

# Heritage Horizons

...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



Editor: Lenore Lang  
Assistant Editor: B. Westerman  
Ed. Consultant: Sarah Breitreuz

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The great use  
of life is  
to spend it  
for something  
that will  
outlast it.  
W.C.Sikes



**NAB Heritage Commission**  
1525 So. Grange Ave.,  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
(605) 335-9071  
www.nabarchives.org

## Point of View *by Lenore Lang*

In this issue we conclude the story of an inner-city Pastor's wife, started in the Fall 2003 Horizons. See pages 2 and 3.

One of the Heritage Commission's Board members, Dr. Janell Beck, was honored in a special way last October. Read about this on page 3.

Associate Archivist Berneice Westerman has some good remarks for us from her Armchair Travelings! Read about much-appreciated help from volunteers in several areas, plus a new book project in which you readers will be able to participate. Page 4.

See the Director's Notes on this page 1. Read about something YOU can do!

## HERITAGE SUNDAY FOR YOUR CHURCH?

By George W. Lang, Director of the NAB Heritage Commission

When was the last time that your church celebrated its God-blessed history? When was the last time the younger members of your church were told about how God led in the planting of your church, its early growth and development? This often happens when the church celebrates its tenth or twenty-fifth anniversary. But why wait so long?

As I read through the Psalms, I am impressed by the number of times the Psalmist reminds me about how God led the Israelites during their early history, as the basis for praise and encouragement as well as for instruction and warning. There must be a reason for this!

A special Heritage Sunday Kit is being sent by the NAB Heritage Commission during the month of April to encourage each NAB church to celebrate Heritage Sunday in their church on an annual basis — either around the date of the church's beginning or in connection with observing the birth of our nation: July 1 for Canada or July 4 for the United States. This Kit contains materials and suggestions as to how to hold a Heritage Sunday. The center page of this issue of Heritage Horizons shows the type of material you might consider as you celebrate God's working in your church.

## Memories of 28 Years in Urban Ministry by Ruth Correnti (part 2)

(Editor's Note: This urban church is the Fleischmann Memorial Baptist church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, our oldest NAB Church. In our last issue we included the first installment of this *true story* with a record of a conversation between two women in the church. The point was, "who owns the pastor's children"? One of the women was holding a new Correnti baby and said to the other, "This is my baby." The other woman replied, politely but firmly, "No, I think that he belongs to all of us." Now the story continues:)

The question of who owns the children was quickly followed by the question of who *disciplines* our children and the children of the church. Every year or so the behavior of the children of church families would be disruptive enough that we would have some kind of congregational discussion related to setting discipline standards.

These meetings inevitably ended up with the decision that all should discipline the children, followed by a few determined adults who would go into the "crack down" phase of church life and follow the children around before, after and during church services. Eventually, the adults would be exhausted, and disappointed that all their vigilance never led to the true discipleship relationships that they wanted with

young people, and behavior standards would again slip.

However, the children were not exhausted and went back to such post-service entertainment that only a hundred year old Gothic castle-like structure (the church) would lend itself to: such as climbing the secret back stairs behind the pulpit to blow air through the organ pipes, or taking advantage of the downward slope of the auditorium to roll balls there or to run down from the back to the front. Then there were games of medieval warfare in and around the church steps, plus other entertainments including broom hockey in the basement and trips to the corner store (between services).

Soon the uproar was such that once again the subject of Behavior of Children and Young People became the concern at the next congregational meeting.

When the time came to move from the parsonage to our own home, the church rented the parsonage to a Puerto Rican family in the church.

Money was tight and our salary was poverty level as defined by the United States government, making us highly eligible for all forms of government issued cholesterol—peanut butter, cheese, and canned pork, dropped off in our neighborhood by the patron saint of urban neighborhoods everywhere: Uncle Sam. We learned firsthand about the pastor's night out: A trip to the library for a good book, and a bowl of popcorn.

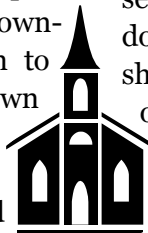
My grown sons still reminisce with

horror of the days I took them to the local clothing discounters and announced that the "Philadelphia Clothes Budget" for the coming spring/summer season would consist of two new shirts and two pairs of pants. Of course, from their point of view, this represented social suicide; however, from my point of view it represented good stewardship of scarce dollars. Borrowing brothers' shirts would double the number of outfits, and other clothes could be filled in through Christmas and birthday gifts.

But our real chance to "Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin...how much more will He clothe you...: (Luke 12:27) ...came in the area of *health insurance*. When our children were small the price of health insurance began to go very high until it became almost prohibitively expensive. Between accidents, ear infections, surgeries, physicals and the ever-present athletic injuries, we needed a doctor's visit almost every week. We didn't know how we would pay the bill, but somehow our little church managed to piece together the money every month to make the payments.

I could share multiple memories with you of encounters with the demonic, or of working to put on the best Great Pumpkin Day Party by turning the auditorium into a haunted house. Or of eight-year-old Jason Correnti lying crumpled and unconscious in the street after being hit by a car. But I will conclude with this story:

Last summer during our morning



worship service, I sat next to a suburban young man who had joined us to get a look at urban ministry. As Pastor Correnti got up to speak, he asked if someone could locate the podium for him.

This young man, who had been privy to our current financial crisis, turned to me and asked, "Did you guys have to sell off the podium to pay the gas bill?" I immediately recognized that this young man possessed the dark humor so essential for survival in urban life and ministry. After the podium was retrieved from some remote corner of the church building, I said to him, "You see those three empty screw holes in the front of the podium? There used to be a sign there that said, 'Jesus Never Fails', but it fell off during a church crisis."

