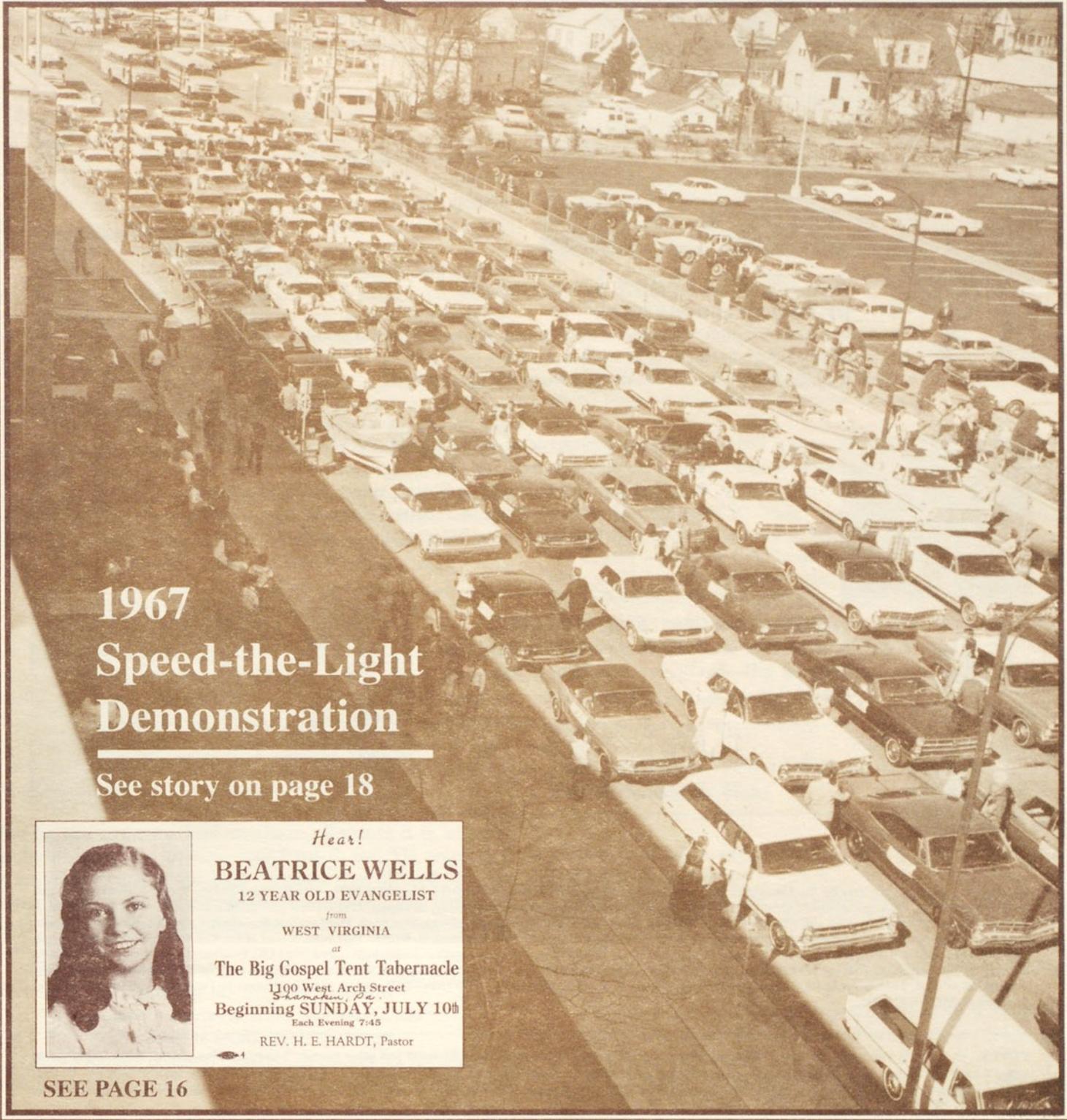


Assemblies of God

HERITAGE™

SONG STORIES

Living by Faith
By James Wells
Got Any Rivers?
By Oscar Eliason



1967 Speed-the-Light Demonstration

See story on page 18



Hear!

BEATRICE WELLS

12 YEAR OLD EVANGELIST

from
WEST VIRGINIA

at

The Big Gospel Tent Tabernacle

1100 West Arch Street
Shamokin, Pa.
Beginning SUNDAY, JULY 10th

Each Evening 7:45

REV. H. E. HARDT, Pastor

SEE PAGE 16



5

PIONEERING IN THE UPPER MIDWEST

Beginning her ministry as a child tagging along with her father, this woman reflects on what it was like to evangelize in the upper midwest 75 years ago. By Anna Berg

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"GOT ANY RIVERS?"

The story of song writer Oscar Carl Eliason and his most famous song that has encouraged believers around the world: "Got Any Rivers?" By Glenn Gohr

Photo: Roy and Jimalee George

THE GEORGE FAMILY REMEMBERS CHRIST FAITH MISSION

When R. Kenneth George, New Mexico District Superintendent, walked into an old chapel in Los Angeles last year, he thought it looked familiar. What do you think he discovered?



13



ALBERT KNUDSON PIONEERS IN WASHINGTON

There was no Assembly of God congregation in Chehalis, Washington, in 1940, so this former boy piano player from Seattle started one. Then he received help: he took a bride, and then T. Burt and Vesta Evans came to assist him.

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"AMERICA'S GIRL EVANGELIST"

A story told in advertising materials about a young girl who began preaching at the age of 9 in 1935.



UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITY
TO HEAR
**15 YEAR OLD CHILD
EVANGELIST
BEATRICE WELLS**
AT
TRENTON GOSPEL TABERNACLE
681 PRINCETON AVE
Beginning Nov. 2 to Nov. 16
NIGHTLY AT 7:45 EXCEPT SATURDAY
SUNDAYS 10:45 AND 7:30
You Are Invited
Rev. Frederick W. Huber, Pastor

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Heritage is published quarterly by the Assemblies of God Archives, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, Mo 65802-1894. ARCHIVES STAFF: Wayne Warner, editor and director; Joyce Lee, assistant archivist; Glenn Gohr, archives assistant and copy editor; Cindy Gray, secretary. ARCHIVES ADVISORY BOARD: George O. Wood, J. Calvin Holsinger, Gary B. McGee, and Charles Crabtree. Yearly subscription, \$12.50; lifetime subscription, \$150. Heritage is indexed in *Religion Index One: Periodicals*, published by the American Theological Library Association, 820 Church Street, Suite 300, Evanston, IL 60201. This index is part of the ATLA Religion Database, available on WilsonDisc CD-ROM from H. W. Wilson Co. and online via WilsonLine, BRS Information Technologies, and DIALOG Information Services. Microfilm of Heritage is available from Theological Research Exchange Network (TREN), 5420 N.E. Glisan, Portland, OR 97213. Copyright © 1996 by The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894. ISSN 0896-4395. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Heritage, 1445 Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802-1894.

COVER: In 1967, 30 years ago, the world was hearing and seeing demonstrations concerning Vietnam and other causes. The Assemblies of God Youth Department, called Christ's Ambassadors in those days, wanted to demonstrate for another cause—the number of vehicles they had purchased in one year for missionaries. Dealers in Springfield lent the vehicles pictured on the front for this demonstration in front of the Assemblies of God Headquarters in Springfield, Missouri. Look for a story on page 18.

“Living by Faith”

A Story of Paul and Betty Wells

By Wayne Warner

*Living by faith, in Jesus above,
Trusting, confiding in His great love;
From all harm safe in His sheltering arm,*
I'm living by faith and feel no alarm.*

James Wells penned the words in 1918 to the great gospel favorite, “Living by Faith.” But he would not live to see his newly born son Paul grow up to live out that song in his own life and in ministry to others. For James was killed in a car accident when Paul was 7 years of age.

He would live long enough, however, to see his only child learn the rudiments of living by faith in a godly home in Collinsville, Oklahoma.

As a layman, James led the singing in their local church and planted Sunday schools in the Will Rogers country a few miles northeast of Tulsa. His son would inherit those musical and church interests and use them in hamlets and metropolitan areas around the world.

Paul stood with his mother around his father’s hospital bed after that 1925 accident, watching his life ebb from him. One of the last sounds he heard from his father was an utterance in tongues. The memory of that experience has never left him.

It was difficult for James’ widow and son to face this heart-breaking loss, but they knew personally the God who could help them. The God of whom James had written:

*I care not today what the morrow may bring,
If shadow or sunshine or rain.
The Lord I know ruleth o'er everything,
And all of my worry is vain.*

Mrs. Wells, wanting to live closer to relatives, took her young son and moved to California where Paul grew up during the Great Depression. It was a move destined to shape Paul’s life toward the ministry. While attending a children’s church service at the Assembly of God in Taft, California, Paul felt a call to Christian service. It was a call from which he would never get away.

Then came the shocking news during his early teens that he had contracted tuberculosis. Because it is a contagious disease, the doctors sent Paul to the TB ward at a hospital in Keene, California—a place that offered patients some comfort but little hope for the future. But the same God Mrs. Wells and Paul knew in Oklahoma was in California.

*Tho' tempests may blow and the storm clouds arise,
Obscuring the brightness of life,
I'm never alarmed at the overcast skies;
The Master looks on at the strife.*

Paul’s mother believed God had an answer for her son’s TB and one day brought Pastor L. D. Hall into what some had called

*Some hymn books have this line as, “Safe from all harm in His sheltering arm.”



Paul and Betty Wells on the evangelistic field in 1947.

the hospital’s death ward. Pastor Hall prayed and God answered, healing Paul’s lungs completely.

It would not be a death ward for Paul Wells! Now at age 79, he is still active in the ministry and never experienced lung trouble after the pastor’s prayer.

After graduating from high school, Paul knew that God was leading him into a radio ministry. His idea was to sing and play his alto saxophone on a live program he called “The Gospel in Song.” He knew a radio audience would appreciate inspiring gospel songs and hymns.

It was a bold step of faith for the teenager who didn’t have much money and not even a pianist for the program. Then someone told him of Betty Rockwell, a good pianist, so he talked with her about his proposed radio ministry. Although Betty was not a Christian at the time, Paul

In 1938 Paul and Betty went on the air “live” with “The Gospel in Song” over KPMC in Bakersfield.



needed a pianist—saved or not—and she agreed to help him with the program.

One day in 1938, the two young musicians traveled the 30 miles to Bakersfield where the Mutual station KPMC presented them “live” (the only practical way to broadcast before the advent of wire and tape recorders) with “The Gospel in Song.”

Paul had no car,” Betty said recently with a chuckle, “so my aunt loaned him her 1935 Chevrolet so we could get to the station each week.”

The couple would also sing and play in revivals and other church meetings. But all was not well with Betty’s

spiritual life. After playing for church services, she skipped out to dances and shows. "I was under conviction," she said, "and was saved in a Pentecostal Church of God revival."

Betty was not only saved during the broadcast ministry, she also agreed to become Mrs. Paul Wells in 1940! Together they worked in the Taft church and sang in church rallies and services throughout Kern County.

But then something affected their lives as it did millions of others all over the globe: World War II. The third verse of his father's "Living by Faith" could have been written especially for these times as Paul was drafted into the army.

*I know that He safely will carry me thro',
No matter what evils betide,
Why should I then care,
tho' the tempest may blow,
If Jesus walks close to my side?*

And Jesus did walk close to his side in the Army Medical Corps and gave him opportunities to learn from others and to minister in Texas. First at Camp Barkley near Abilene. "God leads in strange ways," Betty said, "and it was a time of training not only in his army duties, but also for a future ministry."

Paul and Betty attended the Assembly of God in Abilene and plunged right into a variety of ministries at the encouragement of Pastor W. A. McCann. They conducted street services, chapel services at Camp Barkley, children's ministry, radio broadcasts, choir, played their instruments, and sang in a quartet.

Paul became a supply sergeant and soon was known as "The Singing Sergeant." The pastors and evangelists who came to know Paul and Betty at conventions and rallies encouraged them to seek the Lord for a future ministry after the war ended.

And being in Texas during the war, they were given opportunities to minister with well-known evangelists of the day, including Gladys Pearson, Margaret Plunkett, Fern Huffstutler, and Bracy Greer. Later the army transferred Paul to Camp Crowder, near Joplin, Missouri. They believed that if God opens a door, dedicated believers should walk through it, so it wasn't long before they were assisting Pastor S. K. Biffle in the Joplin Assembly of God.

