

Pretoria

Beyond rolling grasslands north of Johannesburg lies the city of Pretoria, executive capital of South Africa and capital of the Transvaal Province. It is the location of numerous foreign embassies, and the various structures that house all of these offices and residences, plus the homes of the Prime Minister, State President, and many government officials all lend to the creation of a beautiful city. Approximately one-fourth of Pretoria's population are civil servants. The University of Pretoria, the University of South Africa (Unisa), the teachers' college, and fine high schools add to its prestige.

The main part of white Pretoria lies in a saucer-like depression with its numerous suburbs spilling over and beyond the kopjies and ridges that form the rim of the saucer. Some cities, such as Cape Town, owe a part of their beauty to natural settings, but Pretoria sprang from the grassy veld and has been made beautiful by its architects and its gardeners. Early settlers in the 1850's began building in the area now called Sunnyside, where water was plentiful and the soil was rich. Today, some 50,000 jakaranda trees line its streets, creating in the month of October a fairyland of mauve blossoms. Limitless varieties of shrubs and flowers grow everywhere in people's gardens and in parks. To be sure, there are parts of Pretoria that are ugly and unkempt, but much of the city is splendid.

Around the perimeter of Pretoria are a number of industries, particularly Iscor (iron and steel), and nearby

is the Premier diamond mine. Close to the city is Voortrekkerhoogte (an Afrikaans name, literally "Pioneer Heights"), a large military training base.

On a hill just out of Pretoria is the Voortrekker Monument, strong and sturdy as the hardy pioneers themselves, rising importantly on the skyline to remind the Afrikaner of his victory over the Zulu armies of Dingane. That famous black chief had treacherously massacred Piet Retief and 71 white companions plus their retainers and grooms, and all in all, he and his fierce warriors posed an almost insurmountable threat to the doughty pioneers. Ten months after the massacre, Andries Pretorius, with 463 fighting men, was prepared to go to battle with the Zulu. Sarel Cilliers led the commando in prayer and vowed that if God would grant them victory, they would consecrate the day as a Day of Deliverance. December 16, 1838, dawned bright and clear, revealing 12,000 picked Zulu warriors, sitting down in closely-packed lines, watching the Boer camp. The Trekkers were out-numbered 25 to 1, but their hail of buckshot and elephant-ball felled the Zulus as they rushed in, rank after rank, their assegais ineffective against the Boers in their laager. Dingane's army was scattered, the blood of the wounded and the dying so tainting the river that the event is to this day known as the Battle of Blood River.

No white man lost his life in the Battle of Blood River, and only two were wounded. The Voortrekkers kept their promise to God and set aside the sixteenth of December as "one of the most sacred in the South African calendar." First called Dingane's Day, it has since been renamed, "The Day of the Covenant." On that day each

year, great numbers of Afrikaners gather at the monument from all over South Africa, in solemn remembrance. In the top of the monument is a small aperture situated in such a way that at noon on December 16, the sun's rays gleam through it and down onto a memorial cenotaph.

The Afrikaans people are proud of their heritage. In the city of Pretoria, the Afrikaans population far outnumbers the English-speaking sector of white people. It was to this city that we had decided to move in early 1960, and we were coming from periods of service in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, and Benoni, where the English-speaking sector was considerably greater in proportion.

WE ARRIVE IN PRETORIA

The month was May, the year 1960. We'd landed our Chevy station wagon at Cape Town and driven up-country by way of the beautiful garden route from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth and then up through the Transkei, and at last we drove into the yard at 774 Church Street, Arcadia, Pretoria. This was to be our home for the next 5 years! The house had once been a mansion, built, so elderly neighbors told us, by a man of means for his dearly beloved wife, early in the century. The church had purchased the property, not for any beauty of the house as we found it, but for the large grounds upon which there was soon to be a church building.

The front lawn with its flower borders and its two large palm trees was passable in that neighborhood of fine old homes with their beautiful gardens and well-kept walls and fences. The rear portion of the house and grounds, however, was incredibly ugly. Huge stumps attested to the

fact that there had once been a beautiful yard, and residents of long standing remembered when there were fruit trees and other beauties gracing the property. The big house had once served as a nursing home, and the entire ground behind it had been a graveled parking lot. Surrounding the property was a sagging wire fence and bent iron posts of the kind used in farm fencing.

The Carl McCullough family had been living in the house and had restored it to a reasonable state with paint and colorful curtains. The ceilings were very high — the stairs to the upper-story boasted 23 steps — I know — I climbed them enough times. (Today's two-story house has 15 or 16 steps in its stairway). The main living room was spacious and opened with double doors into another room at the front of the house (now to be used as a study) and into the dining room at the back.

The kitchen left much to be desired. Someone had painted the walls with fire-engine red enamel, but at least that created a washable surface which was necessary because the old Esse anthracite cookstove belched clouds of acrid smoke whenever it was opened for fuel. The kitchen and dining room were so badly arranged that I walked at least a mile every time I prepared a meal. The floor was cement — and you've guessed it — polished with red polish!

Now that our boys are grown, we all look back with nostalgia at the years in the old house. Everyone had plenty of room, and nobody had to be warned against damaging something fine and new. The younger boys found the bannister unsuited to sliding, but the hardwood stairs themselves made a good, if bumpy, slide. There was ample room in the yard for all sorts of pets, and Nic Dekker

helped Don to build a good pigeon loft out of used bricks. We were close to the Arcadia primary school, and bicycles were accepted transportation to the high school. Bus service ran at 20-minute intervals past our address and into town.

This was the second property the Pretoria church had acquired. The first consisted of a large plot with three houses at the corner of Church and Hamilton Streets, and drawings had at one time been made for a possible building to be constructed there. The city was rapidly growing up around the Hamilton Street area, and it soon became obvious that noise of traffic and limited parking space would make it impractical to put a church building there. The church at Peak and Eastside Streets in Dallas, Texas, had invested in the first piece of property, and when that was sold, the money was put to use in the purchase of the second one.

The school year was already about three and a half months along, so our first concern was to get the four school-age boys enrolled: Kent in the Pretoria Boys' High, and Don, Brian, and Neal in Arcadia Primary. Both schools had excellent reputations. We credit the head-mistress of Arcadia Primary, Miss Matthews, for the extremely high standards of that school, not only in scholarship, but in attitudes, behavior, manners, and sportsmanship. She knew all of her scholars by name, knew much about them, and never forgot them. They dearly loved her. Every school ought to have at least one "Miss Matthews."

We had been living in Johannesburg when the Gardners and Pettys had begun the Pretoria work in early 1951. Gardners had moved to East London in mid-1952, and in

December 1954, Martelle Petty was killed in a motorcycle accident just two or three blocks from the new church property. Leonard Gray had then filled in for several months until the McCulloughs arrived in 1955. In 1960, then, the church was just over 9 years old.

THE WORK BEGINS

Attendance at Sunday morning services was running at about 60, and at this time, the Pretoria congregation was one of the largest in the country. From it had gone Conrad Steyn and Andy deKlerk to attend colleges in America and return to become ministers to their own people in other South African cities. Phil Steyn and Brian van der Spuy were still in the states and due to return soon. Other men were becoming promising speakers, particularly Phil Theron, Jr., who very capably preached in the Afrikaans language. Hank Pieterse spoke well in either English or Afrikaans, and "Papa Bill" LeGassick loved nothing better than to "give a little exhortation," as he called it.

Among the men of the Pretoria congregation in 1960 were Hank Pieterse, Gavin DuToit, Phil Theron, Sr., Phil Theron, Jr., John Fair, R. Hudd, Fred Pretorius, Bill Allen, Bill LeGassick, Hekkie van Staden, Nic Dekker, Andrew Venter, Glenn Gillespie, George Kruger, Pierre duPreez, Ronnie Pretorius, Mervyn Blythe, Eric Elliott, Charlie Jahnke, and Janssen Uys. Gordon and Ivan Uys and Armand Verster were older teenagers, and among the younger boys were our own Kent and Don, Izak and Martin Theron, and Raymond and Graham Elliott. Among these are the names of some who have died, some who are no longer in the church, and some who, throughout the many years,

have been faithful servants of the Lord in Pretoria.

“Blallen’s here,” became almost a daily shout from our youngest son, Gary. Bill Allen (shortened to Blallen by a two and a half year-old), an electrician by trade, owned a small appliance store at the edge of Pretoria. Bill fell into the habit of stopping by our home on his way to the shop each morning, usually drinking a cup of coffee with John in the study. He was a talented story-teller and he regaled us daily with his newest tale. Bill was a fine Christian, but he had a serious fault – he was too soft-hearted. Because he had a ready ear for customers’ hard-luck stories, he eventually had too many people owing him too much money, and he was forced into insolvency. This was the greatest test for a Christian, for legally he had the right to write off all of his debts, but he chose not to do so. Instead, he and Anne both found employment, lived frugally for several years, and paid off every cent they owed. Bill’s actions were a sermon for everyone to see, and God has blessed him since that time, for Bill went into educational work in technical fields and did very well.

ROCKY ROADS

The church of the Lord on earth, among humans, will always have some difficult times. Pretoria had had its share. There were many faithful members, but there had been hard feelings arising from personality clashes and differences of opinion so that some were weakened and discouraged. John recognized that before we could hope to add many new members, it would be necessary to clear up the existing problems, so we began to do a great deal of visitation work. With careful preaching designed to instruct Christians on

proper behavior toward one another, we began to see some good results.

Beautiful buildings do not assure great congregations, either numerically or spiritually, but there are too many disadvantages to having no building. At the original property at Church and Hamilton Streets, one of the three houses had been used as a meeting place, one as a home for the preacher, and one for Sunday school and social functions. When the transaction for the second property was made, the congregation once again had to meet in rented halls, and before we were able to occupy our own building, we had to move three times. The last of these halls was a fairly good one across the street from the big hospital. It was large enough to accommodate the congregation, but we had to improvise places for Sunday school classes, sometimes meeting on the lawn, and even having small classes in cars. Two Afrikaans classes were set up for small children who could not understand English.

Among our faithful members were Armand Verster and his sister Marie. Their parents were also members but had problems which kept them away, and they did not encourage their children. Armand and Marie usually had no trouble being permitted to attend the morning service but were sometimes forbidden to go to the evening one. Quite often they ate Sunday dinner with us, stayed the entire afternoon, and attended the evening service before going home. Armand drove an old car and some of our boys often rode with him. One Sunday evening, as we were climbing into the two cars, Armand called out, "I have three of your boys." We looked around and saw that we had three, so off we went. When we arrived at the hall,

we realized that Gary was not in either car.

It was time for the service to begin, and John was both song leader and preacher, so George Kruger took me in his car and made record time back to the old house. We searched the grounds and checked all the rooms. No Gary. We drove to the police station just two blocks away, and when I dashed in and started to ask, "Has anyone found a . . .?" the policeman interrupted, "Yes, he's asleep here under the counter." Two black servant girls, off duty for the evening, had found him wandering down the walk, crying, and had presence of mind to take him to the police station. We tried to find out who they were so we could reward them, but they never made themselves known.

Soon after we were settled in Pretoria, we went to visit Benoni, and were greeted warmly by our old friends. No greeting was as ecstatic as the one we got from our old pet, Scamp. She was all over us. She jumped into the car through the tail gate, leaped over the middle seat and into the front seat, knocked off my glasses, and broke open a paper bag of sugar.

We were parked on Benoni's new church property in the Great North Road. After we left Benoni in 1959, the church acquired that ground — an old dairy farm with a barn, milk shed, and house standing on it. It had once been on the outskirts of Benoni, but the town was growing up all around it. By the time we saw it, some of the excess land had been sold to the town of Benoni for a school, and the brethren had plans for renovating the milk shed and making a meeting house that would seat about 100, with projected plans to make the barn over into a larger church building at some future date.

JOHN MANAPE AND THE BLACK CHURCH

In Pretoria, John was growing increasingly interested in working with the black people. When Phil Theron began preaching in Afrikaans for the white congregation once a month, John began to use that time to visit the black congregations in Atteridgeville. Brother Manape, a Sotho-speaking black man, had first been put into contact with brethren Echols, Petty, and Gardner in the early 50's by brother and sister Scott of Cape Town. These men had worked together to a great extent before we moved to Pretoria, but brother Manape was capable of doing much on his own. He had been baptized in Cape Town in 1924 by the British brother Stevens. When he moved to Pretoria, he was employed as a clerk in the Iscor (iron and steel) compound, and began to share his Bible knowledge with others. Long before he began to work full time for the church, John Manape was preaching and baptizing. In 1974, John Hardin met a Jack Sebei who had been baptized by John Manape 27 years before, in 1947. For many years, brother Manape has been supported by the Lamar Avenue church in Sweetwater, Texas.

In the 50's, brother Manape was given a motorcycle to assist him in his work, but he had an accident in which a leg was severely injured and became the source of pain ever after. As our association with him grew and deepened, we appreciated him more and more for his faith and his willingness to stand and interpret for hours at a time in spite of the pain in his leg. Brother Manape has always been an example of humble service to the Lord. With great wisdom, he trained a number of members of his congregation so that they can carry on without him. Born in

the 1890's, he was already a man of years when we began to work with him. From 1960 until we left South Africa in 1978, the two John's traveled many miles together, and preached and interpreted many sermons and Bible lessons, question-and-answer sessions, and private teaching sessions. At the time of this writing, brother Manape is unable to preach, mainly because of physical weakness. He cannot stand, and he walks with what he calls a "walking box," but he keeps a keen mind and is interested in all that goes on around him. He began to study Biblical Greek when over 70 years of age, and in a letter to me, dated in late April, 1982, he was explaining to me the Greek source of the word "evangelist."

Brother Manape's personal salary continued to come from Sweetwater, but he always taught his congregation that they must give of their means for the preaching of the gospel. By 1974, the Atteridgeville congregation was partly or wholly supporting 7 black men to preach in as many places. At the same time they contributed monthly to the publication of the "Christian Advocate." Many of the black people give "out of their deep poverty" as did the Macedonians.

WE GET A BUILDING

Mid-1960 saw a flurry of activity as final details were cleared up before starting work on the new building. Among our members was a plumber, Fred Pretorius; and two electricians, Glenn Gillespie and Bill Allen. They had presented their estimates which were much lower than non-members' estimates would have to have been. The building society arranged a loan on the Turffontein building in

Johannesburg without which it would have been impossible for Pretoria's building to be erected. The Pretoria church was also granted a loan, so for a long time we were "strapped" with the repayment of two loans. When the brethren approached John with the request that he find money from the states, he refused, saying that much of the down payment had already come from there and that if the members gave as they had been prospered, they would be well able to make the payments. John was somewhat unpopular because of his stand, and even more so when he suggested that many could cut down or quit smoking, attend fewer movies, and reduce other luxury consumption. One lady, always very outspoken, lived up to her reputation by asking, "Brother John, what are *you* giving up?" Brother John had never smoked, rarely went to a movie, used his "luxury" motor car as a "Gospel Chariot" at his own expense, and as most missionaries do, led the way in filling the contribution plate. One does not effectively answer vocal sisters with such a list, but John told her enough to satisfy her. The Bible says, "Let a man examine *himself*."

With the building work practically on our doorstep, we had a mess that lasted for months, but the work of the church went right on. We became involved for the first time in the duplication of tracts in African tribal languages, the first of which was for the Venda brethren in the northern Transvaal. John and Joe McKissick had first visited there in late 1954, and since that time the church had grown considerably, largely due to the tireless effort of Samuel Ramagwede and those he converted. Ramagwede had translated three English tracts into Venda, and we were

busy cutting stencils and running off 500 copies of each.

When you type your own language, your fingers fly over familiar letter combinations. Proof reading is easy because errors in spelling and punctuation are readily spotted, and omissions of lines or phrases are quickly noticed in a careful reading. With a foreign language, typing is one-letter-at-a-time, and proof reading is a slow, word-by-word process with special attention to spelling. We typed dummy copies and mailed them to brother Ramagwede for further proof reading, and after receiving his corrected copies, we cut the final stencils and proof read them again.

THE BUILDING TAKES SHAPE

In mid-August of 1960, the concrete foundations were “thrown,” or as Americans say, “poured,” and from the upstairs windows of the house, we could trace the floor plan of the auditorium and classroom wing. South African churches usually did not have special rooms for Sunday school, and the city authorities had to be assured before they approved the plans that we were not going to run a kindergarten or parochial school. We, on the other hand, were sorry that only seven classrooms were to be built, but shortage of money was our problem, and we had to be satisfied with plans for future additions.

Builders swarmed all over the property, and we lived first in springtime dust and later in the summer mud that surrounded us. We were assured that the work would be completed in ample time for a wedding on January 7, and that we should be able to celebrate our formal opening shortly thereafter. When the annual builders’ holiday came

along in December, we had serious doubts that the deadline would be met. All builders take leave for three weeks, and by law, only the contractor himself is allowed to do any work. Our contractor worked a good bit during those three weeks, and when work was resumed after the holiday, they really went at it hard.

The day before the wedding of Pierre duPreez and Marion Pretorius, there was much finishing yet to be done. Late that evening, the carpet people began to lay carpets in the aisles and on the platform at the front of the auditorium. All night they worked, and as the carpet was laid, our black janitor, Jacob, began to operate the new vacuum cleaner. He had never used a vacuum before, and we forgot to instruct him in the need to empty the bag. So he just went on and on until the bag was over-full, and something in the motor burned out. Then it was necessary to use brooms and brushes to clean the fuzz and debris from the carpet, and we only went to bed at 4:00 a.m. The next morning, carpenters came to put down the base boards and quarter-round over the edges of the carpet, followed by painters with wood stain. Fifteen minutes before the bride was due to enter at the front door, the painters disappeared out the back door. We'd made it! Only half of the window panes had been installed, but it was a perfect summer day and we hoped the guests would think we had sparkling clean glass.

I was so thrilled at having the new building, that during the first week or two, I wandered there daily and sat in one of the pews, just looking around, feeling happy and thankful. The building was designed to hold about 220 people and the pews had been placed far enough apart

to allow plenty of space to kneel comfortably for prayer. There was maximum window space and a ceiling high enough to give a spacious atmosphere. Best of all, we had our very own baptistry and would no longer need to find a suitable stream or drive to Johannesburg for baptisms. The building was conveniently located, and as near to the center of the city as possible so that members from all areas had reasonably easy access to it. Church Street was sometimes noisy, but usually not unbearably so.

Summer was drawing to a close, and the grounds were not landscaped, but John used the large slabs of slate which had formed a walk from the street to the front of the house to lay a new walk from the house to the building. The worst of the builders' rubble had been hauled away, but instead of doing a complete job of it, they had gone over the ground with a heavy roller which flattened it but left huge chunks of brick, concrete, squashed paint cans and other rubbish through which a lawn could never have grown. During the winter, we had work parties and cleaned the grounds thoroughly, and in the spring, grass was planted.

John and I undertook the entire portion of ground around the house and back to the driveway as our own project. Having been a graveled parking lot, it needed major work. We hired nursery people to come in with a plow and turn all of the ground over. They planted a crop of buckwheat, and when it was a foot high, plowed it under for green fertilizer. We then brought in several truckloads of compost and mixed it into the sandy, gravelly soil, and after smoothing it well, the nursery people planted runners of a variety of grass called "skaap plaas," or "sheep farm." Before long, we had such a thick stand of lawn that the

mower would stall in it.

My own project was to get beds of shrubs and perennials established so that there would be beauty with a minimum of care. With the addition of some borders of annuals, we had a lovely yard after the first couple of years. I was determined that for my last two years in Pretoria, I would have easy gardening so that I could sit down and look at it and enjoy it. Tremendous bougainvilleas climbed all the way up the two-story veranda and onto the roof, their beauty and size camouflaging the deteriorating old pillars and railings of the veranda. The builder, meanwhile, had constructed an ornamental wall around the residential portion of the property, but he must have been clean out of funds, for he did such a poor job that within months it began to fall down. Fred Pretorius and his son, Ronnie, redid the entire wall with attractive brick and wrought iron. In a neighborhood of well-established homes and gardens, we felt it to be essential to be in keeping without being pretentious.

