mekong Valley in the village of Yea Chi in response to the request of Lisu Christians who were already there. The gospel message at this time was often spread by new Christians visiting other villages or traveling in trading goods. The 1930's were times of active overall mission growth.

LaVerne was raised in the family work of pioneer evangelism. The land was very remote. Much time was spent walking up and down trails visiting from village to village. Climbing mountains and passing through narrow gorges, they shared the love of God with all they met. They endured rugged land and weather changes from snow on the mountains to steaming jungles with ravenous leaches. They emphasized evangelism, Bible Training Schools and they brought medical help.



Morse Family, 1935





**Morse Family, 1942**

Aunt Ruth remembers that the family began each day with family devotions before beginning the work.

In 1939 because of a Tibetan invasion and also urgent pleading for them to come to a different location, they left Yea Chi and moved to the Lisu village of To-ba-lo, also in the Mekong Valley. Soon after they moved, their house was destroyed in a flood and they decided to relocate into the Salween Valley.

LaVerne and Ruth Margaret were in a boarding school in Dali, China when the first invasion of the Japanese came into China. Planes came close to them with bombs and they had to escape through tunnels into the mountains. Ruth Margaret recalled this event during these last years but LaVerne never spoke of this before. When we asked him about it, he stated, "It was just part of life."

In 1943 as the WWII had come to China, Eugene, Robert and LaVerne traveled over the Himalayas to Fort Hertz (Putao), a British post in northern Burma. Having contracted Malaria, they were flown to India for care. There LaVerne was enrolled in boarding school in Northern India. When he received money from his father and his grandmother, he began a journey across India to Bombay where he secured passage on a



**Salween Valley**

Military Cargo ship which eventually brought him to America to live with his Aunt Louise and graduate from High School in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and then finish two years at Minnesota Bible College.

At the end of LaVerne's sophomore year at Minnesota Bible College in 1949, he received a letter from his father who wrote, "The Communists are about to conquer all of China. The doors are closing fast. If you want to get into China before the doors are closed, please come immediately." LaVerne quickly packed his bags and joined the family in China.



**LaVerne at MBC, 1948**

In China other missionaries had joined the Morses since 1937 and on through WW II. They included Harold Taylor, Warren and Isabel (Maxey) Dittemore, Dorothy Sterling, Jane Kinnett, David and Lois Reese, Laura Banks, Imogene Williams and Mel Byers.

## First Term Adult Missionary



**LaVerne, 1949**

During LaVerne's first term as an adult missionary from 1949 -1952, he and his family had many memorable and unusual experiences. The various Morse families escaped from Communist China. Ruth Margaret flew back to the USA to live with Mrs. Myers, Helen Morse's mother. Robert and Betty walked with other missionaries over "the Hump" to Burma. Eugene and Helen escaped with LaVerne's help as he chartered a plane and extracted them from their city as the Communist Army was entering. They entered Burma through Rangoon. Gertrude and Drema Esther escaped by way of Hong Kong. LaVerne and Mel Byers traveled six months around the communist lines into Tibet and down into the Salween Valley hoping to join the family. The family had already gone to Burma. After the snow covered passes opened they walked another ten days over the rugged mountains and jungles into Burma.

