

AEROGRAMMES HOME

Jeffry Paul Belnap

1977 July to August

SERIES FROM KOREA

1977.07.03 Aerogramme: Jeff reports heavy responsibility while his zone leader is hospitalized, financial strain from expensive housing, limited teaching time, musical preparations, leadership lessons learned, spiritual testing, and renewed focus on language and study.

1977.07.19 Aerogramme: Jeff describes intense summer heat, continued zone leadership work, preparing a conference on missionary testimony, financial caution, cultural outings through music and film, growing language comprehension, and overall contentment in Korea.

1977.08.01 Aerogramme: Jeff reflects on inspired leadership from President Hawkins, missionary workshops emphasizing Jesus Christ, renewed spiritual focus, cultural pursuits through Korean drum dance, and balancing creativity with missionary priorities.

1977.08.08 Aerogramme: Jeff recounts successful proselyting on splits, first full family home evening of his mission, exposure to Korean traditional dance, New Horizons recording work, possible mission changes, and steady language growth.

1977.08.16 Aerogramme: Jeff writes amid recording sessions with New Horizons, reports strong stake conference experiences, progress teaching families, increased language understanding, financial caution, spiritual reflection, and anticipation of upcoming transfers.

1977.08.22 Aerogramme: Jeff describes emotional transfer from Third Ward to Ninth Ward, mixed feelings and fatigue, ending involvement with New Horizons, lessons in obedience, and renewed resolve entering a new missionary assignment.

1977.08.29 Air Mail : Jeff reports success with full-day door knocking, new investigators, cultural persecution, first formal Korean drum-dance lessons, reduced living expenses, gratitude for family support, and optimism in his new area.

General Summary (July–August 1977)

During July and August 1977, Jeff experiences one of the most demanding yet formative stretches of his mission in Seoul, Korea. These months are marked by increased responsibility, leadership pressure, physical fatigue, spiritual testing, cultural engagement through music, and a significant transfer that signals a new phase in his service.

July begins with Jeff carrying an unusually heavy workload when his zone leader companion is hospitalized. During this period, Jeff manages zone responsibilities, ongoing proselyting, baptisms, statistics, and administrative duties with limited support. The strain exposes gaps in his preparation and time management but also provides critical insight into leadership realities and accountability. Financial pressure is also heightened due to living in the most expensive housing area in the mission, prompting concern but acceptance and patience.

As summer progresses, Jeff becomes increasingly involved in zone-level leadership efforts, conferences, and workshops centered on testimony, missionary focus, and proper use of time. He develops greater confidence in handling responsibility, speaks frequently in meetings, and reflects deeply on the challenges of companionship dynamics, obedience, and learning to support leadership despite personal preferences.

A major highlight of this period is Jeff's expanded involvement with music. He works closely with the New Horizons musical group, participates in rehearsals and recording sessions, and contributes percussion work. These musical experiences serve both as a spiritual outlet and as a tool for missionary outreach. However, under new mission leadership, the New Horizons program is formally ended, a moment that disappoints Jeff but also reinforces lessons about obedience, humility, and adapting to inspired change.

Spiritually, Jeff reports increasing language comprehension, deeper testimony, and frequent moments of self-evaluation. He acknowledges ongoing shortcomings—fatigue, missed study, imperfect prayer—but

consistently recommits to growth through effort and faith. He describes the Korean people as exceptionally kind and receptive and expresses gratitude for being called to serve among them.

August brings significant transition. Jeff is transferred out of Third Ward after eight months to Ninth Ward, marking one-third of his mission completed. Though emotionally conflicted at leaving familiar members and responsibilities, he embraces the change with renewed motivation. In the new area, he experiences focused door-knocking success, new investigators, family teaching opportunities, and even moments of persecution, which further strengthen his resolve and testimony.

By the end of August, Jeff presents himself as seasoned yet striving—happier, more self-aware, more capable, and still intensely driven to live up to the mission he had envisioned. The period reflects a turning point where idealism is tempered by experience, producing deeper humility, resilience, and commitment.

