

Church of God Historian

Historical Society of the Church of God Vol 8 No 1 Fall 2007



Annalee Reynolds and Dale Stultz at Book Signing at Yellow Creek Lake

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PUBLISHES *THE BOOK OF NOAH*

Noah *Byrum* that is. Not the Noah of the Old Testament, but the Noah who was one of the earliest members of the Gospel Trumpet Family in Grand Junction, Michigan. The Noah who was Secretary-Treasurer of the Gospel Trumpet Company for over fifty years. The Noah who was the brother of E.E. Byrum, the successor of D.S. Warner as Chief Editor.

Noah Byrum was a shy, retiring man who faithfully went about his job as a manager of the Gospel Trumpet Company's finances. In a sense, he spent his life in the shadows: the shadow of his older brother, the Editor; then that of his literary wife, Isabel Coston Byrum, author of numerous popular children's books published by the Gospel Trumpet Company.

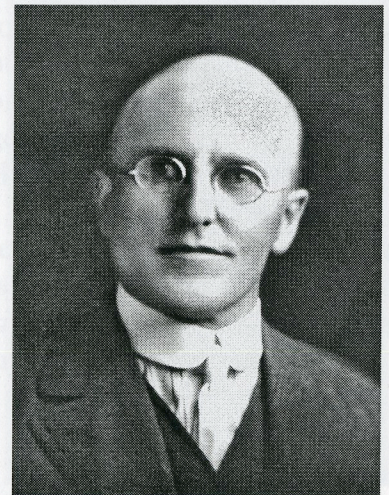
For this reason, Noah is little known among Church of God adherents today. He was so 'ordinary,' so 'everyday.' But without his faithfulness and perseverance the Church of God would doubtless look quite different today.

The Book of Noah: Memoirs from Our Past is based on the diaries and later writings of Noah Byrum. They give us a close-up view of the life and growth of the Gospel Trumpet Company and the Church of God unique both in its scope and in its personal perspective.

Society members Dale Stultz and Douglas Welch have combined their skills to compile and edit this book—the first to be published by the Historical Society of the Church of God. It will undoubtedly not be the last.

What makes the book unique is the large number of pictures it contains (over three hundred). Many of these have never before been published in any of our literature. Some of them open windows to our past most of us did not even know were there in the first place.

We received the book in mid-July. Since then it has been selling exceptionally well. We hope you will buy the book, read it, and share it. **Details on Page 8.**



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

Vol 8 No 1 Fall 2007

This newsletter is published three times a year: Fall; Winter; and Spring. It is published by the Society on behalf of its members. Printed in Anderson Indiana.

All correspondence should be addressed to: Historical Society of the Church of God, P.O. Box 702, Anderson, Indiana 46015. Email should be sent to *Merle D. Strege*, Society President, at: mdstrege@anderson.edu.

Church of God Historian is managed by the Executive Committee of the Society. Merle D. Strege, President, Dale E. Stultz, Vice-President, and Sadie B. Evans, Secretary-Treasurer. Others serve on the Committee as requested by the President.

The Historical Society

The Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson) exists to encourage the collection and preservation of artifacts and documents relating to the history of the Church of God; to encourage historical research and the writing of Church of God history; and to provide a forum for like-minded people interested in participating in and furthering the study of Church of God history.

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.) Checks should be made out to *Historical Society of the Church of God* and sent to Box 702, Anderson IN 46015.