I later told him the story of a congregational meeting of fourteen years ago. Our much-beloved assistant pastor was announcing his disillusionment with urban ministry, together with his resignation; the Pastor's wife (me) was pregnant with her fourth son and had the nerve to end her twelve-year reign over the children's program, and the trustees' report included a less than solid financial picture. During this church-wide hand-wringing session, the "Jesus Never Fails" sign on the podium decided that it was time to pop off and ended up hanging from one screw.

Did Jesus ever fail to come through with what we needed for health and happiness for that day, that month, that season? **Not once.** There was always the time, the money and the physical and emotional energy to get done what had to be done. There were many more things that we might have been eager, or even greedy, to do, but without the resources, they were not God's plan for us.

Now that our family has come down from an all-time high of seven children to one and a half, as time allows and as God leads, I plan to return to some form of the career that dropped off with the filling up of the Anna Marie P. Windisch Memorial Parsonage.

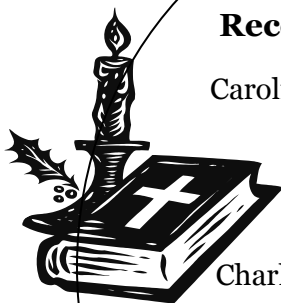


## HONOR FOR DR. JANELL BECK

In a ceremony in San Francisco, CA on October 24, 2003, Dr. Janell Beck was inducted as a Fellow of the International College of Dentists at its 74th Annual Convocation. This College is an honorary organization which recognizes outstanding and meritorious service to the profession of Dentistry.

Hundreds of members and guests were on hand to witness the impressive cap and gown ceremony in which over 250 dentists from the United States were inducted into the College which has representative chapters in more than 80 countries, with approximately 10,000 members.

This particular ceremony was held just before the start of the 144th Annual Session of the American Dental Association in San Francisco. We of the Heritage Commission are pleased that a member of our Board of Directors should be so honored. Our hearty Congratulations to Dr. Janell Beck! She was one of the first to sign up as a life-time member of the Heritage Commission and is a long-term member-at-large of its Board of Governors.



### Recent Home-goings:

Caroline Barsh      Orville Foster

Helen Heeren

Dorothy Herrmann

Charles Littman      Onietta Loewer

Hildegard Wagner

Hans Wilcke

Eunice Weisser

# THE ARMCHAIR TRAVELER

by Associate Archivist Berneice Westerman



This chair has traveled to Philadelphia, Kelowna, BC, and Cameroon, West Africa. It has made a few electronic trips via telephone and e-mail as well as via the printed page to various places.

But **MY MOST EXCITING TRIP?** This is the one going back and forth to Kelowna, BC in Canada! In Kelowna there is a very lovely lady who saw my request for someone who could help us translate some German materials.

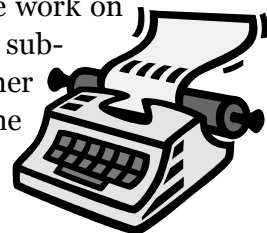
Mrs. Myrtle Ertis saw the need and contacted me, so I sent her two projects. One was Dr. William Kuhn's book, God's Reign in our Missionary History. The other was the message that was given by Professor J. C. Hasselhuhn at Konrad Fleischmann's memorial service. Both first drafts are finished and are being typed into the computer by Louise Westerman, a task made easier by the translator's good penmanship. Thank you, Myrtle Ertis, for unlocking this information for those of us who are "German impaired"!

We have several other 'long distance' volunteers whom you need to know about also. Gideon and Eleanor Zimmerman have been identifying people in some of our archive's pictures. William Rentz is translating an early history of Cameroon written by Hoffman. Donald Madvig and Harald Gruber have been working on the translation of G.A. Schulte's book "Erinnerungen", a German history of our Conference written in 1913. Maria Rogalski is translating the information about plans of the 1913 Triennial that was held in Madison, SD.

There is a possibility of someone who will be able to help churches put their church information into electronic form as well as design formats for anniversary booklets. This person hopes to do the history of First Baptist Church of Chancellor, SD as an example, so that a church that is interested will be able to see the possibilities.

We received significant information about a church founded in 1891, the Canaan Baptist Church near Crawford, TX, from one of our researchers: anniversary booklets, obituaries, and pictures with historical material. Thank you very much, Val Massirer.

Perhaps you have heard of Clarence Walth's project: a book The Heroes of Faith. The work on the first edition is making good progress, though the book has not yet gone to press. The subject? People of our own NAB Heritage, including NAB leaders, missionaries and other faithful workers in the Lord's vineyard. There is the possibility of another edition to come later. If you are interested in this book, contact Clarence Walth. His e-mail address is: clarenceanddorene@hotmail.com. Clarence would be happy to have financial help to take care of printing costs.



**IMPORTANT PEOPLE:** We are very thankful for the Volunteers who come faithfully to the Archive Rooms here at the NAB Seminary. They help file, sort, arrange, identify: So many vital efforts without which the operations of the Heritage Commission would come to a SCREECHING HALT! Marjorie Buseman, Ann Johnson, and Louise Westerman are true stalwarts who have been coming for literally *years*. They have recently been joined by Linda Cruce and Dr. Jackie Howell. Judy Harms has helped when her Seminary duties allow. Daren Junker, currently a student and a full-time pastor, has done invaluable service in setting up our computer system, spending HOURS to make our computers operational. To all these wonderful people, a hearty THANK YOU. God bless you, every one!