The goal of the expedition was to further our understanding of the physical and cultural characteristics of the area. Due to the remoteness and inaccessibility of the region it has remained virtually undocumented and unexplored. There are a few small villages on Arguni Bay but inland virtually nothing is known. Ideally, the objective was to learn if there are any people left who have had little or no contact with the outside world. I felt this was realistic, being an area with good potential as it is one of the most untouched in West Papua. My plan was to do an aerial survey over a large area and then to walk in and reach the most untouched people I could find and document the findings. To gain knowledge about the tribal cultures that exist in the area was my overall goal.

The expedition was awarded Flag # 93
Members of the expedition included: Phyllis Hischier MN 03, USA, Phil Frey USA, Marten Lega, Guide, interpreter and village head of Waynaga 2, Musa Werfete, porter, Wilhelmus Bari, porter, Barias Ris Revideso, porter, Justinus Werfete, porter, Mertias Lega, porter, Hakim Lega, porter, Demianus Lega, porter, Agus Lega, porter and Yesiah Lega. All from the Arguni Bay area.
16 October, 2010
Flew out of Bali early this morning to Ambon with a stop in Makassar. Overnight in Ambon.

17 October
Flew Wings air to Nabire with a 25 minute layover. Just a week ago Nabire had been inundated by floods, many died. Met someone on the flight who is starting a dive resort there. Apparently there are many whale sharks with which you can dive or snorkel. They are from Belgium and just starting up. Back on the plane for a 55 minute flight to Kaimana. We are just up from Namatote Island where last year we looked at a lot of rock art on the Raja Ampat trip. Worked on calibrating the GPS, compass, maps etc. Huge thunder and rain storm. Heard from Max who had an ultralight malfunction and had to be brought a part from Sorong to Misool, 10 hours one way by boat. Tomorrow will need to buy salt and tobacco.

Walked around after dinner, reminded me of Timika after dark. Today everything was closed but after dark everyone comes out. Busy, everyone enjoying the evening and cool breeze. We are the only westerners anywhere to be seen.

18 October
Bought salt and alot of tobacco to trade on the trek. The ship finally made it to Kaimana around 3:00. The plan is to head to KOKOROBA village. S 03 03.324’ E 133 51.748

MAPS
www.idho.org
info@indo.net.id
phone 02164714810
fax 02164714819
Map # 201, 204  Teluk Arguni
Sungai Karuta looks interesting.
Flying over the jungle in search of human activity.

19 October
Still in Kaimana waiting for clearance from the port authority. Now 9:45 should have been on our way by 9:00. Already lost a day. A bit perturbed but not much I can do to hurry it up. Finally 12:45 and on the way with an Indonesian official who knows the water. Apparently, there are treacherous whirlpools on the way which you have to pass with perfect timing. Hoping the official does not cause any problems. Coming up Arguni Bay through a narrow pass, the village on the right is Seraran #56, Aroma is straight ahead, and Kumara on the right, on the far right is Summon. Four villages, a Muslim area, many crocodiles, heading SE. Two districts here, lower
Arguni and upper Arguni we are still in lower about 1.5 hours to upper. Lower Arguni is Muslim, Upper is Christian.

The Putiraja, the base for the survey.

October 20
We are slowly making our way up river as too difficult to continue last night after dark not knowing these waters and uncharted. Started moving at 6:15 a.m., Max flew in to refuel and I joined him and we flew over the area for an hour. Flying was exhilarating! Saw a good amount of logging and villages set up by roads for the purpose. Gorgeous and rugged area except areas touched by logging. Flying at 3000’ to get a good look and time for an emergency landing if it becomes necessary. Even though we are in the tropics it is very cold, my legs are shaking, rain hits your face and stings. Descended and turned off the engine and glided for a while became warm and wonderful, no noise. Descended to land on the water by Kokoroba but tide too low so taxied to Gusi parking in the mud flats. We spoke to the villagers trying to get information about the area. Met Herete Warfete who has walked everywhere including Nabe and seems very knowledgeable, a good guy, not misleading at all. Put up a Dutch map on the wall, 12 panels showing where we are and where we want to go. In the afternoon, flying did not look too promising so we took the small boat into upper Arguni looking for signs of people, we did see signs after about 1hr 15 minutes. Back through the Toengara strait up as far as we could go to the end of upper ARGUNI. Birds of paradise, ducks, sea eagles, flying fox, parrots, black and white cockatoo a plenty. Lots of Flame of the Jungle plants, incredible rich biodiversity. Apparently many crocodiles and sago forever. Saw a very large banana garden in the foothills. Bugs are intense hitting us in the face as we go back heading into the wind. Coming back from upper Arguni at dusk with the full moon behind, clouds in and out, turns to dark with the mountains and swamps surrounding us. Not one light in a 360 view. Where in the world do you get this? Gorgeous!