LIFE IN THE EX-MANSION

The old house needed something to be done about it. At almost every meeting of the men of the congregation, the subject was brought up. Half the men were in favor of spending a goodly sum on major renovation while the other half thought it ought to be left alone and available funds put back for the construction of a brand new house. The upshot of the matter was that exactly nothing was done except for emergencies. Anyway, every available cent had to go on payments on the church building. The tile roof of the house began to leak in several places, the worst

causing John and me to have to move our bed. When tiles were sought for repairs, they couldn't be found. The house was so old that the type of tiles used on it had gone out of production many years before. Eventually some were found in a junk yard and the repairs made. Another time, a hard rain and windstorm came up from the west and blew in one of the kitchen windows, frame and all. It was rotten and had to be replaced.

The floors were uncarpeted and it was Jacob's job to keep them polished. They looked good, but close inspection revealed some splintering floor boards. Once, Jacob, busy spreading wax polish by hand, ran a long splinter far under a finger nail and had to go to the doctor to have it removed. Another time, the boys were having great fun with an old blanket, pulling each other across the floor at speed. After one of them caught a splinter in his sitting-down place, the blanket-pulling game was permanently discontinued.

For a while, Kent had a friend who collected snakes, and Kent also became a prospective herpetologist. He acquired an old fish tank in which he kept 16 or 17 small serpents, tightly covered, in his bedroom. He assured us that they were non-poisonous and that they would be kept enclosed. Except for a short period when he had a couple of small night adders, he kept his word, but he wasn't allowing for the presence of a little brother. Apparently Gary, aged about 5, peeked at the snakes and did not properly replace the cover. Every snake escaped into the house, and with the exception of one which Kent found in his bed, they disappeared into the cracks around the base boards and the stair posts. (That's how old the house was).

Happily I was not squeamish about animals, insects, fish, or even snakes, as long as I could be assured that they would not hurt us. I could handle white rats, hamsters, guinea pigs, birds, and even snakes. Don's racing pigeons interested me, and when he was sick, I cared for them, feeding them and cleaning the loft. His pet goose, "Loosie the Goosie," was an all-time favorite and the best "watch dog" we ever had. She stayed near the pigeon loft when she rested, and when the pigeons were let out for exercise and took off in flight, she ran across the yard with a great flapping of wings, gaining all of six inches in altitude. She had a running feud with Mac the mongrel, she pinching his nose and shaking his head from side to side, and he dashing behind her and grabbing for a tail feather or two. Mac was rather like Walt Disney's "Tramp," tough and worldly-wise. Whenever he saw one of us with the grocery basket, he vanished around the corner of the house, only to meet us at the corner store three minutes later. One day shortly before we were to leave Pretoria, some children came to tell me that Brian's dog had been struck by a car in front of the shops. When we left for the states, Goosie had to be given to friends and eventually she was moved to a farm where at last she could live out her days with other geese.

The big old house was a great place for entertaining large numbers of people. On the large grounds, we had congregational gatherings for dinners and birthday parties, and if the weather was bad, we could all go inside. The ex-mansion must have once been furnished in the grand manner, but its occupants in those days could not have enjoyed it any more than we did.

PRETORIA MEN AND THE CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

Ivan Uys became almost one of the family during his last year of high school and later when he had a job in town. Ivan admired John and wanted to assist him in all activities, so he would come to supper with us and help with whatever church work was on the go. When he turned 21, we had his birthday party at our house because his parents' home was very small. Ivan wanted to be a singer, but he was completely deaf in one ear and tone deaf in the other.

Gordon Uys, Ivan's brother, was a zealous young Christian but did not have the time to come to our house as often as Ivan did. He was willing to try almost anything, and after a while he became a promising song leader. He sometimes gave devotional talks, but in the early 60's he showed little of the potential that developed later when he became an outstanding speaker, much in demand for gospel meetings. Gordon married a Pretoria girl, Rose Smith, went to SABS, and preached first at Pietermaritzburg, then at Durban.

Soon after we moved to Pretoria, the Philip Steyn family returned from college in the U. S. to establish the church in the city of Bloemfontein. If our dark blue Chevrolet station wagon created a sensation by its very size, imagine the impact made by the fire-engine red one that Phil drove into our yard! Red was a popular color of American cars in the 60's, but in South Africa, it was startling. Phil and his brother, Conrad, who was already preaching in Cape Town, were some of Pretoria's earliest converts, so we were very proud of them. Phil and Lucy moved into Bloemfontein in late 1960 to establish the church and have remained there ever since. Phil eventually

sold the red car to a funeral home where it was painted black and used as a hearse, while the Steyn family began driving a small continental car. Phil and Lucy are ideal for Bloemfontein, since it is predominantly Afrikaans, but Phil preaches in a most unusual manner, switching back and forth between English and Afrikaans as though they were all one language. At SABS lectureships he became affectionately known as “die biskop van die Vrystaat.”

Pretoria produced some great preachers. If those men were all in the Pretoria area today, that city would indeed have the largest church in the country, or more likely, several of them, but if so, there would not be the churches in other centers where they have labored.

The Uys family produced another person of note — Shirley van der Spuy. Brian van der Spuy and Shirley had already gone to the states for education by the time we were living in Pretoria. The entire Uys family had been converted soon after the beginning of the Pretoria church, and in 1954, Brian was baptized during the time that Leonard Gray was filling in after Martelle Petty’s death. When I requested that Brian send me an account of his conversion and education, he wrote this gem: “Within a few months (of baptism), Carl McCullough came over and encouraged me to study further. He gave me 5 pounds (about 14 dollars) and then Shirley and I went to East London to work with the church there for one month, September 1957, before leaving by ship for England and New York. Votaw was in East London but was very ill at that time — he gave me another 10 pounds. The rest of the money we collected by selling a truck Janssen (Shirley’s father) built up, selling everything we had and getting a

scholarship from Freed-Hardeman College. We arrived in New York after a weary month with no more than \$10.00 in our pockets. A fat old cab driver turned down his meter and showed us the city. Eventually we wired FHC for some help and flew to Nashville, caught a bus and arrived at the college, cold and sick and wet. I had slept in my only suit two nights, and was introduced at chapel that way – no wonder people looked at me funny. We had spent three days in England on four sandwiches a day, ate well on the ship, and again had a few sandwiches for the next two days. We attended FHC October '57 to September '60, then went to David Lipscomb and graduated October '61. That year was paid for by an eye specialist who wished (to this day) to remain anonymous and the church at Granny White Pike has been behind us since that first day in October 1960 – 22 years. Last month the last of the original elders who started supporting us passed away . . .”

When the van der Spuys first returned to South Africa in 1962, they lived at Sterkfontein, then moved on to Welkom when opportunities there appeared to be far greater for the work of the church.

In the “News and Notes” of the Christian Advocate for June, 1959, we find this report: “A Pretoria couple, brother and sister (John) Fair, were visiting their daughter in Pietermaritzburg where they were contacted by brother Tex Williams. Bible classes were being conducted in the home of the daughter when the Fairs arrived for a three week holiday. During their stay they were taught and obeyed the commandments of the Lord and were added to the church. The two daughters of the Fairs were also baptized. Nola, the younger, is to move to Salisbury where

she will worship with the church that meets there. Joan will worship with the Pietermaritzburg church and Mama and Papa came back to Pretoria to worship with us. We commend brother Williams for his ability to teach through this means and pray that this family might have a long and useful life in the church of our Lord."

Later, John Fair and the husbands of the two daughters, Des Lister and Arthur Engelbrecht, all served as elders. John's nephew, Ian Fair, also converted by Tex, eventually was educated at Abilene Christian, returned and preached in Pietermaritzburg and in Benoni, worked with the Natal School of Preaching, and finally emigrated to America where he is presently head of the Bible Department at ACU. Ian always uses his influence to further the missionary efforts in South Africa. The Fair family has contributed extensively to the growth of South African churches.

THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA BECOMES A REPUBLIC

On May 31, 1961, we saw the historic event of the withdrawal of the Union of South Africa from the British Commonwealth to become the independent Republic of South Africa. It had been named "Union" in 1910 when the four provinces were united: Natal, Transvaal, Free State, and Cape Province. The provincial divisions remained, and as is the case in the United States, certain governmental responsibilities are provincial while others are national in nature. Withdrawal from the Commonwealth was no catastrophic event. Many changes had already taken place long before 1961. The Afrikaner people had moved

a long way from being "Boer," or farm people only. Motivated by the many disagreements with the British, beginning when South Africa became a pawn to be passed between Holland and Britain as far back as the late 1700's, continuing through the 1800's when the British tried to dominate the areas where they settled, and culminating in defeat by the British in the Boer War at the turn of the 20th century, Afrikaners wished for nothing more than to be rid of British domination. Political leaders arose, the Nationalist Party was formed, and Afrikaans-speaking people deliberately moved into every area of life: business, banking, higher education, and all the professions. Before 1961, the armed forces, the police force, and public transportation and communications systems were already manned chiefly by Afrikaans people. Afrikaans and English had long been the two official languages. So when the nation became an independent Republic, it was a peaceful, smooth transition.

May 31, 1961 fell on a Wednesday, the day when John put out the weekly church bulletin which he called the "Pretoria Preceptor." He was moved by the events of the day to write the editorial from which the following excerpts are quoted:

" . . . the echoes of the 21-gun salute heralding the birth of the Republic of South Africa have hardly died over the awakening city of Pretoria. Meintjies Kop, on which the Union buildings are located is a bare quarter of a mile, as the crow flies, from my upstairs window from which I was looking as the first gun fired . . . At the same time, the flag of the New Republic was raised over the Palace of Justice

on Church Square, exactly two miles from our home and the church building, witnessed . . . by many thousands who had braved the chill and wet of the night to reserve their places for the ceremonies of the morning.

“At exactly five minutes to seven, I was in front of the church building where two C. I. D. men met me to search the interior of the building, which faces the route the State President is to take for his induction ceremonies, for possible assassins or other troublemakers . . .

“And so dawns - wet as it may be at the present writing - the new day for South Africa. A great section of the people are fearful of the future while another section are jubilant in the success in attaining their ‘freedom’ from British imperialism. What is the attitude of the Christian to be? What of the future of the church in the Republic of South Africa? Are we to be fearful, or jubilant? Do we close up shop, or can we expect a fresh surge of growth spiritually and numerically?

“I know this: . . . for most of us there will be no perceptible change . . . Souls will be born into families that know not the Lord; and souls will die daily, never having heard the gospel of our Lord and Savior. Our task will be just as great as ever. Souls need saving in a Republic as well as out.

“Our members are made up of both Afrikaans and English speaking people. It is only a matter of circumstances that English is used more than Afrikaans in our religious services. It certainly has

nothing to do with politics . . . We have no room nor any sympathy for partisan political thinking in the church of our Lord. We are Christians attempting to do a Christian task of spreading peace and good will among all races of people . . .

“I call upon this church, not only in Pretoria, but in the whole of South Africa, not only not to allow political feeling to dictate their attitude toward the great work ahead, but to live, and above all, allow their attitudes to be far above any racial, political, or other lines so as to promote peace and harmony among all peoples, and to see that we do our part in spreading the truth to all sections of this new Republic of South Africa.

“An old era has closed, a new day has dawned – but the work of the Lord’s church continues as of old. **PEOPLE TODAY NEED TO BE BROUGHT BACK TO THE GOSPEL OF OLD.**

“Christians, do not fail us in this hour.”

REPUBLIC DAY was a great day of pomp and ceremony. A huge parade was held, traveling from the Prime Minister’s home, past our church building, all the way past the Union Buildings to Church Square in the center of the city. Twelve thousand military personnel lined Church Street while limousines bearing the officials drove slowly, accompanied by a mounted guard. For the parade, we had a vantage point from the covered entrance of our new church building. An unseasonal rain on that early winter day refused to let up for even a moment. The service men, standing at attention, were drenched and so were the

horses and riders.

Our small boys were more interested in the horses than in the officials in the limousines, and they could not have understood the significance of the day. Late that afternoon, we missed Gary, now 3. We found him in front of the church building, barefoot, soaked to the skin, looking hopefully for more horses. The next day he had pneumonia.

Life after the big day proceeded in the usual manner. To the average citizen, there were few obvious changes, and those that came were introduced gradually. "God Save the Queen" was no longer sung at public gatherings, but was replaced by a stirring anthem called "Die Stem van Suid Afrika," "The Voice of South Africa," sometimes sung in English, but more often in Afrikaans.

When the old British pounds, shillings, and pence were replaced by metric Rands and cents, there was general confusion. The British coinage had been cumbersome: 12 pence to the shilling, 20 shillings to the pound — school children had quite a task learning to work arithmetic problems, and John Hardin always got a headache when it was time to work out his income tax. The laboring class found the change most difficult, especially those who had little or no education. When bananas were a penny each, you got 12 for a shilling. Now suddenly, you had a new coin which replaced the shilling but was worth 10 cents and you got only 10 bananas for your coin. Many a customer counted his coins and counted his purchases, mumbling and shaking his head, certain that he had been cheated, which sometimes he had.

Later the entire metric system was adopted and then

everyone was confused. We suddenly had to buy petrol by the litre, measure distance by the kilometer, calculate speed by kilometers per hour and fuel consumption by kilometers to the litre. I had just about begun to feel at home with the system when we moved back to the U. S. where we went back to gasoline by the gallon and distance by the mile. Europe has long had the metric system. Sensibly, everything is in multiples of 10.

1961 MARCHES ON

In June we had a great gospel meeting with John Maples preaching, the attendance for the first time going over the 100 mark. In July we ventured forth into our first Holiday Bible School and had an average of about 62 children attending. We had advertised the school in a wide area around the church building and were gratified by the good response. Hank Pieterse and Rose Mary Smith took leave time from their jobs to assist in the teaching, the total staff numbering an even dozen. "Auntie Vi" Fair was in her element as she prepared cool drinks and served home-baked treats at break time.

Churches in other cities were seeing progress in one way or another. Phil Steyn had baptized 7 in Bloemfontein and was preaching via recordings over the Lorenzo Marques radio. Durban reported an attendance figure of 135 for a special event. A short-term preacher training school for black men was held in Boksburg with 30 in attendance. And Pat Boone, then at the height of his popularity, was visiting South Africa and attended services in Port Elizabeth. His coming was unannounced, and John, in the pointed style of writing for which he was well known, said in his

bulletin article, "The people who didn't come that night must have been chagrined when they found out what they missed. But you know, the King of Kings is there every Sunday, and other times too. I wonder if the same people are chagrined when they realize that?"

Phil Steyn was scheduled to hold an Afrikaans gospel meeting in Pretoria in September, so for many weeks before then, we met on Friday nights to learn the songs in the new Afrikaans books we had recently obtained. The quality of the books left much to be desired. Most of the songs were translated from English and American song books, but even I, with my half-knowledge of Afrikaans, could recognize the awkward phrasing of some of the translations. In addition to the translated songs, the book included the slow, stately, traditional Afrikaans hymns. We were handicapped by the fact that the print in the song books was very small and hard to read, but we managed, and by the time Phil came for his meeting, we could sing pretty well.

Phil's meeting was well received and well attended. His lessons drew special attention because he had some beautifully prepared flannelgraph illustrations that he used to great advantage. Anyone who had not mastered Afrikaans could follow the lessons through the flannelgraph.

In November of that year, Phil Theron Jr. began teaching an adult Bible class in Afrikaans. Although most of the people in the city were able to understand enough English to get along, there were many, including members of the church, who could learn more and participate better in discussions in their own tongue.

The Theron family had lived next door to the original church property on the corner of Church and Hamilton Streets and had been converted by Leonard Gray during his brief stay there. Phil, Sr. had suffered a severe heart attack before we moved to Pretoria and had been given a year or two to live. Often he felt bad, but he was always zealous for the Lord. All but the oldest daughter of the family were baptized, and Phil, Jr., Izak, and Martin have all done some preaching, while "Popeye" has steadfastly been a dependable worker. Phil, Jr. preached full-time for a while in Welkom and in Kempton Park, but perhaps the best work he ever did was the Afrikaans teaching and preaching in Pretoria. Phil, Sr. outlived the doctor's predictions by several years.

We began to think of 1961 as the year of the "down-and-outers." There were at least three men who came looking for help who, after some conversations and some financial assistance, friendship and fellowship, were baptized. We recognized that these were difficult people with whom to deal, but that they needed the gospel as much as anyone. We had them working around the church property, fed them, gave them clothing, and were as patient with them as possible. When John ran out of clothes to give them, Kent lent one of his jackets to a man so that he could attend church services. (In 1961, a man didn't attend services without a suit coat or jacket). None of these men remained with us for long, and the one even absconded with the jacket.

Living next door to the church building is convenient, but it has its draw-backs. We had so many come knocking on our door, asking for handouts, for money, for clothing.

Often they smelled of strong stale tobacco or of liquor, but John had a policy of helping anyone at least once. He never gave them cash, but we often fed them, and John gave away so many of his clothes that he hardly had enough left to cover his own back. If the men needed a place to sleep, he would take them to the Salvation Army hostel and pay for a bed for a night.

A typical story these transient poor would tell was that they had been working in Pietersburg, had had their case of tools stolen, had lost their work papers, and now here they stood in clothes too disreputable to wear for a job interview. Why they used the name of Pietersburg always remained a mystery because it is only a small city on the road to Rhodesia. Several years later, in teaching a ladies Bible class in Benoni, I was telling about these experiences to illustrate a lesson on the subject of benevolence. I expanded on the story about the many who claimed to have come from Pietersburg and added the comment, "I don't know what there is about Pietersburg." A little lady who was visiting the class piped up and said, "I'm from Pietersburg," but she could not explain why the transients used that city in their story.

Jesus said that the poor would always be with us, and our experiences from living next door to the church building and on a main street of the city taught us that along with the poor are the pan-handlers and leeches, and sometimes it is hard to sort them out so as to give help where it is genuinely needed.

Traffic in Church Street kept life more than interesting. It seemed pretty often that we would hear a familiar screech of brakes and tires, then we'd listen to discover if

there was to be a crash. A number of accidents, some slight, some serious, occurred within a two-block area, but only one turned out to be laughable. One Saturday afternoon, a carload of people on their way to a wedding reception had made a wide swerve, the door had swung open and the driver had tumbled out (no seat belt!). The car, driverless, went over the curb and plunged neatly between a light pole and a stop sign, coming harmlessly to a stop in a hedge. As we ran to see if we could help, the driver picked himself up from the street, brushed off his suit, climbed into his seat behind the wheel, and was quite annoyed that we were concerned about his welfare. A tray of cold meats being carried to the reception had flipped and scattered its contents all over the interior of the car.

We had lived in Pretoria only a few days when Neal went to the shop to buy himself a comb. Soon the delivery boy from the pharmacy came running to tell us that Neal had been knocked down by a bicycle. The tire marks went all the way up his khaki trouser leg, and he had a shattered baby tooth and a cut on his jaw that required stitches. Another time Gary was knocked over by a bicycle and had a knot on his head the size of half a tennis ball.

In addition to the perils of a busy street and the problems of indigent callers, we had an experience that was both pitiful and funny. Don had planted a bed of cacti and succulents near the side veranda. Late one afternoon, we watched a drunk man stagger up East Avenue which ran alongside of our house. Following him in the street was a police van. As long as the man kept walking, they would not take him in, but if he were to fall, they would lock him up. We saw him wander through the gateway toward the

house and supposed he would ask for help of some sort, but before he could get to the door, the drink overcame him and he slowly sank down into the cactus bed. Two policemen picked him up and lifted him into the back of their van, leaving us to imagine his predicament when he awoke to find numerous spines needing to be removed from an inaccessible spot.

“1962”

We broke with tradition concerning the holiday season by having a gospel meeting beginning on the last day of the year and continuing through New Year’s day and for the first week in January, 1962. Leonard Gray was our speaker and we broke all records for attendance, and had a number of conversions and a great rededication of many members. Our Neal was baptized at this time.

We were gluttons for hard work – just a week after ending the gospel meeting, we had another Vacation Bible School, having decided that since one a year had been good, two a year would be better. The January VBS was a roaring success because we had classes in both Afrikaans and English. The mother of one visiting child said, “My daughter learned more Bible this week than in all the Sunday schools she ever attended.” Being mid-summer, we had a problem with heat, but Aunt Hettie LeGassick provided cool drinks, the Pieterses donated a dozen watermelons, and Miemie Theron presented us all with ice creams. Plans were begun immediately for the July VBS and for the translation of some materials into Afrikaans. Attractive, colorful books from America were available in English only, so the Afrikaans children felt neglected until we

provided a fair substitute.

1962 was a high-point year in many ways. Attendances reflected good interest and spiritual growth. People were willing to work and cooperate in all the programs of outreach. The new building was making a good impression in the neighborhood, and the VBS's were attracting many children from all around. Later there were set-backs when several families moved away. Some became disgruntled, and there were problems in human relationships. But 1962 was a good year.

