

Church of God Historian

Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson IN) Vol 5 No 3 Spring 2005



THE BARNEY E. WARREN CABIN

The photo immediately above is of the Barney E. Warren cabin on the Springfield camp grounds. It is believed it was one of the first cabins built soon after the camp grounds were established. Seated on the porch are Barney and Nannie Warren with their Monteith grandchildren. Seated at the right are Nellie and Paul Monteith. (Virgil Monteith, who is still present among us, is the small boy seated on his grandfather's knee.)

The Springfield camp grounds

themselves were established in 1905—about 15 years after an evangelistic team (possibly the D.S. Warner team) including Barney Warren held evangelistic meetings in the Springfield, Ohio area. Bro. Warren was instrumental in getting the Church of God established in that area, as well as getting a camp meeting going.

The first camp meeting was not held on the present camp grounds, but on a beautiful wooded lot some distance away. This proved to be



too far from public transport, so the present property consisting of 20 or more acres was located and purchased late in 1905 or early 1906, so says a pamphlet published on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the campgrounds.

The pamphlet provides the following information:

As it was woods, underbrush and briars, the great task of clearing was all done by donated labor of many consecrated saints. Two small buildings were moved from the first camp ground, one of which was the grocery managed by Brother and Sister George Hoppes. . . . Services at first were held in a large tent

Bros. B.E. Warren and A. J. Byers did most of the work of piping the gas line... up to the camp grounds. These early ministers closed their revivals in time to work and get things ready for the camp meeting.

After the camp meeting had closed many people stayed to wash bedding and put things in order. The
(Continued on Page 3)

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*Newsletter of the Historical Society
of the Church of God (Anderson)*

Vol 5 No 3 Spring 2005

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Church of God Historian is managed by the Executive Committee of the Society: Merle Strege, President; Dale Stultz, Vice-President; Douglas Welch, the Acting Secretary-Treasurer.

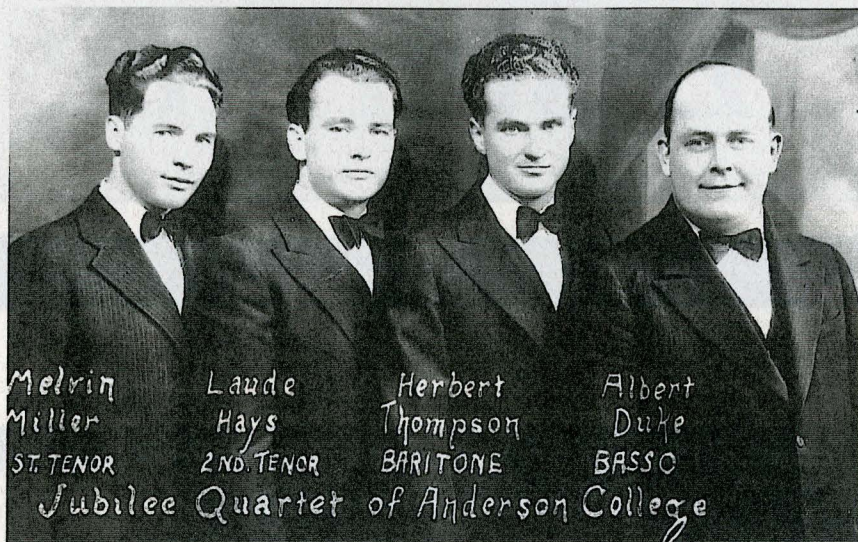
The Historical Society . . .

The Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson) exists: to encourage within the Church of God (Anderson) interest in Church of God history; to help facilitate the collection and preservation of Church of God books, historical documents (letters, diaries, journals, minutes, reports) and photographs; to assist members whenever and where ever possible with historical research and writing; and to provide for those concerned with Church of God history and heritage association with others of like mind.

Membership is open to all who are vitally interested in what the Society desires to accomplish. Membership dues are \$15 per year (\$10 for students). The Society's "year" runs from one Annual Meeting to the next (held at the Annual Convention of the Church of God in North America in Anderson, Indiana in the month of June). Checks should be mailed to:

Historical Society
P.O. Box 702
Anderson IN 46015-0702
Telephone: 765-643-7231
Email: drwelch1@insightbb.com

Remembering . . . Herbert Thompson



Many of the older members among us will remember the very musically talented husband and wife duo: Herbert and Lola Thompson. Herb Thompson served the Church of God for many years as pastor, evangelist, and singer.

Herb was one of 11 children born to a Church of God pastor's family in North Carolina. His father served the church for sixty years. Herb attended Anderson College, where he was part of the noted Jubilee Male Quartet. After graduation, he and Lola traveled for eight years with Dr. E. Stanley Jones in occasional meetings across the United States from coast to coast.

