

A Celebration of Life
for
Major Irving M. Birmingham



Sunrise: February 19, 1974

Sunset: February 14, 2014

Friday, March 28, 2014
Viewing — 10:00 a.m. Service — 11:00 a.m.

Alfred Street Baptist Church
301 South Alfred Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

The Reverend Doctor Howard-John Wesley
Pastor



Scroll of Life

IRVING MCKENZIE BIRMINGHAM

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heavens."

— Ecclesiastes 3:1

"Kicking and screaming loudly" Irving McKenzie "Mac" Birmingham entered this world at 10:41 a.m. on February 19, 1974 at Fort Leonard Wood Army Hospital in Missouri. It was evident to everyone present, especially his proud parents, Irving and Sallie, that he was ready to "take the world by storm". A professional engineer, military leader, accomplished photographer, and family genealogist, Irving's joy of life, love of family, and devotion to friends will never be forgotten.

Like most military brats, Mac moved around frequently during his early years until his dad's retirement from active duty in the U.S. Army in 1985. Mac loved the military life style and quickly made new friends at each of his new homes. In 1981, Mac along with his dad, mom and sister, Camille, settled in Fairfax, Virginia where Mac completed his elementary years at Cherry Run Elementary School in Burke and 7th and 8th grades at Lake Braddock Secondary School. At the age of 8, he professed his belief in Jesus Christ and was baptized on December 5, 1982 at Greater Little Zion Baptist Church in Fairfax, Virginia. He was an active member of the GLZBC Sunday school and Youth Choir. In January 1991, he joined Alfred Street Baptist Church and was active with its Youth Ministry. Mac loved people and displayed an early ability to quickly embrace people from diverse cultures and backgrounds as friends.

Much like his dad, Mac enjoyed technology. He jumped at the opportunity to apply to attend 9th through 12th grades at the new magnet school, Thomas Jefferson School of Science and Technology. God was with him and he was accepted as a member of TJ's class of 1992. In addition to pursuing his academic education, Mac, now known by his classmates as "Irving", served as co-captain of the football team, rowed on the crew team's Varsity 8 Heavyweight boat for three years, and met many lifelong friends while at TJ. He graduated in 1992 and received a four year ROTC college scholarship from the U.S. Air Force.

Irving continued to pursue his love of technology by attending Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). During his years at MIT, he rowed with the crew team, served in the Air Force ROTC program, actively participated in dorm life, and other student activities. In 1997, he received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering with a minor in Economics and as part of a dual program, completed all required coursework for a Master of Science in EE. The day after graduation he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force.

Again, God was with Irving. Rather than reporting for active duty, the Air Force offered him the chance to fulfill his military commitment by serving in the Air National Guard. Once again he jumped at the opportunity because it would allow him to pursue both of his beloved careers at the same time! While serving as a summer intern at Hewlett Packard at the end of his junior year, the company offered him full time employment after graduating. Now he could accept their offer and return to the California climate he enjoyed so very much the summer before. In 1997, he moved permanently to the Sacramento area. To continue his service to God, he united with New Testament Baptist Church in North Highlands, California. Irving thrived at HP as a hardware engineer and played a major role in designing Unix Servers. In January 2005, he received his second patent from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office for his hardware inventions. He also made many new friends and together, they enjoyed numerous outdoor activities, from touring to skiing, thanks to the mixture of climates surrounding the Sacramento area. Over the last 17 years, Irving traveled widely for HP and in 2012, made his first trip to Beijing, China for a week of business meetings. In 2013, he traveled to Beijing, Singapore and Hong Kong.

In pursuit of his other beloved career, in December 1998, Irving joined the California Air National Guard as a Tactical Engineer. After his Guard unit transitioned from Combat Communications to Intelligence, he transferred to Beale Air Force Base to join Distributed Ground System-2 (DGS-2). In October, he was activated in support of the surge efforts for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom at Beale AFB and spent the two and a half years on active duty with the 48th Intelligence Squadron, spending the final six months as the Director of Operations. During this time, Captain Birmingham was named the 2009 Company Grade Officer of the Year for the 48th and 548th Intelligence Surveillance Reconnaissance Group. Promoted to Major on October 20, 2010, he assumed command of the 222nd Communications Maintenance Flight and retained the position until June 2013 when he returned to DGS-2 as the 222nd Intelligence Support Squadron Director of Operations. At the time of his death, he was an Intelligence Officer student in the 315th Training Squadron at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas.