Following his discharge, Paul and Betty visited with their family. But they had something else on their minds. God had called them to evangelize, and they had three churches lined up for meetings. And he began preparations for the ministry, taking correspondence courses from Berean College (now Berean University in Springfield) and Chillicothe (Missouri) Theological Seminary.

Fort Smith, Arkansas, was first on their list for a revival campaign, the first for Paul and Betty to try their wings. Then it was on to St. Louis—and the world. Today their

memories return to those meetings during the late 1940s. There were healings, deliverances, and conversions. There were small churches, like the one in Merkel, Texas, to the larger ones, like First Assembly, in Kansas City, Missouri, pastored at the time by A. A. Wilson.

Two cities stand out in those early meetings. In Fresno, California, a revival ran for 9 weeks, and in Seattle, Washington, 8 weeks. Most meetings ran at least 2 weeks.

A meeting they conducted for Pastor Singleton in Santa Paula, north of Los Angeles, was destined to change their ministry. Later when Singleton resigned the pastorate, he called Paul and Betty to see if they would be interested in candidating for the church. They gave Singleton permission to suggest their names to the church board as possible



Paul and Betty Wells were pastors of this Assembly of God, Santa Paula, California, now The Christian Center, in 1950, when the first phase of the complex was built. They were pastors for 39 years.

candidates. After 3 1/2 years, they thought it was time to settle down for a while, and Santa Paula might just be the place in January 1949.

Many ministers would have kept right on going after seeing what Santa Paula had to offer.

The 26' x 33' church building was a former house with the partitions knocked out. A small garage was used for Sunday school rooms. The parsonage boasted 500 square feet with a dirt floor. When Paul and Betty candidated for the church, 29 members were on the roll—one third of them did not vote for them. Enough support from the other members, however, gave them the pastorate.

The new pastors of Santa Paula were in their first pastorate, and they had accepted a challenge, to say the least.

But they went to work immediately and convinced the church that they needed to relocate. The congregation agreed, and within a year, they had built a 250-seat sanctuary at 8th and Ventura Streets. And not only that, they could boast to the Southern California District office that Santa Paula had 126 in Sunday school. Later they set a Sunday school record of more than 600.

In the years that followed, Paul led the congregation on building programs that added a fellowship hall, church offices, more Sunday school rooms, a preschool, a kindergarten, and an elementary school.

A condition for Paul's acceptance of the Santa Paula pastorate was that he be given opportunity to preach two revival crusades in the states each year and one crusade overseas every other year. Since that time he has traveled the globe, preaching in many countries and chalking up more than 2 million air miles for the Kingdom.

Continued on page 24

Wayne Warner is director of the Assemblies of God Archives and editor of *Heritage*. He is author of *The Woman Evangelist* (Maria B. Woodworth-Etter); *Kathryn Kuhlman: The Woman Behind the Miracles*; and compiler of two books on Smith Wigglesworth's sermons: *The Anointing of His Spirit* and *Only Believe*.



Early Days of the Pentecostal Renewal in Minnesota **A PIONEER MINISTER AND MISSIONARY REMINISCES**

By Anna Berg

When I was about 5 years old, my father took me with him to a church where a revival meeting was in progress. That larger church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, was in the midst of a great and spontaneous outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Crowds filled the auditorium nightly as the congregation yielded to the Holy Spirit in praising and blessing God. The unsaved, who came out of curiosity or a desire to scoff, were convicted of their sin and acknowledged Christ as Savior and Lord.

I believed in the power of Christ to save and to heal. My father and mother taught us in the home. Daily devotions and prayer were a part of our lives. I also understood, though vaguely, some things regarding the workings of the Holy Spirit. But it had never occurred to me that this blessing from God was also for children.

In that meeting I saw a girl only a year older than myself go to people in the audience and plead with them to give their hearts to Christ. Many broke down weeping and surrendered to the Lord as a result of this girl's simple but sincere testimony. This made a deep and lasting impression



Anna Hanson Berg (1897 - 1990) grew up in a Pentecostal home and became a minister with her father. After her marriage to Arthur Berg, they pastored and then served as missionaries in the Congo (now Zaire). For many years they pastored at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. This article was originally published in *Paraclete*, winter 1979

on me.

My father, Carl M. Hanson, had been miraculously healed. It was in 1895 when he was working with his brother in southern Minnesota. They were sawing wood with a power saw when my father's hand was caught and a finger severed. In freezing winter temperature they drove many miles in a horse-drawn sleigh to get help.

When they reached the doctor's office my father was suffering excruciating pain from blood poisoning. Two doctors worked steadily hoping to save his life. They considered amputating the arm as the only means,

“In 1895, while I was holding meetings and preaching the full gospel, a person came through and spoke in tongues as in Acts 2:4.”

Carl M. Hanson

then decided it was too late even for that. The doctors expressed their sorrow and concern to my mother and others and took their departure.

In that lonely hour of death my father cried to the Lord and rededicated his life to Him, God mercifully heard and spared him. To the surprise of all around who were waiting for him to die, he opened his eyes. The fever was gone. The signs of blood poisoning were gone. He was healed.

As a result of this experience, my father began giving testimony wherever doors were open to him: in churches, schoolhouses, homes, and missions. The response was amazing. Everywhere people were saved. This was usually followed by a consuming desire for more of God's power in their lives.

Some time later my father wrote describing those days: “In 1895, while I was holding meetings and preaching the full gospel, a person came through and spoke in tongues as in Acts 2:4.”

“Two years later I prayed with another soul for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. shortly afterward the Spirit came on her. She leaped, shouted, praised God, sang, prophesied, and spoke in other tongues.”

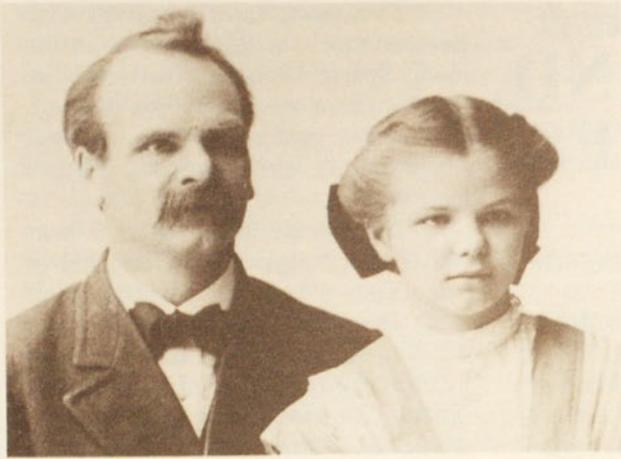
“Two years after this, I was led to get alone with God. All at once like a rushing mighty wind the spiritual atmosphere was cleared and my whole being was enlightened. The atoning blood of Christ, justifying me before God, made everything clear. The Holy Spirit then as a Person took possession of His temple, speaking in other tongues. I felt myself a listener and an instrument in the hand of the Almighty.”

Our family later moved from Minneapolis and we lived for many years on a farm near Dalton, Minnesota. There were no evangelical services nearby so we were deprived of a church home. The love and work of God in our hearts were kept aflame by the family altar, letters, and occasional visits of friends, plus the reports of God's working in various parts of the country. My brother Lloyd in his spare time would pray and commune with the Lord for hours. The times when my father came home from his meetings were often like mini camp meetings as he led us in singing and praising the Lord.

It was my privilege to travel with my father during the summer. God blessed His Word and revivals followed. We rejoiced to see the work of the Lord increase. But there was often opposition. Many times my father's life was threatened and in danger but he was protected by God's intervention.

I have been in meetings with him which were rudely interrupted by angry mobs. Eggs, tomatoes, and even stones were thrown. In tent meetings the ropes were sometimes cut and at times burned. But the Word of the Lord spread. The conviction was growing that “this is that” which was prophesied by Joel. God was pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh.

My husband Arthur was also



The author with her father, C. M. Hanson, in 1910. Anna assisted her father in evangelistic meetings.

brought up in a christian home. His mother had been miraculously healed while still in Norway. Coming to the country she aligned herself with people who believed in God's power to save from sin and heal diseases. Although her husband was not a Christian, she instilled in her family a real faith in a living Christ. When they heard about the glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit, their hearts were open and God met them.

When Arthur was a boy of 14 he gave his life to Christ and was filled with the Holy Spirit. That meeting was described in an early account entitled, "Historical Sketches of the Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle."

The writer says: "Brother William Durham of Chicago, Illinois, was on his way to the West Coast. He came to Minneapolis, then, deciding to take a different route to the coast, he remained 11 days. Oh, what glorious days, days of heaven on earth! What unity, what love! It was indescribable. Hearts were melted together in the love of God — love that knew no fear; love that sought out the unlovely one; love that could not see the mote in a brother's eye.

"This love of God soon gripped the hearts of the children. They too felt the presence of God in the midst of His people. Parents who had difficulty before in getting their children to attend church now found it difficult to get them to go home. Every night the altars were filled with men, women, and children seeking God. A great number were saved and about 25 were filled with the Holy Spirit.

"The following summer a baptismal service was held on the banks of the Mississippi River where 30 followed the Lord in baptism. This

included many children." My husband was one of those children.

What were some of the characteristics of those days? First, there was spiritual hunger. People everywhere seemed to be driven by a deep hunger and thirst to seek God.

Old-timers in Minneapolis remembered the "days of heaven on earth" when William Durham conducted meetings there in 1910.

This was not always for a specific need or special blessing. They wanted more of the Lord himself. It was not unusual for people to pray for hours, disregarding personal comfort. In the heat of the summer (no air conditioning then) or cold of the winter, it mattered not. They wanted God. No less than His best would satisfy.

There was a noticeable disregard of time. No one seemed to watch the clock. Services were often lengthy, but no one was heard to complain. Food and rest were secondary. The important thing was meeting with God and allowing His Holy Spirit to work. His authority was recognized, sought after, and followed most carefully.

Another characteristic of the people was wholehearted devotion. Lives were completely dedicated, regardless of criticism or persecution. People took very literally the Scripture, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37). Also, "Whosoever...forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33).

This devotion to God was exem-

plified by a farmer in Kansas. On a Sunday morning neighbors drove into his yard, offering to assist in harvesting his grain. They knew the Hatch family went to church regularly on Sundays, but they were quite unprepared for his answer:

"No, my friends. I appreciate your kindness and offer of assistance more than I can tell. But I can't do the harvesting today, this is the Lord's day. We have four young sons. I must take my family to the house of the Lord."

The neighbors stood silently by as Mr. Hatch glanced once more at the darkening skies, then resolutely hitched his horses to the wagon for the trip to church.

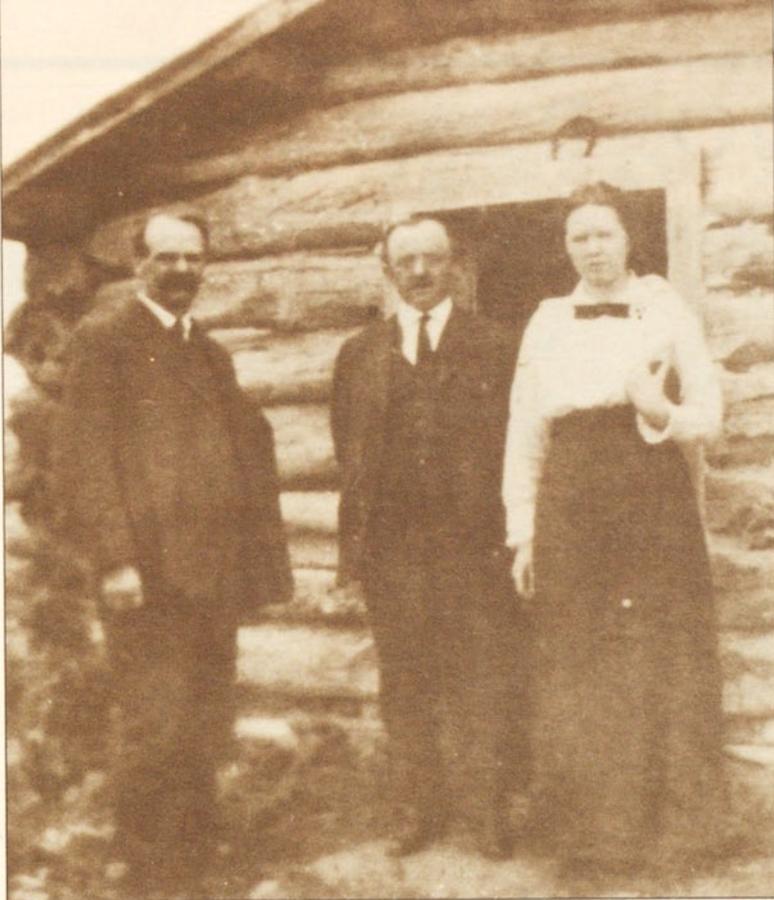
The rain came in torrents and the beautiful grain crop was ruined. The stalks were lashed and beaten into the ground by the driving wind and rain. Some people shook their heads and said it wasn't necessary to be so fanatical — he should have saved his crop instead.