October 21
Kind of cool last night, close to mountains. Flew at 6:30 a.m. for 2 hours over towards Nabe and back. Saw logging and some houses on the way. Got to the Koeri river and came across a fairly large area, probably Rafideso, a Nabe area. About 10 or so houses. Beautiful area but very difficult to get in walking. It is doable but you need quite alot of time. Doubt it. Another option for another time is to go from Bintuni Bay area, looks to be the quickest and easiest option, which
does not mean much. Up the Aromas River to Jawarane to Naramas to the Koeri River if possible. Beautiful jungle absolutely primal and gorgeous where untouched. Flew over one area and circled and we could see people running away and hiding. Hard to imagine their thoughts on seeing this big yellow bird type object flying over them. Beautiful primal rock formations, old growth areas. Some small lakes but nothing big enough to land on. As we flew back and closer to the water came upon a logging area with roads and camps set up. About 11:30 took a boat back out the Toengara strait and then NW down to Berari village and up the Berari River on side tributaries very far up to an amazing fresh water area incredibly clear and ultramarine after a couple of hours through chocolate coloured water, we just happened on this beautiful spot. Jurassic park like. Gorgeous moss, huge waterlilies with strange birds with red heads who landed and walked across them. When they fly the legs follow behind like wings. Neither Max nor I had ever seen before. (Looked them up in a bird book, not found). Heaps of large flying fox flying in the middle of the day as normally I have only seen towards sunset. Seems to be a paradise for scientists and biologists of all types. I am sure many new and unknown types of flora and fauna to be discovered. Birders would be in heaven here. On we went up to a lake at the end, not very deep, but dark and full of crocodiles, 5 meters long sounds normal. Villages here have a type of cement landing in front apparently to keep the crocodiles out. Bromeliads, orchids, mosses, hornbills, butterflies. No people around and no signs of them. Gorgeous X 1000. Coming back stopped at Berari village, learned nothing new here. Said we were the first white people there but I don’t believe it; I think they are trying to please me by telling me what they think I want to hear.

FLIGHT PATH:
Gunung Muni
Pigo first village 4 families about 7 houses
Koeri River
Rafideso 10 houses/15 families
Owa 3 houses
Obo 14 houses
Wosimi Kali by Mt. Ingorosari
Wombo after Rafideso, a government village
Kasmirati 7 houses

Talking to locals to get more information. I keep hearing about the following:
Karafluaj
Sara 1 6 houses
Sara 2 5 houses
Koyea 12
Embaraya=Sara 1 traditional people
Mirasi Tribe/Mirasi dialect
Lake Koyama
Yapata is a village by the river on the map, which comes in and out of the ground.
NABI area consists of the Koeri tribe and Koeri dialect and the Irarutu tribe and dialect.
The Koeri and Mirasi tribes are larger than the Irarutu.