Soon after moving to California, Mac combined his love for family and technology to become the family genealogist and holder of the family tree. He collected information about the members of his immediate and extended families at family reunions, individual and group interviews, and personal research. He displayed family trees at every union and on the walls of his home.

In 2003, a colleague at Hewlett Packard introduced Irving to her sister. A few weeks later, he called his mom in Virginia and excitedly announced, “I have met my soul mate!” On July 30, 2005 at New Testament Baptist Church, he and Susana Concepcion Martinez became husband and wife. Together they had four children Rebecca Susana (7), Irving Andres “Andy” (5), Ana Lucia and McKenzie Rose (3 years old twins). Irving was devoted to his family. He spent numerous hours planning birthday parties, trips to Disneyland, San Diego Zoo, Legoland, and skiing, and carpooling the children to preschool, school, and activities. Again, Irving loved being with people, so whenever the family traveled, he took an entourage of friends and other family members with them.

In his free time Irving became something of a semi-professional photographer. He loved to take pictures and went out his way for the perfect shot. He documented everything with pictures and videos. He then used the pictures to create professional level slide shows and photo books. The photo books included detailed narratives that showed off his knack for knowing trivia and remembering details.

He is survived by his loving wife, Susana C. Birmingham; children, Rebecca Susana, Irving Andres “Andy”, Ana Lucia, and McKenzie Rose; grandmother, Rebecca L. Wimberly; devoted mother, Sallie Gowdy Birmingham; loving sister, Camille Birmingham; aunts, Sheila Varnado (Frederick), and Deborah Wimberly; uncles Melvin Gowdy (Ellen), and Nathaniel Wimberly (Sandra); nephew, Raymond Schumacher, nieces, Briseis Schumacher and Isabel Martinez; and a host of very close cousins, other relatives, and friends.

Irving is predeceased by his grandmother Jessie Hubbard Birmingham; grandfathers Irving Birmingham, Sr., Lorenzo Gowdy, father Irving Birmingham, Jr.; and aunts Lela Birmingham Williams (Sylvester) and Mary Gowdy.

Mac was embraced by Jesus and taken to his heavenly home on February 14, 2014. Although his smile and laughter will not be seen and heard again, we will always catch a glimpse of his smile and hear the sound of his laughter from his four children.

“We have crossed the bridge – the ocean lies ahead!
Plan as if you will live forever; live as though you will die tomorrow....”

Lisa Nicole Bryant

From the Princeton University yearbook, Nassau Herald, 1993

The Order of Service

Prelude..... Instrumentalists
Processional..... Choir, Clergy & Deacons
Invocation..... Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley
Hymn of Rejoicing..... "Blessed Assurance"#345

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Job 1:13-22 Rev. Estelle Chandler
*Greater Little Zion Baptist Church
Fairfax, VA*

The Psalm John 14:1-7 Deacon David Burton
*Castalia Baptist Church
Memphis, TN*

New Testament Romans 8:26-39 Deacon Johnny Brown
Discipleship Group 20

Words & Prayer of Comfort Randolph Meade Walker, Ph.D.
*Pastor, Castalia Baptist Church
Memphis, TN*

Musical Selection..... "Amazing Grace" Frederick Varnado, *Uncle*

Acknowledgements/Condolences Pastor Wesley

Special Tributes (2 minutes each)..... Amy Biehl, Andrea Frome and Jim Granger
"Class of 1992"
Thomas Jefferson High School of Science and Technology

Deacons Vernell & Thomas Howell, *Former Co-Directors*
ASBC Young Adult Ministry

Idis R. Schumacher, *Sister-in-law, Colleague*
Hewlett Packard Company, Rocklin, CA

Camille Birmingham, *Sister*

Scroll of Life *(Silent Reading)*

Musical Selection Alfred Street Baptist Church Music Ministry

Eulogy Reverend Dr. Faye S. Gunn

Hymn of Rejoicing..... "When We All Get to Heaven"#542

Benediction Pastor Wesley

Recessional Instrumentalists

Reflections

We watched and witnessed first-hand Mac's growth and successes through the years. He was an exceptional person and distinguished himself in each arena and endeavor he entered. His ingratiating personality and warm style made it easy and comfortable to be around him. We were grateful for his friendship and influence on our son.