In early May we had another Afrikaans gospel meeting with Andy deKlerk preaching. Andy was well known for the excellent charts he had made for illustrating his lessons. John did a great deal of serious advertising, but in a moment of the corny humor for which he was known, he decided to have some fun with his fellow-preachers all over the country. Some months previously, a group of preachers had been enjoying some time of relaxation and had photographed each other wearing a ridiculous big cap and making funny faces. John had one of Andy, with the cap pulled down so that his ears were made to stick out. He had it processed for the duplicating machine, designed a front cover for a real-looking bulletin, and printed Andy's picture together with an invitation to come and hear him preach. A few days before mailing copies of the real advertising material, John sent the joke edition to Conrad Steyn, John Maples, and several other preaching friends. Most of them recognized the joke, but John Maples, after a chuckle or two, had second thoughts and is reported to have wondered if John was really serious in publishing that picture. All's well that ends well, and the gospel meeting

was a success.

TWELVE YEARS IN SOUTH AFRICA

May 15, 1962, marked the 12th anniversary of our entrance into South Africa, and John wrote an editorial in the bulletin, reminiscing and accounting for the progress that had been made. He estimated about 60 congregations had been formed with around 3,000 members. Exact figures are always impossible because the remote black congregations simply do not communicate and give information. By 1962, churches had property fully or partially paid for in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban, Benoni, East London, Port Elizabeth, Welkom, Harrismith, Woodstock, and Rosebank, with Pietermaritzburg on the way with a house and plot of ground for future development.

Most of the American workers were already on second and third tours of duty: Leonard Gray, John Maples, Roy Votaw, Gene Tope, Tex Williams, and ourselves. South Africans in the work now included Tommy Hartle and Conrad Steyn in Cape Town, Phil Steyn in Bloemfontein, Basil Cass in Primrose, Andy Jooste in Port Elizabeth, Ian Fair in Benoni, Johannes Potgieter in Durban, Roy Lothian assisting in Springs, Ivan Bezuidenhout in Welkom, Andy deKlerk in Port Elizabeth, and numerous black and colored brethren working on a part-time basis in addition to John Manape on full-time. Lowell Worthington was the newest arrival in Johannesburg. Alex Claassen, who had been for a short time at Doonside and then at Johannesburg before spending some time working in Rhodesia, had been killed in a motor accident.

In June of '62, John had a two evenings' discussion

with a man who represented a group who believe that Jesus only is God — that there is no Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Considerable interest was generated, but most of all, John said that he himself was edified by the great amount of study that he did in preparation, and knew better than ever why he believed in the trinity.

A VISIT BY AN ELDER

Brother C. K. Money, one of the elders of the West University church in Houston, Texas, which was contributing regularly to our support, had corresponded with John for some time. Upon John's suggestion that it would be a good idea for an elder to visit our work, brother Money became interested and began to plan a two-week trip to South Africa. John prevailed upon him to extend the visit to 3 or 4 weeks so that he would have opportunity to make a thorough study of the work being done, not only by us, but by the churches elsewhere in the country. If 1962 was the highlight year of our 5 years in Pretoria, we can safely say that the visit of Clay and Olga Money was the highlight of 1962, and probably the greatest single event of that five years.

We had met the Moneys on a visit at West University, but at that time they were just one couple among many, so we couldn't remember what they looked like. John and I stood on the balcony outside the old Jan Smuts air terminal building and studied the passengers as they deplaned. John spotted Clay, perhaps looking like a Texan. He said, "I'll bet that is brother Money!" I disagreed because the lady in question was much too young. I was looking for an elder's wife to be wrinkled and gray. We learned then

that Clay's first wife had passed away, and Olga was his second wife, several years his junior, and younger than myself.

We whisked them away as quickly as we could after they came through customs, and only later did we learn that Clay had the fright of a lifetime, sitting in the front seat, facing the oncoming traffic on the "wrong" side of the road. Before returning to Pretoria, we had to stop in Benoni for the little funeral service for the infant daughter of the Ben Schempers.

Safely in Pretoria after the perilous left-handed journey, we put our guests into the warmest of the bedrooms — they had come to South African winter from the middle of a Texas summer and would feel the cold. The room had a floor of alternate grey and yellow tiles, and according to the decorating fashion of the time, the walls were of different colors: one red, one yellow, and two grey. The curtains were predominately red and yellow — a real boys' bedroom that screamed at you as you entered. Fortunately for Clay and Olga, they didn't have to spend much time in that room for we kept them very busy, but I groaned inwardly when I discovered that Olga loved quiet colors, particularly moss green.

The Moneys had some adapting to do when they spent a month with us. They had two little girls who had been left with a grandmother. Our six big, husky, hungry sons created a beehive of activity to which they were unaccustomed, and with ten people in a house with one bathroom, we had to be cooperative. Clay and Olga were overwhelmed by the huge bowls of food that went onto the dining table every day, their contents disappearing as

if by magic before their very eyes.

Clay loved to take walks to the grounds of the Union Buildings. Although July is not the best month for displays of the massive flower gardens on its terraces, there were enough in season to make a good showing. Pretoria seldom gets much frost; it is 1,000 feet lower in altitude than Johannesburg and Benoni and often as much as 10 degrees warmer.

It was Friday, June 29 when Moneys arrived. Saturday evening we had a welcoming party for them, and Sunday was a normal Lord's day, but that was the end of the leisure. The first full week of July, we had a black preacher training school at the Pretoria building. The men met in the auditorium and the ladies in one of the class rooms. Clay taught on the subject of eldership while Olga taught on "elders' wives" and did some teacher training. On Monday and Tuesday of the second week, they visited Phil and Lucy Steyn in Bloemfontein — Phil had preached at West University before leaving the states for Africa. Thursday and Friday, Clay taught white men on eldership while Olga instructed pre-school Sunday school teachers — her specialty. Olga has written a great deal of pre-school teaching material and has tremendous artistic ability along those lines.

During the third week, we had Vacation Bible School each morning and other lecturing activities at night. Olga taught the pre-school classes with Pretoria ladies assisting and observing, and by the end of the week she was speechless with laryngitis. The fourth week, we had a gospel meeting with Dick Clark from Rhodesia doing the preaching. The Clark family stayed with us for 12 days since they

were leaving for the states immediately afterward, so for that period of time, we were 14 around the table.

Everything went smoothly with the 14 except when the Clark's little Richard drank Clorox. It was noon on Sunday. Phil Theron had borrowed our station wagon for the afternoon because his car was broken down, so we had no transportation. While the rest of us panicked about the Clorox, Adeline calmly gave her child a big glass of milk. I phoned our doctor who said he wasn't sure how dangerous Clorox could be, so he would phone the pharmacist. Meanwhile, John phoned Phil to bring the car. Phil threw down his dinner fork and knife, told Frances, "The Clark boy has been poisoned," and came with the car. The doctor phoned back to say that Clorox could be dangerous in quantity, so we had better meet him at the emergency room immediately. Examination of the little fellow showed no signs of damage and the doctor's only prescription was, "Give him a big glass of milk to drink!"

Moneys had planned to spend a couple of days in Paris on their return to America, but we persuaded them to use the time for a visit to the game reserve. We had three days of peace and relaxation in nature and saw enough wild animals to make the trip to Kruger Park really worthwhile. Clay and Olga collected a number of souvenir items and turned their little den into an African room when they got home. Ever afterward, they had a deepened understanding of the missionary work in South Africa, and at the same time they developed a love for the country itself. Best of all to us was that we all became fast friends ever after.

The effect of a visit by an American elder was good.

Elderships in South African churches were yet far in the future, but it was a step on the way to seeing the need. Olga made an impact on South African Sunday school teaching that simply cannot be measured. Her use of a wide variety of visual aids was an eye-opener to all of us. She encouraged me to carry on with teacher training, convincing me that I was able to do things I had thought impossible. When I told her that I wished she would be along at a certain future training course, she said to me simply, "You can do it." I did.

It was during the visit of the Moneys that Phil Theron, Jr. expressed an interest in full-time preaching, and soon afterward, the West University church took up his support.

Notes in the "Pretoria Preceptor" for August 4, 1962, report that churches in other centers were going ahead in various ways. Port Elizabeth had a VBS in which their attendance figures were almost identical to ours. Ian Fair, now preaching in Benoni, was holding cottage meetings by the dozens, reaching out to many new people. The Leonard Grays were leaving East London for about 8 months, and the Durban church was aiming at the figure of 200 to attend their upcoming gospel meeting. John was scheduled to hold gospel meetings in Port Elizabeth and Welkom, a youth camp was in the plans for October, and also a gospel meeting to mark the completion of Benoni's new meeting place. The van der Spuys were to return from America with Brian scheduled to hold Pretoria's November gospel meeting. Ivan Uys was to leave for Michigan Christian College within a month.

In November that year, Lowell Worthington, the

preacher in Johannesburg, was seriously ill. He had contracted a disease while in service during the Korean war. It was apparently the cause of the problem at this time, and his condition deteriorated so badly that the family members were called to the hospital, perhaps to say good-bye. Massive doses of antibiotics and thousands of prayers turned the tide and Lowell slowly recovered.

YOUTH CAMPS

To write a chronological account of all that has taken place in any one church would be boring except to the few who were there when it all happened, but there are always highlights of interest to all. One of the best things ever done by any of our brethren was the beginning of annual, and sometimes semi-annual camps for the youth. Some of the congregations were very small, and the consequent small number of young people could be discouraging and often caused the youth to look too far afield for friends and companions. If we told them they should make friends with other Christians, they could well ask, "What other Christians?" We told them that they should look for marriage partners from among the Christians, but the local churches were too small to offer much choice. Youth camps brought about lasting friendships and even romances — a real asset — plus the good Bible teaching and relaxing times enjoyed.

John Maples was the first to hold a Christian youth camp and invite young people from all over South Africa to attend. (The Bulawayo, Rhodesia, brethren had conducted successful camps in years past). In the camp atmosphere, with a number of congregations represented, the

young people could begin to feel that the churches of Christ were more than a mere handful. The first camps were at Umtentweni, on the coast south of Durban. John Maples later acquired property close to Durban and put quite a lot of work into it, trying to make it a permanent camp-site, but when the Maples left South Africa, this effort died out.

With congregations scattered as far apart as Cape Town and Johannesburg, a distance of 1,000 miles, and a number of others from 400 to 700 miles away, different solutions were tried during the coming years. If one were to try to work out the geographic center so that everyone would have the same distance to travel, he would find that there was neither a suitable camping place nor a nearby congregation to sponsor a camp. Umtentweni and other places near Durban, as well as East London, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town are on the coast, and lifeguarded swimming can usually be arranged. But it takes more than a suitable location to make a successful encampment. Welkom, for instance, has little to offer in the way of an interesting site, but that congregation sponsored a great camp by having an outstanding program of instruction, plenty of games and activities, and wonderful food prepared, by the way, by the men of the Welkom church. Someone had contributed several sheep, so there was plenty of meat!

Most of the camps for white young people have been held on the long Easter weekends because that is when the greatest number of people can get away from schools and jobs. With almost everything closed up from Thursday evening before Easter until Tuesday morning afterward, there are four full days available, though it often entails

non-stop driving for hundreds of miles in order to make the journeys. Easter in the southern hemisphere comes in autumn, and if Easter is late, it can be very chilly, especially at night. When the camp was held on the grounds of the Southern Africa Bible School out of Benoni, the nights were bitterly cold. The school building had not yet been built. Water was scarce, and temporary outdoor sanitary facilities had to be constructed. In order for everyone to be bathed before Sunday morning services, Benoni members went with their cars and fetched loads of young people, taking them to their homes to use the baths and showers. Rather than try to cook at the camp site, the Benoni ladies had organized the menus and cooked accordingly at home, taking the prepared food to a central collecting point and so to camp. Every camp bears fruit in the form of conversions and rededicated lives. It is also a time for fun, and closing night usually features a talent show in which skits and musical productions are performed, sometimes for prizes.

Of necessity, the camps just described consist entirely of white young people. Camps for black youth are described in the section on the "Big Tent."

PRETORIA'S PEOPLE

Among the Pretoria members, there was a good amount of fun and fellowship. We often had guests in our home by personal invitation, and sometimes the entire congregation used our home as well as the grounds for get-togethers. Often we would gather in someone else's home for an old-fashioned sing-song followed by tea and conversation. The Hardin family as such didn't receive many

invitations to other homes for meals, but we knew the reason – most people didn't know how in the world they would feed so many hungry boys – but we were in many homes for teas and snacks. Babs Pieterse made a specialty of heaping plates of curry sandwiches. Babs worked for a green grocer and often slipped a box of vegetables into our kitchen. One exceptionally large carrot came bearing the inscription, "Texas carrot," courtesy of Hank Pieterse. Amy Pretorius was famous for her home-baked bread, and Carl McCullough used to wait by her oven until the fragrant loaves were ready.

The Pieterse, Uys, and Pretorius families had serious health problems. Hank Pieterse had already had one foot amputated because of a circulatory condition, and the other foot gave a lot of pain. Amy Pretorius had an acute thrombosis in a leg and developed a severe heart problem, eventually having a series of pace-makers. Fred Pretorius tried hard enough to work himself to death – he never knew when to stop, and he suffered from a severe sinus condition. Eunice Uys had multiple internal problems and many operations, but she kept alive by sheer will power – her son, Gordon, said she was too stubborn to die. (Doctors admit there is more truth than fiction to the idea of willing one's self to live). Eunice was the life of whatever ward she was in, and as soon as she was able to walk after surgery, she was busy helping and cheering other patients. Janssen Uys also had a severe heart condition and he died just a day or two before we were scheduled to leave Pretoria for America in 1965.

These were all among our faithful Pretoria members in the early '60's: Hank, Amy, Eunice, Janssen – all passed

to their reward. Also among the regulars were the Theron family, the older Therons now gone. For a long time, Eunice's parents, the LeGassicks, had been among our hardest workers. "Papa Bill" had struggled all his life with a quick temper, and after he became a Christian in middle life, it would still flare up at times, but he did his best. His education had been limited because he'd had to work for a living since boyhood. When he served at the Lord's table, he loved to preach a little extra sermon about it, and we cringed a tiny bit when he added an extra syllable to the word "remembrance." When Papa Bill served the Lord's supper, we always did it in "remembrance." But Papa Bill loved the Lord and we loved Papa Bill. Aunt Hettie had worked so hard all of her life that the wrinkles had formed deeply on her sweet old face, and her hands were ravaged by work and rheumatism. She studied her Bible for hours every day and was deeply concerned that she was not bearing fruit for the Lord because people she invited to services failed to keep their promises to attend.

Aunt Hettie LeGassick's greatest victory was when she finally was able to quit smoking. She had smoked for many years, and whenever she tried to give it up, she became violently ill, but she believed that she needed to quit the habit. When she finally succeeded, she drew me to one side in the foyer of the church building, and filled with joy, she told me that she had done it – but that it wasn't really she but God who deserved the credit. What an example to all those who say they cannot quit smoking! Papa Bill and Aunt Hettie too have gone to join the hosts on the "other side."

Among those we remember in Pretoria is the shy little

girl, Rose Smith, who became Mrs. Gordon Uys. Rose was the only member of her family who had been converted, and it wasn't always easy for her to be faithful in her attendance. But you could nearly always look around and see Rose in the audience. Her most dreadful experience was when we persuaded her to teach a Vacation Bible School class. She said that she was too afraid to try, but we were short of teachers and pleaded with her to take a class, promising her that we would give her one of the easier age groups. However, there were, among the visiting children, a set of twins who needed to have been handled by an experienced teacher. We didn't know about Rose's troubles until the week was almost over, but she came very near deciding that she would never again teach any class, anywhere, any time.

As early as 1962, Gordon Uys expressed a desire to work full time for the church, but he was still very young and there was no way that he could be trained at that time. It was a few years later that Gordon became one of Southern Africa Bible School's earlier students. Rose was then still her shy self, not at all sure that she would make a good preacher's wife. Rose and Gordon both grew tremendously in the Lord. Gordon became a capable preacher, and Rose has even conducted teacher training schools for the Sunday school program.

Time and space do not allow the telling of all the interesting things that occurred in Pretoria during this time, or that developed as a result of ground-work laid in the early '60's. There were long periods when we felt that we were merely plodding along, sometimes making little obvious progress. Yet there was fruit borne. The W. N.

Shorts, who served for such a long time in Rhodesia, helped us to see our work in the right perspective. When the fighting became fierce in Zambia and much of our mission work was either hampered or stopped altogether, I asked the Shorts if they were not heartbroken to see the many years of their labor brought to a halt. They calmly answered, "No, only God knows how much good has been accomplished and what the final score will be. All we did was what we were able to do. Nobody can do more than that." Paul knew it when he said he planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase.

1963

If 1962 was a highlight year in the work, 1963 probably marks one of the greatest times for the family. After Neal was fully grown and had been away from home for some time, I asked him what he remembered as the best thing that the family ever did together. After a brief hesitation, he answered, "Our trip to Tanganyika." It's Tanzania now, but was Tanganyika then. Neal was 11, Brian 12, Don 15, and Kent 17. Dale and Gary, at ages 7 and 5, thought a trip of 35 miles was unbearably long and we were planning to travel 6,000, so we made arrangements for them to stay in Benoni with Beyers and Irene Anderson.

Very soon after moving to Pretoria, we had started a savings account and put a little into it each month, pretending we didn't have it. We knew it was the only way we would have enough money to make such a long journey. In 1961 and 1962, we had taken only a few days off now and then, not taking any real vacation — not necessarily the

best idea, for families need more frequent times together.

It was to be a rough trip, with mostly dirt and gravel roads, some of them seldom graded or repaired. Rhodesia still had some strip roads, in poorer condition than ever because they were neglected while plans were underway for wider paving to be laid. We were going to carry a heavy load, so we had some heavy-duty air lifts fitted to the rear coil springs. To protect ourselves from dust coming through the underside of the car, we had undercoating sprayed on it. Friends who were experienced with dusty road conditions told us to keep our windows closed and the front vents open for fresh air. Luckily it was winter and we didn't anticipate hot weather.

This was a vacation trip for the most part, but is recorded in some detail because it includes our stops and visits along the way with a good many of our missionaries in four countries. Our first stop was Bulawayo. We drove into the yard at Henry Ewing's house, went inside, and within 30 seconds, had song books in our hands. Henry, who loved singing as much as John did, was practicing with a group from the church, so he just added us to the number. We visited the Queens Park congregation that we had seen at its inception in 1950 – now they were in the process of enlarging their auditorium, so our hearts were gladdened by this evidence of growth.

The next day we spent at the Motopos Hills, famous for rocky out-croppings of all shapes and sizes, sometimes looking like stone building blocks piled up by the children of a giant. Cecil Rhodes is buried at the Motopos, high on top of a granite hill known as "World's View." We climbed up to that spot and also climbed a good bit to see the

bushman paintings in some of the caves. We camped by the Maleme Dam, and in the light of our camp fire we sang songs back and forth with some unseen campers on the other side of the water. It was a cold night and we didn't have enough blankets to keep us warm.

From Bulawayo we traveled on a hundred miles or so of the old strip roads and some of the new two-lane highway to Zimbabwe ruins. Kent and Don were too little to remember our first visit there in early 1950, and Brian and Neal had never been there, so we spent most of a day examining the ruins and then camped there for the night.

At Nhowe Mission, we just happened to arrive in time for their lectureship, so we had the opportunity of meeting a large number of black and white Christians from many places. There were some 650 blacks there, and numbered among the white missionaries were the Roy Palmers, Leggs, Giffords, Clayton Waller, Monika Steiniger, Henry Ewing, and Pres Higginbotham. Unfortunately, along with the good fellowship we enjoyed, we also contracted a bad variety of flu. After the lectureship, we heard that visitors from all around fell ill after they arrived at their homes. Fortunately for us, I was the only one who was affected, but my case was bad enough to suffice for all.

We'd had enough of camping in the cold, so when we got to the Inyanga Mountains, we rented a cabin. Firewood was provided for the kitchen stove and the fireplace, but it was green and gave off poor heat. The stove never got hot enough to cook our supper, so we brought in the gas camping cooker we had brought with us, and I was

able to prepare the first-quality chops and steaks that we had bought in Umtali. We remembered the terrible meat of the drought-stricken country of 1949 and were thankful that conditions had so improved that Rhodesian meats became known as some of the best.