But life's harvest is not always reaped in a single season. That ruined crop was not the end. True, the father lost his grain, but he saved his boys. They never forgot that incident. Years have passed. They are grown men today. They with 10 other brothers and sisters are all serving the Lord. Three are in the ministry; four sisters are minister's wives.

When they meet together for a family reunion, the older brothers frequently point back to that memorable Sunday morning. They tell again how their father chose to take them to church rather than stay home and save his crop. The now aged father listens and smiles in gratitude to the Lord who had enabled him to save the real crop.

In those early days of the Pentecostal revival the Holy Spirit emphasized the message of the Lord Jesus Christ. By prophetic utterance and interpretation of tongues the message was repeated time and again, "Jesus is coming soon—go!" Sometimes it seemed everyone felt called of God to go and preach the gospel. The burning desire to witness was the compelling force. There were cottage meetings, neighborhood meetings, street meetings, missions, and

continued on page 27



C. M. Hanson, John Feuk, and Jennie Olson in primitive living conditions at Turtle Mountains, North Dakota, early in this century.

Below, these two Minnesota pioneers helped establish Assemblies of God churches in the Upper Midwest. The older generation will recognize them as Frank Lindquist, left, and James Menzie.



Three evangelists "bringing in the sheaves" in the 1920s. From the left, Mabel Stake, Etta Reckley, and Blanche Brittain.

The author and her husband Arthur Berg were missionaries, pastors, and evangelists.



Below, early evangelists and workers conducting a revival meeting. How many can you identify?

Memories From the Upper Midwest

"Services were often lengthy, but no one was heard to complain...The important thing was meeting God and allowing His Holy Spirit to work." Anna Berg



PHOTOS FROM OUR READERS



Bonnie Wilkerson (Mrs. John), Fort Worth Texas, donated this missions convention photograph to the Archives. The convention was held at First Pentecostal Church (now First Assembly), Cleveland, Ohio, about 1936-38, when Bonnie's father, D. P. Holloway (standing second from right) was pastor. Seated from the left, Elizabeth (Mrs. George) Wood, China; Anne Eberhardt, India; Eileen Edwards, India; Marie Stephany, China; Mrs. D. P. Holloway, pastor's wife; Edith Spong Hedin; and Violet Wilcox, South Africa. Standing from the left, Bud Morgan, song leader; J. O. Savell, speaker; Lorena and Olena Moreland, special singers; Holloway; and Maynard Ketcham, India.

This November cover of *The Tracker* magazine features the 1884 Roosevelt pipe organ in the Highway Mission Tabernacle, 18th and Spring Streets, Philadelphia. The organ was built by H. L. Roosevelt, President Theodore Roosevelt's cousin, in 1884. In 1986 a devastating fire nearly destroyed the pre-Civil War building. The organ and the building were being renovated at the time. The Organ Historical Society, which publishes *The Tracker*, sponsored a recital on the organ, July 4, 1996, by organist Rosalind Mohnsen. The society presented a plaque for the organ, according to the pastors, Stephen and Florence Bogdan. (Rumors circulated that the church burned again in December. A church 3 blocks away, also using Highway in their name, is the one that suffered the tragic loss of their building.)



Got Any Rivers?

Got any rivers
you think are uncrossable?
Got any mountains
you can't tunnel thro?
God specializes
in things thought impossible,
And He can do
what no other pow'r can do.

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THE STORY OF AN INSPIRATIONAL SONG

By Glenn Gohr

One of the most familiar old-time gospel choruses is "Got Any Rivers?" Having been sung at camp meetings, revivals, worship services, and in many settings, it is a catchy chorus with a strong message of hope and deliverance. No doubt many have hummed or whistled this chorus when at work or while attending to their daily chores. Although the song was composed more than 65 years ago, it is still sung with exuberance in many circles today.

What is the story behind this beloved chorus?

The author of this well-known song is Oscar Carl Eliason, who lived for many years at Cook, Minnesota. He was born January 6, 1902, at Nössemark, Dalslånd, Sweden, and immigrated to the U.S. in 1908 at the age of 6.¹ In his early ministry, Eliason and his wife Norma were copastors of the Assembly of God at Huron, South Dakota, and were privileged to be involved in its founding. Oscar also pastored the Assembly at Virginia, Minnesota, and brought it into affiliation with the Assemblies of God in 1940.² And he was the first pastor of the Assembly of God

at Ft. Dodge, Iowa. In addition, he traveled as a musical evangelist. And when, because of health reasons, he was unable to withstand the stress of itinerant work or of pastoring, he tuned pianos.³ In the course of his lifetime he composed more than 50 gospel songs. The best known of these are "Got Any Rivers?" and "A Name I Highly Treasure."

Oscar Eliason passed away March 1, 1985, at Cook, Minnesota. His widow, Norma Eliason, is currently living at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with their son Victor, who is the manager of a Christian radio and television ministry called VCY/America. Another son, Vern, lives at Mukwonago, Wisconsin.

During the summer of 1929, after graduating from Northwestern Bible and Missionary Training School in Minneapolis, Oscar Eliason went through some severe testing. He became gravely ill with tuberculosis and ended up at Glenlake Hospital in Minneapolis. He was not expected to live. His brother had passed away with the same dreaded disease a couple weeks earlier in the same hospital. Oscar became very depressed and discouraged.

While in his hospital bed, Eliason began reading the *Pentecostal Evangel* and was encouraged by the many reports of healing in the magazine. He felt impressed to call upon a local Presbyterian minister, C. K. Ingersol, to come and pray for him. This minister had great faith for healing. He couldn't explain it, but from the day that minister laid hands on him, he began to get better. The result was that Oscar Eliason was healed of tuberculosis.⁴

After his healing, Eliason, who had already been composing songs while in Bible school, felt even more motivated to compose gospel songs. With this in mind, in the spring of 1931 he was reading the Minneapolis newspaper and read about the slogan which had been used by one of the the large construction companies which helped build the Panama Canal.⁵ Immediately he told himself, "Only God can say that!" So, he felt led to make a slight change in the familiar slogan, placing God as the focus, and made a song out of it.⁶ The words of that original slogan, of course, were not sacred, but with a few minor changes they formed a strong gospel message. The rhyme which had been promoted by the large construction company went like this:

*Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
We're specializing in things thought impossible.
We do the things others cannot do.⁷*

Eliason inserted God's name in place of the word "we."⁸ Later, the last line of the song was changed. He wrote music, and

A Panama Canal construction company's motto was turned into a popular and encouraging gospel chorus.

the song became a popular gospel chorus.⁹ The chorus was introduced to churches in North Minneapolis where he lived, and in a short while it seemingly was being sung all over the English-speaking world. At that time it had no verses. Those came later.

The original chorus was:

*Got any rivers you think are uncrossable,
Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
God specializes in things thought impossible,
He does the things others cannot do.¹⁰*

Eliason first sang the chorus at a home in North Minneapolis in the summer of 1931. Two women called The Harmony Twins traveled together and sang the song in several places before it was put into print as a chorus. The song soon made its way across the nation and became very popular. A few variations on the words have cropped up over the years, but currently the chorus is copyrighted by Singspiration Music and administered by the Benson Music Group.

After the chorus became popular, a reader in Washington wrote to the Pentecostal Evangel and raised a question about the song. "I never can understand why intelligent and well-educated people will sing such lines as: 'Got any rivers ...' Why not redeem this good chorus from grammatical disgrace by eliminating 'got' and submitting proper verb forms?" The Evangel editor's answer was that this was a take off from the Panama Canal builders' slogan or song which had lifted the spirits of the workers through heat, toil, and problems of disease during that time of construction.¹¹

It appears that good grammar is not the issue—but whether or not a song is biblically sound and whether it ministers to believers. Indeed this chorus does both.

The next part of the story concerns a young Air Force cadet during World War II who was stationed for a while at Stockton, California. Dick Knautz had been a student at Bob Jones University, and was called into service for his country, entering the Army Air Corps and taking pilot training. People who knew young Knautz recognized him as an outstanding Christian and appreciated his good singing voice, which he would often use while he worked.

One Sunday afternoon, while flying his plane over the airfield at Stockton, he was waiting for his signal to land. Happy in the Lord, he began singing the chorus, "Got Any Rivers?" and unknown to him, his mike switch was on! Thus he broadcast the words of this well-known chorus to all the people in the control tower, plus loudspeakers brought

A World War II air corps pilot flying over Stockton, California, unwittingly sang this song to 5,000 cadets on the ground when his mike switch stuck to the on position. When he landed, five airman sought him out and prayed the sinner's prayer.

the message to some 5,000 cadets in the airfield below.¹²

Dick's receiver crackled as the control tower cut in: "Listen, Knautz, if you want to start a revival, you come down to earth." God was in this incident, for when Dick landed the plane, five young men sought him out and wanted to accept Christ as their Savior. He was able to lead each of them to salvation through the testimony of that song.¹³

You may be wondering why this incident happened? The most likely answer is that on that particular Sunday afternoon, Dick's mother up in Coos Bay, Oregon, was praying for her son that God would definitely use him in some way. And God answered that mother's prayer.

Later Dick Knautz was killed while serving his country. And the story of this testimony and the message of the chorus were shared by a friend of his named Cliff at a

Gideon convention in nearby Modesto, California, in June 1944. The story was later published in The Gideon magazine and in the Pentecostal Evangel.¹⁴

The song was used for many years by Youth for Christ, but until 1948 it had no verses. After Dick Knautz's testimony was published, Oscar Eliason began to receive requests for copies of the chorus, and some asked for "the whole song." They supposed that it had verses.

Oscar told his wife, "What can I do? I don't have any verses." She responded, "Well, there's nothing to keep you from writing verses." So he proceeded to write some verses which were dedicated to Dick Knautz's mother. He chose the themes of Joshua, Moses, etc. Mrs. Eliason says, "The words and theme fit so beautifully with the chorus. I think this was a good choice for the song."¹⁵ Although the verses never became as popular as the chorus, you'll probably agree with Mrs. Eliason:

*"Be of good courage," God spake unto Joshua,
When o'er the river God pointed the way;
Jordan uncrossable! things seemed impossible;
Waters divide as they march and obey!*

*Battles to win! they would meet with their obstacles,
Jericho's walls, too, must fall to the ground.
God never failed; He stood back of His promises;
Walls had to crumble as they marched around.*

*God is the same, and His Word is dependable,
He'll make a way through the waters for you;
Life's situations by Him are amendable,
Mountains and hills He will part for you too.¹⁶*

In the spring of 1955, Oscar Eliason was asked to tell the story and his wife was asked to sing the song at Phil Kerr's Monday Musicales in the Civic Auditorium at Pasadena, California. After this the Eliasons were invited to present the song in churches of many denominations in various parts of the country.

The Eliasons were friends of Haldor Lillenas, founder of Lillenas Publishing, who lived at Pasadena, California. Their son, Victor Eliason, remembers one time that he played the song, "Wonderful Grace of Jesus" with Haldor Lillenas in his home. Lillenas really liked the song, "A Name I Highly Treasure," which Oscar wrote. He purchased the song for \$400, and it is currently in the Nazarene hymnal.¹⁷ Lillenas also published a number of other songs which Eliason had written. One arrangement of "Got Any Rivers?" has appeared in some of the songbooks published by the Lillenas Publishing Company.

