

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

Who doesn't like to be in on "the inside track"? At least now and then, it's a nice feeling, one that we can all share in this month's issue as we read what our Guest Writer (page 2) has to say about his memories of building the International Office in Oakbrook Terrace.

You will be encouraged as you read Dr. Gideon Zimmerman's account of God's faithfulness.

Furthermore, a number of our readers have reached – or are within "touching distance" – of RETIREMENT! Read (on this page) Assistant Editor Berneice Westerman's comments about a book by Dr. Robert L. Veninga. He is the son of the late, former North American Baptist Seminary President, Dr. Frank Veninga.

You might well find some helpful information in the pages of his book.

And our Associate Archivist recently had a golden opportunity to share insights at a Genealogical Society meeting here in Sioux Falls. You won't want to miss her report on page three.

HEADING FOR RETIREMENT?

...or –Already There?

Notes by Berneice Westerman

Dr. Robert L. Veninga's book, **YOUR RENAISSANCE YEARS**, --Making Retirement the Best Years of Your Life --is now part of our North American Baptist Conference Authors' Collection.

I wish I had had this book at the beginning of my retirement, for the author covers such things as money, location, health, leisure, relationships, and living alone. The last two areas are my most difficult, and I was glad to find some good suggestions in the chapters dealing with these topics.

Coming to the USA from Africa I found that this move meant for me a completely new set of friends. Then when my best link to the "old world" died, the adjustment was not easy.

Robert Veninga says that since you have to live with yourself, you should like yourself or change, so you will be able to enjoy your company. There will be some changes made! I heartily recommend this book.

The author's other book, **THE GIFT OF HOPE: How we survive our Tragedies** – is another good one for those who are dealing with the death of a loved one.



**GUEST WRITER:
DR. GIDEON ZIMMERMAN**

Reflections on Building the International Office in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois.

The re-location of the International Office from Forest Park, Illinois to Oakbrook Terrace in 1975-76 had many moments of uncertainty and even debate:

Should the office be re-located to the Twin Cities in Minnesota, or to Sioux Falls, South Dakota? Re-location was strongly recommended by regional Associations.

As Executive Secretary, I was asked to serve as Chairman of the Building Committee. I never considered this to be a wise decision, because it added undue responsibilities to what the position already demanded. (An Associate to the Executive Secretary was denied in 1974 but finally approved by the Triennial Conference in 1979.)

More than 100 sites in the Chicago area were considered before deciding on the present location in Oakbrook Terrace. There was a very harmonious working relationship with the Architect, Mr. Jim Smith, and the builder, the Harbour Construction Company.

The present International Office facility consists of 26,400 square feet on a land site of 55,350 square feet, providing parking for up to 75 cars by converting of the lawn area to parking.

The total cost of the facilities was approximately \$1,300,000 which included the cost for land, building and new furnishings. Within a few years the value of the land and building increased considerably.

Because of a lull in building in 1974-75, seven companies bid on constructing the building. The I.C. Harbour Company of neighboring Oak Brook was granted the contract. This company had just completed building the Hyatt Hotel in Oak Brook.

Two members of the Building Committee were in construction in Canada and the U.S. They were very much amazed that the bids were so low. They were assigned the task to carefully scrutinize the contract so that it would meet the specifications of the architect.

The funding for the project went through several phases. The sale of bonds was not feasible because of registration requirements in individual states, and these requirements would be very costly. The solution was to obtain an interim loan from our bank and solicit funds from individuals and special offerings from churches. The entire amount needed was almost fully received through solicitations. There were many large contributions which brought success to the project.

The dedication of the International Office building was held on May 22, 1976 with much rejoicing and gratitude to God for His leading and blessing.

Prayer was a vital part throughout the building program. The closing hymn sung at the dedication was: "Great is Thy faithfulness..., Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed Thy hand hath provided, Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me."