Plan is tomorrow to fly over Sara 1, Sara 2 and Koyea areas.
And the following: (GPS coordinates on an old Dutch map which look promising)
1.) 03  20  30
October 22

Got to the plane and I was already in the seat and strapping in when Max stepped on the pontoon to get in and the zipper broke probably to the pressure of heat building up (he had been keeping wet towels on it). So we are grounded! He has to go back to Sorong to get a part to repair it. Most likely no more flying for the trip. My disappointment is huge. But I do not have time to fret and must regroup and go to plan B so I can finish what I hope to accomplish here without a lot of time. Am thinking of trying to walk to Sara 1 and Sara 2, which I am told is 2 full days and one night (would have been 4 days there alone). Phil Frey went to see a WW2 bomber that crashed near the village of Kokoroba, a Boston Bomber about a 25 minute walk, was being chased by a Japanese fighter. An old man told us he was young when it crashed and was with his mother. It crashed around 10am and was burning up. His father and uncle went into the cockpit trying to save them but it was too late. He grabbed a gold ring that he said had a watch on it. Gave to his wife. Phil is the first foreigner ever to walk in there. He took many photos. Now working on a change of plans. I went into the village and talked to the men in their bark loincloths in the ceremonial house which was new with a roundish roof, no sides as of yet. One wore a beautiful pig tusk armband and a pig tusk necklace. One drum and a gong were inside. One was making fire with a piece of bamboo and moss with 2 spots to drill. The bamboo was incised with a motif similar to the Korowai area. He had smoke within a minute from start to finish. I spoke bahasa Indonesian with them telling them what I would like to accomplish and learn about their culture. They agreed to help me and we decided what the best plan would be in the amount of time I had left. We talked about walking to Sara 1 and Sara 2. Decided to do it and decided to leave in an hour to have more time. Today we will take the boat 2.5 hours up river to Waynaga 2 (new
Waynaga) a government built village. A huge rush to get ready, shower, wash hair and pack for 4 days (all we have) food, GPS, Solar panel, meds, tent, mattress, socks, rain jacket etc. They were supposed to come to the boat at 4:00 did not show so I went over to Kokoroba at 4:45 picked them up and we were on our way. Waynaga 2 is located on a finger below Gusimawa at the end of a river, depending on tide. Up the Karora to the Totokea (they call it Toktohu River). At 6:00 I could still see the ship behind us in the distance and in front of us a gorgeous rainbow. Two of the porters are very interesting looking, very tribal rather than Papuan. The men had beautiful faces. Hard to get to smile at first but now beginning to laugh. Gunung Budi is the mountain with the interesting shape (volcano looking but steeper) always in the distance, now behind us. Moving incredibly slow but it is gorgeous through pristine jungle, birds and bats everywhere, gorgeous colours and the perfect temperature. Finally arrived in Waynaga 2 at 8:00, taken to the village heads house where we spent the night.

Inland freshwater spring

View as we flew over the Nabe area in an untouched area
Took some political maneuvering when we were there and tried to find the pecking order, which I tried to figure out for the next few days. We had brought some cooked mud crabs and the kepala desa let us eat in his kitchen, which was wonderful rather than everyone watching us. We gave the family the leftovers, which I am sure, was his wish but there was heaps as we only ate the claws and some nasi goring. Shortly after I set up my tent for privacy as many of us were sleeping on the floor in the same room. I gave Phil the bedroom, the bed was rock hard I heard the next morning.

Today learned that there is a lake up by Mt. Nabi otherwise known as Mt. Ingorosari. Freeport, an American mining company already with a huge presence here in Papua has sent helicopters up there various times looking for gold and minerals.

Huge crocodiles on the river here have territories and seasons when they let others pass, most likely mating season.

They snap their fingers when it looks like rain to keep it away.

They hunt crocodiles with a harpoon tied to a rope made of bamboo with a sharp metal edge.

Many fireflies, kunang-kunang.

GPS #72

This area is the Mirasi tribal area with the Mirasi dialect which the Irarutu people can not understand as we have some Irarutu porters.

Mirasi Language.