In Salisbury, we enjoyed a brief visit with the Dick Clarks, Alan Hadfields, and Lyle Pomeroy and then went on to Kariba Dam on the Zambezi. Kariba is one of the largest dams in the world, the water backing up as much as 200 miles. This is where "Operation Noah's Ark" had rescued many wild animals stranded on newly-formed islands as the water accumulated and the lake was forming. We camped at "Pirate's Cove," and on the next day we decided that it was well-named. We paid for an hour's boat ride on the dam, and got no refund for the half-hour that the operator spent restarting the stalled motor. Leaving Kariba, we had the only mishap of the trip to the car when a speeding driver overtook us and large gravel was thrown back at us, breaking both headlamps.

The shortest route to Malawi (Nyasaland) would have been to cut across a corner of Mozambique, but we could not obtain permission to do so. We were perplexed because we merely wanted to travel through without stopping, but we were unwelcome because we were Americans and because we were not Catholic. (Mozambique was a Portuguese colony at the time). We had to go by way of the "Great East Road" from Lusaka — great in name only. It was rough and extremely dusty. And long. About 500 miles long. We swooshed along through a thick layer of fine white powder, but thanks to our undercoating and our closed windows, we stayed fairly clean. We arrived at

the Doyle Gilliams in Lilongwe so late that they had given up on us and gone to bed. The next day we enjoyed meeting with Christians, and were especially impressed to meet some folks who had walked 30 miles to be there, one of them a blind man.

The 265 miles from Lilongwe to Rumpi were, for me, most miserable. We had spent one afternoon having a picnic by the big and beautiful Lake Nyasa, and I had felt myself coming down with flu. My chest, which has always been my weak spot healthwise, was becoming congested, and at Rumpi, I stayed in bed, hoping to recuperate. The Andrew Connallys and the Gilliams and Liggins had originated the work at Rumpi, but in mid-1963, the Doug Bauer family from Rhodesia were holding the fort alone. John worked with Doug at the preacher training class one day, answering questions, and later he and the boys made a trip up the mountain to Livingstonia, an old mission of renown. We admired the Bauers for managing alone at Rumpi, especially since sister Bauer had to be full-time teacher for their own six children.

The last leg of the northward journey was another 320 miles to Chimala. The Andrew Connallys, the Jerry Mays, and the David Caskeys made up the personnel. It was a blessing for me that Jerry Mays was an M. D. for by this time I had a full-blown case of bronchitis. An injection relieved me of the asthmatic condition, but it took me most of a week to feel normal again.

It was Andrew Connally who had invited us to visit Chimala, and they and the Mays did a super job of taking care of us. Chimala had once been a tourist hotel with separate rondavels for the guests, so that is where our boys

stayed. John and I stayed at the Mays, and we had meals with both families. Whatever missionary work was going on, we got to visit it. Sister Connally taught some women's and children's classes which were good for me to observe. Years later, I taught a good many black women in "the bush," but by 1963 I had had little experience.

The nearest town to Chimala is Mbeya, more than 50 miles away, over rough gravel road. We all went there one day to see the little town and to enjoy a very good dinner at a hotel. Then at Mbeya's tiny theater, we saw Walt Disney's movie about the great frozen north – I forget the name – but there we were, close to the equator, watching Polar bears. On the way back to Chimala, Andrew was ahead with his Land Rover, carrying his family and our boys. John and I followed with the Mays in a small station wagon. We hit a rock in the road, knocking a hole in the sump, and we lost all our oil. It was one of those moonless nights, black as pitch. Few cars ever travel those roads, and of those that do, some might be driven by "unfriendly" people, so we decided to sit and wait for Andrew to miss us and return for us, rather than try to flag down some stranger. Only one or two cars passed us during that hour or two, but finally Andrew returned and towed the crippled car back to Chimala.

Brother Mays' work at that time consisted mainly of the clinic which he held in a small pre-fab. While he was busy with patients, there would be many sitting and waiting on the ground outside. The hospital was under construction, the window frames propped in place and the brick work rising to windowsill level. Word came that there was a very sick black woman who was pregnant and

was in dire need of a blood transfusion. Some black men were asked if they would give blood, but this was unheard of to them, and in great fear, they refused. Andrew and John volunteered to give blood and when it was found that John's was compatible, he contributed a pint of it while the frightened black men stood watching in awe. The woman survived, gave birth to a healthy baby, and after several years had passed, we received a letter from her, expressing her grateful thanks.

Chimala is situated on the plains, and immediately behind it there rises a mountain. On the top of the mountain was Ailsa, the Bible School, staffed by Eldred Echols, Al Horne, Tom Dockery, and Worley Reynolds. Ailsa was reached by a narrow road winding tortuously through 56 hairpin turns, some of which were so sharp that a car had to take them in two hitches, reversing a bit, and going ahead again. When we learned that Jessie Lee Caskey used to drive that road in a jeep, our estimation of that petite lady rose by several points. But if we thought that the road was bad, imagine our reaction when we were told that when our first people went there, the road did not exist and they had to climb all the way on foot!

We did not get to visit our old friends Echols and Hornes in their home surroundings because they were on a "safari for souls" on the plains. Bob Weaver and 12 young men from the states were with them, working together in a series of evangelistic efforts in a number of villages. John and the boys got to join them for a few days, but I missed it. I coughed my way through those days, hoping not to disturb the Mays too much. The boys were disappointed when the leopard trap remained empty. There

had been leopard raids, and the treacherous animals were close to the buildings on Ailsa. At such times, the people were permitted to trap the otherwise protected species.

The route we had planned for our return trip southward was to be a particular challenge: there was a 629 mile stretch with no garage or mechanic. This long road went the length of the northern portion of Northern Rhodesia, and even as early as 1963, there had been sufficient political unrest to have caused remote white settlers to sell out and move away, so small hotels and rest stops that had once existed were no longer open. Consequently we needed to make the entire stretch in one day. The map we carried had a few places marked where we could buy petrol, but even these were "iffy," so Andrew gave us a spare can of petrol to carry with us. Sister Connally fixed a large box of delicious food to last the whole day, and thus prepared, we began the trip.

When lunch time came, we found that the petrol can had leaked enough to soak into some pieces of luggage, and that the bottom layer of food in the box was so contaminated that we didn't dare to eat it. We salvaged the undamaged food, and nobody went hungry. By late afternoon, we had come to two places where we had thought we could buy petrol but found them closed. We had emptied the contents of the spare can and were watching the needle fluctuate downward toward the empty mark. Our destination, Kapiri Mposhi, was a mere spot on our map, too far away to be reached with the petrol we had, so we began to discuss how we might spend the night at the side of the long, desolate, dusty road. This was never good country, even in the rainy season. It was sparsely covered with

scraggly bush and almost no grass, supporting only a very small population of poverty-stricken black people. Night was near. Then, just as we needed to turn on the headlights, we saw a single gas pump standing just a few feet from the side of the road. There was no building in sight, no attendant, just that old-fashioned hand-operated pump. We stopped and sounded the horn. In a few moments, a man came running from among the bushes. There was petrol! When John asked the attendant to fill our tank, he said, "But sir! It's 7 shillings a gallon!" Seven shillings or seventy, we had to have it.

For the benefit of younger readers — an old-fashioned pump has a glass container into which the fluid is pumped by hand and from which the fuel runs by gravity into the car's tank. We wanted to make sure our tank was completely full, so John had the man keep on pumping. The last batch was more than needed, but once allowed to flow, the entire amount was emptied from the glass tank and we saw about a half gallon of the precious liquid run onto the sand. But now we could make it all the way to Kapiri Mposhi, and as we drove on down the road, we began to sing, "I know the Lord will find a way for me." We had just learned the song at Chimala. Now it had real meaning.

The little hotel at tiny Kapiri Mposhi was the most welcome sight we had seen on our entire journey. Weary and dirty, we arrived long after the dinner had been cleared away. We had hopes that we might persuade someone to make us some sandwiches, but the gracious hostess told us that if we would give the staff a little time, they would provide a dinner. We bathed and had some time to walk around, stretching our legs and admiring a fantastic

collection of hand-carved rosewood pieces from China. When the dinner was served, we were delighted. It would have been a fine meal anywhere, but we thought it a masterpiece to have been produced in an out-of-the-way hotel at that late hour of the night. The hotel was near a stream that trickled musically over some rocks, and after a typical country hotel breakfast the next morning, we walked by the stream for a little while before resuming the journey.

We swung west and north to Ndola and visited with the Des Ryan family and the small church that met in their home. From Ndola we went nearly to the Congo border to see the largest open-pit copper mine in Africa — perhaps in the world. The great number of ant heaps — actually termite nests — drew our attention. John would photograph the biggest one we'd ever seen, only to drive a bit farther on and find one even bigger. Since the insects work and build only on the inside, we never saw any of them. The nests are as hard as concrete, and each time we stopped for a photograph, Don would scramble to the top to have his picture taken. (15 years later, John climbed onto a similar heap in Southwest Africa so I could photograph him and send a copy to Don). Scores of these termite heaps had been partially dynamited out of the way for the construction of the road and to make way for the power lines to be erected.

Back at Lusaka, we visited again with the Pierces, the Joe Lyons, and Ed Crookshank. Joe worked with a small white congregation and a black group in the city while Ed worked with the Pierces in a preacher training school.

From Lusaka, we drove to Choma, a tiny town,

where the Stan Maidens were living. They had been converted in Bulawayo, and as Stan was an engine driver on the railway, they had been transferred to Choma. Our boys were excited about seeing him there and having a chance to climb onto the engine. We drove into Choma in a cloud of dust, with all of our clothes unbelievably dirty. We never forgot the great act of hospitality shown to us by the Maidens when they excused their houseboy from his usual tasks for part of a day so that he could do our washing. We still had a long way to go and couldn't have stood ourselves and our dirty clothes that long. (The Maidens later emigrated to America, Stan studied for a while, preached for a congregation in Washington, D. C. and later moved to Texas).

We made a stop at Namwianga Mission where the staff now consisted of Leonard Bailey, brother Bell, Stan Shewmaker, Jack Crissop, and brother Balcher and their families, and Betty Bailey (not related to Leonard). At Livingstone we visited the Phil Rabecks and Lester Brittells and then took the boys for a real good look at Victoria Falls. It was John's and my third visit to the falls: the first time there was too little water, the second time there was too much, and this time there was just the right amount to allow us to take good pictures and to see everything from one end to the other. On the Northern Rhodesia side we bought an end table carved in the shape of an elephant, a very heavy piece that loaded the station wagon more heavily than before, but it was worth it for it has been a conversation piece in our home ever since.

By this time we were approaching the final days of our long vacation and had to budget our time. We went

to the Wankie Game Reserve, hoping to spend a night at the camp, but there were no reservations available. Wankie is much smaller than Kruger Park, so we decided to take the day to drive through the reserve and on down to Bulawayo. During six hours of viewing in Wankie, we saw all the animals we cared to see, including lions lying nearly within petting distance of the road, and a large herd of some 60 elephants, one of which lumbered onto the road near us and flapped his huge ears as though he was becoming irritated. The boys chorused, "Daddy, Daddy, move the car, let's get going." Daddy was quite unflappable, but even he decided it would be wise to move.

Back home from our 5 week safari, we had to come down out of the clouds and get back to work. The boys had to make up school work, John had to get some things restarted that had lagged during our absence, and I had to get the household back to normal. Dale and Gary had enjoyed their stay with the Andersons, but it was good for us all to be back home again.

DOWN TO EARTH

An excerpt from a letter John wrote to his mother is the best way to summarize the events that followed immediately upon our return to Pretoria . . . "After our return, we had exactly one week in which to prepare for a gospel meeting (Ian Fair preaching). Then after the meeting I had many classes to hold for prospects (of which we baptized three). That was one of my busiest times — holding classes, calling on delinquent members, and trying to build up the church attendance which had fallen way down while we were gone. Then came the trip to Sibasa the latter part of

September which Gene Tope and I made and which required a lot of preparation (trips, for instance, to the Bantu Affairs Department to get permission to enter the Native Reserve area). Then it was time for the Cape Town meeting, 13 - 20 October. I left on Bessie's birthday and was supposed to return on mine, but didn't make it. Immediately on my return from Cape Town I had to prepare for two lectures on the Benoni lectureship ("Godhead" and the "Jesus-Only Doctrine"). That ended last Saturday, and on Sunday our last 1963 gospel meeting began with Lowell Worthington preaching. Intersperse all that with the usual run-of-the-mill activities and that has left little time for anything else. I took a whole sheaf of correspondence with me to Cape Town, hoping I would get to catch up, but Conrad Steyn kept me busy. A man attempted committing suicide for about the eighth time, and what with that, and a couple of funerals in the congregation, and all the other visiting one does in such a meeting kept me from answering a single letter."

John always emphasized that one of the best ways to reach people with the gospel is to talk with them at work. It was about the middle of 1963, just before we went on the Tanganyika trip, that Fred Pretorius brought to church a young man who worked with him at the steel plant. He was a personable man and star pitcher for the Northern Transvaal baseball team, Stoffel Botha. Stoffel and his wife, Corrie, had been visited by Jehovah's Witnesses and had studied with them once or twice, so Fred suggested that they should hear what John Hardin had to say. It was arranged that John would be present the next time the Witnesses were to hold a class in the Botha home.

Fred and John pointed out to the Bothas that the JW's main theme was their belief that "the meek shall inherit the earth," and that there would be a literal 144,000 in heaven, which number is already filled. It was also pointed out that JW's always want to dominate a discussion – they must do the teaching, not the listening. It was decided that Stoffel would pointedly ask them a leading question and give them a chance to see what they would say. He asked them, "Precisely what must I do to be saved?" This was so far off the track from the usual doctrines which they choose to promulgate that they were completely at a loss for words. After considerable humming and hawing, they made excuse to leave, saying that they would have to study the matter further. When Corrie and Stoffel saw that those men did not have the answer to a simple scriptural question, they decided that they would study no more with Jehovah's Witnesses but would hear more about what we had to say on the subject of the church of the Lord.

It was about the middle of August, still chilly winter, when John and I had a study in the Botha home, and before long, we came to the subject of baptism. It was a Monday or Tuesday night, and Stoffel said he was ready to be baptized the next Sunday. John said, "We have a mid-week service so why not be baptized then instead of waiting until Sunday?" The couple agreed. Then John said, "If you are ready to be baptized then, are you not ready right now?" With joy they said, "Yes, why not?" Their little son Chris was sound asleep, so they bundled him up in a blanket and we all went to the church building where, in the same hour of the night, Stoffel and Corrie were baptized. The air was cold and the water was colder, but

everyones' hearts were warmed by the events of the evening.

“GOVERNMENT RECOGNITION” DONE AWAY

The government rulings concerning church recognition and their subsequent removal of those rulings are mentioned elsewhere, but to fix the event chronologically, we do so at this point. This was a very important milestone in the history of our work, for now we would be able to have marriage officers and we could be of assistance to the black churches in obtaining building sites and in other legal matters.

THIS AND THAT IN '63

1963 ended with a time of mixed feelings about our work as well as our family. We never regretted having made the Tanganyika trip, but it had turned out to be most expensive, for we were a long time paying on repairs to the Chev. After it was repaired, we swapped cars for a much smaller, and hopefully, more economical car, but it was a bad trade. A second trade for a VW was all right financially, but we had to depend on the fact that we had no plans to go on any more family trips for a long time – we could barely squeeze into it even with Dale and Gary in the “dog box” at the back. We lived next door to the church building, and that was mostly where we went as a family.

I'd fired the servant girl – she was helping herself to our belongings – and tried to do the housework myself to save a bit of money. That proved to be false economy, for that huge old house was too much, even with some help from the boys who also had to help in the big yard. I soon hired a new girl.

Don had to have surgery on his nose to correct a deviated septum, and recurring attacks of asthma and bronchitis kept several of us returning frequently to doctor and pharmacy, all of which took huge bites from our budget. The Pretoria congregation had financial problems as well. Several families had moved to other cities, and as John wrote in a report to our elders in the U. S., "Some are not giving at all, and others not as they should, and with such a small group and such a large debt, it is becoming alarming."

Kent was 18 that December, and all ready to go for his driver's license. He passed the driver's test the first time, and then it was for us to decide whether or not this was an asset. He helped a good bit with driving for the church, but he also enjoyed his new-found freedom to go places via car. Any parent who has seen teenagers through their first driving months knows how we felt.

Don had been jarred upon receipt of his end-of-year report card, finding out that you can't put off concentrated study until a few days before exams and expect high grades, but he was promoted. Brian was about to enter high school and Neal his last year of primary. Dale did well in grade 2, and Gary was about to start school. That meant we would have all six boys in school at once. Six clean shirts every day! Neal entered the new school year with the goal of being everything Brian had been the year before: top of the class, captain of sports teams, prefect, the lot! (p.s. He made it!)

1964

Not long after the beginning of the school year, Kent had to have a tonsillectomy. Once over that week of

recuperation, he was back full swing into the school work with the added excitement of making plans for going to the U. S. for college. The prospect of the first fledgeling leaving the nest was devastating to me — there would be five more to go, but this was the beginning of the exodus. Kent, typical of the eager youth stepping out on his own, was on cloud 9 for many weeks. June 25 was the date for his flight, and it came too soon for his dad and me. I had helped with packing his things and had watered them all thoroughly with many tears — tears which Kent could not understand. Parents know they cannot keep their children forever, but they are never quite prepared for the day of departure.

Kent had a great trip planned, and it all came about quite smoothly. His cut-rate Trek Airways prop plane took him to Luxembourg from which he traveled by train to Italy. There he bought a Vespa scooter from the factory (import permits had all been arranged before he left South Africa), and he spent about three weeks touring in several countries. He had some interesting experiences despite a shoestring budget, and he visited several of our missionaries on the way. His tour ended by crossing the channel to England, and after a couple of days there, he put his scooter onto the “Queen Mary,” on which the family had already made two crossings, and sailed to New York. From there to Minnesota he rode the Vespa and visited my mother for a few days. She had recently remarried after more than 20 years of widowhood. Paul Gunther worked as a railway dispatcher and Kent enjoyed spending time with him in the dispatch office. We were all rather amused by mother’s reaction to Kent’s trip. After having toured Europe and

England on his Vespa, and then riding it from New York City, half-way across the continent of America, she had him park the scooter in her garage and leave it there – she said it was too dangerous to drive it around Willmar (population about 12,000). From Willmar, Kent continued his trip by going south to Ponca City to visit his other grandmother. Time ran out then, and he finally headed for Nashville, Tennessee.

Kent attended David Lipscomb College, and for the first year he roomed with the family of Howard Justiss. Howard and John had become good friends during basic training at Camp Grant, Illinois, in 1941, and the Justiss's felt that their giving Kent a place to stay would be a good way to help a missionary family. They also helped him obtain a good job at a meat packing plant to help him pay his college expenses.

John was working very hard. A typical Sunday was to have the morning service and Bible Study, visit the prison at 2:00 p. m. (we had a member from the Reef area in the condemned cells and John was his spiritual advisor), and perhaps travel to a service of black Christians, return for a teenage class at 5:45, and preach again for the 7:00 p. m. service. But we had reached another "low" time. With several families having moved away, our numbers had shrunk. We had some who were dragging their feet. Perhaps some felt that since they had a full-time man to do the church work, they did not have to do much themselves. Let the preacher make the contacts, teach the cottage classes, etc., etc.

One couple who had been members at Pretoria for some 10 years had some ideas that were, to say the least,

different. Every once in a while, John had to spend a couple of hours with them, trying to show them Bible teachings on various subjects, or sometimes just talking them out of some peculiar thinking that had beset them. Now they were so certain that the prisoner mentioned above could never receive forgiveness for his wrong. "When you have murdered someone, you can never make it right," they insisted, "because you cannot bring the victim back to life, and unless you make restitution for your sins, there is no forgiveness." What they were saying was that they thought it a waste of John's time for him to visit the prison and try to give spiritual assistance to the man.

