Worship and work in wild, wonderful West Virginia

1995 General Conference
President-elect Owen Probasco (left) watches as Don Graffius taped messages with your anecdotal memories. Individuals or group greetings in the form of cards or pictures. Please send your birthday greetings by October 20th to any one of the following addresses:

Ronald Maltby
263 N. Jackson
N. Plainfield, NJ 07060
(908) 756-3068

Lucille Jennings
7305 Santa Barbara
Carlsbad, CA 92009
(619) 431-6801

Allan Maltby
36 Stockton Dr.
Marlboro, NJ 07746
(908) 972-8358

Leon Maltby, former editor of The Sabbath Recorder and the oldest living Seventh Day Baptist minister, will be 90 years old on November 26, 1995. His children and grandchildren are inviting all of his friends to join in honoring him. An informal reception will be held at 4:00 p.m. on November 25 at the Daytona Beach, Fla., SDB Church.

It would be meaningful to Leon to receive your individual or group greetings in the form of cards or videotaped messages with your anecdotal memories. Please send your birthday greetings by October 20th to any one of the following addresses:

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Contributing Editors

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Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read The Sabbath Recorder before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe:

- the saving love of Jesus Christ,
- the Bible as the inspired word of God and a record of God's will for man. The Bible is our authority both for our faith and our daily conduct,
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
- the congregational form of church government. Every member of the church has the right to participate in the decision making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ.

It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes Seventh Day Baptists just a little bit different. If you would like more information, write: Seventh Day Baptists Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055, FAX (608) 752-7711.
“Ministry” happened in Buckhannon
by Pastor Jeanne Yurke

The 1995 Seventh Day Baptist General Conference in Buckhannon, W.Va., was a wonderful week in the Lord. In fact, it was the best General Conference I have ever attended!

I've been trying to figure out exactly what it was that made this one so spectacular. Could it have been the lack of Conference floor fights during business sessions? The sense of unity was truly remarkable, but we usually leave as friends even after disagreements.

Was it the outstanding lineup of worship leaders, preachers, seminar speakers, and Bible teachers? That certainly was a blessing, but we've had good people and good programs before.

Was it the hospitality of the hard-working Host Committee and this year’s presidential family?

Again, their graciousness was delightful, but others have had good teamwork, too.

I'll have to call it "ministry.”

At so many other General Conference sessions, I have agonized over the “walking wounded” among us and wished that somehow we could reach out to one another with Christ's restoring touch.

This year that happened in tremendous ways! More people seemed open to sharing their pain in order to get some relief. More people seemed willing to listen, to pray, and to seek divine intervention on behalf of their Christian brothers and sisters.

To me it was as if a huge logjam had finally been pushed out of the way so that God's mighty waters could flow freely. Instead of talking about a theme—as wonderful a theme as it could have been at the time—we put the theme into practice. We participated in joyful service!

As we launch into yet another program year, I hope that our church can learn from this year's General Conference. Yes, we should conduct our business efficiently. Yes, we should do our best in our various duties. Yes, we should be gracious and hospitable.

Most of all, we should be sensitive to the leading of God's Spirit and make ourselves available in joyful service. We need to minister to one another, trusting the Lord to pour out His blessing, healing, and great love.

From "The Mustard Seed," newsletter of the Raritan Valley (N.J.) Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Conference highlights...

Mrs. Myrna Cox presides over the 1995 Conference, with the theme, "Joyfully Serve..."

Statistics
- 772 registered guests
- 900+ at worship on Sabbath
- 339 delegates representing 59 churches
- 62 pastors and seminary students
- 1 fraternal delegate/12 official visitors
- 104 enrolled in Junior Conference
- 64 attended Youth Pre-Con, directed by Amanda and Nelson Snyder, with five staff
- 89 were at Young Adult Pre-Con, directed by Jim and Dee Galanaugh, with five staff
- Women's Love Gift was more than $3,400.

Elections
- President 1995-96: Rev. John Peil
- President-elect: Owen Probasco
- General Council: Rev. Leon Lawton
- Faith and Order: Phil Bond, Alan Crouch
- Committee on Support and Retirement: Eric Rudert, chair
- Tract and Communication Council: Rev. Andrew Samuels, James Skaggs
- Memorial Fund trustees: Donald Graffius, cont. next page

October 1995/5
Coffee house/talent show
by Arlene Bee

They didn’t take VISA or even the Macedonian Express Card at the "Cafe Y-A" on Tuesday night. Instead, the spirit-filled young adults "joyfully served" an enthusiastic, standing-room-only crowd in the upper rooms at Benedum Center.

The finger-snapping, hand-clapping audience was treated to gourmet coffees, cappuccino, and other delicious treats, as well as poetry recitations (if you can call "I love you, Rip, I love you, Pop; I love you more than pigs love slop," poetry!), songs of praise and songs of mirth, and even a conga-line or two.

The idea for the event originated with Suzannah Peil Taylor and Lara Bates, officers of the Young Adult Committee of the Board of Christian Education. But the credit for cooking up the final product really belongs to Heather Mackintosh and Kory Geiske, according to Bates.

With the help of gracious waitresses Erin Burdick, Tammy Miller, Tina Pierce, and Chystal Weber, the group served 12 bags of coffee, seven gallons of milk, four large containers of chocolate syrup, and 14 cans of whipped cream. Even low-octane java was available for the late-night Decaf set.