Three well-known Swedish singers were fond of Oscar Eliason's music. Einar Ekberg, Einar Waermo, and Karl Erik Olevabring each sang "Got Any Rivers?" "A Name I Highly Treasure," and others of Eliason's compositions. Einar Ekberg had a worldwide ministry and sang before kings and other dignitaries. He was in the Eliason home on a number of occasions and used to say that "Got Any Rivers?" was his favorite song.¹⁸

Once Oscar and his wife told the story of "Got Any Rivers?" and sang it in a large church in Des Moines, Iowa. An evangelist there gave a testimony of how God had used the chorus in his life. He said that one winter he was sched-

continued on page 26



**Other Gospel Songs
By Oscar Eliason**

After Awhile
 Answering You
 Anxiety
 The Childhood Prayer
 Cold and Dead
 Come and Find Mercy Today
 Give Me An Open Heaven
 God's Grace Has Satisfied My Soul
 God's Truth Marches On
 Good-Bye
 Greater Love Was Never Shown
 His Tender Touch
 Home Eternal
 I Fancied I Was In Heaven
 I Have a Home Where Angels Sing
 I Lean On His Mercy
 I Think of Home
 Jesus, the Fairest of All
 Jesus Will Understand
 Just Believe

Make My Heart Into a Heaven
 My Longing Eyes
 Shall Soon Behold My King
 My Paradise
 My Soul's Deep Need
 A Name I Highly Treasure
 No Book Can Satisfy Me So
 No Friend So True
 No Name Has Meant So Much to Me
 No Sweeter Message
 O Answer Our Prayer
 On Yonder Hill
 Soon Jesus Will Come
 Traveling To Glory
 Waters of Peace
 When Our King Shall Reign
 Why Should He Stand as a Stranger?
 Wonderful Place of Prayer
 Would You Be Ready to Go?
 A World Beyond

*Most of these songs are copyrighted by Norma Eliason, Lillenas Publishing Company, or Benson Music Group. Used by permission.

Oscar Eliason, about 1931, when he wrote "Got Any Rivers?"

"Got Any Rivers" became a special encouragement to missionaries Rod and Sherry Boyd and their children



Einar Ekberg sang Oscar Eliason's composition's.



Oscar and Norma Eliason, 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Haldor Lillenas, a friend of the Eliason couple



Glenn Gohr is a staff member of the A/G Archives.



The Voice That Thrilled Thousands!



Einar Ekberg and His Daughter Birgit

Einar Ekberg

BARITONE
 Of Stockholm, Sweden

SINGS
 On Our Radio Program

FORWARD
 EVERY SUNDAY AT 3 P. M.
 C. S. T.

Station W A I T - 820 kl.
 Tune in Each Sunday

Philadelphia Church of
 the Air
 Chicago 40, Illinois

Here are two future Assemblies of God ministers along Angeles Crest Highway in California: on the left is 5-year old R. Kenneth George and his 2 1/2-year-old brother J. Don George. Kenneth is now superintendent of the New Mexico District, and Don is pastor of Calvary Temple, Irving, Texas. The photograph was taken in 1939.



The George Family Remembers Christ Faith Mission

Editor's Note: During a "Roots of Pentecost" tour in Los Angeles that General Secretary George O. Wood and Dr. Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., conducted in December 1995, old memories were stirred and are worth telling here. We have a story to report because the tour included the old Pisgah Home at 6026 Echo Street, the ministry Dr. Finis E. Yoakum founded—and which is still operating. On the tour was R. Kenneth George, New Mexico District Superintendent. He thought the old tabernacle looked familiar, and later discussed it with his parents, retired Assemblies of God ministers, Roy and Jimalee George, who live in Haskell, Texas. Indeed, his mother told him that he lived there for a time with his parents and his brother J. Don George during the Great Depression.

As a result of the visit, Kenneth and Don's mother Jimalee George wrote a letter to H. J. Smith, director of the Pisgah Ministry, which is being excerpted here. Heritage hopes this report will be a pleasant reading experience for you and provide additional insights about our Pentecostal history in the Los Angeles area.

Excerpts of Mrs. George's January 31, 1996, letter to Director Smith follow.

I have wanted to write to you for the last month and let you know of our association with Christ Faith Mission (Echo Home) when we lived in Highland Park. My husband and I, and our 2 sons, accompanied by my husband's sister and her husband, left Texas in January 1938 enroute to California during the depression days. We were all very young and had never traveled much. Roy was 25 years old and I was 20. Our sons were 3 and 1 years. The other couple were teenage newlyweds. We had been saved and filled with the Holy Spirit in 1934, so we had love and zeal for the Lord. Our pastors, Rev.

Claude and Ottoma Eckles, were wonderful people and had taught us well in Christian living. We had done some pastoral ministry and youth work, and Roy had received license to preach with the Assemblies of God in 1935.

We had a burning desire to learn more of the Word, so we decided to make the trip west. We had an enjoyable trip, visiting tourist and scenic places along the way. It was raining steadily when we arrived in L.A. so before we could get settled our money was spent. We were referred to the downtown Christ Faith Mission, so we sought help there. The first person we met was Rev. Laleff, who was an Assemblies of God minister, and he was a true friend to us. He referred us to the Echo Home where there were facilities for families. We were warmly received by Mother Green and Sister Jones, and were so happy that God had directed us to such a place. We remained there for several days and Roy and Jerry (his brother-in-law) began to look for work at once. They were able to get some odd jobs almost daily, and met a wonderful Adventist family. They offered us the use of their unoccupied garage apartment, so we moved into it on Avenue 55.

We continued to worship regularly at the Mission and it became our home church. Roy worked for weeks on a flood control project operated by the USED, making cement drainage and channels to prevent flooding along Arroyo Seco. When that was completed, he was employed by Busk Van and Storage. It was just across the block from Echo Home. We moved into a small residence just

across the street and lived there for the next 2 years. Later we purchased a mobile home and parked it inside the storage area.

We took part in many of the Mission activities and had a weekly service at night. I taught a children's class on Sunday morning. Mother Green invited us to move onto the property and become full-time workers on the staff, but we declined it after seeking the Lord for His direction.

We appreciated her offer but felt we needed to provide a stable home and family life for our little boys. I attended the Bible training school that

"We took part in many of the Mission activities and had a weekly service at night. I taught a children's class on Sunday morning."

was held in the Tabernacle for a year or more. We had qualified Bible teachers and it was a great help to us. The teachers included Bro. Wm. Gierke, Bro. Michael Laleff, Bro. Raymond, and others that I do not recall their names. I took notes on the lessons and Roy and I went over them at home every night. Bro. Laleff regularly came to our home one night each week to teach us Bible lessons. Sis. Amelia Vernon was the Mission pastor whose husband was a carpenter. She was English and was a very wonderful lady. They had a teenage son named Frankie. Sis. Vernon's brother, Bro. Patmore, lived nearby. He played the piano for many of the services, and was especially helpful in encouraging our young sons to sing. A Jewish lady, Sis. Elizabeth, was a regular worker, who later married Bro. Lauckner who was also a dedicated worker.

We went to the Mountain Home many times, attending Easter Sunrise and Camp Meetings, which were wonderful. We were there for the wedding of Sis. Laura, a blind teacher who married one of the faithful workers. (Bro. Laleff told us in later years that she had had surgery which restored her vision.) The Chapel was decorated beautifully with cedar branches and white yucca blossoms.

Many times we went to Bro. Cheek's Mission on N. Figueroa,

where we joined in praying for the stacks of prayer requests and the bags of outgoing *Herald of Hope* papers. We had regular services there, and usually were able to attend the weekly service conducted by Lucille Fox, a student who attended Southern

“We attended Bethel Temple on Bellevue. Louis and Josephine Turnbull were pastors and great leaders. Of course, we also attended Angelus Temple on special occasions to hear Sister [Aimee Semple McPherson] preach her illustrated sermons.”

California Bible College which was then located in Pasadena. We met Sis. Mamie Madden who also joined us in the early prayer over the requests and papers. She and her husband became good friends to us. My husband officiated at her memorial service in 1970 and at his (Rev. A. M. Madden) in 1992 in Abernathy, Texas.

We also enjoyed our association with Bro. and Sis. Christian Schaffer and daughter, Esther. They were great people, and the fellowship was very precious in those pre-war days.

We attended Bethel Temple on Bellevue. Louis and Josephine Turnbull were pastors and were great leaders. Of course, we also attended Angelus Temple on special occasions to hear Sis. McPherson preach her illustrated sermons. So our stay there was very enjoyable and informative. We grew and were able to enter full-time ministry when we left in the summer of 1940. A young mother with 2 children was saved from the occult and became a strong Christian. She returned to her home and family in Washington and wrote and invited us to come up there and have a revival in hopes of winning her mother and brothers to the Lord. So we went and had a revival in a Grange Hall in the Wenas Valley. We decided to return to Texas in August 1940 and started pastoring in Spur, Texas. We have had over 50 years of ministry with the Assemblies of God and are now retired at ages 84 and 79. We have no regrets that we have spent our years in God's service for He has blessed us abundantly.

Now to get to the reason for my



Roy and Jimalee George, in 1939 while in California. They are retired Assemblies of God ministers and now living in Haskell, Texas.

writing at this time. Our oldest son, Rev. R. Kenneth George is the superintendent of the New Mexico District of the Assemblies of God, and was with the group of ministers who were with you on December 3, 1995. He had not been there since he was 5-1/2 years old, but as the service progressed, he began to remember things that convinced him that he had been there before. Everything looked familiar to him and he remembered his dad preaching there and also that as a child he had attended children's church in that building. Opal Dunne, a lovely young lady who wore body braces and used crutches, lived there with her mother. She had children's church every Saturday morning and was Ken's teacher. He remembered the construction paper chains that she made for each child at the young age when he was in kindergarten. It was there that he accepted Christ as his Savior and we have always pointed back to that time when he was saved. His memories were confirmed when he learned that the next street over was N. Figueroa, as he had to memorize his address in kindergarten and we used the office of Busk Van and Storage for our mailing address. Our son, J. Don George was too young to remember living in L.A. as he was only 3-1/2 when we left.

Both of our sons began preaching

as teenagers and traveled for several years as the George Gospel Team, but both have pastored quite awhile. Kenneth pastored in Albuquerque, NM for 19 years before being elected to serve the New Mexico District as Superintendent. J. Don has served Calvary Temple of Irving, Texas for over 23 years which now has over 5,000 members. Both of our sons are ordained ministers with the General Council of the Assemblies of God and also our daughter's husband. God blessed our home with a baby girl later and the Lord is using them in the land of Mexico.

Randy and Peggy Sims received missions appointment from the Department of Foreign Missions of the Assemblies of God in 1984 and are veteran missionaries. They are on furlough at this time and reside in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, while itinerating in preparation for returning to Mexico the latter

Kenneth had not been in the mission since he was 5 1/2 years old. “But as the service progressed, he began to remember things that convinced him that he had been there before. Everything looked familiar to him, and he remembered his dad preaching there, and also that as a child he had attended children's church in that building.”

part of this year. We rejoice that we have eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren and all are living for the Lord.

We have been thinking of the time that we spent just across the street from you and want you to know that the time we spent in that area was blessed of God. We continue to rejoice in the memories that we have of all the love and kindness that we received from Mother Green, Sister Jones and all of the faithful Mission workers. Since most everyone we knew then has gone to Heaven, we will have to wait until eternity to express our gratitude to them, but we will be praying that God will continue to make Pisgah home a soul-saving station and a place for training workers of the last day harvest. ❀

A 1940 Church Planting in Washington Albert Knudson Pioneers Bethel Church, Chehalis

While preparing this feature, we learned that Albert Knudson and his sister, Vesta Evans, died within weeks of each other. Vesta died in December, and Albert in January. *Heritage* offers sympathy to the families. --Wayne Warner

Chehalis, Washington, had no Assembly of God in 1940 when a single young man, better known at the time for his piano playing than his preaching, had a burden to pioneer here. Albert Knudson had grown up in a Christian home in Seattle and began early to play the piano, being billed as the "Boy Pianist from Seattle." He had played for Evangelists Frederick J. Betts and Dr. Charles S. Price.

But in 1940 Chehalis, Washington, the county seat of Lewis County and located midway between Seattle and Portland, caught Knudson's attention. Beginning with four adults in the Moose Hall Lodge, the church grew to



The congregation at the Moose Hall Lodge in 1942. Pastor Knudson is on the right.



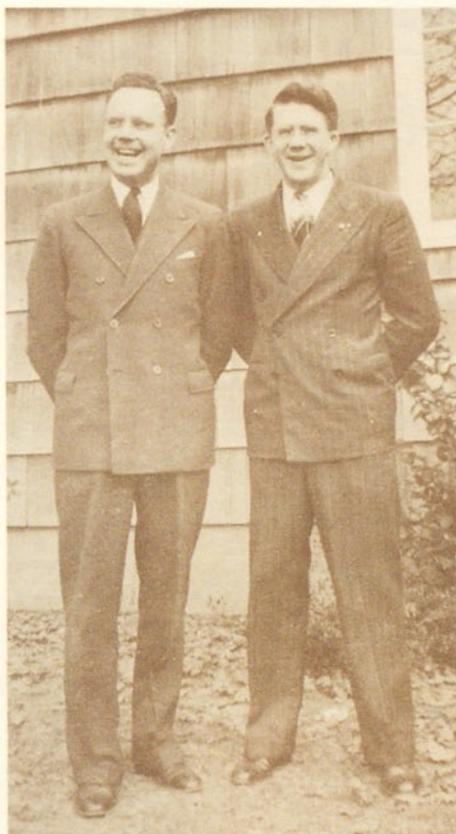
Albert Knudson, founder of Bethel Church, was a pianist for Dr. Charles S. Price and other evangelists.

become the thriving Bethel Church, now in an impressive complex along Interstate 5. Don Detrick is the senior pastor.