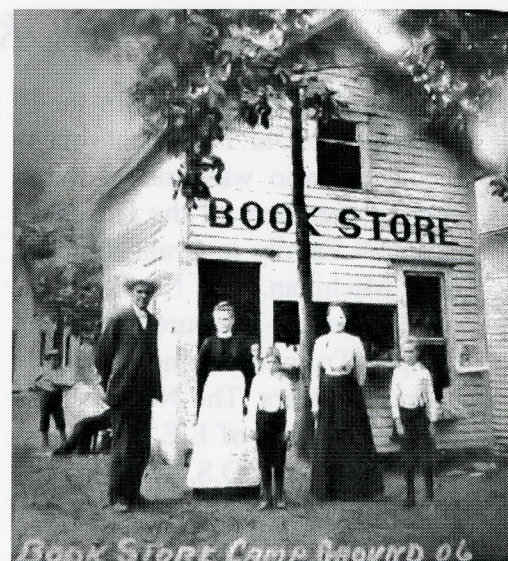


Historic Bookstore on the Yellow Creek Camp Grounds is still there—although, as you can see from the early photo, it is now a campmeeting residence with a ‘lean-to’ added. Society member and our Secretary-Treasurer, Sadie Evans, poses for Dale Stultz while holding a large ‘blow up’ of the original photo. Next to wooden auditoriums, bookshops were central to our permanent camp grounds—of which Yellow Creek Lake was among the earliest.

Rick Blumenberg, in his helpful book, *Standing With the Saints*, writes: “In 1897 the saints met on the south bank of Yellow Creek Lake. . . . [I]t seems they used the land for a meeting the first year while raising funds to pay for it, clearing enough trees to erect a tent in which services were held. Land they acquired in 1897 was called the Saints Campground, the Church of God Campground, or Yellow Creek Lake Campground. It was also known as Claypool, Burkett or Silver

Lake Campmeeting, after nearby railroad stations” (1997:16).

It is not clear from Bro. Blumenberg’s account when the bookstore pictured below was built. On Page 19, he quotes C.E. Brown, who tells of “the bookstore” being there in 1902 when he visited the campgrounds. The first wooden tabernacle was not built until 1906, the same date written on the photo below. Was Brown’s “bookstore” this same one? We cannot be sure.



TOUR IN MICHIGAN

November 7, 1880

After spending nearly all the night in labor for the comforts of the family, and the wants of the HERALD, we took the train at 4:35 on the 14th of October, for Michigan. As we saw the majestic pines in the vicinity of Grand Rapids, towering above the rest of the forest, still dressed in living green, we thought of the words of David: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm trees; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."

We spent the day in communion with God, through whose kind providence we landed safely and was met by Bro. J.C. Fisher at Pewamo, on the Detroit and Milwaukee R.R. Brother F— conveyed us in his buggy to Carson City, where the Northern Michigan Eldership was convened. Brother Walker was engaged in preaching to the people.

October 15 and 16 was devoted to business; worship was interspersed and all was harmonious. The brethren are few in number, but of good cheer, and trusting in the Lord. We preached some during the meeting at Carson and several sought the "fulness of the blessing of the gospel."

Bro. Fisher, who was convinced of holiness at our Eldership meeting one year ago this fall, and who shortly afterward gave all to God and received the blessing of heart purity, was that night sealed in a very remarkable manner by the Holy Spirit of promise, shortly after his companion and brother-in-law received the grace of entire sanctification. It was a night of

God's wonderful power.

On Monday we accompanied Brother and Sister Fisher to their community, where we held services a few evenings, not far from Fowler and Maple Rapids; a few made the consecration and we hope will "hold fast the profession of their faith steadfast to the end."

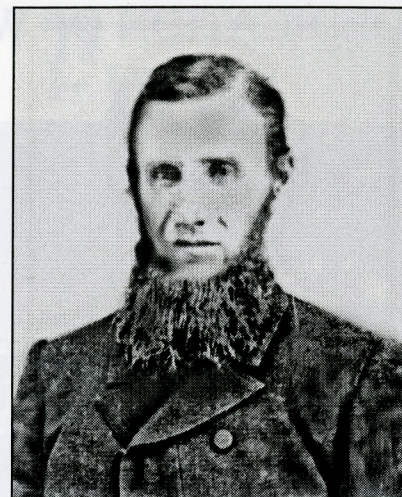
On Friday, October 22, accompanied Brother and Sister Fisher about thirty miles North into Gratiot Co. Passed through Ithaca, the county seat.