Special entertainment for the evening included poet laureate of barnyard lyrics, Brian Barber; impromptu Stained Glass performances by Erik Henry and Mandy Lamoreaux; a moving testimony poem, "Judgment," by Pastor Barry Baugh; and plenty of good foot-stomping rhythms by Tom Goodson, Pastors David Taylor and David Thorrstege, and others.

With such success, Lara Bates predicts an encore in the wings for next year.

Faithful saints
by Pastor Gordon Lawton (from the Conference Crier)

I can't tell you when it began. It may have been when I became a pastor or when I turned 30. Maybe it was when my children began going to school.

I can tell you that in the last few years, the liturgy of our opening session of General Conference business has become more than procedural obligation.

Not only is the Obituary Coordinator's report of interest, it tells of friends in our SDB family. This year I felt as though I wanted to stand and say, "I knew that saint!" "We worked together." "He was a friend." "She was a joy as a deaconess." "I am better because of them."

As the short paragraphs were read, I filled in details of how these people had touched my life.

Thank you, Jean Jorgensen, for your ministry to us from western Kansas. Thank you, Leland Bonn, for your dignified reading of these names and details.

Thank you, Dad (Leon Lawton), for leading us in prayer. Thank you, Lord, for all the faithful saints in your SDB vineyard.

Those whose names were read have graduated to the presence of the Lord. Their gain is our loss.

When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain. But we shall still be joined in heart and hope to meet again.

Obituaries for the following were read: Ferieda Probasco, Burton Cran dall, Eleanor Crandall, H. Earl DeLand, Ted Hibbard, Loren Osborn, Paul Osborn, Albourne Peat, Audrey Stephan, and Allen Wheeler.

Barbara D. McLin

The pastors met to discuss a new national prayer chain.

Everyone enjoyed another great children's presentation.
Revs revived by majestic music

by S. Kenneth Davis

As always, the greatest part of Conference was the inspirational worship punctuated by what I honestly believe to be the greatest non-professional, God-honoring music that was ever performed.

Various reasons have been propounded for the excellence in music our Conferences enjoy, such as so many of us descended from the Welch who are known for their music. But my own theory is that people who are truly free, as Christ intended them to be, and truly committed to our Lord, as Christ intended for them to be, have a song in their hearts that transcends the boundaries of earth.

One evening at the close of the Conference day we were asked to remain seated as our organist, Barbara Saunders, played the postlude. She brought out the many qualities of the pipe organ, building up to a grand full organ of harmonious sound.

At the close, Conference burst out in applause. It was a great experience. The youth, bless them, went wild in cheers, as they would with a touchdown for their team. Many of them may never had heard such a pipe organ.

Perhaps the Lord, through the organ with a skilled organist, made a "touchdown" in their lives.

---

Rod Henry and Victor Burdick take on the roles of first century pilgrims.

Ben Calhoun, surrounded by big burly pastors, shoots for the hoop.

Pastor Chuck Graffius reviewed the Senior Saints' many accomplishments since last year's Conference.

Flowers, and more flowers!

Many Seventh Day Baptists who attended this year's General Conference took to heart and put into practice our Conference theme. You didn't have to look far to find examples of Joyful Service.

One example of this joyful service was evident to everyone who entered the chapel—a beautiful floral display of the Conference theme, "Joyfully Serve."

The words of the theme were featured on a bed of flowers on the back wall of the platform, one word on each side of the organ at the center of the stage. At the center was a large (four-feet tall) daisy created from 10,080 white and yellow chrysanthemums.

This floral work of art was dedicated as a service of love to all Conference attendees by Marietta Sutton of Blountville, Tenn. Marietta heard that daisies are a favorite flower of President Myrna Cox.

Marietta purchased the flowers in Tennessee and brought them to Buckhannon. She and her assistants, Lela Blinens, camped out in a room in Kresge Hall behind the chapel, protecting the flowers and assembling the display. They worked on the project from 2 p.m. Friday until 6 p.m. Sunday.

Thank you, Marietta, for sharing your talents with all of us.

Marietta had help in designing the framework for her floral display. "Thanks" to George Bottoms, who took time out after leaving for a Canadian fishing trip to work out a bill of materials and phoned Marietta and Ed to give them the list. And special thanks to Beth and Milburn Jones (Senior Saints), who made a trip to Blountville to build the frame.

A lovely 3-D daisy and butterfly graced the front of Wesley Chapel.

More than 10,000 flowers stayed fresh and beautiful while lifting up our 1995 Conference theme. Thank you, Marietta Sutton!
Women serve joyfully at Conference

"And though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8 NASB).

How exciting it was to travel to wild, wonderful West Virginia for General Conference meetings in Buckhannon. President Myrna Cox and her team had a tremendous week planned for us, and we were not disappointed.

Myrna was the sixth woman to serve as Conference president, following Doris Fetherston, Dorothy Parrott, Gerry Van Dyke, Juan Ellis, and Althea Rood. Her gentle, humble spirit displayed the influence of Christ in her life—thank you, Myrna, for serving the Lord so joyfully!