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1977.07.03 Aerogramme To Home

Dear long lost family. Since this letter is so late coming, actually I missed last week's. As I believe you know, my zone leader senior companion has been in the hospital for two weeks and he just got out yesterday. But we will be down for a while. He has a grocery bag full of medicine he has to take so I have been taking care of all the zone work and are own two baptisms, which came during this time, and trying to maintain our proselyting. It was the end of the month too so statistics took all the time I had Monday and more. So everything was messed up last week. Had a mere 7 1/2 hours teaching, 3 1/2 hours gospel study, no language and I can't figure out what happened. This coming week we will be taking hospital trips every day.

Tomorrow is the 4th of July. We all are meeting the new mission president at 9:00 AM and then going on buses for a fine American feast. It is rainy right now, so fireworks will even be on that night.

For lack of anything that comes to mind, I'll pour my heart out concerning this hopefully temporary expensive expense. We have started eating in our house now, but it isn't food which is expensive. (Our owner decided that we'd better eat here before others went into the hospital. But I'm just great at 150 lbs.) Our owner is rich enough that he needs no income, but he wants it. He claims he is low in price because we are missionaries, but we live in the most expensive place in Korea. With all total fees, we pay about \$110 here--leaving \$30.00 for lunches, training, dry cleaning clothes. So my average for the month is sitting about \$160.00 right now. Most places are paying \$80.00 for their homes, leaving \$60.00 for other expenses. I'm paying about \$50.00 for other expenses so I'm not splurging but having a hassle. This house is comfortable, but I am willing to move but the zone leader isn't. So, we stay a while. This only means one thing. My mission won't get any more expensive than right now. It may go down or remain the same as economics goes up and I get transferred out.

아직 몰라 = *"I still don't know."*

I missed Dennis's birthday and Father's Day and I don't know how many others, including moms and dads, anniversary. I hope it was all good. Happy 4th to. I really did some hard thinking today. As I had two weeks to play semi senior and didn't do so well, I learned how it needs to be done. It is hard again already to be a junior.

Amongst all the things last week was preparations for a local *New Horizon and Tender Apples* concert. It's on the 5th at our third ward as I have been working with Elder Jay Brian Ballard from California who majored in piano or theory at BYU. He is training for public relations office position at the mission home. We talked a lot about this music group. At present, the New Horizons are not good. Elder Ballard has especially noticed this, how their rehearsals don't go and the lack of individual practice. There's a problem then potential, of course, but the future of the group is “?” to me. It will be interesting to see President Hawkins reaction to this concert on the 5th.

My face is progressively better. And I have to shave every day or it gets grody. I'm working on gaining weight and muscles. I have been failing on my exercise program too. Don't tell anybody. Before I come home I will be almost perfect, but not translated, so don't worry.

I really want to be in a position soon so I can put to work my ideas. I must admit I have learned a lot from Elder Nelson about missionary work. Especially first timing. So I think I've had my balance of style and I'm itching to get going. I hope to really be cracking down on the language and gospel study, for I feel that is extremely important and is probably the most lacking thing in this mission. So there will be my focus. LTM needs help in that area too.

I had some chances to test my testimony this week. And I won. I'm growing and yet need more growth. Thanks for your patience lovers. I request your prayers along with. Mine to. Get back on the road to my goals.

Love, JEFF [Go Top](#)

1977.07.19 Aerogramme To Home

Dear family, I am a day late on this letter too. Sorry we are getting too busy on “P” days, I guess. There has been a lot of zone work we've been involved in. We are having our own zone conference on the 20th about “How to be a testifying and challenging missionary” - we are using Allan R Dyer’s “The Challenge” as a basis.

Sounds like you had some 4th of July and I'm anxious to hear the tape of your presentation in church. Was it some kind of 4th of July oriented?

Sorry about this sloppy writing. The paper is sticky because of the heat, so my hand. Won't slide. And this pen won't stop. It flows too easy. Besides I'm writing on a rocking table.

Do you know where Jackie and Margie are going and how do you know about them? Who is Dale Terry? Hey can you send me some *Muscle Now*? Maybe a simple brochure and instructions. We are eating well now. Real good meals. It is a luxury life and we will have to remain paying for it. About \$95. Room and board compared to \$75.00 in most places.