The Thompsons entered pastoral ministry in 1943, serving a number of congregations over the years, including Holladay Park in Portland Oregon. But

always at the forefront of his ministry was the vocal music for which he had so much talent. Most of us remember him for that (marvelously supported by Lola at the piano).

Just recently their daughter, Peggy Daugharty of Woodburn, Oregon, sent us a CD containing photographs and news clippings about Herbert in particular. And more is to follow. Much remains yet to be collected from many of the 'old-timers.' That's what this Society is all about—at least in large part..



(Continued from Page 1)

water had to be pumped; the washing done on a washboard and wrung by hand or a handwringer; the work was donated and strenuous, but the fellowship was blessed. In the Fall when the apples ripened, several ladies would gather on the camp ground and make gallons of apple butter for the next year. Meals were paid for by free will offerings; much of the food was donated by Church of God farmers living in the vicinity.

Camp grounds, camp meetings, and tents are an important, indeed even a crucial, part of our history. Without them, it is not likely that we would be where we are today doing what we are doing. Tents and tabernacles (and tents were also called tabernacles in those early years) are among some of the warmest memories of the older saints among us today. Volunteer cooking, cleaning, dish washing, and grounds upkeep simply went with that territory. Camp grounds like Springfield often became permanent centers of church life in various states and regions.

It became the custom on many camp grounds for individuals to build permanent 'cabins' for themselves and their families. (The first and only home owned by Daniel S. Warner was built on the Church of God camp grounds at Grand Junction, Michigan. This practice was not followed in Moundsville, W. Va., but in Anderson, Ind. many cabins were erected on or near the campgrounds.)

And so the Barney E. Warren cabin was built on the Springfield camp grounds. Nearly 100 years later it is still there, although it is no longer occupied. The Executive Committee of the Historical Society learned that this building, by then the property of the Camp Meeting

Association, was to be disposed of. We approached the Association and the State Ministerial Assembly, requesting that the structure be placed in the care of the Society to be disassembled, transported, and reassembled on the Church of God convention grounds in Anderson as a permanent historical memorial to our beloved song writer, Barney E. Warren. We have received permission to proceed with this project and are now seeking expert advice on the movement and restoration of old historic buildings

We are fully aware that it is far easier to talk about doing this than actually doing it. Our highest hurdle is, of course, money. It is estimated that the total cost of the project from disassembling to restoring as a public memorial will be \$20,000. That is a lot of money for a small voluntary society to come up with—but it is anything but beyond our reach.

The Committee have requested that Robert H. Reardon take charge of raising the funds needed to accomplish this worthy and exciting memorial project. He has most willingly accepted the challenge and has already begun work. Even before a general appeal to members of the Society and other Church of God persons was in the works, two checks totaling \$2000 were received for the project.

So you will be hearing from Bro. Reardon soon. We hope you will respond positively and assist the Society in what many of us feel is a most worthy endeavor. We are envisioning a permanent kind of memorial that will suitably honor a great song writer and musician whose gifts continue to bless tens upon tens of thousands of us, many of us on a weekly basis. We are all better because he lived.

ANNOUNCING!

THE FIRST CHURCH OF GOD HISTORICAL SOCIETY WORK CAMP

By late Summer we hope to begin the work of disassembling and moving the Barney E. Warren cabin from the Springfield camp grounds to the convention grounds in Anderson. We have decided that a work camp for volunteers is the best way of doing this. We will need from 25-30 able volunteers. Several with building and maintenance skills will be essential. A cook or two would also help a great deal.

The work camp will be about four days long. Some lodging is available at the Lodge on the campgrounds and parking and hookups for R Vs and motor homes is also available, as well as cooking and dining facilities. We are tentatively planning the work camp for the first full week of September (subject to change).

If you are interested in a great time of fellowship and a few days of useful work, contact the project director, Dale R. Stultz, phone 765-378-5558, or email destultz@earthlink.net. His mailing address is 3440 E 200 N, Anderson IN 46012.





From Tent to Tabernacle

The following article was sent to us by its author, Irene Ewert, long-time Church of God teacher and overseas worker, for inclusion in the Church of God archival material. It was originally written for the Western Canadian Church of God Centennial this year. Since its subject matter fits the general theme of this issue of the Historian we decided to include it in this issue. You may not know many of the people named in the article, but we think you will find the account itself interesting and informative.

In the early days of the Church of God, 'church planting' was not done by boards and committees. People just went out and did it. It was a method suited to the times and it worked very effectively to start new works. But new plants needed nurturing and suffered for lack of trained pastoral leadership to establish the new work.