Our women had numerous opportunities to serve the Lord throughout the week. About 40 women attended the Women's Board business luncheon on Tuesday. Vice President Ruth Probasco led the meeting.

Marietta Sutton told us about her work on preparing Summer Christian Service Corps (SCSC) Historical Scrapbooks. She is collecting pictures and biographical information on the 400 former SCSC workers. If you have any pictures or news Marietta could use, please mail them to her at 2991 Highway 129, Blountville, TN 37617.

Yvonne Stephan, representing the Robe of Achievement Committee, thanked the women for all their nominations and asked them to continue sending in names for next year. Ruth then encouraged us to take a turn serving at the SCSC Craft Table which was located in the cafeteria. (Thanks to all of you who served—craft sales resulted in $855 for the SCSC program!)

Women's Board officers were elected as follows: President—Donna Bond Vice President—Ruth Probasco Secretary—Tanya Miller

It was wonderful to see so many women involved in the many aspects of Conference—the music, the Children's Associated Conferences, the business sessions, the many programs and worship services.

Robe of Achievement Committee—Elizabeth Bidwell, Elsa Scull, Yvonne Stephan Tuition Fund Committee—Marie Davis, Sharon Davis SCSC Historian—Marietta Sutton.

The proposed 1996 budget was discussed. We noted our SCSC expenses for 1996:

- Travel: $13,165.50
- Food: 1,300.00
- Phone, postage, etc.: 211.96
- Evaluation: 776.40
- Total: $15,404.86

The following budget was approved:

SCSC: $16,400
Tuition Fund: 200
Conference Nursery: 600
NAHBU: 500
Administration/Miscellaneous: 200
Women's Banquet: 150
President's Travel: 100
Total: $18,150

A highlight for almost 200 women was the Women's Banquet on Wednesday evening. As we gathered in the large hall, we discovered at each place setting a christen-pin doll made by the Lost Creek, W.Va., women. Each doll had a tag with her name, the country she represented, and pertinent facts about that country—a great prayer reminder. Thank you, Lost Creek! Who will bless us with their table favors for next year's banquet?

Following the dinner, Kristen Rood, Tim Rood, and Jeff Haxon (SCSC Team New Song, Riverside, Calif.), sang "Righteous One," and Kristen shared her testimony. Our featured speaker—Barbara Barber of the Westerly, R.I., SDB Church—entitled her talk, "And on the Eighth Day God Created Quilts." She shared the techniques and story behind each of her projects along with the Bible verse stitched on each quilt.

Barbara is truly a master quilter, and her lovely creations drew many "oohs and ahhs" from the women in attendance. Thank you, Barbara, for sharing your talents with us! What a blessing your program was!

Thirty-five women participated in the Women's Interest Committee with Lettie Bond as chairman and Margaret Taylor as secretary. The committee made several recommendations:

1) that SCSC, Robe of Achievement, Women's Page, craft sale at Conference, nursery care at Conference, and the tuition fund be continued.
2) that the Women's Board evaluate the Pen 'n Prayer project to see if it should be continued.
3) that Mary Jane McPherson and Pat Cruzan be commended for their excellent work with the newsletter.
4) that the Women's Page and newsletter information be incorporated into the Sabbath Recorder page.

The committee also approved the distribution for the Love Gift, which totaled $4,490.00. The money will be divided as follows: Bill and Shelley Shobe—23%; SCSC—12%; shipping of sewing supplies for Zambia and Jamaica—10% each; money for pastors' travel and communications for Indonesia, Philippines, and Jamaica—10% each; women delegate travel for 1997 World Federation—20%; Stained Glass—5.5%; Voices of Praise—2.5%; reproduction of pictures for SCSC History Book—5%.

On Sabbath afternoon, we sat on the edge of our seats as Yvonne Stephan gave clues about the newest Robe of Achievement recipient. We were thrilled to hear that Ethel Wheeler of Riverside was selected as the 1995 recipient. Congratulations, Ethel, and thank you for the many ways you have joyfully served the Lord and His people throughout the years.

What a week it was! It was wonderful to see so many women involved in the many aspects of Conference—the social, the Children's Associated Conferences, the business sessions, the many programs and worship services.

May all of our efforts be pleasing to the Lord. And as we get involved in our fall ministries, may all of us joyfully serve the Lord in a deeper way.

October 1995
Women wowed by quilts
by Muriel Osborn and Marilyn Davis

Two hundred beautifully attired ladies greeting each other at the Conference Center Social Hall indicated that the Women’s Banquet time had arrived.

We enjoyed a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings while renewing friendships and getting acquainted with new friends.

“A stitch in time saves nine,” but thousands of stitches and small pieces of cloth turn into a work of material art. Barbara Barber, a member of the Westerly, R.I., church presented a fascinating “show and tell” program with the theme, “And on the Eighth Day God Created Quilts.”

With the aid of her able assistant, we viewed a panorama of gorgeous creative craftsmanship as Barbara related the techniques and story behind each masterpiece.

Barbara was taught to sew at an early age by her grandmother and mother. This avocation became her vocation the year the school bus earned national prizes. Barbara’s quilts are on loan and are shown around the world.