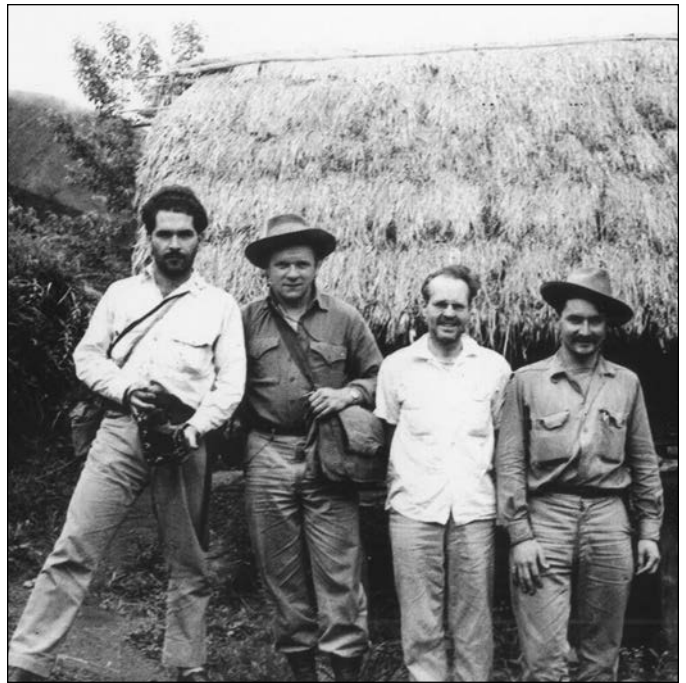


**Mel Byers and LaVerne, 1949**





**LaVerne and Mel in Tibet, 1949**



**Robert, Mel, David Rees, and LaVerne**



**LaVerne on Mountaintop**

J. Russell stayed on in Kunming another year and a half, then was arrested and put in solitary confinement in a Communist Prison for 15 months. Other missionary team members also escaped with the family but only the Morses and Dorothy Sterling were issued Burmese visa permits. The rest traveled on to other ministry stations. A joyous day came in 1952 when LaVerne and Gertrude stopped in Hong Kong to see if there was any news about J. Russell on their way back to the USA. To their surprise, and by God's providence and in answer to the prayers of many, he had been released and they were united. Many churches had sustained a seven day, 24 hour prayer vigil and he was released on the last day.



**LaVerne in China, 1949**



**Prison release to USA, 1952**



## Marriage

In June, 1952 LaVerne returned from Burma to the USA for furlough and for further education. At this time LaVerne met Lois, the daughter of Kathrynne and George Mark Elliott, Professor at Cincinnati Bible Seminary. They met when they were both attending a wedding rehearsal at LaVerne's living link church in Joliet, Illinois. Lois was singing and this was when LaVerne first saw her and was taken in his heart for her. They next went to a Christian camp at Cedar Lake, Indiana. LaVerne was a missionary speaker and Lois was working that summer for Bob Lilly the Camp Manager. LaVerne transferred his schooling to Cincinnati Bible Seminary where Lois was attending and they were married March 27th 1953.

A story needing to be told at this point is that years before either Lois or LaVerne were born, their grandparents had met. Lois's grandfather, G. W. Elliott, an evangelist in South Dakota, prayed with Ruth McKinzie Morse



LaVerne and Lois, 1953



Laverne and Lois' Wedding, March 27, 1953

at a Revival at the church she was attending. She requested prayer that she could have one more child to dedicate to the Lord's work. Justin Russell, LaVerne's father was born. Who knew that two generations later the granddaughter of the evangelist and the grandson of the woman who was prayed for, would marry and go to Asia as missionaries. One more note -- Lois's mother Kathrynne in her young years wanted to go to China as a missionary. It did not work out, but one day her daughter did go.

## The Burma/Muladi Years

In 1954, LaVerne graduated with a B.A. degree. In November, 1954 LaVerne and Lois sailed from San Francisco on a 13 passenger freighter named the MS Peter Maersk to Bangkok. In December 1954 they arrived in Bangkok. Marcia was born August 30, 1955 at a hospital in Rangoon. When Marcia was 6 weeks old they flew to Myitkyina. Then they went 120 miles by jeep, a long two day journey to Sumprabum.

From there, many Lisu and Rawang people helped carry supplies, food and Marcia's mosquito protected travel crib overland through the jungles on a seven day walking and horseback journey to Muladi. The family lived in Muladi most of the time from 1955 to 1964. Mark was born in Rangoon on April 14, 1959. Cindy was born in Muladi on October 2, 1960. Beth was born in Rangoon on August 7, 1963. Lois was six months pregnant with Shirley when they left Burma and she was born in Cincinnati on December 6, 1964.