The country is new; much of it low like the Black swamp in Ohio, but also like it, good and rich. Land is cheap. Held services on the Sabbath. Returned on Monday, and the following day drove about as far South, held service two nights at Midat Station, a few miles from Leru-siug. Two entered into the rest of faith.

We had the privilege of visiting Lansing. Log cabins three and four miles from the city are quite common. The city, too, fell short of our expectation, but the state house is a very grand building indeed.

Friday, Oct. 29—Still in company with Brother and Sister Fisher, and also Bro. Smurr, who had come to meet us at Millatt, some by buggy and the rest by cars, came on to Eaton county, passing through Charlotte, the county seat, a beautiful town . . . Held a meeting near Lacies Lake, Friday evening, Saturday, and Sabbath.

Was happy at this place to meet a people who have come out of various denominations, ignoring all human creeds and



Daniel S. Warner (from a very old, badly stained and faded photograph)

sects and endeavoring to walk in the power of the Spirit. They are very lively Christians, but like the zealous and eloquent Apollos most of them confessed that the inborn foe was not yet destroyed.

There seemed to be a willingness to learn the way of the Lord more perfectly, and receive the great fulness of God in entire sanctification. Sorry we could not remain longer in the neighborhood, as we much love those dear good saints, who are endeavoring honestly to walk in the good old way.

We were loath to part with Bro. and Sister Fisher, whose hearts are all aglow with Pentecostal fire and whose precious songs of Beulah glory continue to ring in our ears and echo in our soul. May it please the Head of the Church to bring us together soon again to work in His vineyard.

On Monday, November 1, I returned home with a grateful heart to God for His blessings and protection over companion and self during my absence.

— D.S. Warner, Editor
Herald of Gospel Freedom



The Historical Society is very greatly indebted to Gary and Darlene Monteith for their interest and support in moving and refurbishing the Barney E. Warren cabin. It was Gary (the great grandson of Barney Warren) who paid for and installed the large bronze memorial plaque hanging on the wall behind him and Darlene in the photo above (top left). It was Gary who paid for and installed the large posterboard (shown left) telling the story of the cabin, its recovery, and move to Anderson. Standing with Gary and Darlene are Gary's cousins, left to right, Debbie (Monteith) Miller, Jo (Monteith) Easter, and Marcia (Monteith) Frier. Gary has collected a great deal of B.E. Warren memorabilia, some of which are shown in the photo at the top right. Having these Warren descendants at the cabin dedication made it a very special event for us all.

Photos by D. Welch

A DREAMER AND HIS DREAM

In many respects he was a very ordinary man. His classroom lectures could put you to sleep on a cold winter day and his sermons were anything but sparkling. He was not well-educated (in the sense that he'd spent a lot of years amassing academic credits and degrees.) Nor was he noted for his personal charisma or great intellect. And his biography would not be high on the list of any writer who aspired to be widely published and read.

But he was a visionary man, a man who saw a possibility few others could see, a man with a dream—and the stubborn Scottish character needed to bring that dream to reality. He was Harry Carlaw Gardner, founder and president of Alberta Bible Institute (now known as Gardner College).

H.C. Gardner (or 'Brother Gardner,' which was all we ever called him or heard him called) was born in Ontario, Canada to a Scottish immigrant family. He served throughout World War I in the Canadian Army Corp of Engineers, farmed in Saskatchewan, then attended Anderson Bible Training School, graduating in 1924. After a year or two of additional education, he assumed pastoral leadership of a Church of God congregation in Edmonton, Alberta.

But, in the view of many of his colleagues, he 'dreamed the impossible dream.' That dream was to establish a Bible school, a ministerial training school for the Church of God in Canada. Think of it! This was the early 1930s. The Great Depression

had far from run its course in Western Canada—and would not for several more years. Most Church of God people (the majority of them rural) were struggling to afford food, clothing, and shelter for themselves and their families. So Brother Gardner's 'dream' seemed to them little more than an irresponsible daydream. A good idea, but . . .!