Dog Nanau

Thank You Nama Amun

Water fata

Hot patengen

Good night lembaye wejamore

Rain jamwyn

Moon tende wesiar

Walk oswan

Good morning sakwet Amori

Sun tende arawar

House weso
Ceremonial house in Kokoroba
October 23
Apar is the Mirasi word for the white stones you see on the mountain. A legend that it was once a boat carrying the ancestors, they could not get down the river due to the rapids and the waterfall. MOINYATONGO is the sacred mountain for the Mirasi people as Gunung Nabe is for the Irarutu.
Men and women marry when they are around 25 years old nowadays and have on average 7 kids.
Christain is the majority although it is still mixed with animism.
Old people do not know their age.
Koeri people commonly marry Mirasi.
Bride price is normally a large bowl, a gun and gold from overseas.
They catch kangaroos here, leave in jungle and pick up on the way back to carry out or eat.
Very rarely poisonous snakes here.
The centipede here can make you very sick, sometimes cause death, they have a natural medicine.
Use bird of paradise feathers for dance skirts.

Started out from Waynaga 2 at 7:30 by longboat to go as far as we could up river before walking. Got out at a garden bivouac where we began our trek into the jungle. The plan being going to Sara 1. As soon as we were a few hours in I figured we would never make it in the time we had, nor would our porters even if alone. This is just the nature of traveling here and dealing with tribal people. It exists anywhere you trek in this country. Time to them and to us is just too different for us to understand in the same way. I was hoping we would make it to Waynaga 1 (the old
ancestral village tonight). Not possible, we made it ½ way where they normally spend the night by the river. We walked from 9:00 – 4:30 through gorgeous jungle, treacherously slippery, moss and lichen covered rocks, walking on ledges along karst formations, the biggest ironwood tree I had ever seen, butterflies with 3 wings on each side with markings of eyes, bright yellow, and bright blue birdwing butterflies. I am sure this area would be fascinating to a biologist.

It’s pristine. To difficult to get here so untouched by loggers, miners etc. We are the first westerners ever to walk here in this jungle let alone to the village which they consider an honour and talk about how this will be a story they will tell for generations about the two white people walking to the ancestral village of Waynaga 1. Walking up and down constantly, I thought it was going to be more through a canyon from the map and I think it was but with a thick canopy. 1:00 and resting here in the jungle, Phil is having a difficult time. We will only make it ½ way today. Phil is a good companion and very enthusiastic and insistent on making it. He has never done anything like this; he trekked in Glacier Park with an 80lb pack but says no comparison. I tried to tell him before we left. Normally, in the Korowai or other areas, I take my own porters who I know and have been with for many years. This time I am the guide and leader with no one to depend on but myself. I feel a huge and overwhelming responsibility to make it to the village and ensure the safety of Phil. The politics alone is tricky. With 10 porters along I have to try to figure out who makes the decisions. It is the Kepala desa. One of the guys has tantrums and does not want to continue when I say we must. I have bonded with the Village head and he is whom I am betting on to get us in and out in time.

Another difficulty is that they could refuse to move, leave us here in the jungle or worse at anytime. Getting out of here alone would be a problem due to the waters infested with crocodiles below. It is a daily fight and hindrance trying to use our time wisely and getting back on the 26th late afternoon on time to get the ship back. It is a complete and total push to get there and back on time with not much rest.

At 3:45 it began raining and it became very slippery and difficult. You had to watch your feet at all times. I feel as if I am underwater diving in the most gorgeous spot on earth but I am hunting fish and have no time to look around at the animals and plants that resemble an underwater
wonderland. Grateful to reach the camp at 4:30. Pouring, thunder and lightening. Got situated for
the night, made drinking water and ate. I am exhausted, 7:30 now in the tent still raining and too
tired to write anything any longer.

