

Assemblies of God HERITAGE

INTRODUCTORY ISSUE
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THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD ARCHIVES

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Introducing the New Assemblies of God Heritage Paper

You are holding the first issue of the Assemblies of God *Heritage*, a quarterly publication being introduced by the Assemblies of God Archives.

This introductory issue is being distributed free at the 39th General Council in St. Louis and through the November issue of *Advance* magazine.

Members of the newly created Assemblies of God Heritage Society will receive *Heritage* free (see page 4 for membership information and gift offers).

Thomas F. Zimmerman, General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God said: "The Heritage Society is a most significant development for the Assemblies of God. It will be the means of calling attention to our inspiring heritage and the importance of preserving that heritage. I am happy to become a charter member of our Heritage Society and urge each of our ministers, laymen, churches, and schools to join with me in this significant effort."

The Role of the A/G Archives

Winston Churchill said, "The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see."

This is true when one looks at church history as well as secular history.

The Assemblies of God recognizes the importance of preserving its heritage. In 1977 the Archives was established as the official repository for all documents, records, and materials of any form created by the Assemblies of God. In addition, historical collections such as books, personal papers, diaries, photographs, recordings, and artifacts of prominent members of the Assemblies of God are preserved and made available for review, research, and display. An active oral history project captures the voices of persons who were involved in the early years



Headquarters and Gospel Publishing House employees in St. Louis about 1916. In the front (left) is Zella Reynolds Mussen. On the far left in the back is Bertha Lawrence Schneider; in the center is J. Roswell Flower. Others are unidentified.

The St. Louis Era

By Wayne E. Warner

St. Louis has been a key city for the Assemblies of God ever since its headquarters and Gospel Publishing House were moved here from Findlay, Ohio, in 1915. This was the headquarters city until 1918 when bigger facilities were purchased in Springfield.

The city has also been the site for 6 significant General Councils¹ and the important Council on Evangelism in 1968. And the many local Assemblies of God churches in the city and sur-

rounding area have been a respected and strong voice for the Movement for many years.

and development of the Assemblies of God.
For more information, request the brochure, "A Grand Heritage." It is available from the Assemblies of God Archives, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802.



rounding area have been a respected and strong voice for the Movement for many years.

Several holiness evangelists who preached here in the latter part of the 19th century helped prepare St. Louis for the coming Pentecostal revival. One of these was Evangelist Maria B. Woodworth-Etter who stirred the city with a mighty salvation-healing campaign in 1890. Her 8,000-seat tent in north St. Louis was filled to capacity night after night; and as a result of that 5-month campaign, a church was formed and a building constructed at 2929 Montgomery Street. In 1916, after the Assemblies of God headquarters was established here, this same church building became the home of the first Assemblies of God congregation in the city.

The preacher who actually brought the Pentecostal message to St. Louis was Seeley D. Kinne. He had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles and came to St. Louis in 1907 where

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he established a Pentecostal mission above the Monarch Laundry.

Another Pentecostal who had an important part in the early years of the work in St. Louis was Mary Barnes who was a well-known evangelist and director of a home for wayward girls. Everybody knew Mary as "Mother Barnes," and the first Assemblies of God ministers roll even listed her that way.

While holding a tent service in St. Louis in about 1910, Mother Barnes and her congregation rejoiced to see a drunken criminal lawyer make his way to the crude tent altar. God wonderfully saved him that night, and he gave up his practice, and went into the ministry and later became a member of the Assemblies of God.

Old-timers will remember this lawyer-turned preacher as Ely Fox Cunningham—one of the firstfruits of the Pentecostal work in St. Louis.

When the Assemblies of God headquarters and publishing interests were moved from Findlay, Ohio, in 1915, a building was obtained at 2838 Easton Avenue.²

A second building at 1243 North Garrison was leased from the Salvation Army where a communal style of living was set up for the headquarters officers and some of the workers. This was known as the Evangel Home.

Three two-room apartments in the Evangel Home were occupied by the families of J. Roswell Flower, Stanley H. Frodsham, and J. W. Welch. Carl O'Guin, who is now 85 and lives in Madison, Illinois, worked at Gospel Publishing House and recalls that he lived in a small room in the attic. Rooms were also provided for visiting missionaries.