The photos in this feature document the early years of the church. The first important event happened in 1941 when Albert took a bride, Floried Evans. When T. Burt Evans and his wife Vesta returned from missionary service in El Salvador in 1944, they joined the Knudsons in Chehalis. (Burt is Floried's brother, and Vesta—who died in December—was Albert's sister.) Soon after World War II ended, the Bethel Church built a brick building on Main Street.

Following 25 years of ministry in Chehalis, Knudson accepted the pastorate of what is now Eastlake Assembly in Kirkland, Washington. They retired there in 1994 and moved to Dallas, Texas. Burt and Vesta Evans moved to Michigan and pastored churches in that district. Burt is on the staff of First Assembly, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The young church pioneer took a bride, Floried Evans, in 1941.



The copastors of the Chehalis, Washington, Church, in 1947, T. Burt Evans and Albert Knudson.

Bethel Church built this brick building in 1946.



Beatrice Wells, "America's Girl Evangelist"

On the Sawdust Trail Beginning as a 9-year-old in 1935

Heritage stirred up a tremendous amount of interest by publishing several photographs and advertisements of children in the ministry in the spring 1996 issue. Later when missionary Harold Kohl reminded me that his wife Bea had also been a child evangelist (1935-48), I asked him to send a photograph. He responded by sending a handful of advertisements and newspaper clipping. We have selected some of these for this feature, showing Bea growing up in her evangelistic meetings.

Bea preached her first sermon at her father's church on the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Then she began a traveling ministry which took her all over the Eastern part of the United States and into Canada.

Following her marriage to Harold Kohl, she assisted him in pastoral ministry and in missionary service in Sri Lanka, the Philippines and other countries in the Far East. She taught in Bible colleges; was librarian at the International Correspondence Institute (ICI), Brussels, Belgium; and served as a library consultant and teacher for the Division of Foreign Missions and ICI on overseas assignments.

Today she is retired but still active in preaching and teaching at local churches, and serves as librarian at Hayfield (Virginia) Assembly of

God. She and Harold make their home in Winchester, Virginia.

And it all started on the Outer Banks of North Carolina when Pastor P. A. Wells was convinced that he had another preacher in the family, that God had called his 9-year-old daughter Beatrice to preach.

-Wayne Warner, Editor



OLD FASHIONED ◆ REVIVAL ◆

Hear The 11 Year Old Evangelist
BEATRICE WELLS

Of Fairview, West Virginia

June 27th — July 18th 1937

at the

Calvary

Pentecostal Tabernacle

2051 GRAYLAND AVENUE

Richmond, Va.

Every Night at 7:45 P. M. Except Saturday

Sunday 11:00 A. M.

EVERYBODY WELCOME

11 Years Old, 1937, Richmond, Virginia



Hear!

BEATRICE WELLS

12 YEAR OLD EVANGELIST

from

WEST VIRGINIA

at

The Big Gospel Tent Tabernacle

1100 West Arch Street

Shamokin, Pa.

Beginning SUNDAY, JULY 10th

Each Evening 7:45

REV. H. E. HARDT, Pastor

12 Years Old, 1938, Shamakin, Pennsylvania

REVIVAL MEETINGS

AT

Bethel Pentecostal Assembly of God

DECATUR & GRADY ST.

SOUTH NORFOLK, VA.

**BEGINNING AUG. 13, AND CONTINUEING FOR
THREE WEEKS OR LONGER — 1939**

PREACHING

Salvation for the Soul

Isa. 3:16

Baptism of Holy Ghost

Acts 2:4

Healing for the Body

Jas. 5:14-15

Second Coming of Jesus

Acts 1:11



Timely Messages
and Prayer for the Sick
Jas. 5:14

MEETINGS EVERY
NIGHT EXCEPT
SATURDAY
8:00 P. M.

A Child Shall
Lead Them
Isa. 11:6

Evangelist Beatrice Wells

OF FAIRVIEW, W. VA.

Sings and Preaches, only 13 years old yet a veteran in the ministry, she has preached for 4 years, holding campaigns in many cities of the U. S. A. and Canada.

WELCOME

E. W. WELFORD, Pastor

13 Years Old, 1939, South Norfolk, Virginia

... REVIVAL ...

MARCH 16th to APRIL 6th
Nightly at 7:45 (Except Monday)

FIRST PENTECOSTAL CHURCH
645 So. Broad Street, Elizabeth, N. J.

Beatrice Wells

Child Evangelist - Preaching the
OLD-TIME GOSPEL

— GOOD MUSIC AND SINGING —
EVERYONE WELCOME!

A. D. Christensen, Pastor



15 Years Old, 1941, Elizabeth, New Jersey

16 Years Old, 1942, Plainfield, New Jersey

17 years Old, 1943,
Tipp City, Ohio

Services to Be Held By 17-Year-Old Evangelist

Beatrice Wells, seventeen-year-old evangelist of Elizabeth, N. J., will hold revival services at Bethel Tabernacle, corner of 4th and Plum streets beginning July 18. Services will be held for three weeks or longer every night at 7:45 except Monday and at 11 a. m. on Sunday morning.



BEATRICE WELLS

Miss Wells has preached in many services in the United States and Canada. She has wonderful delivery and has always been well received.

Miss Wells will be accompanied by her mother. At present they are holding a revival campaign in Louisville, Kentucky.

Special music and a "good old-fashioned" song service will be features of every meeting night.

E. P. Cooper, pastor, extends a cordial invitation to all to attend these meetings.

Tipp City, Ohio

OLD FASHIONED REVIVAL

Hear the 13 year old Child Evangelist

Who has been preaching in the U. S. A. and Canada since she was 9 years of age.

BEATRICE WELLS
OF FAIRVIEW, WEST VIRGINIA

Beginning Sunday, June 2nd, 1940

EACH NIGHT AT 7:45 (Except Saturday) SUNDAY 11 A. M.
SPECIAL MUSIC AND SINGING - PRAYER FOR THE SICK



EVERYONE

WELCOME

BETHEL TABERNACLE

35th STREET AND OLD YORK ROAD
Baltimore, Maryland

Rev. Enoch C. Wood, Jr., Pastor Phone, Ches. 4841

14 Years Old, 1940, Baltimore, Maryland

EL
AL

th or longer
T FRI. and SAT.)
7:45 P. M.

AL ASSEMBLY

Reformed Church
et, Plainfield, N. J.

E WELLS

RL EVANGELIST
Nine Years of Age

C AND SINGING

HT * EVERYONE WELCOME!

W RAHNER in Charge
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

Operation Demonstration

CA's Illustrate a Year of Speed-the-Light

Editor's Note: This article is excerpted from one appearing in the April 30, 1967, *Pentecostal Evangel*. At the time of this demonstration, the United States was embroiled in the Vietnam War, and many demonstrations against our involvement continued in cities and on college campuses. Thirty years have passed since this demonstration. Since that time, youth of the Assemblies of God have raised \$96 million for Speed-the-Light, and a total of \$103,518,677.63 since the program started in 1944.

Now, 30 years later, where are the three speakers for the occasion? General Superintendent Thomas F. Zimmerman left office in 1985 and died in 1991; J. Philip Hogan retired from office in 1989 and lives in Springfield, Missouri. Russell J. Cox left the National Youth office in 1968 and has pastored in Pennsylvania, California, and Florida; he now lives in Tempe, Arizona.

On a recent Sunday afternoon in Springfield, Missouri, the Christ's Ambassadors of the local churches, together with students of Central Bible College and Evangel College, staged a demonstration.

This demonstration was not the riot-type, although motorcycles were involved. It was not an inflammatory, protest-type of gathering, although there

16 motorcycles, 48 bicycles, 6 buses, 2 boats, 2 trailers, and 1 Jeep necessary to reflect last year's purchases were borrowed from local dealers who willingly cooperated. News media also cooperated in giving the event national publicity.

About 30 home and foreign missionary representatives were present in costume adding color to the occasion. Each vehicle had a sign showing the field to which its Speed-the-Light counterpart had gone.

The vehicles lined up curb-to-curb and bumper-to-bumper, completely filling six lanes of Boonville Avenue for almost the entire block in front of the Assemblies of God Headquarters. Following three brief speeches, the entire cavalcade moved about a quarter mile down Boonville Avenue and, after three simultaneous blasts of 188 horns, disbanded.

Speakers for the occasion were

Russell J. Cox, national secretary of the Christ's Ambassadors; J. Philip Hogan, executive director of Foreign Missions; and Thomas F. Zimmerman, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.

Brother Cox explained briefly the purpose of the demonstration, then presented to Brother Hogan a large ring on which hung 188 keys, symbolic of the 188 vehicles given by the Christ's Ambassadors to our missionaries. Brother Hogan then told how important Speed-the-Light is on the foreign fields today and mentioned specifically how much it meant to our workers who have just returned to the Congo [now Zaire].

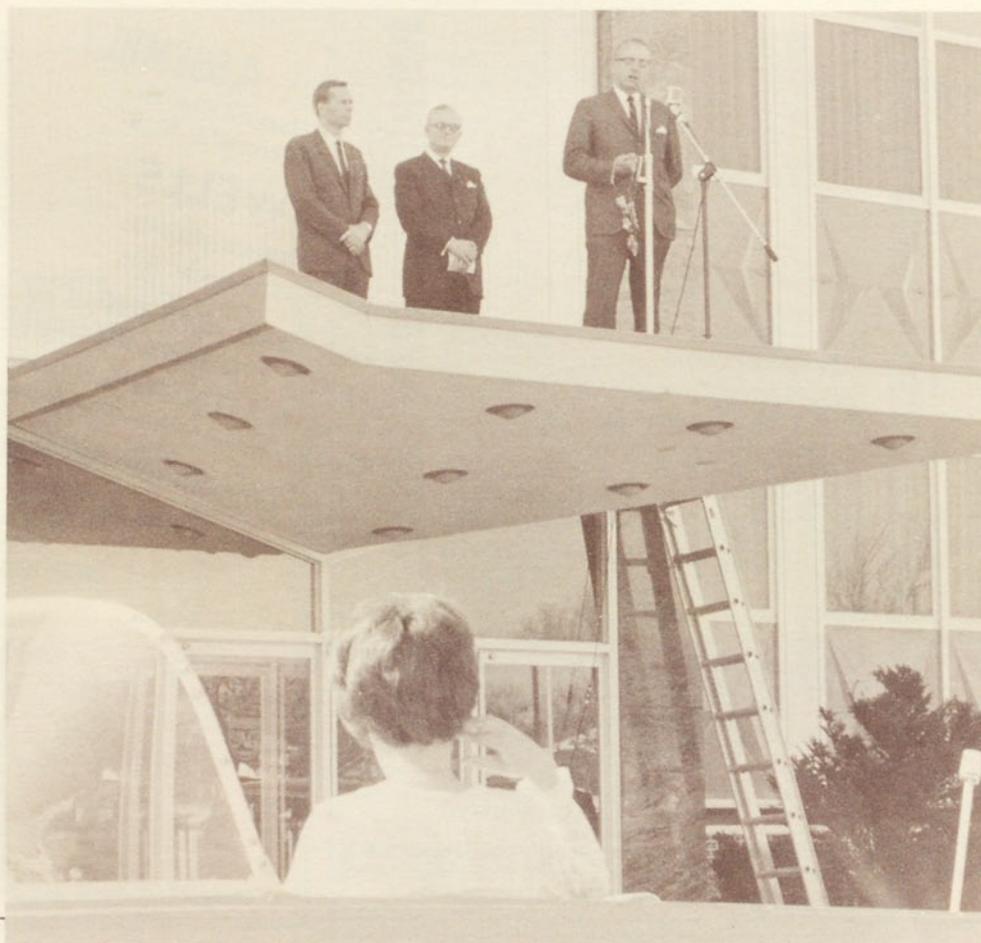
Brother Zimmerman said Speed-the-Light is a God-given vision of youth in these last days. He commended the Christ's Ambassadors for so mightily strengthening the hand of the entire church in its worldwide outreach. He also thanked the local dealers who provided the equipment for the demonstration, then told of yet higher goals for Speed-the-Light giving in 1967.