The same lady approached me in the foyer one day and nearly pinned me to the wall with her pointed finger. John had been speaking to the congregation about the many things they could do to build the church: teaching, door-knocking, inviting people, visiting the sick and spiritually weak, etc. As it happened, I was teaching four classes a week and often accompanied John on his visits and classes, sometimes to the point of neglecting my own family. The lady spoke rapidly and in a crescendo, shaking her finger at me, coming closer and closer to my face. I could get no word in edgewise even if I had been able to gain composure enough to think. What she said all boils down to this: "Your husband is telling us all what we should be doing. Well, then what are *you* doing?" By the tone of her voice and her expressions and gestures, she could just as well have added, "You lazy, good-for-nothing thing." I don't remember what I answered, if anything. I was floored. I think I just walked away as soon as I could get out from between her finger and the wall. It was the first and only

time anyone ever spoke to me that way. Maybe I needed what she said. It took some soul-searching and some long talks with John to help me understand what I was feeling and what I should feel.

THE MISSIONARY'S WIFE

Sometimes, preachers are “put on pedestals” by their church members, but sometimes they are just “put on the spot.” Everyone looks to the preacher to live an exemplary life, to be at beck and call, to preach beautiful sermons, to visit, to comfort the sick and bereaved, to teach classes, to give freely of his time, his life, his money, his home, his car — and never be tired or discouraged. The preacher’s wife is brought into the scene in much the same way, and in the two largest denominational churches in South Africa, it is expected of the minister’s wife that she take the lead in the activities of all the women’s groups in the congregation, that she entertain beautifully and generously, and be a leader in the social activities of the church. It could very well be, explained John, that this background has made it harder for wives of our missionaries in South Africa to fit the mold they are expected to fill.

I have always been grateful to John for the level-headed way in which he spoke to me about my problem. He told me that there are certain things mentioned in the Bible which are the duties and responsibilities of *all* Christian women. Although the wife of a minister should be in a better position to fulfill these scriptural duties, she is in reality no more called upon by God to perform them than any other lady in the church. He then went on to remind me that the churches in America who sponsored us to work

in South Africa had hired *him*, that he was the head of our family, and if I was doing those things which he deemed to be sufficient in the way of a Christian woman's service to God, that was all that anyone should expect. He then pointed out what I already knew about the lady of the pointed finger — she herself did very little in a positive way, and we needed to pray that she would get busy with the work that *she* needed to be doing.

ECHOLS AND HORNE TO SOUTH AFRICA

In July of 1964, the Echols and Horne families moved to South Africa from Tanganyika. Political problems of that country had accelerated, and with children coming into school age, it was a propitious move from every standpoint. They had obtained property for a preacher training school in Swaziland, and in a discussion described elsewhere in this book, it was decided that they should rather start a training school in Benoni.

From a personal standpoint, we were happy to have Echols and Hornes move into our area. We'd known Eldred since we began working together in 1949. He had married Jane Holland in 1959 and had one daughter, Cherry, born in Tanganyika. Al Horne was our old friend from Port Elizabeth — 15 years old when we first met him. He'd married Donna Whittaker while attending ACC in Abilene, Texas. Lisa was born in Texas and Lynda in Tanganyika. The two families had worked together in Tanganyika for several years.

The Hornes had moved household goods to Benoni in a truck belonging to the mission in Tanganyika, so Al had to make the long trip back, get his jeep from the repair shop

in Mbeya, and return to Benoni. Al asked Don to go along for company. It was school holidays, so off they went. When they did not return at the expected time, we began to feel uneasy. When several days passed, we were really concerned because there had been political unrest and violence in the northern part of Northern Rhodesia. A fanatical religious leader named Alice Lenshina convinced her followers that bullets could not kill them as long as they carried the "tickets" she had given them, or if by chance they should lose their lives, these tickets would get them straight to heaven. Believing a promise like that, they were fearless and reckless, and they had caused some deaths and had burned a good many huts and other property. Phone calls to Tanganyika were next to impossible, so we sent telegrams to which we had to wait some days for answers. Donna Horne was expecting their third child to be born any day, so she was particularly anxious.

The main reason for the delay was that the mechanics failed to keep their promise to have the jeep ready. Each day, Al and Don went into town, expecting to be able to leave, and each day it was the same — jeep not ready. When at last they were on the way, they were stopped at the border and told that they would have to stay overnight as it was too dangerous to drive at night in Lenshina's territory. Soldiers were everywhere, and when the travelers were shown to some guest rooms, they were told that there were trenches prepared for everyone's safety. If they should hear screaming and commotion, they were to head straight for the trenches. They shared a bedroom, and as they told us later, each one turned and tossed and heard the other doing the same. Suddenly there was a horrible

screech and the two leaped out of their beds, adrenalin surging through their systems, ready for flight to the trenches. Then they discovered that the screech had come from the short-wave radio of the man in the adjoining room. The remainder of the night was quiet, but sleep had vanished. The long trip to Benoni was uneventful, and Al arrived home before Stacey was born.

1964 was more than half gone, and we were aware that our departure time of May 1965 was rapidly drawing near. John's mother celebrated her 82nd birthday. She had been a widow for 10 years, and was asking John to come and live closer to her in her declining time of life. We had some idea of what she had sacrificed by having her son and her grandchildren so far away, so John decided to fulfill her desires.

With such plans in the offing, we remembered that our youngest boys had not been privileged to enjoy the wild animals of Kruger Park. September is the best time to see game. We had to take the boys out of school, but Kruger Park is educational too, so we took Neal, Dale, and Gary with us for a few days. We felt confident that Don and Brian would be just fine, going to school and getting some of their own meals, so we relaxed and began to enjoy the trip. We saw a lot of game and felt it special to see a herd of 3,000 buffalo cross the road not far ahead of the car. However, Gary began to run a fever, and without doctors in Kruger Park, all I could do was give him aspirins. By the time we arrived home, he had a full-fledged case of tonsillitis.

SIX STEPS FROM DEATH

We arrived back in Pretoria to find that there had been some upset in the home, that a rather serious problem had developed in the church, and worst of all, we got the news that the prisoner whom John had been working with was to be hanged in three days. The man's plea of temporary insanity had been turned down, and now "justice" was to be done. He had never denied his guilt. He expressed to John that he had repented of his wrong. God is the judge. It was a terrible ordeal for John to have to be there until a few seconds before the hanging took place behind closed doors, and to have to return a few hours later and conduct the funeral.

John had had only a few experiences with prison inmates, particularly because in South Africa, regulations permitted a minister to work only with prisoners of his own church or denomination. This, therefore, was one of the deepest experiences of his entire ministry. I quote from the article he wrote afterward:

"The full moon hung at a forty-five degree angle in the pre-dawn of the western sky. Earlier in the evening it could have been called a lovers' moon, but on this occasion such thoughts were furthest from my mind. Mine was a mission concerned with death. Church Street, reputed to be the longest straight street in the world, at this early hour of 4:40, was lined with the cars of the sleeping flat tenants, only the occasional early riser's lights meeting my own as I drove slowly, not relishing in the least the arrival of the end of the journey. For I was going to spend one-half

hour with a man — his last half hour on earth — doomed to die at 5:30 sharp.

“The sleepless hours of two nights — the two nights since I had learned the hour of his scheduled death — had preceded this slow journey toward Church Square. Obediently I observed every red light, trying to delay the inevitable, turned up Paul Kruger Street to Visagie, right to Potgieter, left under the railway overpass, past the awaiting-trial prison and into the Prisons Department grounds. Even the slow trip had gotten me there some ten minutes before five. Should I go on up? Yes. The prayers of innumerable saints who knew of mine, as well as his ordeal, began to be effective. Courage to face a most distasteful — and yet most humbling and rewarding — experience flowed through my being. Thank God for those righteous men whose effectual fervent prayers availeth much in that dark hour.

“Not only in me. He met me at the cell door with a smile on his face . . . He showed me the hand-written programme he desired to follow in the few minutes allotted us. First the song, ‘We are Going Down the Valley.’ Then, in more cheerful vein — showing, I thought, his faith in his own spiritual condition — ‘In the Morning of Joy!’ He wanted to read the 23rd Psalm, but the single dim light in the high ceiling did not shed enough light for him to see, so I read it for him. I led in a prayer, and then I asked if we could sing ‘When Peace Like a River.’ A smile

lit his face – he welcomed it. As usual, I started on the melody and he the bass – as we had done dozens of songs during the months I had been visiting him – but midway through the first stanza he switched over to the melody. I thought I understood, so I immediately started on the bass part. Through a strange chance the remembrance flitted through my mind of the occasion when my own father lay dying, having lost his right mind through his physical infirmities, and we had sung for a good hour the hymns of past years – he and I switched back and forth from melody to bass, from bass to melody. But now I was in a death cell singing with one condemned . . . As his voice came forth . . . sweet and clear, I thought, ‘He *does* believe that it is well with his soul!’

“That song finished, he himself led in prayer in which he thanked God for all that the Christians over the land had done for him and asked his final forgiveness for sin in his life. We then sang, ‘Be With Me, Lord’ to conclude the service. He said, ‘John, I’m nervous, but I’m not afraid.’ He had time to express his appreciation for what I had been able to do for him, drink a cup of coffee, and then ‘they’ were at the door . . . A shake of the hands and a final farewell on this side, a smile and a handshake for each of the warders, then his hands handcuffed behind him and the cloth placed on his face. I, *six paces from that door*, watched as they turned toward

it and began to open it. I turned away. My job was done. I could do no more. Outside the cell in the steel-grated concourse, I bowed my head for I knew that he was already dead — three seconds, I had been told, once the door in the wall was shut. Mercifully swift, at least.

“Stepping to the office, where, forty minutes before, I had ‘signed in’ and must now ‘sign out’ for the last time, I found an elderly African minister of a denomination who had come on just such an errand for one of his flock as I had. He asked, ‘Did your man admit his guilt?’ I said, ‘Oh yes’ . . . He said, ‘My man still maintained his innocence. It is a very hard case.’ Then I realized how easy ‘my man’ had made it for me by his faith and courage up until the very end . . .

“. . . ‘my man’ took upon himself the full responsibility. But he also told me, ‘John, I have learned the lesson of love. Love for God and for fellow man. Had I learned that lesson a long time ago, I would not now find myself where I am’.”

There have been those who have expressed serious doubts as to the sincerity of the man who so died. There was the couple who doubted that God could forgive the sin of murder. There were some who asked us, “What do *you* think has happened to this man?” Our only answer then and now is from the Bible, one of the best scriptures being II Timothy 4:1 which speaks of Christ Jesus

being the judge of the living and the dead, and 4:8 which speaks of God the *righteous* judge.

As for the living after the time of this tragic incident, we can remark that it was a time of tremendous spiritual growth for John, a time of drawing very near to the Lord for all of us who had any connection with the prisoner, a time to return thanks to God for His love and mercy which had kept others of us from slipping into lives of sin which could very well have led us down the same paths, had we been exposed to similar situations in our own lives.

UPS AND DOWNS

Every congregation will have a certain number of people who fall away from the faith, and even the occasional one who gets into serious trouble, either with the law or in personal relationships. Often a missionary would rather leave out the sad cases when reporting on his work. He would rather wipe them out from his own memory, and he would rather send only the good news to those who support him. Yet the stories are incomplete if the "failures," at least a few of them, are not recorded. If we dwell on failures, we may be accused of negative thinking, but we need to mention a few instances to illustrate the reasons why churches fail to grow.

Due to a chain of circumstances having to do with people moving from one city to another, we had several families move into the church in Pretoria. Some of them had become backsliders at other places and had come to us for a new beginning. Of these, some had never been what we ordinarily call strong members. One family had been in a Spiritualist movement, were with us for a while,

then returned to the Spiritualists. Several families who became members of the church of Christ retained very strong ties with the Afrikaans community and found it difficult to be with an "English church," their national ties being stronger than their faith. For a while they were with us, then returned to where they had been before.

There was a lady who had been a member of the Seventh-Day Adventists who became convinced that the Sabbath was not meant to be kept in New Testament times. She was baptized in cold water on a shivery winter night, and soon afterward, she brought several of her married children, of whom a few were also baptized. When we learned that one of the daughters was about to be divorced, John pleaded with the mother to use her influence to discourage it. When the lady asked why, he explained to her the Bible teaching on the subject. The upshot of the matter was that she herself had been divorced and remarried as had several of her children. She had even encouraged some of them in their divorce suits. In great haste, they all departed from the church without hearing any more in the matter.

Then there is the sad story of the two young brothers from a broken home. They were baptized as a result of teaching received at a youth camp. We tried to help them through many ups and downs, being alternately encouraged and discouraged by their attitudes and activities. To make a long story short, both of them left the church, one to live just an average sort of life, the other to become involved in a series of escapades ending in his imprisonment for bank robbery. I taught these boys in Sunday School, and it gives me no pleasure to report

their story. Where did we miss it? We can only pray that there will yet be a happy ending to the tale.

There are always some who drift in and out of various churches, trying them out but never finding satisfaction. Some of these came our way. "We have been looking everywhere for the right church, and now we think we have found it," they would say. Sometimes there was the genuine seeker after truth, but more often, these people proved to be disgruntled individuals who would never be happy anywhere, perhaps because, instead of seeking the truth and following it, they were seeking a church that taught what they liked to believe. Many long hours were spent with some of these folks to sort out the seekers from the drifters and discontent.

Before the end of 1964, however, John was able to write to his family that there had been an encouraging upturn in the work in Pretoria. Several backsliders had returned to the fold. Our spirits were boosted, too, by the plans for starting the Southern Africa Bible School in Benoni. Classes were to begin in early 1965. More about SABS in another chapter.

1965 was quickly approaching with plans for another Vacation Bible School, to be the last one we would work with in Pretoria. Kent was well established in David Lipscomb College, Don was ready for his last year of high school. That January, John and I made a trip to Vendale where I had my first experience in teaching rural black women and children. The children's class was held under a large mango tree, and being the height of the mango season, the ripe fruit would occasionally fall, causing a rustle of leaves, and the children would look up to see

the building; Church Street was becoming more heavily traveled and noisy; and the old house was deteriorating so rapidly as to become a liability. All things considered, it was decided to sell that property and move to another part of the city. Property zoned for church buildings was difficult to obtain, but eventually a plot was secured in the new suburb of Ashleigh Gardens. A modest building was erected, and the members pitched in and did much of the finishing work themselves.

The least desirable feature of the Ashleigh Gardens building is its location, far out to one side of the city. Many members have to travel great distances to attend the services. At about the same time that the building was completed, the world oil crisis hit, petrol became scarce, and prices sky-rocketed. It became a test of the faith of some, and a strain on their pocketbooks, to travel several times a week to partake in church activities. If there had been a home for the preacher in the immediate area, or if there had been some members able to move into that suburb to create a local nucleus, the task might have been easier, but it has been next to impossible to reach out to the residents in the vicinity. The building was opened on March 20, 1971, ten years after the opening of the first one in Church Street.

Pretoria lost two of its old soldiers of the cross within two days of each other. Hank Pieterse, who had had one foot amputated before 1960, was further stricken with the circulatory disease. He was buried with full military honors at Voortrekkerhoogte on April 29, 1970. He was a sergeant in the permanent forces. On May 1, we laid to rest "Papa Bill" LeGassick. Underneath Papa

Bill's brusque and forthright manner was a loving and sincere man, living still in the devoted lives of his faithful grandchildren: Shirley van der Spuy, Gordon Uys, and Hettie Gerber and their children.

Bob and Shirley Cannon were loving, caring people whose fellowship we valued highly. Before they came to South Africa from the Los Angeles area, they had been friends with Pat and Shirley Boone. The Boone family's move away from the church of Christ to the charismatic movement is well known all over the western world. After the Cannons left South Africa in 1971, they followed in the Boones' footsteps and are no longer in our fellowship.

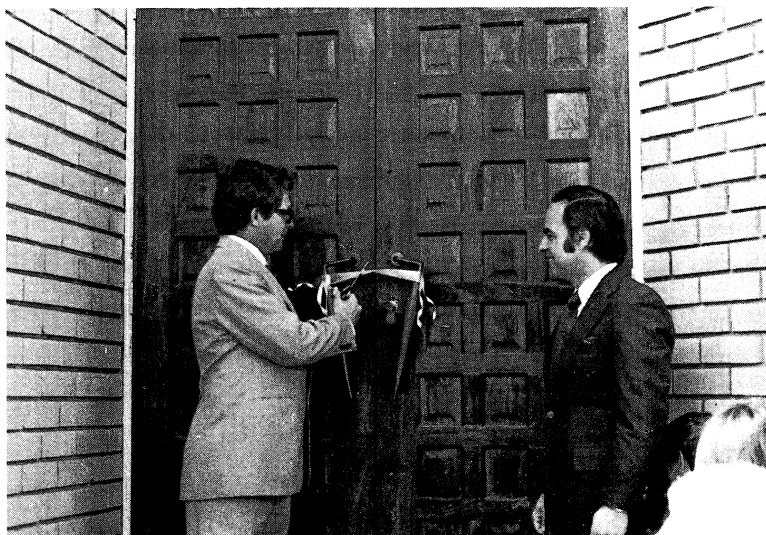
Two SABS students, Tony Sofianos and Johan Smulders, assisted in Pretoria for a while. When Tony dropped out of that work, Johan continued until his graduation at the end of 1972. Clive Biggs preached from July 1972 to July 1973, and Roy Lothian from January 1975 to March 1976. The men of the congregation did their best to fill the gaps between these dates. In April, 1976, Phil Theron began to carry the main burden of preaching, and in July of that year, John Hardin had the joy of helping to ordain three elders: Nic Dekker, Dennis Marran, and Fred Pretorius. After about a year, Nic was transferred to another city, Dennis resigned, and Fred had to step down in recognition of the Biblical principle of plurality of elders.

Among the many men who filled the pulpit from time to time were Izak Theron, Jerry Hogg, Fred Bergh, Vince Hunt, Eric Bressler, and Hendrik Botes, and also assisting when needed were Fred Pretorius, Andrew Venter, Danny Sullivan, Koos van Staden, and perhaps some others

whom we have overlooked. Eric Bressler was at one time considered as a permanent man, but he found it necessary to move to Cape Town for the sake of his daughter who needed to attend a special school.

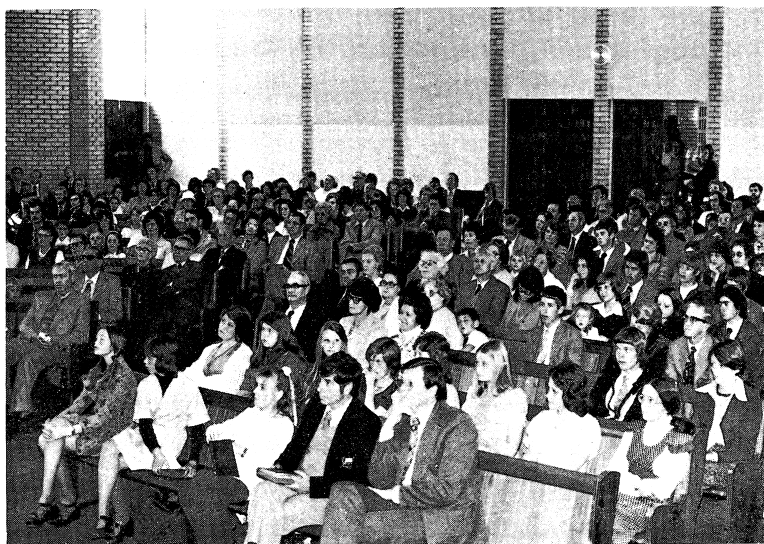
In October, 1981, Jerry D'Alton began to work with the Pretoria congregation on a part-time basis, and from the first of August, 1983, he became their regular man in the pulpit. The population of Pretoria is predominantly Afrikaans, so it is good to have fully bilingual preachers. Brother D'Alton is capable of preaching in either English or Afrikaans. As it was explained to me in a letter from Dinky Pretorius, there was a family from England that "just happened" to start visiting the services, so Jerry preached mostly in English for a while, and the man was baptized. Then an Afrikaans family "just happened" to start attending services, so Jerry's main preaching for a while was in Afrikaans. Most of the Pretoria members are able to understand sermons in either language, but it is an asset for a preacher to be able to explain the scriptures in whatever language is best understood.