On the back of each quilt is the legend telling the hours of labor, quilt’s name, and other pertinent information. Every quilt has a scriptural background, and the Bible verse is listed. When Barbara speaks, the glory of her work is given to the Lord, who has given her the ability to sew, speak, and write.

We viewed a panorama of gorgeous creative craftsmanship as Barbara related the techniques and story behind each masterpiece.

Our thanks to Barbara for sharing with us. We applaud the Women’s Board committee who arranged for this lovely affair. (Reprinted from the Crier)

Taking aim on your life
Two views of Young Adult Pre-Con

As if a summer full of fun, laughter, and friendship wasn’t enough! Thirty-nine young adults converged on the campus of Salem-Tokyo University to attend Young Adult Pre-Con under the direction of Pastors Jim and Dee Galanaugh.

Our Pre-Con was made interesting not only by the Bible studies and going through the seven steps to spiritual freedom, but also by the fact that some of the Japanese students at the university became interested in what was going on. What a way to witness!

We’ll be able to tell our grandchildren that “We walked five miles to get from the dormitory to the cafeteria when we were in Pre-Con!” Since most of us got our exercise walking up and down the hill, recreation was a breeze. Wallyball and basketball were the main attractions, and a little friendly competition made it all the better.

One of the most memorable aspects of Young Adult Pre-Con this year was the time we spent for evening praise and worship. Friday evening’s communion service was a special time for prayer. We lifted our hands, hearts, and souls to the Lord, and unbelievable things happened. The Holy Spirit was definitely in the Brewster All Faith’s Chapel that evening.

We also put more credibility to the statement that Seventh Day Baptists can sing! Choruses such as “Mighty God,” “Awesome God,” “Mighty Warrior,” and “Our God Reigns” reverberated off the walls and brought Japanese students in from outside. Some of us had a chance to speak with them and try to explain what it was that we were doing. It opened our eyes to a whole new aspect of witnessing.

We’ll be able to tell our grandchildren that “We walked five miles to get from the dormitory to the cafeteria when we were in Pre-Con!” Since most of us got our exercise walking up and down the hill, recreation was a breeze. Wallyball and basketball were the main attractions, and a little friendly competition made it all the better.

Some of our members had never been to a Pre-Con before. They testified that they were having an awesome experience and that they would be back again.

We are now more conscious of our actions, and striving to make sure that the life of each person we contact is influenced in a positive way because of the encounter.

We want to continue the spiritual high that we experience at Conference throughout the year.

We understand that we will have value and will be mentors, but we are encouraged because others are praying for us.

Following the seven steps to spiritual freedom has made us new and better people in Christ and has freed us from our demons. Taking Aim on Your Life is a serious thing, and we can all benefit from it. (Reprinted from the Crier)

by Andrew J. Camenga

A spirit of worship and praise prevailed at Young Adult Pre-Con ’95 as 39 young adults were encouraged to “take aim on their lives.” This became clearer each day as the worship and praise times allowed all of us to realize that God truly dwells with us.

Recreation, classes, meals, free time, and fellowship helped make this Pre-Con exciting and uplifting.

God used many things to bring the group together in its worship of Him. One of those was the Bible study of Habakkuk. As Pastors Harold King and Ken Chroniger brought us through the book, we saw firsthand the struggle the author faced.

Yet, even in the face of utter destruction, Habakkuk arrived at complete trust in God: “Though the fig trees do not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Habakkuk 3:17-18 RSV).

This picture of complete trust in God was left in our minds as the directors, Pastors Jim and Dee Galanaugh, introduced the major theme, “Taking Aim on Your Life.” We explored this theme by examining motivating factors in our lives, then recognizing areas where we had allowed sin and Satan to influence us.

The high point of the lessons came as we worked through the booklet, Steps to Freedom in Christ by Dr. Neil T. Anderson. It outlines an approach to freedom in Christ that allows a systematic examination of one’s life. It further provides the guidance and encouragement needed to break the strong influence of sin.

It was this outline that formed the basic idea for the Young Adult Pre-Con vespers service at Conference. The program was planned and organized at Pre-Con by several volunteers and demonstrated the steps to freedom.

Praise and class times gave way to basketball, swimming, wallyball, and the long hike to the dorm. These times of friendly competition added tremendously to the Pre-Con experience. The free times allowed for talk, rest, prayer, games, and catching up with friends.

Young Adult Pre-Con was a well-balanced time that allowed us all to grow closer to God and each other. (Reprinted from the Crier)

by Leann Rogers

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Young Adult Pre-Con was a well-balanced time that allowed us all to grow closer to God and each other.
President
Jeremiah Moore
Jeremiah, a member of the Denver, Colo., Seventh Day Baptist Church, moved to the Seattle, Wash., area during the past year. He is now active in the Seattle church's Youth Fellowship.
Jeremiah has attended Association camps and is a senior at Issaquah (Wash.) High School, where he is active in the Art Club. He designed the school logo for Lutheran High School in Denver. Jeremiah is a cartoonist, soccer player, and has a black belt in tae-kwon-do.

Vice-President
Sarah Fernyhough
Sarah is active in the Youth Fellowship of her home church, Seattle Area Seventh Day Baptist General Conference in 1996 will be her first, though she has attended Pacific Pines Association Camp.
Sarah is a ninth grader at Meridian Junior High School in Kent, Wash., where she participates in band (trumpet), juggling club, photography club, and volleyball.