Aboard the MS Peter Maersk, 1954



LaVerne on the freighter deck, 1954



Lois and Baby Marcia's travel crib





**Lois on a jeep trip, 1955**

The Putao and Muladi years in the late 1950's and early 1960's were wonderful years of rich harvest as the Morse family worked together in Northern Burma in pioneering evangelistic work. All family members invested their talents and gifts, each doing what they were best able to do. During these years they worked in partnership with the Lisu and Rawang leaders serving to develop Christian Leadership training programs. Concentration was given to training national Christian leaders for the churches. LaVerne's emphasis in addition to evangelism was training tribal Christian leaders in the 1-month, 3-month and 6-month Bible Schools in which hundreds of Lisu and Rawang Christians enrolled. Many walked up to 15 days from their home villages and distant mountains to study. Classes were taught 5 days a week, 8 hours a day. On weekends the Rawang and Lisu Christians walked to nearby villages on evangelistic trips. They learned by teaching and experience.

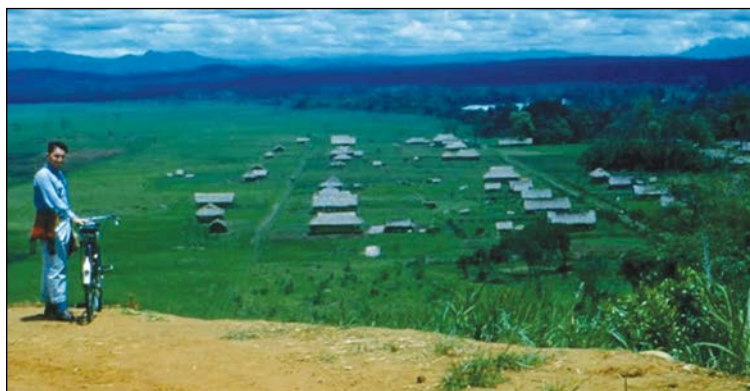
LaVerne's other emphasis was heading up a program of Christian Schools. Teaching for pre-literate levels upwards he aimed for an educated Christian leadership for the churches in the Country. LaVerne served as the Principal of the Putao Christian School. The enrollment grew to over 300 students who learned 9 months per year. Many of the graduates became evangelists, pastors, missionaries, teachers in village schools, pharmacists, business men and government officials, as well as farmers. Many became elders and deacons in the churches. In all the Christian Leadership Training programs the emphasis was on having high goals in fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ. The Lisu and Rawang Churches through the years have sent hundreds of their own to other people groups all over the country of Burma until today in 2016 over 40 people groups have been reached with the Gospel of Christ.

During these years Lois took care of the home, worked alongside the family in different areas and taught music in the Lisu language. The Lisu grew to love to sing after they became Christians. Before their initial conversion as animists, the Lisu people didn't sing. Lois continued their instruction and she even taught the "Hallelujah Chorus," which at one point was sung A Cappella by a 240 voice choir. One recent book contains a story of a traveler through Northern Burma hiking over the mountains who heard a noise and asked, "Is that thunder?" The answer was, "No, that is the Lisu Christians singing."

LaVerne and Lois left in 1964, relocating in Cincinnati. The new military government that took over the country ordered all foreigners to leave in 1965. The rest of the Morse family traveled toward India experiencing the "Exodus to the Hidden Valley" years.