FURTHER NOTES ON THE PAST:

On page two we have read of the building of the new International Office. Here is an account of the earlier headquarters office:

From Dr. Martin Leuschner's editorial in The Baptist Herald of April 15, 1946

"On Wednesday afternoon and evening May 1, the new headquarters building at 7308 Madison Street, Forest Park, Illinois will be dedicated. This remodeled building willdefinitely help to increase the efficiency of headquarters in the interest of our churches and the denominational enterprise."

HONOR CONFERRED

On Friday evening, October 22, 1999 at a dinner for NAB Seminary Board of Trustees, faculty and administrators, joined by many members of the Board of Governors of the NAB Heritage Commission, Dr. George A. Dunger was honored with the conferring of the title of ARCHIVIST EMERITUS.

The plaque for Dr. Dunger was "for pioneer leadership, insightful resourcefulness and dedicated faithfulness in his noteworthy contribution of 19 years of service as North American Baptist Conference Archivist and Historian".

Dr. Dunger continues to work on the history of the NAB Seminary from its start in 1858. Many of the documents he is using are in German, needing his expertise in translation and assessment. Therefore this work is significant and time-consuming.



OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE

By Berneice Westerman

It was my pleasure to speak to the Sioux Valley Genealogy Society in Sioux Falls on October 7th, to share concerning the information we have about the German genealogy we have in the NABC Heritage Commission holdings.

As I told those members, we have all of Der Sendboten from its first issue, August 1953 until December 1971 with a supplement of German materials in The Baptist Herald from 1972-1985. Each year is bound into yearly volumes which have also been put on microfilm. Almost every issue contains some obituaries.

The Baptist Herald is in yearly bound copies from 1923-1995. These, too, are in the microfilm version as are the NAB Conference and Association reports from 1859-1997. From 1935 - 1997 the obituaries were printed if the pastor or families submitted them.

(Today you will have to rely on Government Vital Statistic Reports. We continue our request that obituaries be sent to our Heritage Office. We really want to help you with past history but we can only do so if you will send in the material!)

OUR DEEP SYMPATHY.....

is extended to the family of the Reverend Fred H. Fuchs, whom the Lord called Home on Thursday October 21, 1999. He faithfully served his Lord in many places, retiring in 1997. His wife, Ruth, continues to reside in Sioux Falls.





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

(In the July issue we read of some travel trials in 1889-1900.)

"Next morning our canoemen became carriers – each one carried the assigned load on his head and then started the trek from the village to the river and then upstream along the river bank.

"At the river bank, the announcement was made that the canoe was missing. Apparently what happened was that the canoe had not been dragged sufficiently high up the bank and the rising water floated it downstream.

"Since I needed a canoe for my return journey, I was advised to make an announcement via a speaking drum that there would be a ten Mark reward for the finder. This announcement resulted in the return of the canoe.

"The path alongside the river was very slippery and we also had to cross several small streams across which a coconut tree trunk acted as a bridge, it often being submerged.

"After a time we left the path alongside the river, turned right and began climbing the hills. On the narrow trails we were soon soaked by the wet grass, and any streams we came to either we had to wade through or be carried across."

(More next time.)



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

(April 1, 1946) "The first zoo in the world was opened in China about 1100 BC and was called 'Intelligence Park'.

(April 15, 1946) "A large oak tree may have as much as 87,000 square feet of leaf surface. If the leaves were spread out on the ground and touching each other, they would still completely cover two acres."



(July 15, 1946) "When you are in the right, you can afford to keep your temper, and when you are in the wrong, you cannot afford to lose it."

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

(May 1973) "Swallow your pride occasionally. It's non-fattening."

"There are three basic rules for having good teeth: Brush them twice a day; see your dentist twice a year; keep your nose out of other people's business."

(December 1973) "Now, class," said the teacher to her primaries, "let's get to work and make this the best Christmas ever." "But teacher," said one little tot, "I don't see how we can improve on the first one."

BOOKS

Our next issue (in March) will have some important words about a new book soon to come off the press: CAMEROON ON A CLEAR DAY by Mrs. Helga Bender Henry. Watch for this information!