Secretary
Heather Ecklund
Heather is a member of the Seattle Area SDB Youth Fellowship, where she has participated in Youth Sabbath. She attends Tacoma Junior High School, and Rachel Parker of Denver, Colo. I'm sure Myrna spoke for all of us. And this was especially true as we were inspired and uplifted by Monday evening vespers presented by the Youth Pre-Con.
A comment heard following the vespers service was, "I didn't know we had so much musical talent and youth Pre-Con presents Monday evening vespers"
The kinship of history

Remembering the lessons of history is incumbent upon the people of God. Unfortunately, indeed, is that nation or people or person without the memories of the great blessings of Providence, never knowing the hand of God in history. And blasphemous are those who would rewrite history to exclude God's guidance and watch care.

The faithful curator of our Historical Society for many years, Evelyn St. John, convinced the historian of another denomination that he was wrong in taking Seventh Day Baptist history to apply to his Sabbathkeeping group. He replied, “Well, still if I knew it when I have written it, so don’t mind I’ll change it.”

This is not an isolated case. We who, from the 17th century, have been God’s witness to the validity of the fourth commandment, need to be informed enough to keep the true alive and well and burning brightly.

Perhaps it’s because we have such an illustrious history that it is easier for us to seek to be completely honest. It is more than of passing interest that those of other denominations seeking historical accuracy use our Historical Society library as a resource. A recent doctoral thesis by an Adventist historian documents the influence of SDBs as the inspiration for Ellen G. White’s “visions” concerning the Sabbath. If non-Seventh Day Baptists are that interested in SDB history and our passion for the truth, surely Seventh Day Baptists ought to be well informed.

We must never be too ready to quit the past. Foundations have been laid for us. Someone has observed, “The greatest molders of men, the greatest teachers of the world, are not any of them above ground.” It’s a sobering thought, whether literally true or not. It takes the perspective of history to determine greatness. At least this is an acknowledgment of our debt to the past.

Beloved, our past—the history of Seventh Day Baptists since the 17th century—is a veritable gold mine. And I might add that our historian, Don Sanford, is a great miner—a “major miner.”

Do you know what the definition of a historian is? A prophet looking backwards. Now that’s not an oxymoron! A prophet is not a fortune teller. He is “one who speaks for God.” Anyone who does not see the hand of God in history is hardly worthy of such a title.

Another quote: “We could better afford to throw all our gold into the sea than to lose our past, and the past of the divinely led nations among whom God has been so vividly working.” We had better remember all the way the Lord has led us—remember it because it has made us what we are, and remember because God’s footprints are visible upon it.

The great, gracious God who created us, has created life as a continuity. The past, the present, and the future flow into each other. One of the best ways to experience God today, one of the best ways to sense who you are and where you are going, is to be aware of how God has been present to you in your past.

Your Historical Society was created by an act of Conference for the preservation of the documents, writings, records, etc. of our people, our churches, our boards and agencies. That sounds simple enough on the surface, but it involves a great deal.

In the first place, it does no good to have any amount of information if you can’t retrieve it when you want it. So everything has to be filed and cross-referenced by...
1995 Scripture Memorization Program

The Scripture Memory Program for the 1994-95 conference year featured the theme, "Joyfully Serve." The Sabbath School Committee of the Board of Christian Education selected the monthly Scripture verses. Those who completed the program were presented certificates at the General Conference sessions in Buchanan, W.Va. The following is a list of those who participated:

- Madeline Fitzer
- Pauline Pelletier
- Central, MD
- Kevin Croninger
- Je<br...
The President's Page—“At the Crossroads”

Kinship and family: absolute bedrock

(Part one of President John Peil's Conference message.)

A long time ago, I was at General Conference, walking along, talking adamantly to an elderly gentleman. Something on the Conference floor was very divisive, with a lot of discussion surrounding it. I was saying I didn't like this or that, and he kept trying to get my attention. He kept saying, "Well...", and I'd go right on talking. Finally he said, "John, if everyone is going to work at this as hard as I am, it doesn't matter what the vote is going to be."

And the years passed, and it didn't matter. What he was doing was explaining who we are as a people—that things get very intense at times, extremely intense, and nothing too radical happens. (Which isn't bad, by the way, in this time of all kinds of change.)

Nothing too radical happens, and the stability of the group comes back. You can trust the system that it's going to work out. So I didn't have to worry, and I don't think I've been adamant since. I simply watch, and I see what's happening.

Our church system has been given to us by our forefathers, and it's up to each new generation to decide how they will use that system to further the glory of God. It's an amazing and good system. It requires a great deal of compromise and togetherness. It absolutely must have those two things: togetherness and compromise.

When we've started churches as a kinship system, we've moved in groups. North Leup, Nebr., was formed when a whole bunch of Seventh Day Baptists moved there, and they formed a town. That's the way we move. We have a vision, and then we take that vision to a new area—in mass.

That's how you keep your kinship system together. This method was even continued into the 1950's when Seattle was started. A group of people from Riverside, in mass, moved up to Seattle, forming the Seattle Area SDB Church.

What's also required of a kinship system is our weekly Sabbath meetings, where we reaffirm with each other that it's not just our family that keeps the Sabbath, but all of our families keep it.