**LaVerne in a dugout canoe**



**LaVerne at Muladi**



**Dinner in banana leaves**



**Morse Family Team**

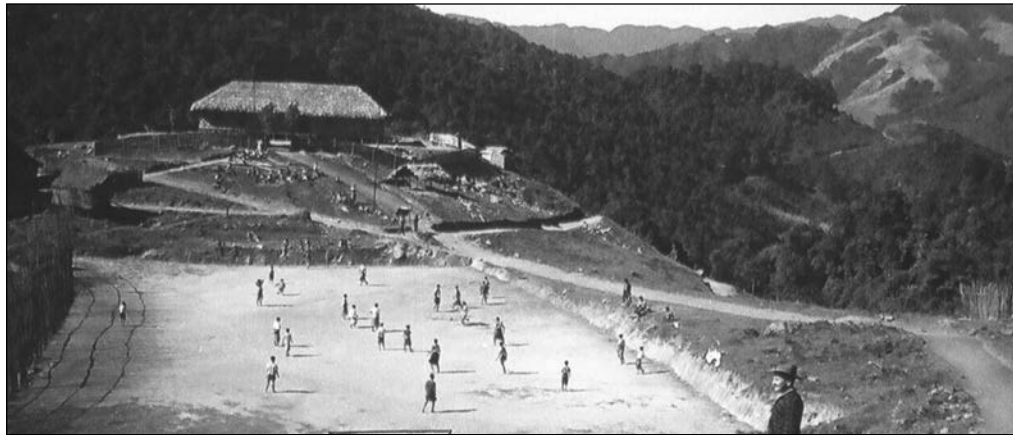




Overflowing Church



Morse Family, 1961



Namtamai Valley School



LaVerne and Kids, Putao Plain



Leadership Training School



Garden Harvest



Church in Muladi



Marcia, Ahpu, Mark, and LaVerne along the river





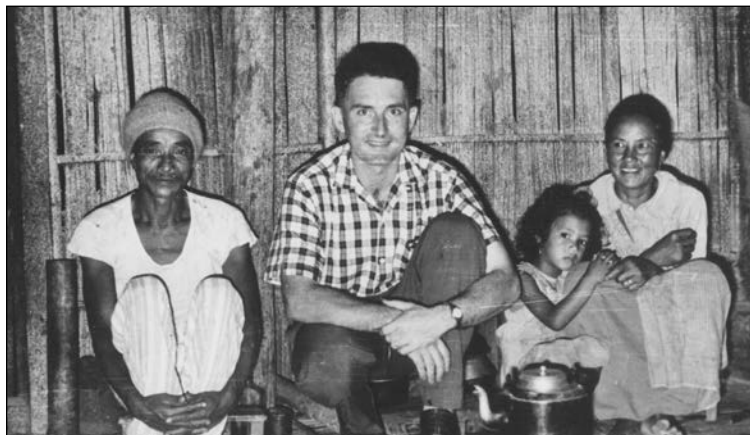
Morse Family Women and Children



LaVerne and JRussell in front of a grapefruit tree



Convention



LaVerne in North East India

## Missions Professor

LaVerne served as the professor of Missions at the Cincinnati Bible Seminary for 22 years from 1965 – 1987. He appealed to the administration to allow foreign students to study at CBS. He with other professors like Lewis Foster, sponsored many students from around the world to come to Cincinnati to study. At one point, he sponsored 75 from Cambodia alone during the Pol Pot “killing fields” regime. His students were from Egypt, Pakistan, Laos, India, China, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, Viet Nam, South America, Canada and many other countries.



Professor  
LaVerne Morse



LaVerne in his CBS office

*In 1982, Lee Turner interviewed me and he said, “I have a best friend LaVerne at Cincinnati Christian Seminary who helps students to study at CCS. After completing studies they return to their countries to preach the Gospel. I will send your credentials to him. In 1983 I got an I-20 from Brother LaVerne Morse.... His humble attitude influenced me a lot. After completing my studies I went to Pakistan.... He was a great man of God, prepared thousands of people to preach the Gospel around the World. He fought the good fight!” -- Dr. Saleem Massey, student from Pakistan*

*LaVerne was a man of vision -- a dreamer of realities to come. He was way before his time...what he projected would happen in missions is today a reality. He saw how modern technology would alter missionary endeavor and how interchurch cooperation would be necessary for the ongoing of the Gospel in difficult areas. And above all he saw that if the Gospel, particularly in Asia, was to go ahead, strong local leadership was needed. He was an advocate of local people, like me, working both with and even above the traditional western worker who had come from abroad.” -- Dr. Leonard Thompson, student from India*