When I had my first interview with President Hawkins, he told me to make sure I keep it under \$160. I should do better than that in the future also. President Hawkins was able to connect me with you out of the people he has met. He said he knew some people that worked with Dad also. They need to know Dad's jobs in the church and Moms too.

It is hot and humid. I'd never believe it would be hot and now I'm forgetting the winter. I'm lucky to be in such a nice house right now. More than any other missionary house, it is clean. Three out of four of us are clean and neat, so the one sloppy guy is getting a hard time from us. But it is nice to have a little organization. Other places in the mission make me nervous just to walk in. Just finished dinner. It was a hot meal that made me steam from the inside out. It was so **덥다** “hot”.

Yesterday I had a neat experience. Last week, we had met a music composition professor from Seoul National University. We found out about a demonstration at the US Cultural Center that didn't have anything to do with Korea. But yesterday I went and saw it. It was very simple display with four short films being shown one after another. I saw great one on "Lionel Hampton" - Do you know him? They also had a live demonstration, but it was at 6:30 PM after we had to leave. Some drummer named Michael Rhonda was here for lectures. I didn't see him. Then at 3:00 they showed a special movie, *West Side Story*. Oh wow, it was neat. I knew everything, every line the whole way through and I loved it. It was all free too.

Back to Korea now and still happy to be here. I'm understanding about 60% of the conversation and 80% of what is going on. In a while here I'm going to make a study on Chinese characters. Any suggestions from home? Ask Jay. It would help.

Love you all, JEFF [Go Top](#)

1977.08.01 Aerogramme To Home

Dear family, it is August, I have one month left. In my pocket. And book. But I can manage an extra month or two. President Hawkins is a fine man. We had a zone workshop the past week and I. Came to know how close he is to the Lord. I really feel he is sent here to boost our spirituality. In the workshops, he spoke. On. One clash and then two. Many of us as a group in the class he went over. Some rules in the White Book I was glad to hear purposeful instructions. Where they were lacking before. I was called to changes myself.

So you remember my comments about Korean Barber shops? They do everything. I usually had my nails cut and my hair washed. But as president Hawkins said, "They provide several other services, but all we'll be getting is a haircut." He didn't say why. He did for every other rule but not this one. This was also the only one I wanted to know.

Later, he spoke on the central theme of missionary work and our Church - *Jesus Christ*. He told us that our message was that: He lives, loves us, and His church is on the earth. He talked from events in the Book of Mormon. He explained how Enos was a Rascal. Sat on the back row in church. Had to go to family night but wanted to go out with friends. But one time having some success in hunting (out playing), he started thinking about what his dad says in family night. Also, Enos thought the Saints seemed to be so joyful and caught up in it. Then, as what happens when you ponder if you're not careful, he began to be concerned with his own soul.

President Hawkins is a man I could listen to for hours. My companion taught another class about what our zone has been doing. So it went for two days.

At times, [at the Mission Home], I was studying in the assistance office. I saw and talked to Dave Merrill and found he is in Anyang, near the area where the floods were. He is going to be a fine missionary.

My writing is not too good.

Later this afternoon I will be working with. A lady who is soon to be a dance instructor at BYU. She is a Korean member - **최옥희** Choi Ook Hee. I'm working on the **북춤** Pook-Chum or drum dance. It's for the Foreigners Festival in September. Among the problems I've encountered are: Dance moves -- One is bending way over backwards and playing upside down. Costume-- Only girls do this dance these days, but only men did it thousands of years ago. Not sure what to wear. Instruments- Sister Choi would loan me hers, but she's taking them with her to America before the contest.

These are also something I'd like to buy and send home. But that is expensive. The best drums cost about \$60.00 each, and three or five are used. There are cheaper ones for about \$16.00 each. I'm not sure what I want to do, especially since I'm now living in such an expensive area. Today I will be checking out possibilities for borrowing from a folk dance center. But there might be a rental there.