In addition was the hard fact that in Western Canada (Ontario, where the Church of God had its beginning in Canada, was almost another world in those days) Church of God congregations, most of them rural, all of them small, provided a ludicrously small base on which to attempt to build such an institution. They were barely managing to feed their pastors (and a lot of the time not quite). The timing seemed to most of them to be all wrong.

To add to the problem, most of the pastors, evangelists, and lay leaders frankly saw no need for a Bible school. God had brought them this far, had he not? All that was needed to successfully spread the message and plant the church, they believed, was a Divine calling and the ministry of the Holy Spirit among God's people. Not only was education not needed, some of them said, it could actually get in the way.

Brother Gardner had tried before to interest the Church in his dream, but found few takers. However, a few leaders, notably Edgar Busch, Mother Monroe, and Ethel Williams, shared his dream. But most others—in effect at least—asked themselves



Harry C. Gardner

"Is he crazy, or what?" No, but he was sure of his vision and he was determined. In his quiet, affable, and unassuming way he kept on talking to individuals, patiently sharing his dream, changing a mind here, a mind there, winning a 'convert' here, a 'convert' there.

Finally, in 1932, in a Western Canadian ministers' meeting in Saskatchewan, Brother Gardner stood and again passionately shared his dream with the assembled pastors and leaders. He did not ask them to underwrite the support of such a school as he proposed. Few could have done that had they wanted to.

All he asked was their approval and their prayers. Writing later about this event, H.C. Heffren notes with some candor that "sanction was granted in an almost nonchalant manner." And thus in January, 1933 Alberta Bible Institute was born.

Only thirteen students enrolled that first year and survival was always in doubt through the rest of the decade. Had things merely been difficult

Cont'd next page

they would have had a much easier time of it. Few today have the faintest idea what it was like to exist in a Depression that seemed to have no end. Things had improved a lot by the time I enrolled in A.B.I. in 1949, but meals were still often very skimpy and we had to do most of the menial 'house-keeping' tasks connected with the running of such an institution. But we numbered about forty five or so by then, so our 'gratis work' was really not all that burdensome.

H.C. Heffren, a long-time leader in Western Canada, said it well in his book, *The Voices of the Pioneers*: "The fact that we have a Bible school today is a tribute to the dogged perseverance and unflinching courage of Brother Gardner and his dedicated co-workers. A.B.I. is his real monument" (n.d. p.39).

But his 'monument' is much more than an institution. His greatest monument is the scores upon scores of pastors, missionaries, and church workers (who were called 'Gospel workers' in those days) who graced the halls of A.B.I. over the decades and spread out to bless the world. The influences that have been set in motion by one man's dream are incalculable.