I can recall one of these efforts, a local tent revival meeting about 80 years ago in the small town of Loughheed, Alberta. Walker Wright and Leonard Millensifer, who kept in touch with 'isolated saints,' arranged a tent revival meeting on a vacant lot in downtown Loughheed. Evangelist Featherston from the United States was the speaker. In those days tents with circuses or chautauguas were special attractions in small prairie towns. Thus a tent meeting with lively music had no trouble in attracting a crowd.

The meetings were progressing with some success, but as leading citizens were answering the call of the Church of God message, the established churches in the town became concerned. The hardware store owner's wife, a trained soloist and leader in her church, not

only took her stand with the Church of God, but also became involved in singing 'specials.' This added fuel to the fire of opposition.

In the services, time was given for personal testimonies. I recall how one dignified-looking minister showed up in his clerical collar and sat near the front. When testimony time came he stood up and in a very irate voice shouted, "I pray your old Gospel be blown to the four winds of the earth." Unperturbed, Bro. Featherstone answered: "Amen, Brother, that's what we are trying to do!"

From then on opposition became more intense. The tent ropes were cut and had to be mended and stones were thrown at the tent during the evening services. My mother was sitting at the back by the entrance of the tent to allow my little brother, Donald, still a toddler, to walk around. He was hit on his leg by a stone. Fortunately it was a small one, but large enough to prevent our mother from returning to the meetings.

Following these events words of warning came to Brother Wright that a "town group" was planning to 'tar and feather' the evangelist. Brother Featherstone would have continued the services, but the local Christian group advised him to leave, as they feared for his safety. It also would not be to the advantage of the nucleus of an emerging local congregation.

A local congregation and Sunday School were formed under the leadership of Walker Wright. It met in a large room above the local hardware store and had a thriving Sunday School. I remember that in my mother's class were three Chinese boys from a local restau-

rant who attended every Sunday morning wearing sparkling white shirts. Many years later at a reunion of the town of Loughheed, I met and talked to one of the boys. He told me that he and his wife were very much involved in the United Church in Toronto. He warmly recalled our mother and the Sunday School above the hardware store.

Happier memories of tent meetings were the camp meetings held in different areas. As a child, camp meeting was a highlight of the year. It meant meeting friends, sleeping in a canvas tent, picnic meals, lively music, the woodsy smell of fresh sawdust on the floor of the huge tent that flapped in the breeze and heavy rainfall on the roof that drowned out the sermon.

As a teenager from an isolated area, you were not considered 'queer' because of your beliefs. You could feel you belonged. My first experience of camp meeting was at Ferintosh, Alberta where Victor Lindgren was pastor of a small congregation. We owe much to the Lindgrens, Bottorffs, Scarffs, Smithsons, and others for the tremendous amount of work they did in preparing for the annual camp meeting.

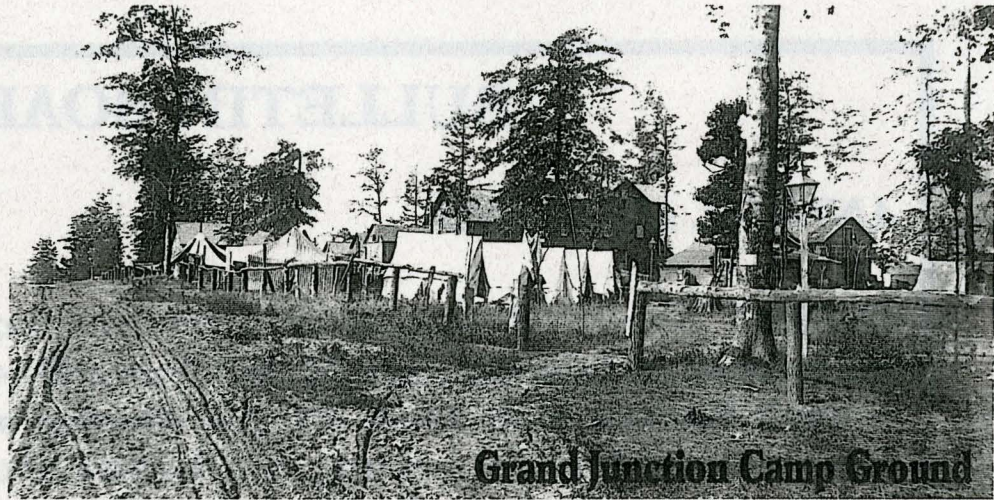
The camp meeting was in a wooded area by a small lake, where the baptismal service was held. There was a row of smaller tents to house the campers. Usually the tent floor was covered with 'ticks' (mattress covers) filled with straw provided by the farmers. The kitchen and dining area were at the church. The tables were usually outside, but inside in the sanctuary if it rained. There were beds in the basement for older women and some mothers with small children. Brother and Sis. Monroe senior were there, but the women were put at ease when Mother Monroe assured them her

husband was blind.