There was very little money in those early years, but the group sacrificed, worked closely together, and lived by faith. Faith Frodsham Campbell, who was just a baby when her parents moved to St. Louis, quoted her father's memoirs of those early years:

"If those early workers had not sacrificed, the Gospel Publishing House would have gone on the rocks. I can well remember the day when we were at a great crisis; we owed \$1,800 and Brother Flower said we simply must have a new folding machine that would cost \$400. So we knelt together



Some of the people who lived at the Evangel Home. In front, Mrs. J. Roswell Flower with son Joseph (now General Secretary of the Assemblies of God); behind Mrs. Flower to the right is Mrs. Kelley and her young son; seated at the far left is Anna Hackelman who is holding Adele Flower; the woman holding the baby in the center is Mrs. George Flower, and the baby is George Ernest Flower; Standing (from the right) are J. W. Welch, George Flower (J. Roswell Flower's father); Mrs. J. W. Welch; and Carl O'Guin. The others are unidentified.

and prayed for \$2,000. I knew we had prayed in faith and my heart was jubilant. But the Lord was extra kind; He knew we would need more than that to carry us over the summer so He put it on the heart of a lady in San Diego to send \$3,000."³

It was a time of rejoicing when the small band of faithful workers secured the old Woodworth-Etter church building at 2929 Montgomery. J. W. Welch, in addition to his duties as chairman of the young organization, became the pastor of the congregation. Today within a radius of 50 miles there are over 100 local assemblies.

Two of the three General Councils held in St. Louis during the time the headquarters was located here were extremely crucial for the survival of the organization. In 1915 the controversial "New Issue" was the main topic of business. The division was on whether the water baptismal formula should be based on Matthew 28:19 or Acts 2:38. The apparent victory by the Trinitarians in 1915 did not end the controversy. The 4th General Council in October 1916 saw the Oneness controversy continue, which prompted the adoption of the Statement of Truths—with its strong position on the Trinity. As a result of this council the 2-year-old Assemblies of God lost

"If those early workers had not sacrificed, the Gospel Publishing House would have gone on the rocks."—Stanley H. Frodsham

156 ministers and numerous assemblies who accepted the Oneness position, but it survived because of the faithfulness of dedicated believers throughout the Fellowship.

One St. Louis council is remembered for something besides business meetings, times of worship, and fellowship. Willie Millsaps, who is now 85 and living in Bristol, Virginia, had attended the first General Council in Hot Springs. But the one he remembers best is the 1921 St. Louis council when the chairman, E. N. Bell, took time out of his busy schedule to perform a wedding ceremony for Millsaps and his bride in a local St. Louis hotel.⁴

The 1921 council would be Bell's last, for in June 1923 this first chairman of the Assemblies of God would be with the Lord.

Those still living who were associated with the St. Louis era include the widow of J. Roswell Flower, Alice Reynolds Flower. She is still active as a leader in a Sunday school class and a prayer group at her church, Central Assembly in Springfield, Missouri. Her son Joseph, who was just a toddler when his family lived at the old Evangel Home, is now the General Secretary of the Assemblies of God—a position his father held for 27 years. Joseph's sister, Adele Dalton, was too young to remember much about the years in St. Louis; she is a former missionary and now writes for the Foreign Missions Department of the Assemblies of God. Bertha Lawrence Schneider who was in the first Pentecostal church above the Monarch Laundry and later worked at the publishing house on Easton Avenue lives in Detroit. Carl O'Guin lives across the Mississippi at Madison, Illinois, and at 85 still remains active with a Sunday school class. Another person who lived at the Evangel Home as a child is Faith Frodsham Campbell. She and her husband live in Arlington, Virginia, where her husband Leonard pastors Calvary Gospel Church.⁵

A lot of water has gone under the
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ASSEMBLIES OF GOD HERITAGE

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Preserving Your District and Local Church History

By Pam Eastlake

Before a church, district office, or any institution can begin their own archives they must first determine what are archival records. Various technical and elaborate definitions can be used; however, a definition used by archivist T. R. Schellenberg is most applicable: archival records are those documents and materials created by an institution in pursuance of its legal obligations and business transactions. These records should be preserved as evidence of the institution's functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and operations. The archives of a church should be those records which are important to the church as well as to others.