So, what do you think? This is something really sincerely worthwhile, but I don't know if we can afford it. If I did buy them, I wouldn't spend more than \$100. On it all. Then needing some money to send it home. If I can borrow them, then I can wait for a year to buy them. If I do, I'll know more after today. But this is all I can tell you so you can let me know in three weeks. Which is the letter you write after this one.

I won't do anything without your advice. This isn't. An easy subject so don't be overly concerned.

My main worry right now is still missionary work and I'm working super with my companion. We really bear a lot of testimony and I really am growing. The Korean people are kinder and more receptive than anywhere else in the world. What a blessing to be here.

Love you much, JEFF [Go Top](#)

1977.08.08 Aerogramme To Home

Their family. Hello. This week my companion went to another area in our zone on a split so I had a "Newman, Dave" from Idaho. We did some great proselyting . One morning we sang "I am a Child of God" at the door. One man, who had a record by the Tab Choir, invited us in. We loaned him a Book of Mormon and will be back to him. This week we had a family home evening with a complete family for the first time on my mission. It was great. However, the family claims such a busy schedule we were not able to get a return promise with them.

Saturday we went downtown to the Korea House and met the owner, manager Guy, and his friend who is the dance instructor. I was in enlightened by the behavior of this Korean man and dance teacher because he fit the stereotype of the position -- he had feminine characteristics and all. It was something.

We also saw the drum dance I hope to do. It is two girls [dancers] in front of [set of] five- [each] with their own set. They started wearing a lot of gowns and a hat. They dance around a while to regular Korean music. Then they slide off this extra stuff, down to a regular dress. (When I do it, I doubt that costume). All this time they have had the sticks in their hands. At the point they drop the robe, they click the sticks above their heads and step into the arrangement of drums. Then in unison, they strike one or two drums and click their sticks and then they go into it.

It doesn't seem too hard to play, but the motions are smooth and graceful. It is a dance. I liked it. It is going to be a challenge to learn and to make all the arrangements to do it, but I'm going to try. I also weigh your feelings on when, why, and what I should do concerning buying this stuff. I will have no problem I think. For the contest. As I tried to say last week, I can borrow the drums.

Things sound big at home, but I guess by now it is settled a bit. When this letter comes, Cherie ought be about ready to head for school. Incredible! Time is moving. It seems a long time since I've heard from some people.

I have received 2 letters from each of my missionary buddies. That's all. It is hard to correspond with them. I tried sending a tape to pass between the Heaths and me, but it hasn't got back to me yet. 1 1/2 months have passed. A do hear from them though.

AND, I I've been asked to spend a few days to record with the New Horizons -- for their new album. Jim Jones from Bountiful has become a member of that group, he'll be a bass guitar to replace a, elder returning home. It should be fun.

So I am busy, happy and working all over the place.

President Hawkins is going to be making big changes in the mission. By the 22nd of this month I should have big news.

I learn every day. My language is coming, but I'm never going to be done. Never planned to be. I love you all. My prayers always include you all.

This is a great mission. I'm doing my best to keep expenses down and yet I want to buy all of creative bring home and show you all. Please have Ron check on a strobe again. Those dark slides are my attempts without flash -- too expensive here? All camera stuff is anyway. Film and flash could be appreciated.

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1977.08.16 Aerogramme To Home

Dear family, today is the year 1977, Month 8 and Day 16. August is half over. In Korean numbering systems, everything goes from big to small. So it is the best thing that Koreans do. I particularly made notice of that when I got. The tape back. Sent around to Steve and Alan Heath. They both wrote dates. Day, month, year. It is fun to hear them. We all spoke a little of our language. Steve made the comment. You could dance to Allana's language. They both sound great. I do have much, don't have much time today. I leave in one hour to the mission home. I am playing drums with the new horizons and they're recording session.

It should be a good tape. I'm having a great time playing. We got some fair drums from the Army base music supply. They have stuff like that for USO tours to use. I guess Jackie Wood and her friends will be coming with some group.

I received more letters this week than usual so being busy I won't get them all answered. I have been missing practice on the Korean drum because of New Horizons so I hope I still get that done. Time is getting close to the day.