October 24
Woke at 6:00, stayed in my tent because I thought it was still raining but it was the river raging
from the rains. Due to all the rain it was an extremely difficult crossing. Put my soaking wet pants
on again. Beef jerkey for breakfast, no coffee or tea, its 7 now and waiting for all to be ready.
Walked 4 miles yesterday hard to believe seemed like 12. Now have learned that from Waynaga
1 where we hopefully will reach today it is another 2 days walk to Sara 1 and another 2 days to
Sara 2 and from there a 1 day walk to Koya. Par for the course, always the same here. Old
Wayanga does not have as many people as Sara 2 because so far from the main river. People
have moved down to government centers. Sara 1 = 5 houses Sara 2 = 7 houses. This
information is from Musa who walked there 3 years ago. There are mountains on each side of
Koyana lake (by Waynaga 1) no houses around because floods in rainy season. Full of deer,
birds of paradise and eels. Rest spot #80 S 03 15 587 E 134 00. 688’ 1257’
Tribes in this area from largest to smallest:
Mirasi
Koeri
Irarutu
Oberau
Madewana
Koey
Miere
Counting:
Start with small finger as #1 to #5 for the thumb across to the next hand with the small finger as #6 and the thumb #10. 2 hands together = 10
Then start with the feet big toe #11 to small toe #15, next big toe #16 to #20 for the small toe and 2 feet together = 20.

NUMBERS:
1.) tangat
2.) amoch
3.) ari
4.) ach
5.) ivor
6.) iptan
7.) iveramot
8.) iverari
9.) iverat
10.) orfamoy
11.) orfamoyneytangat
12.) orfamoyneychamoch
13.) orfamoynechari
14.) orfamoynechach
15.) orfamoynechivor
16.) orfamoynechiptan
17.) orfamoynechiveramot
18.) orfamoynechiverari
19.) orfamoynechiverat
20.) jawatmy
They say that by the lake is a field where you can land in the dry season, which no one made, has always been here according to the ancestors. Say January-March is dry and should be able to land a helicopter. Say there is gold and oil here but theirs and they will fight for it.

The porters asked me this morning to ask Phil to stay and camp in the jungle with a porter and we would come back for him. Said we would have a much easier time and move much faster. I asked Phil about it and what he wanted to do. He wants to keep going and says he will stop if he holds us up. I made a decision right there to walk faster and keep up a better pace today. He followed and did fantastic. We made it to Waynaga 1 after a very hard day, incredibly steep up and down slippery, difficult and dangerous, especially without a Satellite phone, how would we ever get out? Arrived, happily around 5:00. Halleluiah! Incredibly clean, no trash, no plastic at all. A lovely ceremonial house and two living houses for the families, 3 each house, which live here. Impressive how clean it is, people seem healthy except for one old man which I believe is mostly age related problems and he can not walk so does not bathe and his skin is covered with ringworm and scabies. We walked into the ceremonial house and the fire was covered on top with deer and pig. They had never had visitors, Indonesians or westerners here before. The children cried upon seeing us out of fear and the women stayed away. A few of the men were kind and generous and led us around the area to see the houses as I had told them I wanted to learn all I possibly could about their living area and them. The men led us to the house where we saw a lovely set up, clean no trash or plastic at all. Full of utilitarian items for everyday use such as bows, arrows for everything imaginable, nutmeg drying over the fire. Separate sleeping areas for each family, a main fireplace and kitchen out back. Was getting dark so we would have to continue tomorrow.

Back to the ceremonial house where we slept. They put out mats for us and I set up my tent. Gave us deer and vegetables, squash and potatoes root, for dinner. I sat up and talked to the men. They used to cook in bark. Made cloth out of bark, which Sara 1 still does. Sara 2 has a lake near it and a place a helicopter can land. (They want me to come back on a helicopter). They grow tobacco here and use the same leaves to make mats. Waynaga 2, new was made in 1974. Government gave cement and tin for roofs. Marten became the village head in 1989. To bed, too exhausted to think.

October 25

Slept well last night. It was so quiet, which I am not used to. Normally the men in Asmat talk, drum and sing all night and do not sleep until morning. Everyone was waking up around 6. Only a few hours before we turn around. This area is like a wonderland, surrounded by the Embaroro Mountains to the left of the houses and the Watumei mountains to the left. Butterflies which look like scorpion fish, graceful with multiple wings.