Sam and Mittie Burris

I was Irv's crew coach in high school at Thomas Jefferson. Irving was one of a handful of student athletes that got the young team off the ground. He was intelligent, dedicated, and always put his teammates before himself. Rowing can be a brutal sport, but Irv always had a smile on his face no matter what the workout was - no matter how many 1 minute pieces the boys in the eight had to do - he was smiling - that big grin - I will remember that always. May your faith in God and the memories give you comfort in this time of grief.

Cathy (Proctor) Coffman

Here's a recollection from my mom's best friend, and shows how kind and giving Irv was to everyone: Mike was storing his car in our driveway in Maryland (beside our garage) while he was at MIT. Mike and Irv came to our house because Mike wanted to get his car. It had snowed a bundle, and I was reluctant to drive in it, but Irv was intrepid. My dad had a prescription ready to be picked up at the Giant, and was concerned whether he would be able to get there before he ran out of the supply he had, so while Mike was digging his car out of the snow, Irv drove me up to Giant, got the Rx, drove me to my parents' house and then brought me home. A really nice guy.

Mike Plumpe

Stalwart. Intelligent. Loyal. Focused. Fun loving. Intense. These are all the words that come to mind about Irving from our days at MIT. Irv was a model Air Force ROTC cadet and he saved me many pushups, sit-ups, runs, etc. helping me get my uniform right and shoes shined correctly. Growing up in a military family helped him know all of that stuff on day 1. And he gladly passed on that knowledge. When I first met him freshman year, I asked him where was he from...he replied, "TJ!" (he said it with pride and as I was supposed to know that "TJ" was Thomas Jefferson High School in northern Virginia and the #1 rated school in the country). Well, when I realized there were some 40+ (?) folks from TJ at MIT, I knew he was a seriously smart and talented guy. He proved as much by acing our first set of tests in Physics, Calculus and on and on. And then going on to cruise through Electrical Engineering/Comp Science.

Matt Turner

Irving was a great friend, colleague, and mentor. I met him when I interviewed for my job at HP. We worked together on many projects and he impressed me with his expertise and leadership. I looked to him as an example of the type of engineer and leader we should all try to be - he was always willing to roll up his sleeves and get into the lab to help solve a problem. He also provided career advice I hold dear even to this day. We will miss seeing Irving at holiday gatherings and social events, his smile, and his generous spirit.

Nehal Patel

I also met Irving for the first time when I interviewed here at HP. He and I, along with many others joined HP between 1999 and 2000 during a rapid expansion of the lab in Roseville. Irving was not only a respected technical expert, he was one of the reasons work was fun. His big smile and laughter came easily and he loved to sit and chat, telling stories, talking about family, work, whatever. He has left a lasting impression on me and he will truly be missed.

Michael Brooks

I met Irving about 10 years ago while working here at Hewlett Packard. The first two qualities that I saw in him were his willingness to help and his intelligence as he helped me with a technical challenge that I had at the time. It wasn't until years later that we found ourselves working in the same organization and it was in this brief time that I learned more about Irving. In one of our very first discussions we quickly started talking about family as we both had four children. His smile grew as he told me how much he loved his children and his family. It was obvious to me where he placed his priorities and where he found the most joy. I will miss Irving but I will always remember the love that he shared while talking about his family. May God Bless You!

Brent Ford

Maj. Birmingham was my flight commander while I was on active duty at the 48 IS in 2008-2009 working in the SCB shop. He was a particular inspiration to me in physical training (PT). He will be missed and I will be praying for his wife and children during this time.

TSgt David L Blakley, CA ANG

"You know I never save Christmas cards. But I did save the last few from Mac. He was so thoughtful to send them and I was fascinated by those lovely little faces. I really enjoyed his description of a trip they took with a list of paraphernalia: car seats, pack and play, etc. Describes a young family in the most delightful way.The only thing I can offer is that by my sights, Mac missed nothing and appreciated everything.