*Brother Morse.... advanced all (other teachers) so much farther by living what he had learned. This provided him the practical knowledge and made him stand far ahead of anyone I know as a Missions teacher. Here is the best description: Brother Morse lived Missions, He always was dreaming of Missions, he ate his meals thinking of Missions, he walked Missions, he talked*



*Missions [all the time], all his efforts were for Missions, Finally he gave his life for Missions. Soldiers of the Cross like him do not die, they live in their students like me to carry his legacy on.*  
 -- Jay Henry, student Mid India Mission

*He was a man who always was thinking about 10-20 years ahead. He told me once that life was like playing a game of chess. Always thinking about making a move, but planning the next 5 moves at the same time. He was a "thinker, dreamer and planner," and encouraged countless individuals to do the same. I was one of those individuals who was touched by this giant man of God. He will be missed by hundreds." -- Doug Umbanhowar*

During the summers while LaVerne was teaching at CBS, he and his family traveled on behalf of the mission. The children relish the memories of family trips traveling out west to the Rockies, Oregon and Mexico in the back of a station wagon and going to church camps.



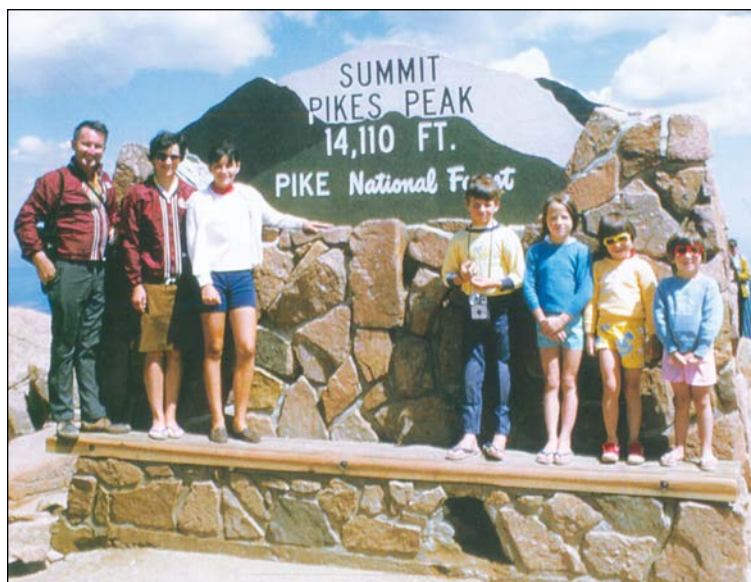
LaVerne and Lois in Thailand



Morse Family out West



Morse Family, 1972



Morse Family in Colorado



Professor Morse, Mid-India



Morse Family at Lake Michigan



## Founding ACS

LaVerne founded South East Asia Evangelizing Mission (Asia Christian Services) in 1966. He traveled frequently over the years to Thailand, India, Viet Nam and Burma for Short Term Mission Trips to teach in Christian Leadership Seminars. He called strategic conferences to discuss the expansion of the Gospel with Asian Fellow Missionaries for their further growth in Evangelism, New Church Planting, Christian Leadership Training, Literature Development and "Electronics". The latter included Gospel Radio Broadcasting to reach into the highly restricted areas of Communist China, Northeast India and Burma (Myanmar). He called his World Mission Strategy, "Evangelism plus 3 L's – Leadership Development, Literature and 'Electronics'". The radio ministry was established through the Far East Broadcasting Company of Manilla, Philippines in conjunction with the Gospel Broadcasting Mission and Bill McClure. LaVerne also served on the Board of International Disaster Emergency Services for 18 years and served as Vice-Chairman during some of those years.