Many churches today maintain a church library. An archives is different from a library in its methods and in its materials. Libraries are collecting agencies—gathering books by a variety of authors on a variety of subjects. An archives is established for the purpose of preserving documents and other materials produced by the institution it serves.

Items that should be preserved in-

clude legal documents concerning church property, constitution and bylaws, annual reports, committee reports and minutes, membership rosters, church directories, personnel (names of pastors, Sunday school teachers, etc.), photographs of the church and personnel, and materials reflecting the growth and development of church programs.

Most archival materials are paper documents. Preservation is not always easy due to the quality of the paper. The methods used in processing the wood pulp leave a residue of acid in the finished product causing eventual deterioration. Higher quality paper will last longer; newsprint, of course, is one of the least permanent papers. Proper storage will lengthen the life of the documents. If possible, it is recommended that acid-free storage boxes and folders be purchased; The Hollinger Corporation manufactures boxes of various dimensions including legal size. Papers should be inserted into folders and packed so that the edges do not curl and further damage the documents.

In addition to the use of proper boxes, it is important to store the boxes in the best possible environment. Boiler rooms and basements are not suitable areas for storage due to high humidity and increased chances of water damage from broken pipes or fire damage. Paper will last longer if kept in a dark area with temperatures from 60 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit and 50 percent relative humidity.

By planning an archival program



The Author placing documents in acid-free folder and box.

for your church now, you ensure that the records will be available in the future.

Some books you may find helpful in organizing your archives are listed below as well as the address of The Hollinger Corporation. Also, please feel free to write or call us at the Assemblies of God Archives (417) 862-2781. We will be glad to assist you.

Brichford, Maynard J. *Archives and Manuscripts* (Basic Manual Series).

Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1977.

Duckett, Kenneth W. *Modern Manuscripts*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1975.

Kane, Lucile M. *A Guide to the Care and Administration of Manuscripts*. Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1966.

The Hollinger Corporation, P. O. Box 6185, 3810 South Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington, VA 22206

The St. Louis Era

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Eades Bridge since a small group of believers set up a headquarters and printing plant at 2838 Easton Avenue. The leaders of that period are gone but certainly not forgotten. The names of E. N. Bell, J. W. Welch, J. Roswell Flower, Stanley F. Frodsham, and others will remain as symbols of dedicated service to the kingdom of God.

Somehow it seems only fitting that there will be an Evangel Home reunion in heaven. For here were some choice servants of the Kingdom who were instrumental in helping the Assemblies of God get off to a good start during very crucial times.

¹ General Councils held here in 1915, 1916, 1917, 1921, 1923, and 1981.

² Easton Avenue is now called Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard.

³ Faith Frodsham Campbell, *Stanley Frodsham: Prophet With a Pen* (Springfield, Missouri: Gospel Publishing House, 1974), p. 58.

⁴ Millsaps served as the first superintendent of Kansas District. He was a pioneer of Pentecost to the Appalachian region and served as superintendent of the Appalachian District.

⁵ No doubt there are others living who were associated with the Assemblies of God during the St. Louis era. If you know of others, please send names and addresses to the editor.

Capturing History in the Sony Age

An increasingly popular method for gathering and preserving important events and experiences in the lives of people and the story of a movement is oral history. The Assemblies of God Archives is utilizing both audio and video tapes to record interviews with people who have contributed to the development of the movement. Without the use of oral history, many of these important stories would be lost forever.

In addition to interviews the Archives is now conducting, we are searching for tapes already in existence. Arrangements are then made to copy the tapes and place them in the Archives for preservation and research. Recently 17 interviews were obtained from the collection at Southwestern Assemblies of God College, Waxahachie, Texas.

The following is a partial list of persons who have been interviewed: E. S. Williams, Alice Reynolds Flower, J. Roswell Flower, William B. McCafferty, A. A. Wilson, Dollie Simms, George W. Hardcastle, Sr., James Menzie, Lloyd A. Sappington, Lois Buffum Childs, J. S. Jamison, Hugh Cadwalder, Willie Millsaps, Everett L. Phillips, Noel Perkin, James Hamill.

Persons interested in interviewing people in their area should write to the Archives for further information.