Again, Love Bonnie Arnold

Legal Patent Plaque Info

From: Intellect Property
Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2005 9:33 AM
To: Birmingham, Irving M
Subject: HP Legal FYI: Patent Plaque Info - no response needed

Dear Irving McKenzie Birmingham,

Congratulations. The United States Patent and Trademark Office has issued your patent titled "Cable Systems And Related Methods" as US patent number 6843660, issued on 1/18/2005. On behalf of Hewlett-Packard, I would like to thank you for all of the fine work that you put into the development of your invention. I would also like to thank you for the assistance that you provided the Legal Department in the preparation of the patent application.

As you know, HP has relied heavily on technological innovation since the time of the Company's inception; and applying innovation to create market advantages is a significant part of our competitive strategy. Inventions are important in order to give our customers new, better and needed products. Your innovative contribution comprises valuable intellectual property and your patent ensures that HP will be able to protect that contribution well into the future.

In recognition of your inventive activity in furthering HP's research and development goals, a personalized patent plaque will be ordered and shipped to you. Notification that your patent has been granted will be emailed to your manager.

A copy of your patent is normally available from the HPLabs website <http://lib.hpl.hp.com/> approximately six to eight weeks after issuance. This patent has not yet been proofread, so if you discover any mistakes please let the attorney in charge of your case know, and he or she will prepare a Certificate of Correction if deemed appropriate.

Please accept our thanks for your efforts, and again, congratulations on your achievement. You should expect to receive your patent plaque within three months after you receive this message.

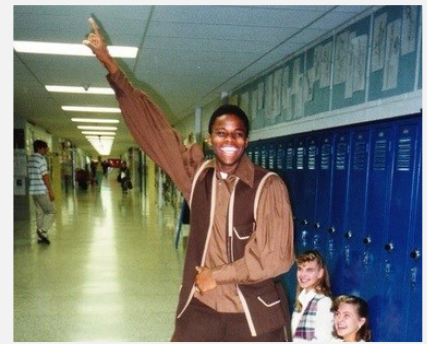
Sincerely,

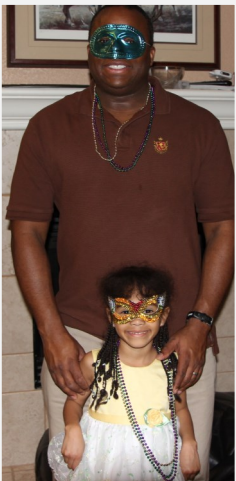
Steve Fox
Vice President & Deputy General Counsel
Intellectual Property



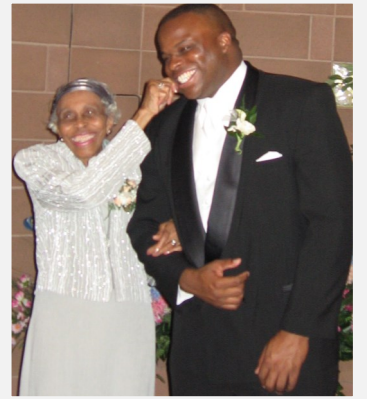














Pallbearers

Jim Granger
Ofilio R. Martinez
Jonathan Karpick
Christopher Moore
Garrett A. Wimberly
Nathaniel R. Wimberly

Honorary Pallbearers

Hewlett Packard Colleagues
Members of the Lewis, Witherspoon, and Williams Family
Members of the Hubbard, and Persons Family
Members of the Sanez, Rodriguez and Martinez Family
222d Intelligence Support Squadron, Beale Air Force Base
315th Training Squadron and Class 140108, Goodfellow Air Force Base
Kevin H. Yeh

Service entrusted to

Pope Funeral Home
5538 Marlboro Pike
District Heights, Maryland 20747
301-568-4100

Final Service and Burial

Thursday, May 8, 2014
11:00 a.m.
Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, VA

Acknowledgments

The family wishes to thank each of you for your many acts of kindness. Sacrifice is the true measure of generosity, and you have truly exemplified the spirit of giving. Your prayers, kind words, cards, and all acts of kindness during our bereavement are deeply appreciated. Your expressions of love helped to make the burden a little lighter. May God bless and keep us.