If you are standing by the ceremonial house mountains surround you. If you start on the left directly in front of the house you have UMBU, going left away from the river continues with SAWAHU, ENAKNAU, OTENAL in front of houses, to the right of Otenal you have UVIA, TAVESI, EMBORERO and WATUMEI. This takes you in a 360 view from left to right facing the ceremonial house.
Family heads that live here:
Abraham Nega
Hendrik Nega
Harans Nega
Demianus Nega (Traditional head)
Yohannes Nega (Old man)
Gerson Nega
Stupianos Nega
Yunus Nega

Waynaga 1
S 03 17.350
E 134 02.069
976'

So we have made it to an unexplored area. No westerners have ever walked in here nor been to this village. They are fascinated by every movement we make, watching closely, the women stay away from us, kids cry if they see us when fathers holding them.

People here say they do not kill the bird of paradise. I asked why and they said they do not know, it has always been that way. There are eels in the lake 2 meters long, which they catch with a large metal double-pronged spear. The lake is a major source of food abundant in shrimp, small fish, tons of deer. The deer move to another lake when this is dry. They have a cave where they sleep when they go hunting there. You can canoe to the lake from here in rainy season. But today even though it has been raining like crazy you must walk at least 1 hour each way. When they give birth they make a hut in the jungle where they give birth and stay there 4 days if a girl and 5 days if a boy. Have a small ceremony after a birth. And, when someone is sick they have a ceremony where they catch deer and pig and eat a lot so the person will get better, he will gain strength from them.

When a death they save the deceased clothes for 3 days, go hunting for deer etc that they cook in the ceremonial house everyone joins in a feast and they burn the clothes of the deceased. They wash the body, put it in a box and wait for the skin to fall off. When it does they take the bones to the cave down by the lake.

2 large drums here made with deerskin, they play them with a gong at the same time, which I have seen all over this area.

There is a feast at Sara 2 (new village) once a year about 25 people come. They now say from here to Sara 2 (new) without carrying a lot, if you left at 6 arrive at 12 or sleep one night in the jungle and arrive the next day. Anyway, Sara 2 is beginning to sound uninteresting.

They are very friendly here and so excited to have us, want to make plans for us to come again. I have given and left nothing but tobacco, as I don’t want to start a cargo cult.

Upon walking into the ceremonial house the top rack above the fireplace was covered with 2 deer and 1 wild pig. I was shocked to see how clean and tidy, no paper, plastic etc of any kind. I assumed it would be different with people coming from Waynaga2 as this is their ancestral area but apparently not many come here and not often. Hanging in the rafters were 2 huge drums covered in deerskin and a gong. There are sleeping and eating spots the entire length of the wall on 2 sides. Probably 35X35’ Floor amazingly clean, hardened mud so used that it was shined to perfection like concrete. A couple tree stumps where large trees were cut down for the house and 2 huge cooking pots sitting on logs up off the floor.

The houses were both very similar. Consisting of several sleeping areas, a main fireplace with nutmeg drying on top. Many deer horns and pig jaws hanging from the ceiling. Bows and many arrows for different types of game. Metal for wild pigs and deer, 2-pronged metal for eels, fish spears metal with many barbs.

Stayed in the area this morning as the kepala desa had to make a pilgrimage to the lake and wanted to take photos for me so I would know for the future about landing. They said they would be 2 hours and it took 3. I was pacing as we had a 2-day walk back with a lot of hard walking. We are so fortunate it did not rain last night or we would be in trouble slipping and crossing the river.
may be impossible. We left at 12 and got to the river at 3. Phil and I were dying to refill our water supply. At this point they basically refused to

Cooking deer

House in the ancestral village of Waynaga
move, the problem porter was yelling and I settled him down and waited for the kepala desa to arrive and talk to him. There was a cave here where they could spend the night and we would not make it to the next sleep spot. We are 812° S 03 15.133     E 134 00.404
I could not push the kepala desa as I did not want to emasculate him so we stayed here by the river. The plan is for Phil and I to start at 6 ahead of most with a couple porters. Should be easier back, as hopefully we will reach the ship by tomorrow night.
Now it is 6pm, I have bathed in the river and eaten bbq sago, deer meat, peanut butter, bread, beef jerkey and cookies. The rain is just beginning, am in my tent. It has been a hard 3 days behind us. Phil has come all the way. I was hoping he would stay in the first biefak but he insisted on continuing saying he would stay in the jungle if he did not make it. It has been hard and frustrating. Having the responsibility for Phil getting out of here safe and alive, having success in my mission. Today I thought I was getting malaria, really weak and feverish; walking slow, feel fine now. Too dark to write and too tired. Sleep now!