Then we also have to meet in Associations, because it's just not our local church, but it's many churches that are bound together. We have covenanted together as churches.

Some Associations are now sending delegates. This is going to be very interesting in the years ahead. Because what an Association needs and what a kinship needs is as many families as possible meeting together to stay healthy.

Then we have our General Conference, which we have to have, as we come here and we reaffirm that all of us keep the Sabbath, all of us believe in Jesus Christ—not just our churches, not just our Associations, but all of us across the United States. We believe in Jesus Christ, and we believe in the Sabbath, and we are meeting.

Without these meetings, we are severely crippled as a kinship system. We must meet, and we must meet a great deal, with as many families attending as possible. It's not just an option; this must happen. The kinship system depends on a strong family system.

This is absolute bedrock—besides Jesus Christ, and the apostles, and the Bible. The absolute bedrock is you must have a strong family system.

As Seventh Day Baptists, we cannot exist without a strong family system. The family is where values are taught. The next generation is instructed in what is really important.

The autumn leaf dance

by Bob Spreadborough

The autumn forest stands, enticing. I listen to its music. It's the music of the wind as it ripples across the treetops. The treetops nod and twist as if to assure the wind that this is the moment to begin.

The dance commences as a swirl of leaves pirouette with giddy strides in their gold, brown, yellow, and crimson splendor.

They've picked up on the rhythm and the beat. Dancing now they go higher and higher with flying golden feet. For a moment I'm caught breathless with their beauty as they go dashing to my left, then flying to my right.

I softly whisper, "Are you dancing for me? You are all so lovely, and I thank you for letting me hear and see you. When your show has ended, I'll always remember your beautiful dance!"

Gently the wind softens, and the leaves settle for a moment with a whisper at my feet. If only they should speak: would they reminisce of when they were new buds swelling on the branches? Of when before the frost had ended, swelling 'neath the bark... pushing toward the sunlight that had at first beckoned them to come?

They came forth in tender softness, each leaf so finely formed. Then faster, they grew in grouped mosaics... contrasting to the evergreens and pines and skies behind them. They quivered as winds blow cold, and winds blow hot. Then they darted to blend in with the evergreens. They looked robust... mature, as if to stay forever on their chosen host.

But days, and nights, and time passed on, and the daylight shortened. The dark grew longer still. The sun which had been their beacon now withdrew, each midday further behind the hill.

Not a time for sadness. For now they've put on new beauty, translucent in the sunrays. No artist's palette ever could conjure. The beauty from within them, from the process of the season. Now at last their gifts are given in this glorious autumn spectacle to thrill us as we behold, the red, the brown, the yellow, and the gold.

For a season we partake with them in their dance of wondrous colors on the autumn wind. Soon the limbs that bore them will be standing stark and bare. Their twigs pointing skyward in crisp cold winter air.

At first the leaves fall crisply upon the frosty forest floor. Then they brown and blacken to melt softly with the rain and snow into the earth. Here at last they will give nourishment and succor to the root of hosts that once had given them birth.

Bob Spreadborough is a member of the Denver, Colo., SDB Church.
Shall we gather at the river?

A group of youth and adults from the North Loup, Neb., Seventh Day Baptist Church celebrated Sabbath Emphasis Day 1995 by taking a journey into the past.

Commemorating the Sabbath commitment of the pioneers who founded the church, they took a field trip to the spot on the North Loup River where the first Sabbath services were held on May 18, 1872. Now on private land, the spot is marked by a small stone slab which notes the event and date.

Writing in a family history, Hosea Rood says of the early settlers:

"The people were tired after their long journey they did not neglect 'the assembling of themselves together'. On the first Sabbath after their arrival, they gathered at an appointed place on the bank of the North Loup River, about a mile and a half from where the village now stands, and held religious services. When the Sabbath was past, the people began to hunt about the country for such spots of God's green earth as best suited them for home making."

At that first service, Elder Oscar Babcock preached, and Charley Rood led the singing. One of Charley Rood's descendants, Merlyn Williams, was leader of the 1995 field trip.

In the tradition of that first SDB gathering, the group sang the old hymn that was also sung in 1872, "Shall We Gather at the River?"

However, the 1995 group departed from tradition in one respect. Pastor Ken Burdick, having already had his opportunity to preach to the group earlier that morning, was not extended a second opportunity in the afternoon.

A good time was had by all, and the field trip ended with prayers made at the marker and ice cream consumed at the church.

Farewells given to Galanaughs


Our Battle Creek church family shared cake and punch after the worship service on July 1, 1995, to honor Pastor Jim and Dee Galanaugh on their last day with us. The huge cake was decorated as a golf "green," complete with holes, with many meaningful Scriptures written on it. Church members gave love gifts to help the Galanaughs in their move.

In his final sermon, "A Farewell," Pastor Jim urged the congregation to "aim for perfection" and to seek "spiritual maturity." Our next pastor, he felt, would raise us to the next level of maturity.

"Shall We Gather at the River?"

Pastor Jim Galanaugh

Wheeler Lodge dedicated

On July 1, 1995, a group of over 100 people gathered on a warm Sabbath afternoon at Pacific Pines Camp in Crestline, Calif. A very special occasion brought these people here. The Riverside Seventh Day Baptist Church had voted to dedicate the main lodge to the memory of Rev. Alton L. Wheeler.