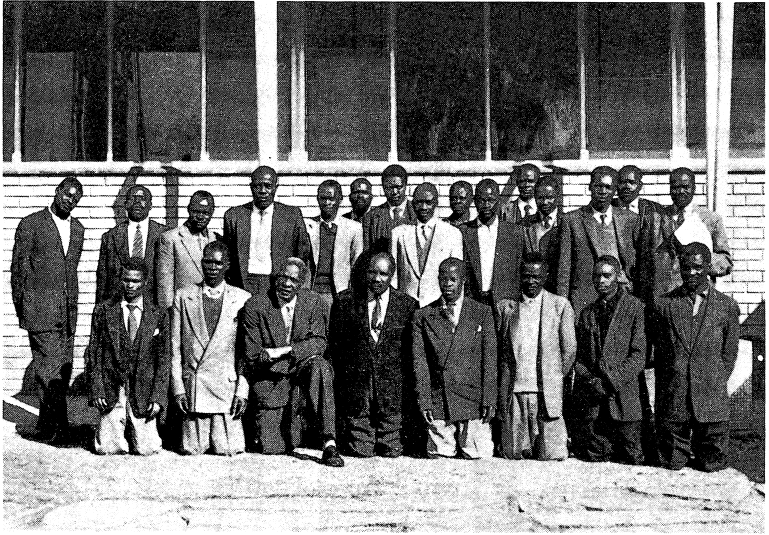
Having lived and labored in Pretoria for five years, I am happy to hear and be able to report that Jerry D'Alton has been putting the members of the church to work. After all the ups and downs that Pretoria has experienced, perhaps they can take heart from the story in Nehemiah where the wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt against great odds "because the people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6).



24. Formal opening of the 600-seat auditorium of the Benoni church, Arthur Engelbrecht cutting the ribbon while Al Horne looks on.

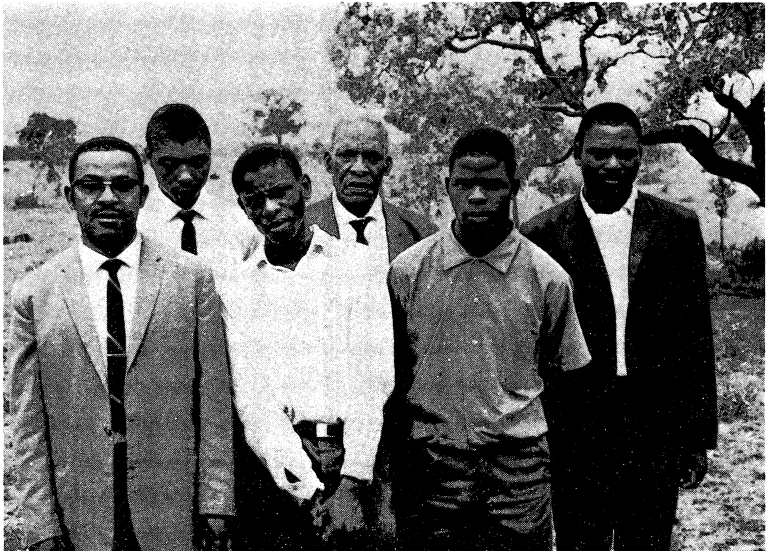
25. Congregation attending the opening service of the new Benoni building.

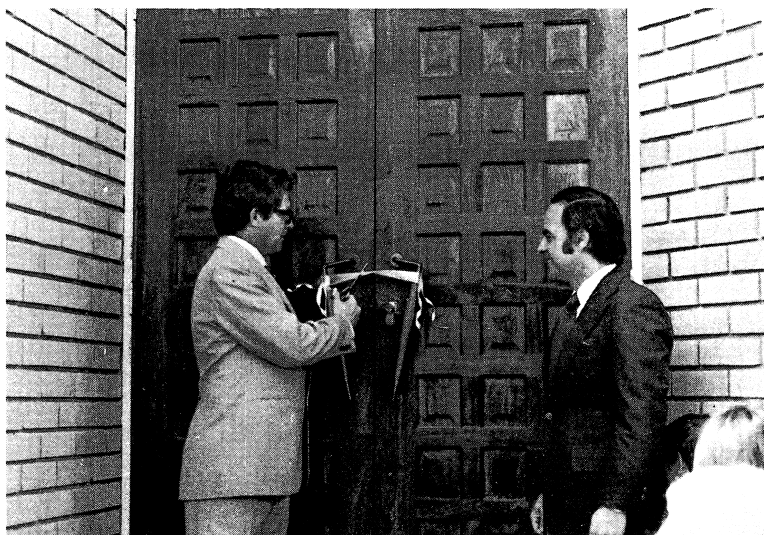




28. Preacher training for black church workers of the Reef area, short course, 1962.

29. A group of workers at an encampment for black teenagers. John Manape, preacher for the black church in Atteridgeville, Pretoria, is at center, rear. Bro. Manape began his full-time work in 1951, and died at about 100 years of age in 1984.

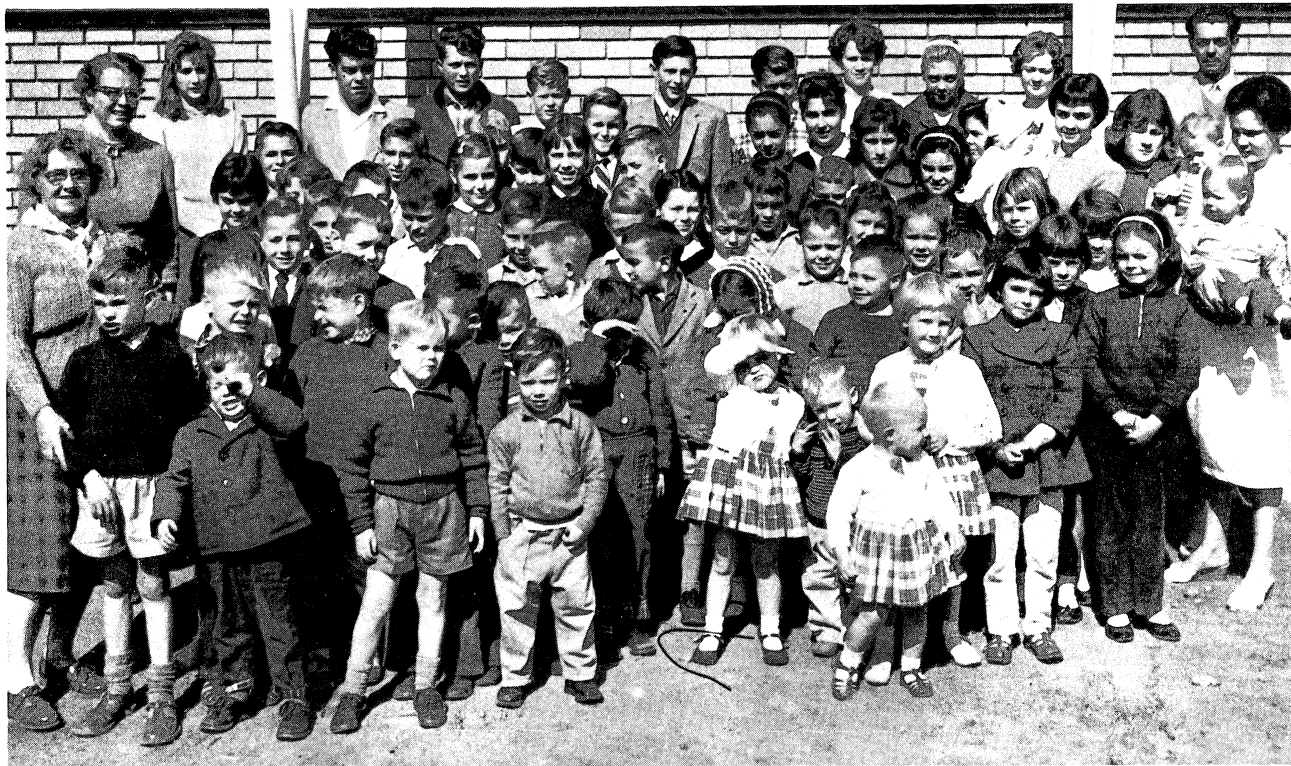




24. Formal opening of the 600-seat auditorium of the Benoni church, Arthur Engelbrecht cutting the ribbon while Al Horne looks on.

25. Congregation attending the opening service of the new Benoni building.

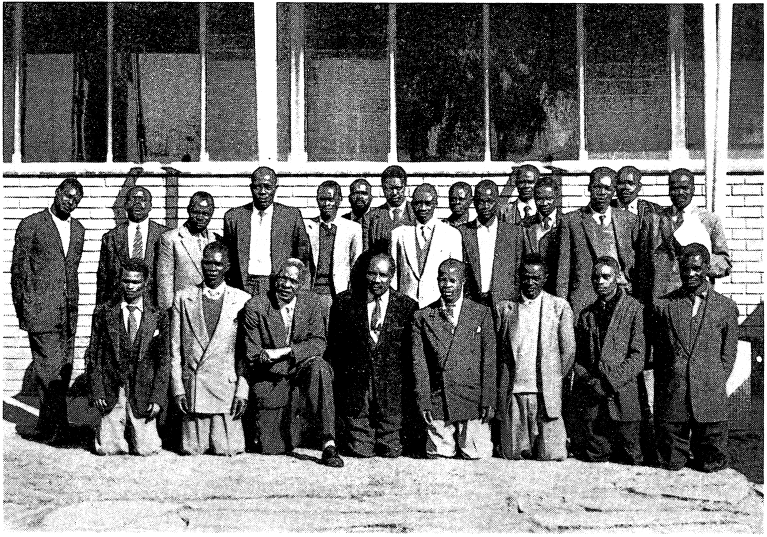




26. A Vacation Bible School group in Pretoria in 1963.

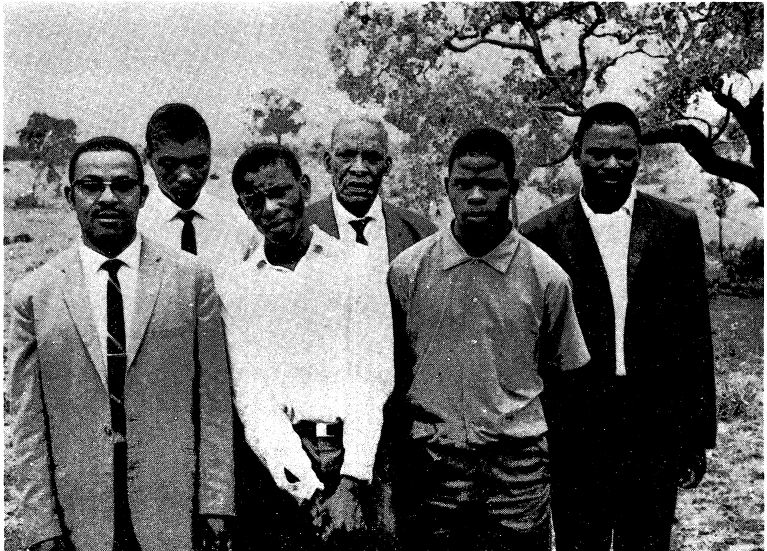


27. VBS teachers take a refreshment break, Pretoria, 1964.



28. Preacher training for black church workers of the Reef area, short course, 1962.

29. A group of workers at an encampment for black teenagers. John Manape, preacher for the black church in Atteridgeville, Pretoria, is at center, rear. Bro. Manape began his full-time work in 1951, and died at about 100 years of age in 1984.

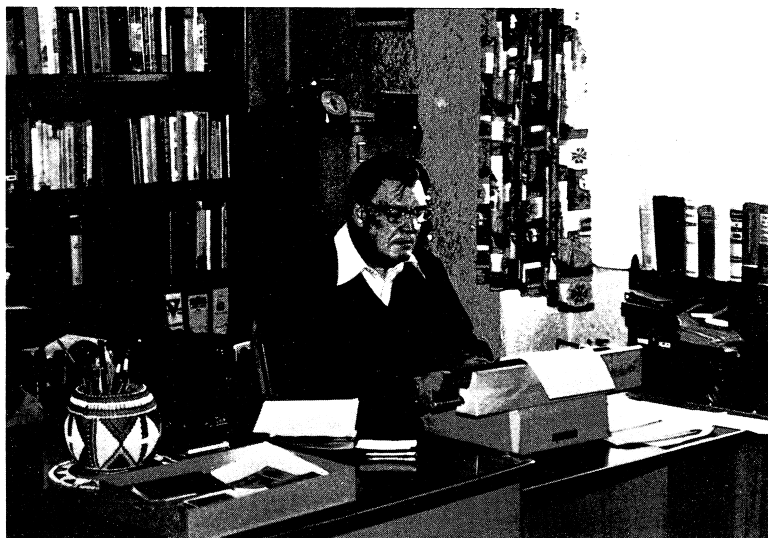




30. Joe Watson presents diplomas to SABS graduate Allan Kriger. Also shown are Colin Kauffman and Johan Smulders.

31. The Peugeot, purchased by the church at 29th and South Yale, Tulsa, on the way to a black area in northeastern Transvaal. This vehicle had 98,000 miles put on it in the Lord's work.

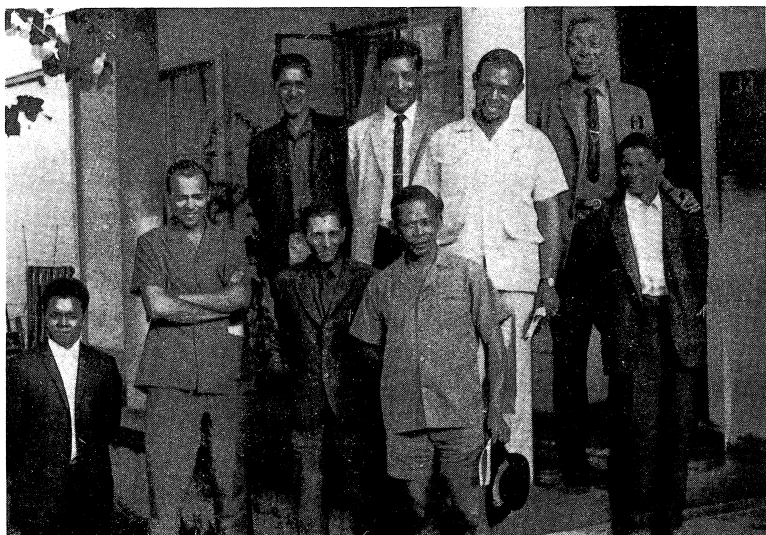




32. John Hardin in his office at 4 Whitehouse Ave., Farrarmere, Benoni. He spent many long hours typing and duplicating teaching material for all races.

33. A group of Reef colored Christians, relaxing after a Saturday afternoon Bible study, in Noordgesig.





34. Colored Christians on the Reef near Johannesburg.

35. Colored Christians after a leadership training class. Jerry Hogg at the far right.





36. The little group of colored Christians that meets in the garage-meeting hall on the property of Bro. Walter Paul, one of the earliest converts in the Johannesburg area.

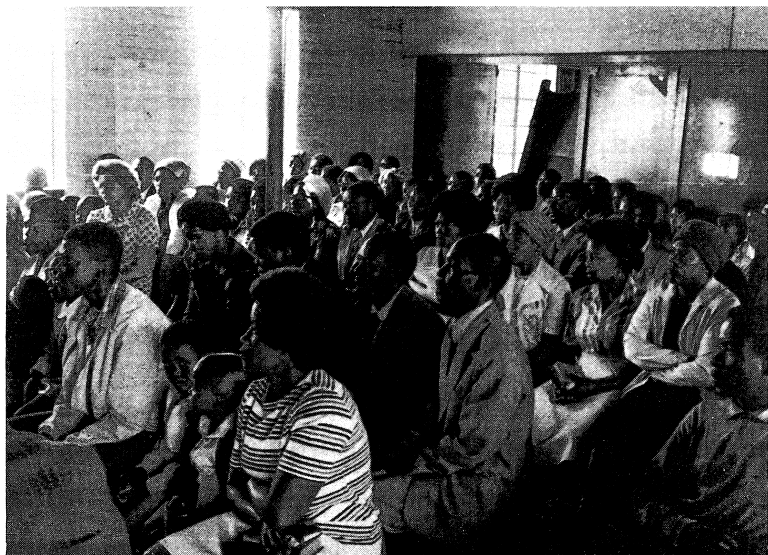
37. A group of colored Christians in the home of one of the members, Westcol.





38. Leaders and preachers of several black churches in the Johannesburg area, meeting at Mzimhlope, 1968.

39. Sunday services in a school room, Daveyton, Benoni. Such school room scenes are typical of dozens of meeting places for black congregations all over South Africa.





40. Four black ladies in Daveyton, Benoni. I taught them how to teach Sunday school, and had the assistance of Simon Magagula, who interpreted for me.

41. A group of villagers gather to hear the preaching being done with the aid of a loud hailer.



The Anti Problem

It is regrettable that it is necessary to record the less pleasant aspects of a missionary work. It is sad that divisions occur. "Divide and conquer" is a military strategy that Satan uses with devastating results. Paul warned against it in I Corinthians 1:10 and in Romans 16:17. He instructed that those who cause division should be marked and avoided. For some years there had been members of the church who became known as "anti's," because they were "anti" certain practices that had been generally accepted in churches of Christ. Some believed that orphans should be cared for only in individual Christian homes — not in orphans' homes. Others believed that because of church autonomy, no two congregations could pool their funds in order to send a lump sum to a missionary, but that each congregation must send directly to the recipient. There were those who believed it a sinful practice for a church to send money from its treasury to a Christian college, or in fact even to call a college "Christian." Then came the move to Galatians 6:10 which says to "do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." The "anti" position is that good done to those not of the household of faith cannot come in the form of money from the church treasury. It can only come directly from the purses and pockets of individual members.

One's stand on such subjects needs to be kept in the realm of opinion, and as long as it remains there, no division will occur. Division occurs when someone begins to press

one or more of such "issues," saying that someone else sins by believing and acting differently from himself. Pressure builds into the formation of little groups of people who hold to their opinions so strongly that they draw apart and label as "liberal" those who do not believe as they do. It was this sort of action that led to a splinter movement in the states in the 50's.

In South Africa, we had been so naive as to believe that the "anti" movement would not affect us. It was about 1960 that we began to feel disturbed about the problem. Carl McCullough had not preached the issues from the pulpit, but he had privately influenced several of the members, particularly Gavin duToit who attended Florida College (an "anti" institution), and returned to start an "anti" church in Brakpan.

In the early 1960's, Ray Votaw showed himself to be more strongly "anti" than before, and he was soon joined by Gene Tope who by then was in Krugersdorp. Ray and Gene drew away members from other congregations and many were becoming disturbed.

Among the South African people they influenced were Piet Joubert who established his own congregation in Durban and keeps very much to himself with that group; Roy Lothian, who later left the "anti" group, attended SABS, and preached for a while in Pretoria; Basil Cass, who worked with Gene Tope in Turffontein and in Krugersdorp; and others who to my knowledge, became so thoroughly confused that they have left the church altogether. Andy deKlerk of Pretoria attended Florida college and returned to South Africa with "anti" leanings which he did not press at first. He preached in

Port Elizabeth for a while, and during that time, we heard that “anti” brethren in America warned him that he would be sinning if he asked one of our “non-anti” brethren to hold a gospel meeting for that congregation. Andy deKlerk returned to Florida for further studies and became a full-fledged “anti.” Leonard Gray and Charlie Tutor assisted Andy Jooste for many months, teaching the congregation what we believe to be the correct approach to the scriptures involved. When deKlerk was ready to return to Port Elizabeth, he was informed that he was not welcome to return to the Pickering Street congregation. He avowed that he would return whether or not he was wanted, and then started a new little group together with some of his personal followers. They built a building not far from the Pickering Street one, and for several years they continued to meet there. Eventually, their efforts played out, their building was sold, and many of the members returned to the old group in Pickering Street, while other discouraged ones simply drifted away.

The arrival of Joe Watson to work with the Pickering Street congregation in late 1965 was a tremendous unifying force for the Lord’s church, and it was possible for a period of peace to reign within the membership there.

By early 1965, the movement on the Reef had so escalated that there were alarming symptoms of division in the very midst of several congregations. Something had to happen to prevent utter chaos. It became obvious that a public discussion needed to be held, with both sides having equal opportunity to put forward their beliefs.

James Judd, then of Rhodesia, had once espoused the “anti” beliefs but had studied himself out of them, so he

knew the issues well. Ray Votaw was the most “vocal” of the “anti” people, so it was decided that those two should be the speakers. In March, 1965, the discussion was held at the Benoni church building. At the beginning of the evening, the followers of Votaw and the followers of Judd gravitated to the two sides of the building, according to whom they believed. Lowell Worthington reminded me recently that 70% or so were on Votaw’s side of the building. During an interval when the audience stretched their legs and went outside, a move to the opposite side took place – when the audience returned to seats, there were more on the Judd side. Then brother Judd told a story about a boat being operated on the great Lake Nyasa. He had operated such a boat, *bought with church money*, so he asked the audience to suppose that he was in it when a wind storm arose, capsizing a boat nearby, spilling its passengers into the water. According to the “anti” interpretation of Gal. 6:10, he would have to go over to the struggling people and ask them if they were members of the church of Christ. If the answer was “no,” he would have to say, “Sorry, can’t help you,” and let them drown. With that, others from the Votaw side of the auditorium arose and moved over to the Judd side, and according to brother Worthington, only a few remained with Votaw.