A Reprint From the April 30, 1967, *Pentecostal Evangel*

there were speeches and at one point lots of noise.

This demonstration was designed to show what the youth of the Assemblies of God had purchased in just one year for their missionary outreach through Speed-the-Light. The 81 cars, 20 station wagons, 12 trucks,

Speakers at the Speed-the-Light demonstration in 1967, standing on the entry roof of Headquarters building in Springfield, Missouri. From the left, Russell J. Cox, national secretary of Christ's Ambassadors; Thomas F. Zimmerman, general superintendent; and J. Philip Hogan, director of the Division of Foreign Missions. This occasion could be the only time these three preachers climbed an extension ladder to get to the pulpit.



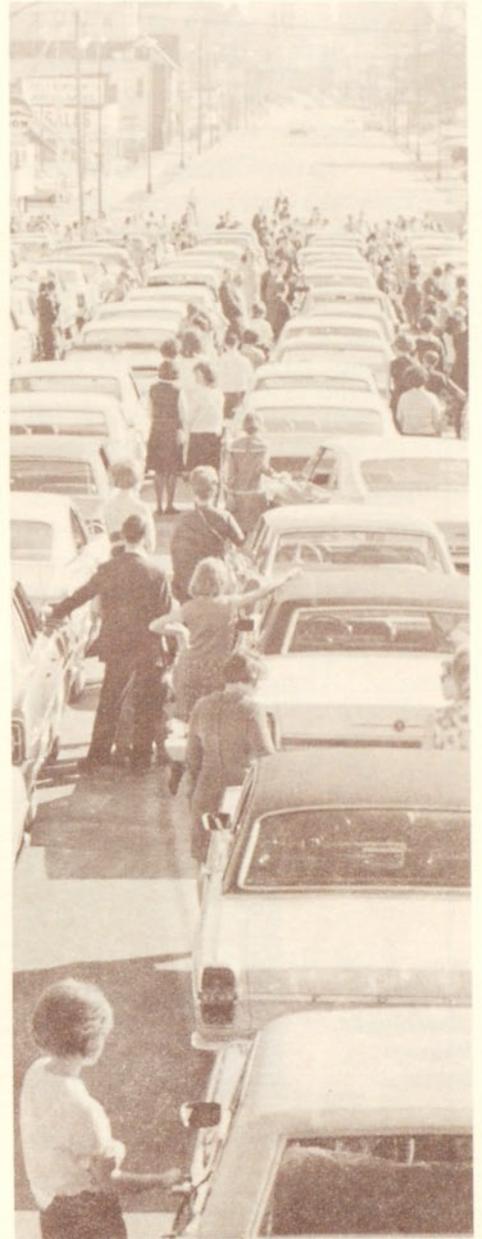


Leading the parade of Speed-the-Light vehicles are bicycles which are often used by national pastors and missionaries.



And you've thought your city has traffic jams! Here are 6 lanes of vehicles representing Speed-the-Light purchases for 1966.

Below, Verne MacKinney, director of Speed-the-Light at the time, is organizing the huge demonstration with two of his helpers, Doris Mooney and Ruth Scott.



FROM OUR READERS

Readers are invited to submit letters for this column. *Heritage* reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. If photos are sent, writer should indicate whether they should be returned. Letters should be kept under 200 words. Submit to Editor, A/G Heritage, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802-1894.

Readers Enjoying *Heritage*

We enjoy *Heritage* very much. My husband Don and I have been in the Assemblies of God our entire life, and we are now retired ministers. Don's grandparents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1918 under Aimee Semple McPherson's ministry in Holdrege, Nebraska. My parents, L. Basil and Eula Bell, received the Holy Spirit in 1924 at Astoria, Illinois, under the ministry of Evangelist Nelly Cox.

Wanda J. Shoff
Rialto, California

1914 General Council Photo

Subscribers to *Heritage* received a frameable photo of ministers and delegates attending the organizational meeting of the Assemblies of God at Hot Springs, Arkansas, in April 1914. Several wrote to comment on the photo or on their ministries. Here are excerpts from some of the responses.

Thank you so much for the nice picture of the General Council at Hot Springs. I will cherish it as long as I live. I enjoy the magazine very much.

In August 1932, I went to Yarnaby, Oklahoma, and preached a revival in a school house. We had 32



Willie Ross Davis, still preaching at 94 years young!

saved and 21 filled with the Holy Ghost. There were no churches there, so I continued preaching in the school house until 1934 when we built a



Big Bear Lake Camp, Southern California, about 1936. Dean Osterberg (see letter below) donated this photograph to the Archives along with other items.

church. I left there in 1937 to pastor the church at Antlers, Oklahoma. Also pastored in Oklahoma City; Childress, Texas; Hugo, Oklahoma; and Durant, Oklahoma.

I turned 94 last August 9, and I am still preaching—have preached 16 times this year [written in November]. I have evangelized, filled in, and was associate at Denison 1st Assembly (resigned in August 1995). I plan to preach until Jesus comes.

Pray for my eyes because I can't see to read; my wife reads for me.

Willie Ross Davis
Denison, Texas

Thanks for sending the picture.

I am now semi-crippled with arthritis, just had a new pacemaker implant, and in October I had cataract surgery and now my wife is my great helper, and does all of the driving.

On August 1 we celebrated our 61st wedding anniversary. I turned 85 in November. I'm still called on to teach and preach. God is good.

Herbert Bruhn
Cape Girardeau, Missouri

Heritage published a story of the Alaskan ministry of Brother and Sister Bruhn in the winter 1995-96 issue.

Reflecting on the 1930s

Enclosed is a copy of the program from 1933 General Council in Philadelphia. I was 17 years old and attended the meeting together with my mother and father and sister Dorothy. [Many of our readers will remember that Dean's father was Arthur Osterberg, an Azusa veteran and superintendent of the Southern California District in 1933; his mother's name was Grace.]

I suspect if the program has any value, it will be in the assortment of signatures I gathered from the Council gentry. Of note are the signatures of Lucille, Marjorie, and Ethel Price, daughters of Dr. Charles S. Price; Carl Brumback; William E. Long; Suzanne Flower; Harrison Cox; Mark J. Draper; Frank Gray; Samuel Swanson; Ernest S. Williams; J. R. Evans; Louis F. Turnbull; Henry Ness; H. L. Collier; Peter Verona; J. Narver Gortner; Charles S. Price; J. Roswell Flower; Noel Perkin; J. W. Welch; Ruth Cox; as well as others who impressed me equally.

Prior to the General Council, I had been elected as missionary secretary of Christ's Ambassadors for the Southern California & Arizona District [now separate districts]. I attended the Philadelphia meeting with great enthusiasm as a youth who was discovering a new world.

I also enclose my "official

badge" from the C.A. Convention held at Big Bear Lake Camp in 1936. The Christ's Ambassadors in Southern California was remembered then as a strong, vigorous, "Spirit-filled" group eager to serve Christ and spread the gospel.

Blessing on you, Wayne, and the strong continuance of your fine work. You are valued and appreciated.

Dean Osterberg
Mesa, Arizona

Dean was an outstanding high school football quarterback at Alexander Hamilton High in Los Angeles and went on to play for the USC Trojans (1939-40). He earned a bachelor of theology at Princeton Theological Seminary and pastored three Presbyterian churches.

Donating Photos to Archives

Going through my Bible school 1928-29 Central Bible Institute [now Central Bible College] album, I found some pictures of Donald Gee, A. G. Ward, Frank Boyd, Helen Boyd, and Stanley Frodsham. I believe Ward was dean of men, and Gee was there for spiritual emphasis weeks. Boyd was C.B.I. director-principal, and Frodsham was the *Pentecostal Evangel* editor.

My wife and I appreciate *Heritage* very much. At our ages, 80 and 87, we have known, or do know, most of those that are mentioned in the magazine.

My health is not good; have had more than 200 strokes (TIAs) during the past 3 years, and it limits me in several areas. I try to walk a mile a

This is one of the photos Elmer Trygg donated to the Archives. It shows A. G. Ward, Frank Boyd, and Donald Gee at Central Bible Institute during the 1928-29 school year. Ward was C. Morse's father; Boyd was principal of the school; and Gee was an English preacher and writer.



day. I am so grateful for what I have left. My wife Kay is so kind, patient, caring, and loving. She realized one of her wishes by taking a hot-air balloon ride on her 80th birthday.

Elmer M. Trygg
Hillsboro, Oregon

The Story of Ethel Musick

I just want you to know how thrilled we all are to see the summer-fall issue with our mother's article, "A Legend Among Church Planters." It was very well-written with the little amount of information you had. My brother Jay was really happy and sur-



prised to get the two copies you sent to him. [Copies of the issue were also sent to other members of the Musick family.]

May God bless you and the work you are doing.

Violet Musick Cassady
Tulare, California

Scholarship to Honor Dr. J. Robert Ashcroft

Thank you for the good article about Dr. J. Robert Ashcroft in the summer-fall 1996 issue. Certainly he was one of the outstanding educator/leaders in our fellowship.

Your readers may be interested in knowing that the A/G Commission on Christian Higher Education renamed the National Youth Scholarship in honor of Dr. Ashcroft's many years of service to the youth of our fellowship through his association with several of our colleges and the national Education Department. The scholarship is now known as the J. Robert Ashcroft National Youth Scholarship.

The scholarship is sponsored jointly by the Youth Department and the Christian Higher Education Department here at Headquarters.

Dayton A. Kingsriter, Secretary
A/G Commission on Christian
Higher Education

Heritage is available in book form?

Yes, we've copied and bound the first 54 issues of *Heritage* (1981-94) into two big books. Here's more than a thousand pages with features on people who helped form the A/G and the ones God sent later to develop churches, missions, and ministries. If you like well-researched stories with variety in your reading, you'll love these *Heritage* reprints. Scores of rare photographs make this a collector's dream.

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TESTIMONY TIME

Readers are invited to submit brief testimonies of their conversion, ministry, a healing, special spiritual blessing, or other interesting narrative to "Testimony Time." The editor will use submissions as space permits and reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. If photos are submitted, writer should indicate whether they should be returned. Please limit the testimony to 200 words. Submit to the Testimony Time, A/G Heritage, 1445 Boonville, Springfield, MO 65802-1894.

It is a Wonderful Life

Please find enclosed the December 1928 issue of *Golden Grain* published by Dr. Charles S. Price, which you requested in *Heritage*. I found this issue in my mother's things.

My mother, Ethel Martin, graduated from Southwestern Assemblies of God, in 1936, when it was in Enid, Oklahoma. She was ordained with the Oklahoma District for 22 years. My husband Howard has been in the ministry 45 years, receiving his credentials from the Oklahoma District in 1957.

It is a wonderful life. We are retired but preach for pastors on vacation and a few revivals. We really enjoy your magazine which brings back a lot of memories of the great preachers in the past.

Mary Evon Martin Snell
Enid, Oklahoma

Father and Son Pastor Same Church

I thank you for the print of the 1914 General Council. My father and mother, Grover C. and Caroline Mangum, are in this picture. My oldest brother Jesse (then 2 1/2) can also be seen.

An interesting note is that last year I retired from Barton's Chapel Assembly (North Texas District), the same church from which my father retired in 1947. Dad first pastored the church in the 1920s and then returned in 1942 for 5 years. He died in 1949.

During Dad's second tenure at the church, I was in high school, graduating in 1944. In 1959 I left for South Africa as a specialist missionary. After two extended terms, I transferred to the ministerial list in 1973. I went to Rockwood Park Assembly as associate pastor and business administrator after completing my B.A. and M.Div.

In 1991 Barton's Chapel called me as pastor. The elders of the church had

Speaking a Language He Did Not Learn

While attending Glad Tidings Bible Institute (now Bethany College, Scotts Valley, California), 1929-31, my husband George Nye would pray in the large prayer room. One night as he prayed, he prayed in tongues. At the other end of the prayer room a group of Russian believers, who were not students, were praying. After a few minutes the leader of the Russian group came to where George was kneeling and tapped him on the shoulder. He asked George if he was Russian. When George answered that he was not, the Russian asked him if he could speak Russian. George answered that he could not. "Well, you just did," the Russian answered. "What did I say?" George asked. The man answered that his words were a stern rebuke to some of the Russians who had been criticizing things going on in the prayer room.

After we graduated from Glad Tidings, we were married and returned to my hometown of Raymond, Washington, where we pastored for the next 4-5 years. We have been privileged to minister in several countries. After 65 years of marriage, George passed away last June.

been my high school classmates. After 4 years, I retired from the same church my father had retired from 48 years earlier. Although "retired," I am still on the sectional committee, secretary-treasurer for

Father: Grover C. Mangum, charter member of the Assemblies of God, pastored Barton's Chapel.



