

HERITAGE HORIZONS



a publication of
NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST HERITAGE COMMISSION
*...a memorial book was written in His **presence**, recording those who revered Him
and those who had the highest respect for His Name...Malachi 3:16*

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POINT OF VIEW

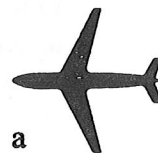
By Lenore Lang

Combing through The Baptist Herald's past issues for material for Heritage Horizons, I have been impressed by the numbers of articles on Missions: reports by missionaries; pictures galore: missionaries, co-workers on the field, church buildings, medical dispensaries.

Even though The Baptist Herald has been discontinued, replaced by NAB Today, I have noted that the July/August issue of NAB Today has continued this tradition with its extensive coverage of Bango Hospital's fiftieth anniversary. On page three of Heritage Horizons you will find mention of this event, also, with the Heritage Commission's contribution.

Going back even farther into history, -- one hundred years, we have more information on early missionary endeavors, thanks to the talented translation work of Mr. William H. Rentz, who, together with his wife, Gladys, and their children, served in Cameroon from 1957 through 1965.

Last month we had an excerpt of this translation, which we continue on this page. Mr. Rentz has a great command of both the English and German languages, and we are grateful for his contribution in this way.



Furthermore, we are glad to feature a report by Miss Florence Miller about her recent trip to Japan. As you read, bear in mind that she was one of our "pioneers" in missionary endeavor in the country of Japan nearly fifty years ago.

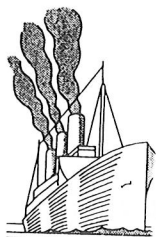
THE HOFMEISTERS' MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE IN KAMERUN: translated by Guest Writer William H. Rentz. (Used by permission of the translator.)

(In the March issue we read of some of the trials of travel in 1898-1900.)

"In the course of the day we had had some bread and coffee but this did not adequately satisfy our hunger.....We were extremely tired and wanted a place to rest. Since we didn't bring any cots, we had no where to lie down. The only thing that remained for us to do was bring our folding chairs into the schoolroom and spend the night sleeping in a sitting-up position in our chairs.

"The chairs sank into the soft earth up to the canvas seats making it very uncomfortable indeed. Added to this was the problem of mosquitoes and mosquito bites. It was no problem for them to get their sting into us through the canvas seat and the clothing we wore....

"One positive outcome from all this discomfort was that it was quite easy to get up very early the next morning. What a relief to hear the cock's crow." (Continued).



GUEST WRITER:
FLORENCE MILLER
Forty-eight years in Japan.

Fast forward the historical tape from the time in 1951 when the Hirths and I first arrived in Japan, to 1999-- and what changes do we see?

Evangelist singer, John Schindler, and I arrived in Osaka on April 1st of this year to serve in six of the eleven NAB-related churches in Japan. John was asked by our Japan Baptist Conference and NAB Mission to come for singing and preaching.

I accompanied him as a volunteer and served wherever I was asked, as Bible teacher, interpreter, tour guide, or personal worker.

I was pleased to see some of the early believers as well as to meet some of the very recent ones. In Ise, our oldest church, I met Mrs. Matoba, one of the four baptized at our very first baptism. She has faithfully attended the Ise Church since we started the work in 1953 and, over time, her entire family became Christians.

I visited Dr. and Mrs. Uchida, from whom I rented a room while studying Japanese in Kyoto around 1955. Mrs. Uchida has been a dedicated Christian and soul-winner all these years, but her husband, now 86 years old, is still not a Christian. Although he vehemently opposed his wife's becoming a Christian, she has never ceased to pray for him and to witness to her family. Mr. Uchida permitted me to have a short devotional time in their home and even participated in reading the Bible and singing a hymn.

One day I had lunch with some former English Bible Class members, several of whom have been studying the Bible for many

years, but are still seekers, never having decided to follow Christ.

I also saw new developments in our Japan Baptist Conference. The Kongo Church in Osaka enlarged their building and a young lady joined a seekers Bible Class. An 82 year old lady in Higashi Mukoh, Kyoto, was soon to be baptized. The care of the elderly was being expanded in Tsu through a doctors' clinic, and a large short-term care center has been built near the retirement home, Bethany House. A young couple from the Inazawa Church entered seminary in Tokyo.

But – not everything was thriving. Some older churches were struggling to exist, causing pastors to seek secular jobs to supplement their incomes. Internal problems were causing some members to leave. Older pastors are nearing retirement and no replacements are in sight. New churches started by missionaries need pastors to take over when the missionaries leave, but none are available.

Young pastoral candidates and new missionaries are needed to replace the older ones.

Looking forward to the year 2001, what is on the horizon? The 50th anniversary celebration of the NAB Mission work in Japan is being planned for 2001, and all former NAB missionaries who served in Japan are being invited to come back and celebrate the occasion, short-termers included, but at personal expense.

The gospel of Christ is still not clearly understood or appreciated in Japan. There is much work left for the new generation of Christians, pastors and missionaries. Let us pray for them.