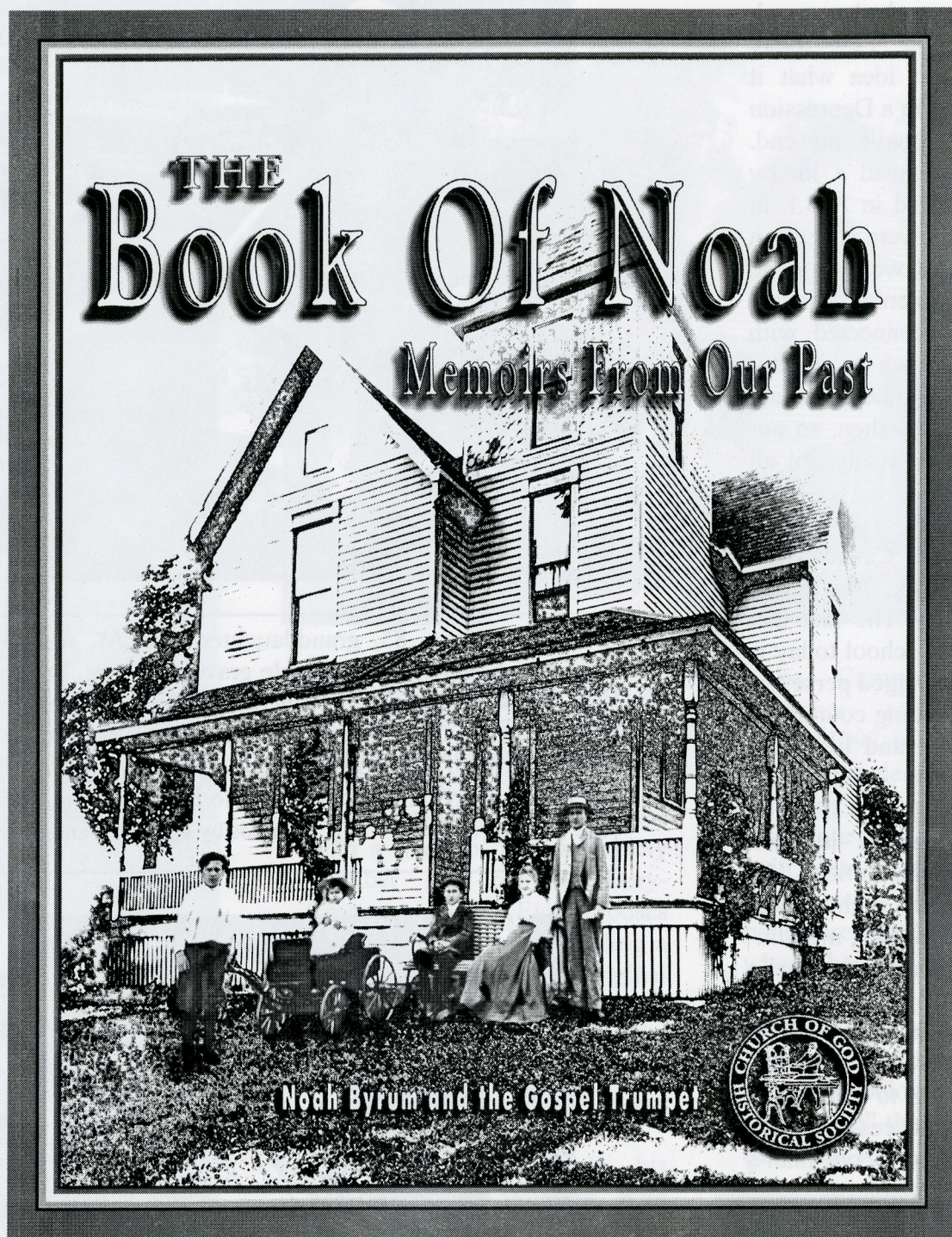
That's where it all began — with a dream and a dreamer who poured his life, quite literally, into his dream. Brother Gardner may not have earned a paragraph in C.E. Brown's *When the Trumpet Sounded* (although he was very briefly mentioned four times), but the Church of God would be a great deal poorer without him. As would I. And that matters to me.

— Douglas E. Welch



Minnie Ellison, 85, granddaughter of **H.M. and Minnie Riggle** (shown above at Riggle grave in Akron, Indiana) and her son, **Charles** (pictured below), long time members and leaders of the Olive Bethel Church of God, are shown below with many of the Riggle family photos, documents, and memorabilia recently contributed to the Historical Society of the Church of God. Photos by D. Welch and D. Stultz.





For a fascinating and refreshing overview of Church of God history
don't miss this book!

The retail price is \$19.95, but we are selling it for only \$15
plus handling and shipping. Those who buy in quantity for
resale will pay only \$12 plus handling and shipping

To purchase: call Secretary-Treasurer Sadie Evans at 765-643-3702 or
Email at Evans.s@att.net or direct mail to the Society's postbox