George and Edna Nye were married on May 31, 1931, after graduating from Glad Tidings Bible Institute, San Francisco.

Thank you so much for the two *Heritage* issues. I thoroughly enjoyed them as they brought back some of the old days.

Edna (Udd) Nye
Lacey Washington

Azusa Revival Continues

I was particularly attracted to your article in the September 22 issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* ["The Miracle of Azusa," by Wayne Warner], because Pastor George H.

the section, and missions representative. I have preached about 50 times this year.

Philip N. Mangum
Athens, Texas

Son: Philip Mangum, also pastored Barton's Chapel 44 years later.



Hess was a partaker of William H. Durham's revival [after he returned to Chicago from the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles]. Pastor Hess was my pastor for many years.

Pastor Hess, a Methodist minister, heard of the revival in Chicago and came from Wausau, Wisconsin, along with his friend, Fred Link, also a Methodist minister, to witness this outpouring.

Pastor Hess tells of the fire that was present, how they had to walk over the "slain" (like cord wood). He went back home very sorrowful without this baptism, although Link received. Hess later was baptized in Wausau.

He then returned to Chicago and began a church at 930 N. Wells Street, at which time I became acquainted with him as a youth of about 16. My folks were members of the German Assembly, but I was hungry for more than being with young people who were interested only in fun. I attended Wells Street and saw and experienced the moving of the Holy Spirit and said, "This is for me!" I moved in and became associated with street meetings, hospital visitation, jail ministry, and great moving of the Holy Spirit.

The Lord later called me to full-time ministry and I began a church on the west side of the city that grew and is still moving forward. I call to remembrance the many who were called to the ministry from this beginning of Pastor Hess' work, dating back to Brother Durham. Isn't Jesus Wonderful!

God bless you, Brother. I enjoy *Heritage* and look forward to the magazine regularly. I have all of the copies safely kept. They are most interesting.

Michael J. Gebhart
Trinity Life Center
Las Vegas, Nevada

41 Years in the Same Pastorate

I was saved when I was 8 years old in Glad Tidings Tabernacle, New York City. Robert and Marie Brown were my pastors. My dad, Frank Vigna, who was a lay preacher, pioneered Italian churches in the five boroughs of New York City.

I began testifying in street meetings when I was 15 years old. Wanting



Anthony Vigna

to train for the ministry, I went to Beulah Heights Bible School in New Jersey when I was 17. After graduation at age 19, I started First Assembly in Middleton, New York. From there I went to Bethel, Connecticut, and started another church.

We then evangelized for several years before going to Providence, Rhode Island, to pioneer another assembly. The church at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, called me to pastor, where I remained more than 8 years. One of the converts during our stay in

Harrisburg was Robert W. Schambach, the well-known evangelist.

After the war in 1946, we went to Gary, Indiana, and pioneered what became Glen Park Assembly of God. We built a church building and paid off the indebtedness. We retired in June 1987 after 41 years in the same church. [The building is now owned by a black congregation.]

My brother James and his wife Rhoda were missionaries with the William E. Simpson family in Northwest China and Tibet, and later in Hong Kong and Taiwan. They are both with the Lord.

Anthony Vigna
Clearwater, Florida

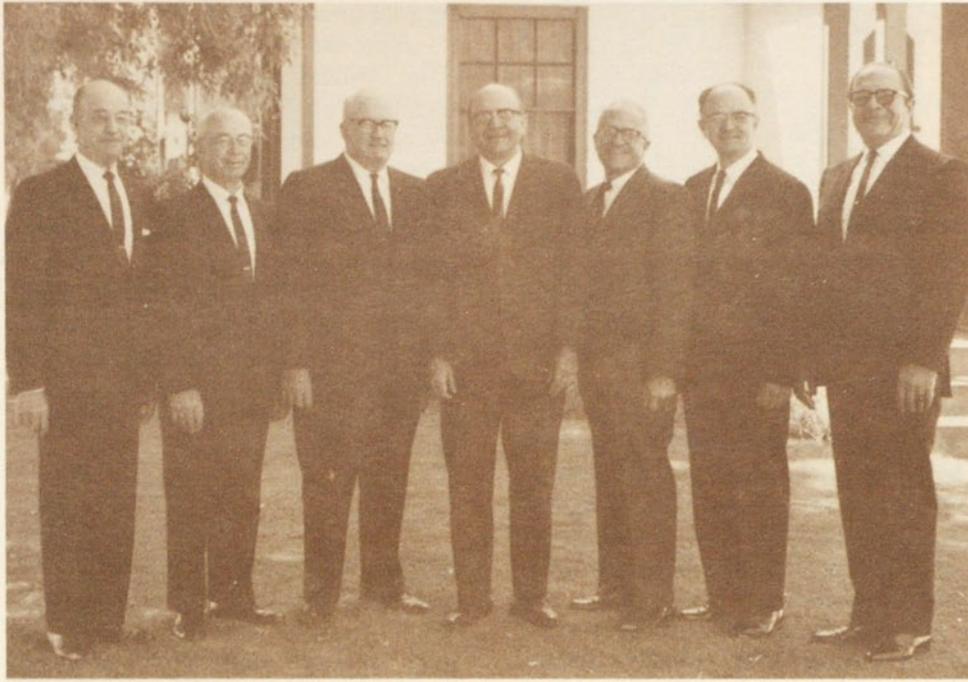
Brother Vigna, who is 87, discussed with the editor a few years ago some of the early Italian Pentecostal preachers and churches on the east coast. The tape is in the oral history collection of the Assemblies of God Archives. Heritage hopes to publish an article on the Italian Pentecostals at a later date.



A Hot-air Balloon Challenge

For a long time Kay Trygg has had a dream of going on a hot-air balloon ride. She fulfilled that dream on her 80th birthday last July near Portland, Oregon. Now, the challenge is whether *Heritage* has readers older than Kay who have been in one of these contraptions. If we don't hear from anyone, *Heritage* will assume Kay Trygg holds the record as the oldest reader who has been in a hot-air balloon. Although Elmer did not make the trip because of his health, he was there to give Kay support. The Tryggs are retired Assemblies of God ministers who live in Hillsboro, Oregon.

The End of an Era and a Memory from 1953



The spring 1989 *Heritage* published this 1966 photograph of the seven Weston brothers, five of whom went into the Assemblies of God ministry. With the recent death of Louis, third from the right, all seven are deceased. From the left, Bruce (1895-1970), San Diego police officer; Arnold (1896-1975), missionary, Bible school teacher; Claude (1898-1988), dairyman; Charles (1900-88), pastor, district superintendent, and teacher; Louis (1903-1996), pastor and teacher; Leonard (1904-69), pastor and teacher; and Donald (1906-87) pastor.

Editor's Note: I remember Leonard Weston's kindness to me while I was taking basic training at Fort Ord, California. I attended the assembly that Leonard pastored at nearby Pacific Grove. One Sunday night while a bus strike was on, the kind pastor gave this homesick trainee a ride back to the base. I felt like a celebrity riding past the MP gate in the back seat of Pastor's Weston's Packard. It probably didn't seem like much to Pastor and Mrs. Weston, but the editor will never forget their kindness that night 44 years ago.

□ Paul and Betty Wells / from page 4

One of Paul's crusades was in Mark Buntain's church in Calcutta, India. Sharing Buntain's burden for a hospital, Paul returned to this country and raised \$100,000 to help build the Assembly of God Hospital and Research Centre. Not only that, the Santa Paula church supported 20 children in the Calcutta school for more than 12 years.

The salvation-healing crusade tours included stops in Italy, Germany, Yugoslavia, Austria, Indonesia, Ireland, Haiti and other countries. During the 1950s he took a leave

Sharing Mark Buntain's burden for a hospital in Calcutta, Paul returned to this country and raised \$100,000.



of absence and worked with Gordon Lindsay and The Voice of Healing ministry.

In 1961, Paul and Betty took a European revival tour of a lifetime. Stopping first at the Bahamas, they went on to Belfast, Edinburgh, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Zurich, and Amsterdam, preaching to thousands in each place. A few years ago Betty told a newspaper reporter, "We were met and hosted by civic and other governmental dignitaries along the way, including the Lord Mayor of Belfast and Willy Brandt, mayor of West Berlin."

Paul said, "Once we met with 10,000 people in Tampa, and we've conducted a meeting in a tent in Bakersfield—in the summer!" The friendly preacher with a sense of humor added, "That was a real 'warming' experience!"

Through the years, Paul has kept busy in a pastorate (1949-88), organizing and directing choirs, preaching in evangelistic meetings and conferences, and raising funds

for various ministries. He has also found time to write 15 books and produce 14 record albums.

As they look back on their ministry, Paul and Betty have much for which to be thankful. One of the most important events was when he asked her to be his pianist on a low-budget radio program in Sacramento—which led to their marriage. Then they would list the birth of their daughter Sheri, her marriage to Larry Grimes, and the births of their grandchildren as very important mileposts in their 56 years together.

One of their great joys was to have their daughter Sheri and her husband Larry Grimes serve as associate pastors at the Santa Paula church. When Paul and Betty resigned in 1988, after 39 years of ministry, the church elected Larry and Sheri as their successors. Now the Grimes couple are pastoring Mountain Christian Center in Oakhurst, California.

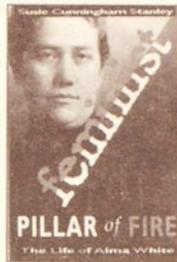
Today Paul and Betty Wells are still living by faith, in keeping with James Wells' 1918 song. They keep busy as seniors pastors at Canyon Hills Assembly of God, Bakersfield, pastoring senior citizens in a "Primitimers" group. Here they have the privilege of helping to meet the needs of the sick, lonely, and forgotten older people of the area. Paul also makes hospital calls for an area Health Management Organization (HMO), doing public relations work as well as praying for the patients.

Things would have been different had James Wells survived the 1925 car accident. But Paul Monroe Wells does not question God in the matter. And he is not interested in turning back the calendar to change circumstances. He is interested in serving faithfully the God who called him in a children's service so many years ago in Taft, California. He still believes that if God opens the door, he should walk through.

*The Lord I know ruleth o'er everything...
[I'm] living by faith in Jesus above.*



As a service to our readers, this column highlights books with Pentecostal and related themes and which are often not widely promoted by other means. Because some of the titles listed here are privately published, orders must be placed with the author or publisher. Orders should not be sent to the Assemblies of God Archives.



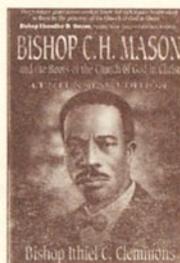
Susie Cunningham Stanley, *Feminist Pillar of Fire, The Life of Alma White* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1993). 162 pp. \$24.99 hardback; \$14.99 paper.

"Feminist," with its modern, liberal interpretation, might not be the word Alma White (1862-1946) would have chosen, but there is no doubt that this strong and independent woman fought all the definitions of what a woman was supposed to be at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.

When women were mostly consigned to the roles of wife and mother—and bitterly opposed as preachers—Alma White developed into a fierce and successful religious leader and preacher. A founder of the Pentecostal Union and Pillar of Fire movements, she found biblical affirmation for her role as prophet and preacher in the face of opposition from the Methodist Episcopal Church—and her husband.

Alma White is one of those fascinating characters only found in America, particularly Western American, history. She was rich in contradiction and larger than life. In addition to having a "feminist" side, she saw herself as a "fundamentalist." This seeming inconsistency is only one of the intriguing aspects of her life, which also included vegetarianism, the founding of a religious commune, and affiliation with the Ku Klux Klan.

—From the Cover



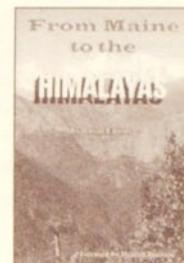
Ithiel C. Clemmons, *Bishop C. H. Mason, and the Roots of the Church of God in Christ* (Bakersfield, CA: Pneuma Life Publishing, 1996), 208 pp., \$19.99, paper

Students of Pentecostal history will recognize the name of C. H. Mason, founder of the Church of God in Christ—considered the "first major denomination to spring from the fires of the Azusa Street revival." Bishop Mason was born a son of slaves in 1866 and died in 1961. The Church of God in Christ, with head-

quarters in Memphis, Tennessee, and the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri, are members of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA).