DO YOU KNOW THAT....(from The Baptist Herald, by the Rev. A.R. Bernadt, Burlington, Iowa.) ,

(March 1, 1945) "Often when a person starts to rest on his laurels, he discovers they are poison ivy."

(March 15, 1945) "In ministers' families one out of every fifty becomes a clergyman; from all in other families it is one in every 3,000."

(May 1, 1945) "Don't be afraid of having too many irons in the fire, as long as the fire is hot enough."

(June 1, 1945) "The wingspread of a B29 is greater than the distance the Wright brothers flew at Kitty Hawk."

(October 1, 1945) "Malaria was so common in Rochester (NY) in the last century that it was often called 'Genesee fever' - taken from the name of the river."

(October 15, 1945) "Lightning striking a tree leaves such queer wreckage because the lightning causes the moisture in the tree to boil literally, exploding the trunk."



RECYCLED CHUCKLES
(from a column in The Baptist Herald
by Rev. B.C. Schreiber.)

(May 1972) "A little learning is a dangerous thing. Ask any little boy who brings home a bad report card."

(August 1972) "Almost everybody knows the difference between right and wrong. Some people just hate to make decisions."

(August 1972) "A farmer looked anxiously out of the window, watching the approaching hailstorm. Finally he gave a sigh of relief and said, 'Thank God it's going south.' Little daughter looked up wonderingly, 'Doesn't anybody live down south, Daddy?' "

(November 1972) "Sign on church bulletin board—'Help Stop Truth Decay!'"

(Editor's Note: Both Rev. A.R. Bernadt and Rev. B.C. Schreiber were regular contributors for many years to The Baptist Herald in these columns of interest to readers. Today we can still enjoy their humor and the insightful items which they included, though both are now at home with the Lord.)



A CALL TO PRAYER

In the February 1972 issue of The Baptist Herald, Mrs. Elaine Strobel wrote a very challenging article, "An Open Letter to North American Baptists"—a call for all of us to keep informed about what goes on in Government, and to spend fifteen minutes a day in prayer for our nation.

This was 27 years ago, and the need for our prayers has not dimmed in the least!

"There's no virtue in being moved to tears if we're moved to nothing else. Nothing weeps so copiously as a block of ice." (from the May 1, 1945 Baptist Herald, page 15.)

FIFTY YEARS AGO, in 1949.....
the July 1st issue of The Baptist Herald
carried the story of the dedication of the
Banso Baptist Hospital in Cameroon, West
Africa on Saturday April 2, 1949. It was a
joyful and thrilling report by missionary
Laura E. Reddig, one of our first nurses at
that hospital.

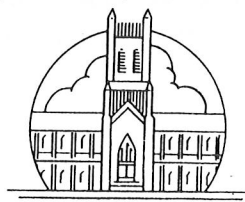
Missionary doctor Leslie M. Chaffee was the
Lord's answer to many prayers which made
the hospital a reality.

Others present at the hospital dedication
were Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth (June)
Goodman, Rev. and Mrs. Earl H. (Lois)
Ahrens, Rev. and Mrs. George (Alma)
Henderson, Miss Hilda Tobert (who became
Mrs. Harold Gieseke), Rev. and Mrs. Paul
(Clare) Gebauer, together with Cameroon
evangelist Mr. Abel Gaduma and Mr.
George Martin, a faithful Cameroon nurse
from Victoria.

(Editor's note: As mentioned in the editorial
on page one, the July/August issue of NAB
Today features an article on Banso Hospital.
There is a fine picture of the early hospital
there. Berneice Westerman of our North
American Baptist Heritage Commission was
able to supply the picture and to identify the
people on it. Another example of the
worthwhile "behind-the-scenes" work of our
Heritage Commission!)

THAT JULY 1949 ISSUE
*published the names of six students who
graduated from the NAB Seminary in
Rochester, New York:*

Isador Faszer, Norman Miller, Vernon Link,
Rudolph Rapske, Raymond Dickau and
Alvin Wetter.



Furthermore, at that date, (1949), Mrs.
Florence E. Schoeffel was President of the
National Women's Missionary Union and
edited a column called "We, the Women."



BOOKS

This summer you may have time for some
extra reading. Here is the name of one of
our faithful NAB writers who has produced
three books: Mrs. Viola Pahl, who lives in
Canada.

She has authored these:

Through the Iron Lung,
Gold in Life's HourGlass, and
Granny's Love/Hate Affair with a
Computer.

In addition, there is another which will be
published toward the end of 1999: Granny
Loves to Speak Up and Hates to Shut Up.

If you are interested in ordering, send \$3
(US) plus postage costs, for each one, to:
Mrs. Viola Pahl, #507 - 1480 Foster St.,
White Rock, BC, Canada V4B 3X7.

These three books are already in our
Heritage Commission holdings. We do have
quite a collection of books which have been
authored by NAB writers!

If any of you readers know of such books
which we should add to our collection,
please contact Berneice Westerman at the
Heritage Commission, and she will be glad to
be in contact with you.