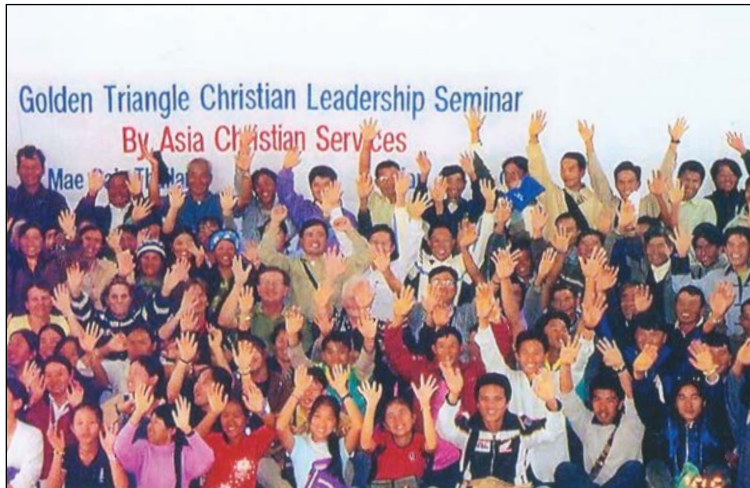
**LaVerne and Lois**



**LaVerne with Burma, Thailand, and Laos Leaders**



**LaVerne with Asia Leaders**



**Golden Triangle Leadership Seminar**



**LaVerne and Simon**



**LaVerne and Lisu Leaders**



**LaVerne in China**





Manassah, LaVerne, Norman, Samuel Ahdi, and Mark

After retiring from teaching at CBS, he continued to travel to Asia. His last trip was in 2010. Many trips included fellow travelers. He maintained a mission office from which he worked daily until he became ill with pneumonia in 2013. He received this letter from Asian Leaders about eight years ago.

*"We know how much you have done for us the people of Asia. You have trained leaders among Lisu, Rawang, Burmese, Chine, Naga, Ngochang, Mro, Hmong, Lahu, Ahka, Chinese, Cambodian, and many other tribes. You have encouraged and lifted up many new leaders, preachers, evangelists, and Christian leaders in every tribe and culture. We remember all those great leaders that you have trained and encouraged and have delegated and appointed and advised them for the good works. We remember how you did and started to do things that other people did not dare to do. Such as sending young leaders to go to the states for training. Yes, those people have come back and done wonderful works: (Bible Colleges) MBI, EBI, PCBS, Berea Bible Training Center, Zion Hill and CBI.*

*Now there are people working everywhere because of the seeds that you have planted. We just have to say, A-NAE as we Lisu always say. Thank you for your commitment to the Lord and for the people that you love so much.... We also pray that God will watch over M M as she has stood beside you all these years. We always remember how M M has sacrificed her life with you working among our Lisu and Rawang People up in the Northernmost of Burma and we remember the beautiful song that she sang and we are grateful to her that she taught us how to sing the beautiful song like her. Now we can hear in the valley and on the mountains of people singing to the Lord.*

*Mapa and Mama we want you to know that we are appreciative for your love. We know you have so much concern for the needs of the churches and you have done so much. We want you to have peace and joy that the works will continue and will be productive more than ever before.... In Christ we serve....*  
-- Ahtapa, Samuel Leme, and Chi-Ah-Due from Burma"

LaVerne's heart was always with God's people to reach the lost with God's love. His (standard) class on the Seven Sequential Objectives for World Evangelism began with #1. Contacting people where they are in their felt needs with the love of Christ.

LaVerne cherished time together and the precious love and friendship with his five children. That love extended to their families. His family loved him and admired him. He had 22 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren. One of his grandchildren wrote this:

*Grandpa encouraged me to see the world for how big it is and how to go explore it. At the same time he taught me to see everyone, no matter how different, as image bearers of God, loved and valued greatly by our Lord. This has shaped how I have gone out into the world, the experiences I have had, and my desire to see love and justice play itself out here on Earth -- my desire to see God's kingdom here on earth." -- Joseph Mizener*