Yesterday was Stake Conference - the first for the Seoul East Stake. Elder Komatsu presided and spoke at the end. Of course President Rhee Ho Nam spoke and I understood a great deal of what he said. I'm starting to get more and more conversation now- especially about the church.

Anyway, we had five kids from the family we were teaching come out to both meetings. After sacrament, the Bishop here in 3rd Ward talked to them for about 45 minutes. Shared a lot of their questions. They look good but we are struggling for their parents. Another family of 10, which we are moving real slow. We have met them three times, but each time our effort of family home evening was set back with a dinner or talking or English lessons. Last time we met I was asked to sing at one point I sang "I'm a Child of God" in Korean and English (since I learned it last week). Now they want to know about the church. We met them this week. We've met a few other families too, but not more than one are studying continuously yet.

Also last week. President Hawkins invited us to church at his home. He has asked Elder Nelson to make up a report on what he feels the problems are in the mission and how to fix them. We had cheeseburgers, pork and beans and made strawberry ice cream. Wow.

I'm working on not buying anything. Money seems to fly away. I need to save a little more here and there for an overcoat. Which I will be buying within a month or two.

I've been in the most expensive place in Korea for 8 months now so. I could go within the next four months any time. No one knows. Next week is transfers but they haven't been announced yet.

I'm sitting behind a drum set as the boy set up equipment for recording. I'm kind of nervous. It looks semi-professional. It is a little rusty to be playing but fun. I wish to go well.

Elder Dixon Burton is in Acapulco. I just received a letter from him. He's excited to be there in a Mexico finally. He said it was slow where he was and he was only understanding about half. Well, things are a bit slow and proselyting due to many other activities.

I'm still learning, meeting adversity and challenge, understanding more about people and myself. I'm happy, healthy, homely, humming on. Though it is a good experience to be here, but I am still waiting for the mission as I had

pictured it. I plan on making my ideas as a reality by hard work and prayer. Missing a lot in my prayers still. It's one of the real challenges I'm to meet. I'm happy, as I said, but nowhere near satisfied. I hope things pick up.

President Hawkins ever inspires me. But he is yet maintaining impersonal relationships. Well, I love you all.

Sorry this letter is such a confusion.

Love, JEFF [Go Top](#)

1977.08.22 Aerogramme To Home

Dear family, it is 7:30 AM this morning of my first transfer. I'm going to 9th ward to be companions with Elder Richards. 9th Ward has a missionary house on the church grounds. Is also where the Institute of Religion. Is. Yesterday I spoke for a few minutes in Sacrament meeting. 8 months in 3rd ward, 1/3 of my mission. I sure didn't feel like going. It said so after the meeting, saying- **안녕히 계세요** "Good Bye" to all the members. I felt bad last night - my face hurt. I have one big zit under my nose. That's it. I was overtired and somewhat depressed. I've been uneasy the past few days. I thought somebody isn't happy with me going to 9th Ward and so I battled on.

I feel a lot better this morning, have been anxious to go. Only the cat which came to our house 1 1/2 weeks ago also is bugging me. I'm to be a junior companion to Elder Richards for a while.

I'm glad it will still give me a chance to get the discussions. I thought I might stay in 3rd ward as a zone leader for a month more since. Since an assistant zone leader usually goes to senior next. But I didn't. But I'm going to a new area. I guess it is about time. We had a few good promises this last week. One family's kids gave his presents. Since we are going, (my companion also goes to a new area). It is a wall-hanging out of [bamboo] wood which symbolizes famous things of Korea. Tried to get a few pictures of third ward members but it was too dark at sacrament meeting.

Sorry about my writing. I guess I'll have to really slow down and work on writing clearly. **분명히**. I've been practicing my Korean and it has an effect on my English writing. In writing Korean fast cursive style is similar to never taking your pen off the paper. So sometimes I drag my pen in English writing. About the drums, if it isn't clear, I'll try again. I'm not going to buy them. This time I'm borrowing the drums from the Korean sister who has helped me out a bit. Going to America and the 29th and leaving me responsible to send the drums to her by a member in the army. That is what is planned, but it may be different. I hope it works out. It is only one month away now.