The reasons were many, but probably best expressed by the dedication plaque mounted on the front of the building:

Reverend Alton L. Wheeler
1917-1994
Beloved Pastor, Friend, Counselor, Teacher and Servant of Jesus Christ.
His Talent, Energy and Dedication to God was One of the Driving Forces in the Youth Ministry and Expansion of Pacific Pines Camp while Pastor of the Riverside Seventh Day Baptist Church.

The service opened with camp songs led by Pastor Eric Davis and Tony Maddox. It was followed by an invocation by Pastor Gabriel Bejani, special music by a quartet from the Riverside church, a male trio of campers from YP Camp, and a poem recited by former campers.

The service was highlighted with an address by Rev. Glen Warner. Individuals were then invited to come forward and share their memories of Alton at Pacific Pines—a place where he had devoted over 20 years of service in four different decades.

Our nostalgic time ended with what is a tradition at Pacific Pines, a closing circle with hands linked. We sang the old spiritual, "We are Climbing Jacob's Ladder," before Pastor Bejani closed in prayer. Among the many attending were Alton's wife, Ethel, and son, Doug.

The service was well attended and overflowed into the nearby facilities. The reasons were many, but probably best expressed by the dedication plaque mounted on the front of the building:

"I have learned so much in four years, and the greatest lesson was how to love close up."

Pastor Jim Galanaugh

October 1995/ 23
Richburg welcomes pastor, outreach
by Ruth Bottoms

The Richburg, N.Y., Seventh Day Baptist Church is happy to report that we now have a resident pastor. Rev. Robert Harris and family arrived on June 13 and are settling in.

A combined reception on September 9 formally welcomed the Harrises and gave appreciation to Rev. Gordon Lawton of Little Genesee, N.Y., for his services as interim pastor.

A packet containing a letter of introduction from the pastor, a brief history of the church, some beliefs, an introduction from the pastor, a Sabbath tract, etc., and an invitation for children and family to attend a six-week Bible study on the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. This bit of free public controversy may well be to our advantage, with perhaps more to come.

Accessions

Portage, WI
(Branch of Albion, WI)
Joined by letter
Jeremiah Julson
Joshua Hermanson
Kayee Smalley
Sara Smalley
Mitch Smalley
Debbie Smalley
Daron Smalley
Paula Smalley
Jessica Julson
Linda Schulze

Columbus, OH
Robert Van Horn, pastor
Linked after baptism
Marissa Van Horn
Christopher Van Horn
 Joined after testimony
Jamie Perez
Emeka Annonyuo

Accessions, cont. from page 24

Connie Annonyuo
Emeka Annonyuo Jr.
Kachi Annonyuo
Chidi Annonyuo
Georges Ayemou
Anna Marie Paige
Katherine James
Latifah Sauda

Leonardsville-Brookfield, NY
Ernest Clemens, pastor

Joined after baptism
Sharon Furgison
Stacey Furgison
Jeremy Furgison
Clifford Furgison
Scott Hungerford
Tabatha Hungerford
Robin Robinson
Daryl Hawes
Jodi Hawes
Patti Hawes
Daryl Hawes Jr.
John Hawes
Shonel Gaff
Jamie Lum

Old Stonefort, IL
Julius T. Lumpkin

Richburg—Margaret Davis Burdick, 89, of Little Genesee, N.Y., died on April 4, 1995, in Jones Memorial Hospital, Wellsville, N.Y., after a lengthy illness. She was born on June 28, 1905, in Leonardsville, N.Y., the daughter of Rev. Alva L. and Flora (Talbott) Davis. On December 23, 1929, she married Thomas L. Burdick in Little Genesee. He died in 1983.

Margaret was a graduate of Western (R.I.) High School. In 1928, she graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, Mass., with a major in piano and voice. She quickly became a popular piano teacher, with 47 students a week her first year, and 55 her second. She taught piano for three years in Little Genesee, Bolivar, and Richburg, N.Y., and from 1929 to 1969 in East Aurora, N.Y. Returning to Little Genesee, she gave lessons from 1969 to 1992. She retired at the age of 87.

Margaret was a member of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Genesee in Little Genesee, N.Y., the Little Genesee Sunshine Society, and the Roena Ames Music Club in Richburg. She was a popular piano teacher, with 47 students a week her first year, and 55 her second. She taught piano for three years in Little Genesee, Bolivar, and Richburg, N.Y., and from 1929 to 1969 in East Aurora, N.Y. Returning to Little Genesee, she gave lessons from 1969 to 1992. She retired at the age of 87.

Margaret was a member of the First Seventh Day Baptist Church of Little Genesee, N.Y., the Little Genesee Sunshine Society, and the Roena Ames Music Club in Richburg. She was also a former choir director of the First Baptist Church in East Aurora, and past president and companion of the East Aurora Choral Club.

Margaret was described by many as a "very brave lady." After losing her husband of 58 years, she picked herself up and went on to build a new life. She successfully battled cancer twice, and also rehabilitated herself after suffering a major stroke. She traveled alone to Wisconsin for family visits, and went to Ireland to celebrate her 83rd birthday. Margaret lived alone in her little house until the last few weeks of her life, when she was lovingly cared for in the home of her good friend, Ruth Bottoms.