LaVerne at Putao Airport

*He was a legend and has been a guiding force for our spiritual growth and Christian ministry in India....He has been instrumental in producing Christian workers in Arunachal Pradesh, North East India. My late father Pastor Tito was sent by him from Putao (northern Burma) to the present Moloshidi valley (NE India) to spread the Gospel of Christ. And today after five decades we have many believers and many evangelists. The Medical relief supply programs for Moloshidi valley started from 2009 was initiated by him and still has been benefiting for many sick people both in Moloshidi valley (India) and Benozo valley (Burma). We are ever grateful to him. Today we feel like orphans on hearing this sad news. However, as taught by him, we shall see him someday. My name "Phillip" was given by him when he visited Nongpoh, Meghalaya State many years ago when I was a Bible student. With tears . . ." -- Phillip from Miao, Arunachal Pradesh. India*

*"We have no words to express how deeply we are in sorrow to hear the news of LaVerne's going back to his heavenly home. We are in shock to hear the news. We always admired him as our spiritual father who showed us how to love and serve God through his exemplary life. He was also a good friend for us who had full trust in us and stood with us in all times."*  
-- Manasseh and Ruth Fish from Burma

*There is literally no word to express how deeply sorry I am for the loss of such a great missionary to Myanmar like Mr. LaVerne Morse. He was a true servant-leader I admired.... He will be truly missed dearly by all the families and faculty at Taunggyi Bible College..." -- Aaron Ngwa from Burma*



*I honor him for what he has done in Myanmar. I have known that his heart was in the Christian ministries in Myanmar." -- Timothy T. Pungsar from Burma*

*My greetings with sadness and regret the departure of LaVerne Morse, but his victory was glad to heaven with God the Father. My brother LaVerne is my hero and leader of the good news of Christ from Heaven. Asians have many ethnic and tribal salvation because of his mission work. I have served the Lord with his memory of the 7 tribes of northern Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos in recent times." -- from Y. Yohan Yotkiri from Laos/Thailand*

*We will keep on in the services of the Lord's work, as Mr. LaVerne led us, until the last minute of our lives." -- Ezekiel Fish from Burma*

## From the ACS Board

Dear friends and supporters of LaVerne and Lois and ACS,

Thank you for your gracious words and prayers for the Morse family. We also thank you for the generous financial gifts to the LaVerne Morse Memorial Fund to honor LaVerne. We were deeply moved by the shared grief of our Asian friends, brothers and sisters. They held numerous memorial services for LaVerne in China, India, Burma and Thailand.

LaVerne had a vision and a passion for souls in Asia. He lived his life for them. Many souls will continue to know Jesus through the leaders he developed and encouraged. ACS will continue with the mission to urge further pioneer work in South East Asia. One goal among many is to equip evangelists to bring the Gospel to the 40 plus tribes who still have not heard about Jesus in Burma.

Simon Thaug stated our path forward this way, "Our first step in showing God's Love is by action. Our second step is sowing the seed of the Gospel as God opens the door. And our third step is planting a new church."

We are grateful for you and thank you for all you have done for this mission. Please continue your partnership with us as we do all we can to support and urge forward the workers for Christ on the other side of the world. Our joined partnership with our Asian leaders, both financially and in fervent prayer, will enable them to follow the legacy of LaVerne's work that will continue to grow by the grace of the Lord. Thank you!

Mark Morse - Director  
Kent Odor - ACS Board Chairman  
and all of the ACS Board of Directors

**It has come time for LaVerne to rest from his labor and hear the words of our Father, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"**



### LaVerne Morse Memorial Fund:

LaVerne's entire life has been about encouraging and empowering others to continue in spreading the good news. Gifts given to this fund will facilitate Asian evangelists to pioneer church planting in new areas of South East Asia.

Memorials can be sent to the LaVerne Morse Memorial Fund of Asia Christian Services.

Asia Christian Services Address:  
9378 Mason Montgomery Road, Suite 326  
Mason, OH, 45040

Be sure to check out our website:  
[asiachristianservices.com](http://asiachristianservices.com)

Contributions may be sent to:

*Asia Christian Services*

9378 S Mason Montgomery Rd, Ste 326  
Mason, OH 45040-8827

For more information:

phone: 513-229-8886

or

e-mail: [erbreuer@aol.com](mailto:erbreuer@aol.com)