Tex Williams then asked Votaw if he was going to continue to preach the “anti” doctrines. The answer was “Yes.” Then he asked if Votaw was going to continue even if it meant dividing the church. The answer was still “Yes.” It was time, then, to act according to Romans 16:17, mark those that caused division and avoid them.

Lowell Worthington also reported that at one time it was arranged that he and Ray Votaw would discuss the issues at one of the black congregations in Soweto — they had also been disturbed by Ray's teachings. The meeting began with the "anti" side of the issues being presented, but Lowell was not permitted by them ever to take the floor.

People who are moving into the work of the churches in various places in South Africa need to be aware of the "anti" problem. At the time of this writing, it still exists. We do not advocate ugly warfare and open wrangling. Constant awareness is necessary. It may even be said of our attitude that we need to "be sober, be watchful, for your adversary, the devil, goeth about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." False doctrine and division can cause us to become the "lion's" victims.

Among black churches, Paul Williams has done much to spread "anti-ism." One congregation in Vendaleland has been totally drawn away through his teachings. A second one was nearly taken over, but our faithful black brethren persuaded them that it was not right. Some "anti" people, I'm not sure who, have told an untruth to the Venda-speaking congregation in Soweto, namely Tshiawelo, that there is no longer any division between the "anti's" and ourselves, and that it is all right for them all to be together. Would that this were so! Would that those in error had returned from their divisive ways!

Preacher Training Schools

SOUTHERN AFRICA BIBLE SCHOOL

A missionary's real goal is to work himself out of a job. This never really happens, but it is the ultimate aim. He is eager to see the day when local people will be capable of taking over the work of the church. In a new mission field, this goal may be far in the future, but he will realize that there may be three steps in the process. First, he and his fellow-missionaries will be doing all of the preaching and teaching. Second, as capable men are converted, the missionary may find it expedient to send some of them to existing colleges in the United States with the intent that they should return and minister to their own people. The third step is the provision of training schools in the mission field itself. It may take years to reach step three. In most instances, it would be better if step two could be eliminated. In South Africa, it was almost 15 years from the time that Caskey, Miller, Echols, and Hardin first entered the country and started the work in Johannesburg until Southern Africa Bible School convened its first classes. It was Eldred Echols and Al Horne whom Eldred had converted in Port Elizabeth in late 1952 who now re-entered South Africa and opened up the doors for future preachers to be trained in Benoni. The two men had worked together in a preacher training school in Tanganyika so they had considerable experience behind them.

The beginning of SABS was a wonderful accomplish-

ment and cause for much thanksgiving. From the time that South African men began to go to America for training in the early 1950's, we had seen a number who never returned. Although statistics never tell the whole story, a quick look at a few figures reveals the following: before the opening of SABS, about 20 South African men went to various Christian colleges in America, of whom 7 are faithfully serving in their home country, or 35%. Out of 14 others who went to America after SABS had been established, about 43% returned. Of the 49 men who had graduated from SABS by 1982, there were, one year later, 41 serving either as full-time ministers, part-time ministers, Bible school teachers (Manzini and SABS), or good, useful, working members of congregations all over the country. Among the graduates are two who are elders and at least one deacon. (There would be more, but few congregations as yet have elders and deacons at all). One of the SABS graduates, originally a Texan, is now preaching in a large church in his home state; one is an Irishman who is preaching in Canada, one is a Portuguese who has returned to his homeland to preach; one is preaching full-time in Missouri; and one other who is out of fellowship is overseas.

About 23 men have attended SABS but have not finished all the courses. Thirty percent or so of that number, including my son, Neal, completed a good amount of the work while some others attended for shorter times. By the end of 1982, 40 female students had attended SABS, anywhere from half a year to nearly 3 years. None have actually finished all the courses, but two-year certificates have been earned by several. Although girls will not be preachers, many of them are or will be preachers' wives.

They are permitted to take any of the courses they wish, and the girls have taken a great variety of selections from the curriculum, even the Hebrew and Greek. In addition to the men's courses, there are courses for girls in the homemaking skills, and wives of students are required to take the courses in being better wives and mothers, particularly as pertains to wives of preachers.

As one would expect, SABS began small and was slow getting off the ground. Of necessity, it was limited to white students, except for one older black man who attended during 1982 and 1983. (The future may see more mixing of the races in the school. In the meanwhile, there are other provisions for non-white students, described later in this chapter).

A school such as SABS was new and different in Southern Africa. It could offer no degree. It could not promise its graduates any pulpits to fill after graduation, nor would it serve as an employment agency to place men in pulpits. It had little money and no property, no building. The first classes were held in a large class room of the Benoni church, some in the day, some at night. When this proved to be unsatisfactory, the classes were moved to the personal study of Eldred Echols. Classes were very small, the teaching almost on a personal basis.

In 1967, a small-holding of 6 acres with two old houses was purchased in Cloverdene, just outside of Benoni. Married students lived in the houses, with the living room of one being used for a class room. Other classes were held in a room which had once been servants' quarters; on a log under a chestnut tree; and on cold days, in a car warmed by the sun. So it was a great day in

October, 1971, when a building was completed with ample class room space, a library, offices and a kitchen. As this is being written, we have a report of 40 students in the present facility — a full house. If more students enroll, the building will have to be enlarged. What a wonderful problem to have!

SABS was first sponsored by the Garland Road church (now called Highland Oaks) in Dallas, then for a brief period by Richland Hills in Fort Worth. At the time of writing, the complete oversight of the school is carried by the eldership of the Memorial Church of Christ in Houston, Texas. They are also the principal financially supporting congregation with American individual Christians as well as congregations assisting in the program. On at least three occasions, elders from Memorial have visited the school.

Since 1973, Joe and Polly Watson, who worked at times in Port Elizabeth, Uganda, and Benoni, have traveled in the interest of SABS. They have numerous slides and a 16mm movie, one or both of which they have used at least 466 times in 10 years. In addition to showing the films and speaking about SABS for congregations who request it, they set up booths at most of the major lectureships and workshops across the southern states; part of the display in the booth is a continuous slide showing. Literature concerning SABS is handed out, and Joe and Polly are always ready to tell enquirers all about it. Joe says he would call his work "information sharing" rather than "fund-raising." He does not pressure anyone into giving large sums, but informs them of the work and tells them how they can help if they so wish. To keep SABS in the

public eye in America, he distributes a periodical called "Southern Africa Connection," with news, updates, and interesting highlights from month to month.

South African Christians contribute substantially to the support of SABS, both as individuals and as congregations. They do so freely because the entire curriculum is Bible or Bible-related. Most of this support is pledged at lectureship time each year.

As long as SABS has resources available, bursaries are given to those men who apply. Those who are needy and lack funds for school are first in line, and those who can support themselves are not eligible for assistance.

Full-time teachers through the years have been Al Horne, Eldred Echols, Des Steyn, Mel Sheasby, and Les Massey. Part-time men have been Jerry Hogg, Bill Bryan, John Reese, Jerry D'Alton, Manuel d'Oliveira, Craig Ross, Andre Landman, Sam Wishart, Ernie McDaniel, Arthur Engelbrecht, Robert Bothma, Jerry Hayes, Jim Petty, John Hardin, Bob Cannon, and Clive Biggs. Women who have taught on a part-time basis are Donna Horne, Lois Sheasby, Lisa Steyn, Bessie Hardin, Jane Echols, Beth Reese, Kay Petty, Kay Hayes, and Veronique Hirst.

The curriculum ranks high in academic quality, including Greek and Hebrew courses that extend through the entire three years. There are in-depth studies of all of the Bible and survey courses in Old and New Testaments. Other courses are Bible Geography, Personal Evangelism, the New Testament Church, Homiletics, Church History, Denominational Doctrines, The Preacher and His Work, Christian Evidences, Systematic Theology, Principles of

Teaching, Church Growth, Biblical Archaeology, Christian Communications, Hermeneutics, Pastoral Counseling, Writings, the Educational Program of the Church, and Youth Ministry. Third year students choose between Languages and Educational courses.

The work of SABS is not accredited by universities in South Africa, but it is possible for students to take courses from Unisa, by correspondence. Some students have done a certain amount of this at the same time as they are doing similar courses at SABS, while others have done the Unisa work at later dates. It is possible this way to obtain a Bachelor's degree.

In 1976, through the efforts of Al Horne, Abilene Christian University agreed to give credit to SABS graduates for most of the work completed there, making it possible for a diligent student to obtain a degree in 12 to 18 months. Some who have done so are Des Steyn, Mel Sheasby, and Peter Mostert. A general tightening up of certain rulings and some change in policy may make it more difficult for future prospective students entering ACU from SABS, but there will likely be good opportunities still available.

Following is a list of graduates of SABS through 1981: (those rendering faithful service in some capacity are so noted).

1969

Clive Biggs, George, C. P. Teacher
Les Massey, Mesquite, Texas, Preacher
Gordon Uys, Durban, Pulpit Minister
Jim Byrne, Dublin, Ireland

1970

Dave Rodger, Boksburg, Preacher
Izak Theron

1971

Kenny Hunt, Benoni, Deacon, High School Teacher
(Colored work, Johannesburg area)

1972

Colin Kauffman, Pietermaritzburg, Assists preacher.
(Formerly Port Elizabeth)
Allan Kriger, Manzini Bible School, Swaziland Bible
School Teacher (Deceased, 1984)

1973

Vince Hunt, Benoni, Elder, SABS Office Manager

1974

Roy Lothian, Pretoria (Preached full-time for a
while), Secular job
Greg Wood, Pinetown, Preacher. Formerly Wind-
hoek, SWA

1975

Eddie Baartman Kimberley, Preacher
Manuel D'Oliveira, Portuguese Bible Translator, (for-
merly at Manzini, Swaziland; Lisbon, Portugal)
Bev Hirst, Benoni member, Secular work
Eamonn Morgan, Canada, Preacher
Basil van As, Alberton church. Secular work.

1976

Paul Brady, Pinetown, Assistant Preacher
Robin Dennill, Turffontein member, Secular work
Frank Malherbe, Turffontein Minister, Self-supporting
Chris Savides, Butterworth
Errol Williams, Mutari, Zimbabwe, Minister

1977

Chris Burke, Secular job, Zimbabwe
Maurice Charlton, Missionary to Zululand, (Lives in
Empangeni)
Nigel Hausberger, Assists Weltevreden Park Church
Peter Mostert, Missionary to Blacks, (Lives in Benoni)
Brian Simpson, Benoni
Marcelle van der Spuy, Missouri, U. S. Preacher

1978

Reg Branford, Durban, Personal Evangelism
Keith Minaar, Benoni member
Mel Sheasby, SABS Lecturer, Benoni Elder
Kerr Sloan, George, Minister
Des Steyn, SABS Lecturer

1979

Angus Gordon, East London Church, Secular work
Dave Savides, Bellville, Minister
Dick van Dyke, Swaziland Bible School
Clive Watkins, Benoni member, Secular work
Sam Wishart, Springs, Assists Minister, High School
Teacher

1980

Eric Bresler, Cape Town member, Secular work
 Andrew Dumbriss, Pietermaritzburg, Preacher
 Andrew Landman, Benoni, Afrikaans Preacher, Part-time at SABS
 Craig Ross, Benoni Youth work, Part-time Teacher at SABS
 Andrew Williams, Uitenhage member, Secular work

1981

Alick Burger, East London, Secular work
 Jeff Kenee, Uitenhage Assistant, Secular work
 Colin McKay, Military Service period, Southwest Africa
 Johan Snyman, Goodwood, Minister
 Dick Waldie, Manzini Bible School, Swaziland

In 1983, John Graham graduated from SABS and is presently preaching in East London. Patrick Kenee, Derrick Bam, and Rod Calder, also 1983 graduates, are working on degrees at ACU in Abilene, Texas.

This is not a directory. There will be changes and additions very soon, some of them before this book can be printed. The list serves to demonstrate what has been and is being accomplished at SABS. It can be seen that some graduates are not filling pulpits or otherwise engaged in full-time church work. At present, there are not enough "pulpits" to go around, but most of the graduates are involved in the work of the church wherever they are. Some are in places where the church today is small and weak but may some day become strong and require a full-time

minister. It is anticipated that former graduates will eventually fill such pulpits.

The publication, "Southern Africa Connection" for June, 1983, features a section which points up the extent of SABS as to length of time, growth, popularity, and stability. The opening statement is as follows: "Now that Southern Africa Bible School has been in operation for eighteen full years, a few father-son (or daughter) teams have entered the school." Note these: Gordon Uys and son Craig; Vince and Kenny Hunt; Maurice and Stephen Charlton; Mel and Paul Sheasby; Sam and Rozanne Wishart. The Horne's three daughters have all attended the school, and there are several families who have had at least two in SABS.

Accreditation of SABS has some distinct benefits in addition to scholastic advantages: it allows a student to receive military exemption until SABS training is complete, and it is hoped that in the future it could mean some tax relief.

There are numerous opportunities for SABS students to make practical application of their training and practice their skills as they go along. Students sometimes travel as a group to a city or area for the purpose of evangelistic outreach, to knock on doors, invite people to special services, and offer to teach home Bible studies or set up studies to be done by local personnel. Students are frequently used to assist in preaching and teaching programs wherever possible.

Study at SABS has become so popular with Christian girls that a girls' dormitory was set up in a large residence in 1982. Edythe Cowan from the Richland Hills

church in Ft. Worth served as the first dorm mother, followed by Rhona Menage. A great deal of concentrated Bible study is done by the girls, and there are some who have obtained their Mrs. degree – what better place for a Christian girl to find the ideal husband!

MANZINI BIBLE SCHOOL – SWAZILAND

With a combination of uncommon foresight, boundless zeal for the Lord's work, and a spirit of pioneer adventure, Eldred Echols has always been ready to make the next step. With the Tanganyika Bible School well under way, Eldred was thinking of what else should be undertaken. As early as 1960, he and Al Horne made a trip from Tanganyika to investigate the possibilities of opening up a training school for native preachers in Swaziland. It was an ideal time, for the borders between Swaziland and South Africa were completely open to people of all races so that blacks could travel back and forth without hindrance, and it was thought that South African blacks who wished to train as preachers could do just that.

The account that Eldred wrote of the trip is worthy of being quoted – it illustrates not only his and Al's spirit, but more importantly, the guidance of God in an unusual way:

“We left Tanganyika for Swaziland . . . with barely enough money to pay for food, lodging and gasoline for the trip. If any mishap occurred involving a major expenditure, the trip would be ended then and there. However, the trip went off smoothly enough with only minor troubles. We were told in Rhodesia that the South African government

might require us to deposit a large sum of money on our car at the border, and we were somewhat apprehensive about that. We would just have to try to get through, as we had come too far to go back. As it happened, there was no problem at all. The young man at the customs window simply took down the particulars from the registration book and waved us on.

“We found the brethren in South Africa very enthusiastic about the possibilities of a school in Swaziland and willing to assist in any way possible. Thus encouraged, we talked with government officials in Mbabane, the capital of Swaziland, and investigated a number of possible sites for locating the Bible School. We eventually settled on a riverside location between the two largest towns of the country and took an option to buy the land, intending to move there as soon as replacements could be found for us in the Tanganyika work. We headed back for East Africa, well pleased with the way everything had worked out.

“When we arrived back at the South-Rhodesia customs post, the official asked for our receipt for the money we had deposited on the car. We looked blank. ‘Don’t tell me you didn’t *make* a deposit!’ he exclaimed in astonishment. ‘We didn’t,’ we confessed. ‘What customs officer let you through?’ he demanded. ‘A young man with blond hair,’ we replied. ‘Now *that* could be,’ he nodded his head. ‘That was his first day at this post and he probably didn’t know that East African cars require a deposit.

You were just lucky you got that particular man. Any other officer would have charged you about 300 pounds (840 dollars).’

“We left South Africa with the deep conviction that the Lord had a special interest in a work being started in Swaziland. At this writing (it was then 1966), it does not yet appear what His plans are. Al Horne and I are now in South Africa, teaching in Bible training schools for both white and native preachers. Shortly after we had bought the property in Swaziland, the South African government lifted their restrictions against our operating a Bible School in this country. So future plans for Swaziland are still locked up in the heart of God . . .”

The period between the acquisition of the Swaziland property and the move of Hornes and Echols to South Africa was a waiting time for that project. In the interim, in conference with Tex Williams and John Hardin, it was decided that it would be better first to establish a training school for white men in South Africa proper. Then, within a short time, it would be possible to train a number of men who could move on to establish other works, including a school in Swaziland. If anyone thought this was a ploy to divert the capabilities of Echols and Horne from black to white emphasis, such suspicions have long since been dissipated. The plan has worked exactly as set forth.

The first man to go to Swaziland to do some building and begin to lay the groundwork for the Manzini Bible

School was Nic Dekker. Nic spent a year at SABS and then moved to Swaziland in late 1966. He was first joined by the Jesse Browns who had considerable experience in mission work in Rhodesia, and later by the Shorty Winfields, newly graduated from Sunset School of Preaching. Near the mission property were the Figuerido family whose son, Mickey was converted and attended college in the U. S., married an American girl, Ann, and returned to assist at the Manzini school. When Dekkers, Browns, and Winfields moved away, there was considerable turn-over in personnel. The Jim Byrnes, the Manuel d'Oliveiras, the Chris Savides', the Andrew Williams', the Andrew Dumbri's, the Dick Waldies, the Dick van Dykes, and the Maurice Charltons, all from SABS, spent varying lengths of time in the program.

In mid-1983, Allan Kriger, another SABS graduate who spent many years in the Vendaland Bible School, moved to Swaziland. Of all the South African men who have been involved in the Manzini school, Allan had the most years of work with the black people, and it was hoped that his experience and his love of that work would stand him in good stead in Swaziland. Allan died in 1984.

The course of study is two years, with English and Seswati being used equally as media of instruction. In addition to white teachers, brother David Macubu and brother Samson Shandu have taught. Samson is still with the school. Students have come from South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, and Mozambique as well as from Swaziland. In 1983, one colored student, a Swaziland citizen, was enrolled — the others are black. About 50 have been through the school, and about half of these are

preaching. A new education block has just been completed with 4 classrooms, office, library, and fellowship area.

After Eldred Echols had spent some time in Swaziland in mid-1983, he had these comments to make: "Politics have not affected the work. There is no threat of communism, and rioting and rebellion are remote possibilities. Swazi traditions affect the work more than any modern trends."

NATAL SCHOOL OF PREACHING

In January, 1969, the Natal School of Preaching at Pietermaritzburg was opened to black and colored students. There have been students from Botswana and Lesotho as well as from many parts of South Africa, but most of the men have been from the Zulu and Xhosa nations. The founding faculty were Ian Fair, Tex Williams, and Delbert McCloud. Other missionaries who have taught are Jan Mauck, Don Perry, Jack Mitchell, Milton Wilson, and Bill Tyson. Non-European brethren who have taught are Samson Peters and Joseph Maisela. By the end of 1983 there were 207 who had completed the two-year course, with 38 enrolled for the beginning of 1984.

In addition to the two-year course, some short courses have been conducted, for there are a good many men who, for financial reasons, job commitments, and otherwise, are unable to attend a school for extended periods. Subjects taught at the Natal school are: Textual studies of each book in the Bible, Beginning Greek, Ministry, Evangelism, Missionary Methods, Sound Doctrine, and the Church of Christ. A large library has been completed.

Support of varying amounts has been provided for full-time students, the money coming from churches in the states and in South Africa. A condition of enrollment has been that upon completion of the course, a student is to return to his home area to preach or otherwise assist in the churches. During their stay at the school, students have ample opportunity to make weekend trips of an evangelistic nature, together with some of the teachers. This is regarded as an extension of the classroom and provides experience in mission work.

Ian Fair reports that a good many men from the Natal School of Preaching have done a fine work, and he especially mentions the names of Samson Peters, Joseph Maisela, Richard Maxhayi, Garner Kentane, and David Phelane. This is particularly commendable because there is no way in which graduates of the school can be assured of support for preaching in their home lands.