Last week was a special experience for me. I was able to record with the New Horizons and I'd felt good about my playing. Tuesday we were interrupted for a few moments as President Hawkins spoke to all the New Horizons. It was special for me to see those missionaries give their support to President Hawkins as he called New Horizons to an end. He said, "I'm sending you elders out to the field" and explained it was time for a change. The blessings of revelation.

We were all disappointed. President Hawkins expected such, and told us we'd "better be disappointed. You've done a great work." I was the shortest-lived New Horizon - 3 days so this is the last recording to be done and we gave our all. We worked 2 1/2 days solid and. That little stuffy room getting just instruments down as our best. I was done, but the rest recorded the vocals with the tender apples straight through Saturday. I saw them Saturday when I was up proselyting with a greenie that had come in the country three days ago. They looked spent.

Well, I just finished breakfast. I sure think about you all the time. And hope everything is super. I only want to sample of your food product - several cans or something that looks like I can sell boss a lot of money to get. In but it does come through. Keep working and praying with me.

I love you all, JEFF [Go Top](#)

1977.08.29 Air Mail Envelope. Pages To Home

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Dear family, I have your letter of the 16th now. Being in 9th ward. I get any mail that arrives during the week on Monday only since it goes to the mission home and we pick it up there. As long as I live in Seoul I will. It will be that way. So I have been one week in a new area and already paid for a whole month in my old house. But because of transfers I don't get any back. This place is a missionary house, not a "Hasook" [Boarding House]. About 34,000 Wan (about \$70 compared to \$100 in the old place). That means next month my expenses should come down a bit. That's good, huh? I also got the package today. Thanks. It cost \$10 to get it through customs due to the film, but that should last a while.

I should have enough toothpaste and socks for the rest of my mission. I've been wearing only half the socks I brought, so I have plenty. The old ones I will throw away and the last three tubes of toothpaste I have sold one, one is left and the third is only half. I brush every day but use only a little. I'm sure I have enough. The film is good too. Have you thought about flashes? One or two packages should do for another year. There isn't any shots that I need them for, but there are some. 6 cubes would suffice.

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When and if you send them, mix them up in the rest of another package. Christmas time would be good. I got a postcard from Diane Howell in Washington for some music camp. She said she was engaged but didn't say who or when. I thought you might like to know that.

Today I had my first real lesson on the Korean drum dance. The teacher is a pro - so it is the real thing. Hard, fun, the whole bit. She isn't a member but is attending in second ward. She is living and working. With a tender apples. Why she is helping me I'm not sure, but she offered happily and I keep telling her how grateful I am. She's about 35 or 40 and is quite good. She just returned from touring Japan. It's fun. No line. Last week we knocked doors

only all day long. No missionaries in Korea have done that in a long time. We taught 12 hours, sold two books. And have 4 new investigators. It was hard. It is the gutsy part of missionary work which President Hawkins will be starting again.

We even met up with some persecution too. Some guy in a Non-denominational Christian group called "Navigators." Met as knocking doors. We were working with two new Stake missionaries too. He spoke 1/2 in English and called us devils and Joseph Smith a Sinner. The Stake missionaries were testimony, as did we, but he was bitter. Almost didn't let us go.

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I was really scared the Stake missionaries would be scared out of the work. It was a pretty uncomfortable atmosphere. I asked if we could go. And he said, no, and was getting to criticize my Korean. I said let's go to the others. And we just left. I was surprised afterward to see more enthusiasm out of the Stake missionaries it. Ruined my day.

We had a short prayer and continued trying.

Times are strengtheners in a way, but I'm waiting for the exact opposite to that experience. It's bound to happen.

I'm loving it still. I don't think there is a nicer companion in the world I have. Be careful that I don't overdo what I want because the Elder Richards is so easy going and kind. Some guy. My missionary house sure is a mess. These boys just didn't have the good home-bringing-up I did. Love you all, it's a great experience. I wish you could be here and see it. The language is coming.

Great love, JEFF [Go Top](#)