About the book, Dr. David D. Daniels writes in the foreword: "While the book does not claim to be exhaustive, it does present an engaging history of Bishop Mason and the development of the Church of God in Christ. With this book Bishop Clemmons inaugurates a new era for the Church of God in Christ scholars in the denomination, demonstrating the constructive role they can play in advancing the best of the tradition and the realm or kingdom of God. Bishop Clemmons' book will definitely serve as the text that all serious students of Church of God in Christ history will have to consult first and a gift to those seeking insight into that history."

Bishop Clemmons is a member of the General Board of the Church of God in Christ. He is the Church's historian and serves two congregations in New York and North Carolina. He is chairman of the Executive Committee of the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America (PCCNA).



Leon Elliott, *From Maine to the Himalayas* (Springfield, MO: published by the author, 1996), 227 pp. \$11.50 postpaid. Books are available from the author, c/o George Crawford, 3868 South Lexington Court, Springfield, MO 65807.

Leon Elliott grew up on a farm in Littleton, Maine, and learned to "live by faith" while attending Zion Bible Institute, Providence, Rhode Island, under the ministry of Christine Gibson. Burdened for India after completing studies and ministry in the U.S., Elliott left for India with little support in 1937. Running out of money, he was forced to stay in Beirut and wait for support from home. Then it was on to Damascus by bus, bus to Baghdad, and train to Basra where he caught a ship to India. Later he proposed to Almeda Valley by mail; she came to India where they were married and served as a missionary team.

In 1950 they were called on to manage the Childers Lodge, a missionary rest home and retreat complex high in the Himalayas. They remained at the Lodge until the end of their active missionary duty in 1962.

Mark and Huldah Buntain met the Elliotts shortly after the Buntains arrived in Calcutta as missionaries in 1954. "Mark and I have been greatly enriched by the Elliotts and the encouragement they gave to us in our early days of ministry," Hulda wrote in the foreword. She added, "The story told within these pages record their experiences and unswerving obedience to the call of God on their lives. It will be a blessing to readers for generations to come."

The Elliotts are now retired and living in Springfield, Missouri.

□ Eliason / from page 10

uled to conduct revival services in Seattle, Washington, beginning on a Sunday night. He and his family were on the other side of the mountains, and the highways over the mountains were all closed due to a severe snowstorm.

Still the evangelist believed that God wanted him to be in Seattle on that Sunday night, so he headed toward the mountains in spite of the weather reports and the roads being impassable. By faith he and his family sang, "Got Any Rivers?" God honored their faith. He sent a Chinook wind and melted the snow, so they reached their destination without any trouble.¹⁹

In speaking with Norma Eliason, Oscar's widow, she said, "I'm glad someone is interested in 'Got Any Rivers?' That song hasn't outlived its usefulness yet." Another comment she made was, "He has other songs which are just as good. They just didn't get the exposure that 'Got Any Rivers?' did." She says that throughout the years they received many good reports of the song.

The popularity of the song spread to England. When one of the leaders in the Salvation Army died, his favorite song was sung at his funeral. It was "Got Any Rivers?" The use of this song was mentioned in the *War Cry*, the Salvation Army magazine. After reading this, Oscar said, "Has it gotten all the way over there?" "Maybe there is another song by the same name." He wrote to the *War Cry* and learned that it was the same song that he had composed many years earlier.²⁰

A modern-day testimony concerning "Got Any Rivers?" is reported by missionaries Rod and Sherry Boyd of Panama. In their September 1996 missionary newsletter they reported visiting the Guaymi Indians in the mountains of northwest Panama to solidify plans to start a new Latin America ChildCare school.

It was raining very hard, and they had to drive 6 hours from Panama City and then navigate a 2-hour trip on foot. They arrived safely at their destination and had a productive meeting with the Guaymis; however, on the return trip they became separated from other members of their missionary team. It continued to rain heavily, and they lost their way. Some of the party ended up climbing steep mountains and then had to cross a rain-swollen stream to get back to their destination.

They prayed continually, and their two daughters sang songs they had learned at MK (Missionary Kids) boot-camp. The group eventually ended up at the main highway, about 2 miles away from their intended destination. They flagged down a man in a pickup, who happened to be one of the church members. He took them back to their van where the others were waiting.²¹ When all was said and done, they realized that God had provided just like in the chorus: "Got any rivers you think are uncrossable? Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?"

Oscar Eliason and his music have had an influence on countless thousands throughout the years. Former general superintendent G. Raymond Carlson and his wife, Mae, speak fondly of Oscar Eliason. Carlson, along with



Bartlett Peterson and Russell Olson of Minnesota, each took a turn at hunting deer, elk, and other game in Oscar Eliason's woods at Cook, Minnesota. And today, in the Carlsons' living room, one of their cherished pieces of music is a memorial songbook called *Making Melody* which contains 14 of Eliason's compositions. Eliason composed the song, "A Name I Highly Treasure," which is one of the Carlsons' favorite gospel songs. It has a beautiful message. Other well-known songs written by Eliason include: "I Lean On His Mercy," "Jesus, the Fairest of All," and "Wonderful Place of Prayer."

In retrospect, G. Raymond Carlson remembers Oscar Eliason as a fine Christian gentleman. "He was the kind of man that he didn't want credit for things."²² In line with this it should be noted that some of his songs, such as "Got Any Rivers?" were in public use for several years before Eliason obtained a copyright.

Robert Scharnberg of Floodwood, Minnesota, remembers a time that Eliason attended a fellowship meeting at International Falls. "He was almost in tears as I sang the song, 'All Your Anxiety.' It really ministered to him, and he testified that he'd never heard such a beautiful song in all his life."²³ The two men struck up a friendship, and afterward Eliason sent Scharnberg a copy of most of the songs he had composed up to that time. Robert and Tillie Scharnberg cherish the music of Oscar Eliason, especially the chorus "Got Any Rivers?" and the song "A Name I Highly Treasure."

And how many more testimonies could be written about Oscar Eliason and his music? And what about the way the chorus, "Got Any Rivers?" has blessed and continues to bless untold thousands in the Assemblies of God and other denominations?

Notes

1. Norma Eliason, telephone interview, December 11, 1996.
2. Application for affiliation, Virginia Gospel Tabernacle, Virginia, Minnesota, January 8, 1940; Norma Eliason, letter, December 23, 1996.
3. Victor Eliason, telephone interview, December 11, 1996.
4. Oscar C. Eliason, "Got Any Rivers?": The Story Behind a Well-Known Song," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 19, 1944, p. 20.
5. A 1903 treaty between the United States and Panama gave the United States the right to build and operate the waterway. The U.S. also received the right to govern an area of land called the Panama Canal Zone on both sides of the canal. The Panama Canal was completed in 1914 at a cost of about \$380 million to the U.S. Thousands of laborers worked on it for about 10 years, using steam shovels and dredges to cut through jungles, hills, and swamps. The canal extends 50.72 miles and by sailing through the Canal, ships traveling between Atlantic and Pacific ports can save a distance of more than 7,800 miles. A 1977 treaty gave most of the Canal Zone to Panama and provides for Panama to take control of the canal itself on December 31, 1999.
6. Victor Eliason, telephone interview, December 11, 1996.
7. Oscar Eliason, "The Chorus, 'Got Any Rivers,'" *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 25, 1944, p. 7.
8. Leon Tucker is reported to have changed "We're" in the third line to "He." Thinking this was a little too indefinite, Eliason changed it to "God" and set the verse to music.
9. Eliason, "Got Any Rivers?" p. 20; "A Testimony in the Air," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 4, 1944, p. 8.
10. Eliason's original rendition of the chorus had "He does the things others cannot do" as the last line. But people from memory began singing, "And He can do what no other power can do." So when the song first became copyrighted in the *Youth For Christ Hymnal* in 1942, it was printed according to how the general public knew the song, even though it was not how Eliason had originally written it. Since then the chorus has appeared in a number of songbooks and hymnals. The current copyrighted version uses "He does the things others cannot do."
11. "Why Be Ungrammatical?" *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 27, 1967, p. 28.
12. Eliason, "Got Any Rivers?" p. 20; "A Testimony in the Air," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 4, 1944, p. 8.
13. "Got Any Rivers," *The Gideon*, September 1944, p. 28. In some versions of this testimony, the Air Force cadet is listed as Dick Krantz. The Eliason family does not know the correct spelling of the name.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Norma Eliason, telephone interview, December 11, 1996.
16. Eliason, "Got Any Rivers?" p. 21. Song copyrighted 1945 by Singspiration Music, renewed 1987, and administered by the Benson Music Group.
17. Victor Eliason, telephone interview, December 12, 1996. Originally copyrighted in 1946 by Lillenas Publishing and renewed in 1974, the version of "A Name I Highly Treasure" as arranged by Lyndell Leatherman appears in the latest Nazarene hymnal, *Sing to the Lord*, copyright 1993.
18. *Ibid.*; Norma Eliason, telephone interview, December 11, 1996.
19. Eliason, "Got Any Rivers?" p. 21.
20. Norma Eliason, telephone interview, December 11, 1996.
21. Rod and Sherry Boyd, missionary newsletter (online version), September 1996.
22. G. Raymond Carlson, telephone interview, November 21, 1996.
23. Robert Scharnberg, telephone interview, November 22, 1996.



PHOTOS FROM OUR READERS

Career Achievement Award. The Southern California College Alumni Association presented its 1989 Career Achievement Award to Bonetta Rabe. *Heritage* recognizes that achievement by publishing excerpts from the award introduction and a 1939 photo of Fred (1904-76) and Bonetta (1911-) Rabe. Bonetta, now 86, lives in Norwalk, California.

“For over 50 years this alumnus has been involved in the ministry of helping others--throughout numerous revival crusades in the Midwest, Canada, and the Western States. Thousands received sound teaching; many hundreds accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, and scores entered full-time ministry as a result of the challenge presented by this exemplary person.

“This gallant lady has actually been a ‘recruiting officer’ by guiding new converts into sound, academic training and, over the years, by referring dozens of students to Southern California College. She has been personally involved in their lives by counseling and assisting them into places of ministry. Her converts and her young people have become her life-long friends.

“In between evangelistic meetings, she found time to serve as pastor, interim pastor, youth pastor, Bible school instructor, and was involved for many years in Los Angeles Skidrow mission work, county jail and hospital ministry, as well as in conducting street meetings.”



Fred and Bonetta Rabe, 1939

□ Minnesota Renewal/ from page 6

churches where the message was proclaimed. There was nothing “dry” about those services.

In those days many of the places of worship had little that appealed to one’s sense of beauty. Many places were severely plain, even ugly, by today’s standards, but the presence of the Lord seemed to be felt by all. The manifestations of the Spirit, the Word of God, and the preaching of the cross of Christ were held in deep reverence.

One example was told to me by Zelma Argue, an early evangelist. When the family was still home in Canada, her father heard about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Chicago. His hungry heart was stirred and he bade his family farewell. He didn’t know how long he’d be gone, but he must have this baptism with the Holy Spirit. After some days he sent a telegram to his wife telling that the Lord had filled him with the Holy Spirit and that he would be home on a certain day.

As the time neared Zelma noticed

Early Pentecostals would often suffer opposition. Angry mobs interrupted the meetings, threw eggs, tomatoes, and stones. They cut ropes and even burned tents.

her mother seemed apprehensive. She soon confided in her daughter saying, “I am worried. I don’t know what to do. How am I to treat a man whom the Almighty God has filled with His Spirit?”

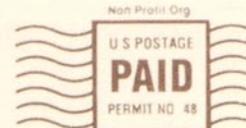
People were from varying backgrounds and teaching. Some who had felt the bondage of denominational straight jackets and dead formalism reveled in a new freedom and liberty of expression. This often led to extremes and excesses which brought reproach instead of blessing.

The fear of drifting again into

cold formality brought a distrust of everything that might be called organization. Because of this there was little provision for the children or young people in the way of systematic services and studies. In many areas it took years before the believers recognized that Sunday schools and planned lessons could also be used by the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ.

After my husband and I had been in the ministry for just a short time, we were burdened about this need and sought to start Sunday school in Minneapolis. With the help of the Lord, we overcame opposition. From the first Sunday God met us and a revival started in the hearts of the boys and girls. We wished we could have had Pentecostal helps of some kind, but they were not available (none being printed then!). Today, as we see the great work that has been done and is being carried on by the various departments of our Assemblies of God, we give praise to our Lord. It is His work. To Him be all the glory.





Executives elected at first General Council are kneeling in front. From the left, J. W. Welch, M. M. Pinson, T. K. Leonard, J. Roswell Flower, Cyrus B. Fockler, Howard Goss, E. N. Bell, and D. C. O. Opperman.

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