26 October
Halleluiah, it did not rain last night! Up 5:15 a.m. packed quickly, drank water and ate a power bar and we were off at 6:05. Walked as fast as possible all day with few breaks in order to make it out tonight. Was happy when we made it to our campsite on the first night by 11am. Today was a full push we arrived by the river at 4:30 and waited there. We finally heard the boat motor by 5 and had to walk closer as the tide was too low for them to get to us. These last 10 minutes of walking was treacherous, slippery and excruciating but we were so happy to know the boat was there it did not matter. Great to see Ken, the captain, with the tender. We went back to Waynaga 2. I walked to the village heads house and arranged with him to come to the ship tomorrow morning and I would pay him for everyone. Got our things together and headed back through this lovely river. It felt so wonderful to be in the open, to see the sky and stars and out of the dark jungle canopy. Arrived at the ship 7:30. More than anything I wanted to shower. Phil and I unpacked our gear out on the back deck as everything was so muddy and reeking, even took off our clothes there. Isaac will wash everything in the morning under the waterfall. Shower at last, I was covered with dirt, mud, caked blood from the leaches a particularly nasty one who got me on the hip. Mud ran off me for a long while. My legs are covered with leech bites and other nasty bites, swollen from some. Heavenly to be clean.

27 October
Rainy misty weather. The village head, Marten, from Waynaga 2 and all the porters came in the morning. I paid them 2,500,000. or 60,000. each a day. So $120. Each for Phil and I. Worth every penny. I am so grateful we got back on time. They could have easily left us in the jungle or worse. All in all the entire trip was amazingly successful. Phil is ecstatic he made it and it really is miraculous. Slept (feel like I could sleep for a month) and rested all day and getting ready to fly out of Kaimana tomorrow and back to Bali.
Pulled up the anchor 11:30 in order to go with the tide and get through the whirlpool area. Anchored at 7:30 p.m. with Kaimana in sight.

28 October
Got dropped on the beach in front of the airport. After about 2 hours of being the only westerner around a group of French scientists showed up. Had lunch with one. They had been in Triton Bay and discovered new rock art, no hand motif, says very good. He is very interested in the cave I found up by the lake. Will send him a photo etc.
From Kaimana-Ambon-Ujung Pandang-Bali finally arrived home at 10:30 p.m. A huge tsunami hit Sumatra and hard in Sikikap the evening of the 25th and Mt Merapi is going off in Java. Tony said 18 earthquakes since. Surely the ring of fire.
The goal of the survey was to see if there were any untouched peoples in the area and to gather information about the people and the area. The goal was achieved and the trip was successful.

Kaimana/Arguni neck, skinny entrance
S 03 18.838
E 133 39.832
NE heading
#57 anchor #1
S 03 06.358
E 133 42.611
#58 Anchor # 2 by Gusi on left Kokoroba on right
S 03 02. 927
E 133 52.320
27”
#59 Up top of tributary flying foxes
#60 -61 Flying 10/21
#62 Gunung Nabi area houses in swampy area
#68 Boatride village ahead
#69/70 Fresh pond

Summary of what I found:

Able to fly over the area and explore by small boat for 3 days until the pontoon broke on the aircraft. During this time I was speaking to everyone to get information about the surrounding areas. The two days of flying gave me a great look see of the terrain and we were able to pinpoint some small areas with houses although with the time we had it would have been impossible to walk in to these sites in the Nabi area. The 3rd day after the pontoon broke I had to go to plan B and figure out what that would be. Very fortunately I had been gathering information all along from the locals and had an idea of what we could do in a small amount of time. (As it turned out it was a huge push and virtually impossible but we did do it and successfully.) After the pontoon broke I was devastated but went in to Kokoroba to talk to the men in the ceremonial house, which had a
rounded sloping roof no sides as of yet as it is newly built. Men were wearing bark loincloths, beautiful pig tusk armbands and necklaces. 1 drum and a gong. We talked and decided to try to get to Waynaga 1, Sara 1 and Sara 2 and a lake. I was assured we had enough time. We decided to leave in 1 hour, it was now 3 and at 4 we would take the small boat to Waynaga 2 to save us time rather than starting tomorrow (if we did we never would have made it back on time). Arrived in Waynaga 730 pm slept in the Kepala desa house. Left the next morning by longboat to go as far up the river as possible where we got out and began the walk in to the ancestral village of Waynaga. Walked all day for 2 straight days sleeping overnight on the way in the jungle. Very difficult walking, up and down, slippery and treacherous. Finally arrived just before dark the 2nd day at Waynaga 1. Grateful to have made it. We are the first westerners ever to come here. The women are standoffish, the kids cry at the sight of us, the men are helpful but wary at first. Had 1 night and a few morning hours to see the area and gather information. Not nearly enough time. The area is gorgeous, no trash whatsoever. I am amazed. Surrounded by beautiful mountains on all sides, a lovely valley. Men wear loincloths of cloth, old sarongs, some in bark cloth but say too difficult to make, the women wear sarongs. The ceremonial house and 2 living houses, the area consisted of were lovely, clean and large. 3 families to each house. The houses consist of one main fireplace with nutmeg drying on the top. Bows, arrows of all types, deer antlers hanging from the rafters. A kitchen out back. The ceremonial house was gorgeous and huge. A central fireplace with deer and wild bore cooking on top. Two very large drums and a gong, which they played for us. An interesting area being the original village and the new moved down to the water and helped to build by the government, which it seems, is very common here. Tied between the new and the old, a mix of Christianity and animism. Some unwilling to move but most already moved and used to the new ways. We finally left at noon and walked only until 3 when we were forced to stay in an area where there is a cave a normal stopping, sleeping spot. I was assured if we left the next day by 6 we would arrive late afternoon and make it back to the ship, which we did. From what I can gather, the entire area seems to have ties to the past and present. There are government built villages on the rivers where most people live and they also have remnants of the original villages in the jungle where only a few families still reside. The jungle villages are very remote and difficult to access. A good example is Waynaga 1 where we definitely were the first westerners. However, the majority of men were wearing loincloths of ripped up sarongs rather than the traditional bark cloth as they say too time consuming and difficult to make. The area has a wealth of biodiversity with I am sure much in the way of flora and fauna to be discovered. It is a treasure trove. There are still a few uncontacted peoples living in the interior but there has been contact somewhere along the line through relatives. The amazing thing is there was no plastic whatsoever. No paper, wrappers, no trash to our eyes. The area is also rich in minerals, Freeport and Rio Tinto are already looking for gold and other minerals. Logging is definitely here but not as bad as I imagined it would be. The area is definitely and adamantly worth a look to biologists of all types and I would strongly encourage this. Seems a wealth of new species. As for culturally, definitely interesting and worth another look. However, to walk you need a lot of time. Best way to do it would be by helicopter as you could access very difficult places. The area still is now virtually unexplored. I saw no missionaries although their influence is definitely there. Each tribe seems to have a sacred mountain from which it came, the Nabe tribe Gunung Nabe or Mt. Ingorosari. The majority of these people live between 2 worlds, 1 being the government village and the other the original or ancestral village. Some go back and forth to Kaimana the “city” for school and other purposes. A long boat ride to and from. Seeing it from the air shed light on the fact that the inland peoples are trying to stay away from any form of intrusion. One village, which we
flew over and circled, the people ran away and hid. From what I have gathered there are several settlements in the general area which have never been visited by outsiders and rely on traditional customs. All in all I was able to locate approximately 6 more settlements not counting the ones I flew over.
Nutmeg drying in the sun

Making fire

Packing to go upriver