Survivors include one daughter, Virginia Mary Duncan of Waukesha, Wis.; one brother, Alfred L. Davis of Rochester, N.Y.; one granddaughter, and two great-grandsons. She was predeceased by one daughter, Margaret Louise Burdick, who died in 1986; and by a brother, George T. Davis.

A memorial service was held on April 5, 1995, at the First SDB Church of Genesee. During the service, Rev. Gordon Lawton spoke of Margaret's 69-year legacy of music to the Little Genesee church. He also talked about one of her habits that people would do well to emulate: "On Sabbath morning, she went to church. Although home, she went to church" by using tapes of previous services. For her, the Sabbath was a special day, even when it meant meeting only with God and meeting at home. Rev. Lawton read eulogies from her former pastors—Herb Saunders, Steve Croach, and Ed Sutton. Rev. Herlitz Condison of the First SDB Church of Toronto (Canada) also spoke. Burial was in Wellsville Cemetery, Little Genesee.

Wood—Agnes Fern (Arnold) Wood, 91, died on July 10, 1995, at Thornapple Manor, Hastings, Mich. She had lived there for the past 10 years. She was born on May 20, 1904, in Dodge Center, Minn., the daughter of George and Flossie (Tuppen) Arnold. She graduated from Dodge Center High School in 1922 and moved to Battle Creek, Mich.

Agnes married Thomas P. Wood Sr. on Nov. 23, 1925, in Battle Creek. He died on June 20, 1945. She was a homemaker who enjoyed crocheting and blueberry picking, and was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church.

Obituaries


In addition to her husband, Thomas, she was preceded in death by two sons, Larry and Dennis, and by one sister, Eloise Spells.

Funeral services were held on July 15, 1995, at Shaw Funeral Home, rectangular Chapel, Bellevue, Mich., with Rev. George Crawford officiating. Burial was in Austin Cemetery, Conviv Township.
churches, by individuals mentioned, by writers, by subject. You begin to get the picture?

Preservation also means copying old manuscripts so that researchers can find what they want more than handling the original documents (causing them to wear out sooner). It includes keeping the originals in a climate-controlled safe at ideal temperature and humidity to make those documents last as long as possible.

It includes keeping copies of especially rare and important papers in an off-site location so that if the city of Janesville were destroyed by some catastrophe, we would still have access to that information. Most of these things our forefathers who established the Historical Society never dreamed of. Neither did they dream of the expense involved.

Simply to have all that info somewhere in the attic may give anyone is immersed in God's Word sufficiently to see the validity of God's Sabbath, he is not likely to jump at the opportunity to join those who are out-of-step with the world. Alton Wheeler used to say that he didn't even try to discuss or defend the Sabbath until a person had already accepted Christ; it is an exercise in futility. But having accepted Christ, many want to go forward in their commitment to Him.

In studying the Bible, they discover for themselves the truth of the Sabbath. It is then that they are ripe for learning about Seventh Day Baptists. Up to that point, the typical response is, "Huh!"—which may be why there has not been more response to our TV program.

The average person randomly watching TV is not seeking spiritual maturity. However, those checking out our books or reading reviews of our books in religious periodicals are of a mind-set for spiritual growth, or they wouldn't be looking there. We are pleased to provide that opportunity.

So where do all of us fit into this? First of all, make sure you have copies of our books in your home. Then become acquainted with the contents, so when the kids ask the equivalent of "What do these stones mean?" you have the resources to show them. When friends say, "Seventh Day Baptists? Never heard of them," you will have first-rate material to show we're not some "Johnny-come-lately," but growing in the mainstream of Protestant Christianity.

Secondly, make sure your church library has at least one copy of each book, especially for newcomers, but also for those who have never learned what a heritage is theirs. Be sure your local library has these books if they are willing to accept them. Next to the phone book, more people use the library to learn about other denominations.

Third, we'd like to see your involvement. It is, in a very real sense, your Historical Society. You owe it to yourself to be a member if you are a Seventh Day Baptist.

Finally, because our mission has expanded since the days of our inception, and since prices never go down, you can envision how dependent we are on endowments given back when a dollar was a dollar. You've heard about the man who, after his physical, asked the doctor for an honest report. The doctor said, "You're as sound as a dollar." The man fainted. He even threw in some gentle rain, yet not enough to drench those "poor" Camperville residents. How would they be able to face the scorching heat and dangerous storms of the coming week?

Well, the Lord graciously blessed us with a cool spell. He even threw in some gentle rain, yet not enough to drench those "poor" Camperville residents. The cooling break in the weather began the opening weekend. Then it started heating up again by the next. But that blessed in-between time; it was like the Lord wanted us to focus on Him, not the weather.

Could what happened in the weather be compared with what happened in many of our hearts?
We enjoyed ourselves at West Virginia Wesleyan.

The banner summed up our week.

Believe it or not, Moses appeared at the Council on Ministry program.

"Camperville," behind the Camden Avenue dorms, was a great place to stay, thanks to "Mayor" Robert Van Horn.

Hawking their wares to the very end: Philip Lawton, and Jackson and Matthew Butler.