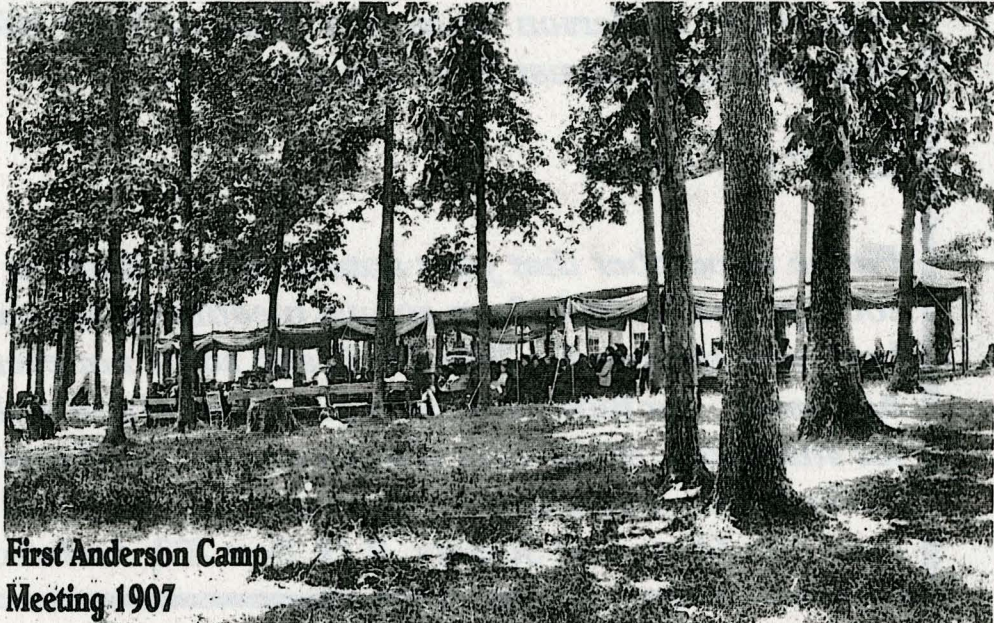
Since I was a child in the 1920s my recollection of those days is on that level. I recall at prayer time we knelt by plank benches on which we were sitting. Prayer time often became quite prolonged and at such times we often opened our eyes and studied the bench and surroundings with head bowed. On one occasion a friend related how she saw what looked like a baseball bat in the sawdust under the bench. She tugged at it, but it seemed stuck. When she stood up she saw a man with a wooden leg on the bench behind her.

The Ferintosh camp meeting became the main camp meeting for Alberta. In 1928 the Ministerial Assembly decided to establish a permanent camp ground there. In 1929 a permanent building with dome rafters and a seating capacity of over one thousand people was built. As Camrose became a focal point of the work in Alberta, the tabernacle was moved and placed near Alberta Bible Institute in 1938. There it remained until sometime in the 1960s, when it was dismantled due to the growth of the city of Camrose and high taxes that made it impractical to maintain.

Thereafter, camp meetings were held on the Camrose exhibition grounds, but seemed to lose the flavor and spirit of the tabernacle days. The development of Deer Valley Meadows with beautiful grounds and facilities seem a fitting setting for the new tabernacle.



Grand Junction Camp Ground



First Anderson Camp Meeting 1907



Anderson Camp Meeting c. 1908

BULLETIN BOARD

ANNUAL MEETING

The Sixth Annual Meeting of the Historical Society of the Church of God will convene on Saturday, June 24, 2005 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. in Anderson University's Hartung Hall, Room 101. The Meeting will begin with a brief, but very necessary business meeting, but the bulk of the time will be devoted to our special guest lecturer, Dr. James Earl Massey, who will discuss his forthcoming book, African Americans in the Church of God. (This book will be released by Anderson University Press at West Middlesex Camp Meeting in Pennsylvania, August 5th of this year.)

ANNUAL DUES

Please remember that your annual dues enable us to function as a voluntary society. Our 'year' is from annual meeting to annual meeting. Very few of you have sent in dues for 2004-2005 (and some not even for the year before that). As a result, our fund balance is quite low. Membership dues are \$15 a year (\$10 for students). Make your checks payable to Historical Society of the Church of God. You may either bring your check with you to the Annual Meeting or mail it to Historical Society, P.O. Box 702, Anderson IN 46012.

RETURN TO:

First Class Postage

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