Jack Mitchell is engaged in publicity and fund-raising for the Natal School in much the same way as Joe Watson is for SABS. Approximately half the year is spent in traveling in the states and during the other half, Jack is in Pietermaritzburg, actively working with the school staff.

VENDALAND SCHOOL OF PREACHING

The report on the Vendaland school has been included with the chapter on that little nation, especially because the work of the school and the work of the church were so tied together in the Hardin experience with them.

OTHER TRAINING

Numerous short-term schools, and schools conducted

weekly over periods of many months have been conducted in nearly every part of South Africa by the preachers at the various congregations. These are too numerous and widely scattered to be described here.

Kansas City

If bidding farewell to South Africa after almost 16 years was traumatic, finding a place to settle within reasonable distance of John's mother, with a position suited to John's abilities and the family's needs was equally so. This was no furlough. We needed to see our loved ones from Texas and Oklahoma to Minnesota and Kentucky, but we needed to be settled by September if the boys were to have a good year at school. Making the change to American schools would be difficult enough, but if the children had to enter after the opening date, they would be handicapped.

John still felt his lack of a college degree, and having been overseas during most of his full-time ministry, he was unknown to the churches in the U. S. The positions he had filled at Waxahachie and Altus before we went to Africa — full-time song leader, cum youth worker, cum jack-of-all-trades — was no longer offered by congregations. He began to feel like a square peg trying to fit into a round hole. He loved his mother, but his heart was in Africa, and he was unhappy about job-seeking.

Summer was nearing its end, with still no position. We were visiting my folks in Minnesota when we received a telephone call from Mom Hardin, saying that she had word of a congregation in Kansas City, Kansas, that was needing a minister, so we cut our visit short by a day or two and headed south. At the Kensington Park church we found that the ladies' Bible class was in full swing. They had had

their study and had shared a pot-luck lunch and were about to begin on their project of making cancer pads for the hospital. If they had been wondering what to do with the left-overs of the lunch, they had no problem – we made short work of them for we had not eaten since early breakfast. Arrangements were made over the phone for John to meet with the elders, and our family was provided with motel rooms.

Before we had a chance to get used to the idea of living in Kansas City, we were there! The church had a house for us, but we had not one stick of furniture, so we spent several days acquiring what we needed, putting the boys into school, and gradually settling down. Dale and Gary were in primary school, Brian and Neal in Junior High, and Don was a senior in High School. Kent, of course, was at David Lipscomb College in Nashville.

We all had “reverse culture shock.” The school systems and subjects were so different. Integration rather than apartheid required adjusted thinking. After all, the boys had lived most of their lives in Africa, and John and I had become as much South African as American.

In October, after we had had a chance to become well settled in our home and work, John’s mother came to visit for about 2 weeks. She told me then that she did not feel well and that she was a little bit disgusted with the doctor who kept telling her, “Mrs. Hardin, you can’t expect to feel well all the time when you are 83.” Most of the time during her visit, she seemed her old self and we had a good time. It was apple season, so we bought 2 bushels of apples for canning. Mom sat in a rocker near the television and peeled apples while I worked in the

kitchen to can them. Mom attended the ladies classes with me and endeared herself to those who sat around the quilting frame, stitching for the needy. The ladies even persuaded her to postpone her trip home to Ponca City for a day so that she could quilt with them once more.

John had to take Mom to the bus early one morning for the journey home. That was the last time we saw her. We heard soon afterward that she had the flu and was having a hard time getting over it. She went to stay at the home of a friend who waited on her hand and foot, but she did not improve. Bess, John's sister, took their mother to her home in Ft. Worth where she was diagnosed as having leukemia. We had heard nothing to alarm us however, and enjoyed having Kent come and spend Christmas with us. On the evening of December 30, we were invited to the home of brother Lyman, one of our elders, to have dinner with them. Shortly before the meal, we received word that Mom was very bad and for John to hurry there. John and Kent ate their meal hastily and drove toward Dallas-Ft. Worth, but they were too late to see Mom before she passed away.

Mom was ready to "go home." She had been a widow nearly 12 years, had lost a son, she was ill, and she was not afraid. Long before this, she wrote a poem about death in which she said that it was like a soft door in an old wall – she could easily pass through. Another time she wrote that she was ready for the death angel to come and rock her gently to sleep in his arms. She'd been a good woman, self-educated to a great degree. Born in a log cabin in the remote hills of Kentucky, she had become a dignified and refined lady. She was a faithful Christian,

much loved by many. Although she could and would “speak her mind” if the need arose, she was sweet and patient, loving, helpful, and kind. To her goes much of the credit for the sort of man her son John became. Burial was to be in Ponca City, the weather was cold and windy, and Dale had a touch of pneumonia so he stayed with Lymans while the rest of us went to the funeral.

Back home in Kansas City before the reopening of school in January, the boys began to ask if we were not going to go back to South Africa. Without hesitation, we answered in the affirmative. One thing bothered us – the Kensington Park people had felt that our coming had been an answer to their prayers, and we wondered how they would feel if we were to leave them after such a short time. They were very understanding, and it was decided that we would remain until the school year ended in late May.

By the time Don graduated from high school, he had a good job in a large department store, had substituted for the departmental manager a time or two, and wanted to remain there. He was not interested in college at the time, but his employer liked him and had arranged for him to take some night classes in business school. The year was 1966 and the United States was deeply involved in Vietnam. When Don was about to be drafted into the army, he decided to join the Marine Corps instead, for in that he saw some chance that he could select the branch of activity in which he would spend four years of youth. This turned out to be a good choice for he learned avionics and has used his electronics skills to this day.

Before we left Kansas City, connections had been

made for us to be supported in Africa by the church at 29th and South Yale in Tulsa, Oklahoma. One of its elders was Marvin McKissick, brother of our friend Joe McKissick, and Ronnie Milton, their preacher, had been in John's teenage group in Altus, Oklahoma, in 1948-49. The plan, then, was for us to stay for three or four months in Tulsa so as to become well acquainted with the people of the congregation. This was a good plan, for that congregation supported us fully for the next 12 years. The same church also supported Arthur Lovett in Johannesburg and two black preachers in Southern Rhodesia.

Until this time, the work of our missionaries had been primarily with white people, the work among other races being only as time allowed. We felt that it was high time that someone concentrate on working with black and colored people. We needed a home base from which to work and where the boys could be in school and also have the benefit of a good local congregation with its Bible classes and young people's activities. Having enjoyed our first stay in Benoni in the 50's, we chose to go there.

People in the states, unaware of South African living conditions, asked us why we did not go and live "in the bush" as did missionaries in such countries as Zambia. Because of the policy of racial separation, we would not have been permitted to do so. We could have chosen to live in another town, perhaps closer to some of the tribal people, but there would have been no congregation of white people in any of the towns we considered. John foresaw the possibility that if we had gone to such a place, he would have felt compelled to start a white congregation, and once again his efforts would have been divided. Benoni was near

Johannesburg so that we could work with black and colored congregations that already existed but had no full-time preachers and at the same time be reasonably central to other areas that are considered to be "in the bush."

We had bought a 1965 Chevrolet, and since we had been out of South Africa for over a year, we were permitted to enter once again as immigrants and bring a car with us, customs free. Financially, this was the best arrangement for us, so for the last few weeks of our Tulsa stay, we drove borrowed cars while ours was shipped via freighter out of Galveston to Durban.

Goodbyes are always painful, and they seemed to come so often. The goodbye in Pretoria had hurt us in May, 1965. Another goodbye was for John's mother, and then there were people it was hard to leave in Kansas City in early June, 1966. Now it was goodbye to my mother, my brother, John's sister and brother, and our two oldest sons. Yet we eagerly anticipated our return to the land and the people we had learned to love.

Back to Benoni in '66

It was on the 30th of September, 1966, that we flew from the Tulsa airport to begin another period on the mission field. Neal had been asked by the Gotcher family to stay with them in Tulsa and attend the first semester of school with their son, Chip, and fly to South Africa in early January in time to start the new school year there. It was John and myself, and Brian, Dale and Gary who made this journey together. We flew via New York to Athens where we spent several days visiting our niece, Linda (Shoemaker) and her new husband, Jim Willis, an Air Force man stationed in Greece. We visited the church in Athens twice on that Sunday and John spoke to the English-speaking class about our work in South Africa.

The only other stop we made was for refueling at Entebbe, Uganda. This was before Idi Amin's regime and the incident of the dramatic release of prisoners by the Israelis. All we saw during our brief stop was a very ordinary small airport, and we were glad to be away from the humid heat. At Jan Smuts airport we were met by old friends, Claude Flynn from Johannesburg, and the entire staff and student body of the new little Southern Africa Bible School.

We had no plans for a place to stay, but there was no problem because the Hornes were to be on their furlough, leaving their home on the church property of Benoni available to us. Donna and the children had already gone, and Al was to leave within a few days. We moved in with our

suitcases and used the Hornes' furniture. Since we planned to buy a house, we had time to look around for one to fit our needs and our bank account.

We arrived in Benoni on a Wednesday, and that very evening, John was leading the singing. On Thursday, we were having tea with the Nic Dekkers when Gary fell out of a tree and cracked a wrist. On Friday I had to see the doctor because the cold I'd been fighting had gone to my chest. Later that same day I had such a violent asthma attack that the doctor had to come to the house and give me an injection. We were off to a great start!

Thankfully, John's beginning days were not of the same nature as mine and Gary's. On our first Saturday, he went to Mamelodi, near Pretoria, for a wedding of black Christians, and on our first Sunday he went with Nic Dekker for a service at Angelo Compound – black mine laborers mostly from Malawi. From Angelo, they went to a colored group at Stirtonville, and by mid-afternoon they were with the black congregation at Daveyton. The same night, we were in Pretoria, where John preached in the building we'd seen constructed in 1960, and we enjoyed a reunion with many of the people we had parted from so sadly about 17 months before. It was a strenuous Sunday, but as the years passed, there were few Sundays that were less busy for John. He loved it that way and made up for the long days by sleeping late on Monday mornings.

On our first Monday in Benoni, we had to get the boys started in their schools: Brian at Benoni High, and Dale and Gary at Tom Newby elementary where the older brothers had attended when we lived in Benoni the first

time. Once again, we had the problem created by the different opening dates of school years in America and South Africa. By early October, the South African school year was 3/4 over, so we had to experiment to see whether to put the boys back or ahead. We started by putting them ahead, and all three would have managed except that Gary had not learned cursive writing as had his new classmates, so he had to go back a year. With some help in Afrikaans spelling, Dale did well. We were especially proud of Brian's completion of all of Standard 8 (10th grade) in one quarter of a school year. In math, he set himself problems, then solved them, until he had mastered the principles.

These preliminaries behind us, we began to search for a house. It needed to be in a respectable neighborhood, priced within our budget, easily accessible to people of all races who would be calling at the study, and large enough to house four big boys plus possible guests. We searched for several weeks, viewing 30 or 35 houses, finding most of them too small or too costly. When we came to the stage of feeling desperate, an agent said, "I have just the house you want." When we saw its spacious rooms and enormous built-in storage, we were afraid to ask the price. The figure named was so low that John asked, "What's wrong with it?" A thorough inspection proved it to be sound and in a well-kept neighborhood. Surely, we thought, the Lord's hand is in this transaction, and we were convinced even more when the monthly payments came within a few cents of our housing allowance. Besides, we could move into it exactly one day before the Hornes were to return to their home.

Everything from our house in Kansas City had been

shipped in two large containers, so when a flat-bed truck rolled up in front of our house and movers carried our furniture up the walk, there were many curious watchers. Not everyone moved house that way!

Our return to South Africa in late 1966 marked the beginning of a new phase in our work, a phase entirely of our own choosing. All the while that John had worked chiefly with white churches, he was drawn toward the black and colored people and had assisted them as time permitted. He was keenly aware of their vast numbers and of the fact that there was no missionary devoting his full time to working with them.

In 1958, John had written from Benoni, "We are beginning to do some work among the natives." In 1966, we felt that we were walking blindly into a new situation, for we did not know what would develop, or how. We set up residence in Benoni, which is fairly centrally located, and when our presence and John's availability became known, there was soon more than enough to do. John, being older, with grey hair at the temples, soon became much respected as a man of wisdom, and was looked to as a source of help, advice, and teaching. It wasn't long until his appointment book was filled as much as six months in advance.

Temptation could have come John's way, to be considered by the blacks and coloreds as a special leader — a centralized "headquarters." But even when his tasks included becoming "liaison" between black churches and the government offices in Pretoria, he stressed to all concerned that he was not "the head of the church." When one black congregation asked John to be in charge of their

building funds, he refused, reminding them that he was not their "head" but that they should be in charge of their own affairs. He was willing to advise, teach and assist, but no more. And so, to a great extent, the work that John did after October, 1966, simply grew and developed as opportunities and needs arose.

Much of my source material for 1966 - 1978 comes from diaries kept by John. These were first used as appointment books, the pages then being filled in with each day's events. The books are worn and dirty from being carried on dusty or muddy bush trips, and some are water damaged from the rains that sometimes plagued the tent meetings.

John did not have to look around for things to do, for very soon his activities, at least for the first months, fell into several categories. Although he had come to work mainly with black and colored people, he could not ignore the requests from some white congregations that needed assistance. Pretoria's attendance and morale were at an all-time low because the man who took John's place had not worked out well and had left in less than a year, so John began to preach there on alternate Sunday nights. The white church at Boksburg had no full-time man, and asked John to teach their mid-week Bible class, and the Benoni church asked him to teach the young people's class on Sunday evenings.

Within a 50-mile radius of Benoni, there were about 20 urban congregations of black and colored people. There were three full-time black preachers: Jackson Sogoni who had had two years at Southwest Christian College, and John Manape and Simon Magugula who were mostly self-educated in the Bible. Many of these congregations had

roots in the earlier work done when we first lived in Johannesburg in the early 50's. John trod carefully in his approach to working with these people. He made his presence known and indicated his willingness to be of assistance to any and all, but never pressed himself upon them and never tried to make their decisions for them. There were many who were happy to have a man like John to whom they could turn for spiritual help and who was willing to spend long hours with them, in services, Bible classes, and in personal relationships. Eventually, too, John was able to be of great help in obtaining church building sites, and he became well known in the government office in Pretoria where those matters were handled.

John's typical Sunday began to look like this: preaching at the morning service for a black or colored congregation from 10 to 45 miles from our home, meeting with another group at 2:30 or 3 o'clock, hurrying back to Benoni to teach the young people's class at 5 p. m. and finally driving to Pretoria to preach for the evening service. Add to this the time and effort of driving from 100 to 125 miles or more in making this circuit. Often, such a Sunday ended only at around midnight, by the time we drove back to Benoni.

The vast majority of colored people of South Africa live in designated sections of urban areas, most of them employed in semi-skilled jobs. Cape Town has the greatest colored population, but there are many in the Reef area all around Johannesburg. There have been several missionaries who have worked specifically with the colored groups in Cape Town, but this is not true of the Johannesburg area.

These colored people had managed to continue in

their own work with only occasional help from the outside. Some of the leaders were men of intelligence, and some had a fair amount of education, even into high school, while others had only a few years in elementary school. As far as the Bible was concerned, they had had little opportunity for extensive instruction. Without the benefit of mature Christians to lead them, they had in some ways done very well, but at the same time they had some major problems with which they needed help.

In November, 1966, John had a meeting with leaders of the congregations at Riverlea, Stirtonville, WestCol, Noordgesig, and Grasmere, in which he asked them how he could best help them. They decided they were not ready for a preacher training school, nor would it be the answer to their problems to have church buildings, or even to have financial support for men of their own number to work full-time. It was finally decided that John would hold a leadership class on alternate Saturdays for as many as wished to attend. These classes were held regularly in Noordgesig, and soon after their beginning, there was also a class held in a home on Monday nights which was attended by about 30 men, women and children.

These classes were no automatic, instant cure for their troubles. Knowledge of the word of God is of little profit unless it penetrates to the heart and changes people from the inside. Some of the brethren were not living the sermons that they preached. Rumors ran rampant, and grew with each repetition. People took sides, rallying to this man or that instead of to the Lord. One is inclined to analyze and diagnose situations like this, but after all the analyzing and diagnosing is over, it all comes

down to one answer: one of Satan's most powerful weapons is the dividing of Christians, whether it be tiny factions within small congregations, or major denominational separations. Christians who are busy fussing about their differences are too busy to preach the gospel and save souls. They have lost sight of the love of God and His mercy that makes it possible to receive the forgiveness of sin.

Together with a few of the less volatile of the members, John worked for many months to try to restore peace and harmony among these brethren. A man of less patience than he would have given up, for just about the time a problem seemed to be overcome, another would appear. The Saturday afternoon and Monday evening sessions were lengthened by those who remained after the studies to tell John their troubles. Some of them came to visit John in his study, and after we got a telephone installed, many hours of conversations took place by that means. One or two of our co-workers in whom John confided said, "Why don't you just give them up?" But that was not the answer. It is difficult to write about it even after all these years, for the agonizing that John underwent in his efforts to set things straight is still fresh in my memory. Just when do you "give them up?" Should one discontinue efforts that bear little fruit and spend the time in more fertile fields? There was even one Sunday when members of one of their congregations drove up to the meeting place of another and wanted to have things out then and there. When their conversation outside the meeting place deteriorated into a loud argument, and when John saw that his efforts to quiet them were ignored,

he simply got into his car and drove home. Was this the time to "give them up?"

Just when it seemed that everything was improving, the man in whose house the Monday night classes had assembled became "upset" about something or other and refused to open his home any more. The class continued for some time at other venues and eventually changed form altogether: John would teach the men at one place while I had classes for the women at another.

Benoni is on the east side of Johannesburg while most of the colored congregations were on the west side. Before completion of the freeway which would one day take us over and around the congested traffic of the city, we needed a full hour to make the trip from our home. Often we drove into the blinding glare of the setting sun, which in the winter months, burned red until overcome by the smog of the city.

Names have not been mentioned in recalling these difficult times. Some of the people involved "straightened out," and others did not. Some did better for a time, then fell away again. There is no fairy-tale conclusion that all turned out well and they lived happily ever after. It is painful to relate it, but it's so much a part of the story of John's work in 1966 and especially 1967 that it must be included.

Why did John continue so patiently after so long? First of all, he loved these people and could not bear to think of losing them. Together with that love of the brethren, John was characterized by a trusting nature. He himself was so completely honest and forthright in his own life that he simply could not believe that another Christian

would be deceitful or dishonest. In secular relationships, people could cheat him and take advantage of him, but he said that he would rather trust people than to endure having a suspicious mind. At the same time, he was deeply hurt when people let him down, and the more so when it was Christians who did so.

One of the favorite activities of the colored people was to have what they called "combined meetings" for which they rented a large hall and sometimes had as many as 300 attending. Sometimes a few black brethren would be there too, as well as some of us white folks. They always made big plans for the combined services and sometimes served a dinner of curry and rice and other good things. One of these combined meetings was convened and served as the means of partially restoring good relationships between colored congregations.

For several years, the church at 29th and Yale in Tulsa had been supporting a South African man to work with colored as well as white people. Before we had left Tulsa, the elders asked John to visit him and see how things were going. Since there was no one directly overseeing his work, they wanted some information from John. The upshot of the matter was that he could see almost no evidence of any work at all being done. The Tulsa brethren sent John the reports the man had sent to them, and when he read them, he noticed that without exception, there was little accomplishment reported, only glowing words referring to the things that were planned for the future. After much careful checking and several personal visits with the man, John could only report back to Tulsa that they were wasting their money. The support was

discontinued and almost immediately, the man joined himself to a denomination that taught many things different from the Church of Christ.

In mid-January, John began a singing school for the Benoni congregation. Singing schools are never as well attended as gospel meetings, but there were quite a few with enough interest to make it worth while. One evening, when John was teaching the simple fundamentals of rhythm and time signatures, a man who knew practically nothing about music almost disrupted the class by his insistence that the time signature determined the speed of a song. 4/4 time, he insisted, was march time and nothing else. Just look at "Onward Christian Soldiers," he said. It was pointed out to him that "Nearer, My God, To Thee" was in 4/4 time, and John sang a few lines of it at the same pace as "Onward Christian Soldiers." Yet this person was unconvinced. One day soon after, in our home, he and John were still discussing time signatures and tempo, so I got out some of my classical piano music and showed several instances of 4/4 time where one may be marked "Lento" (slow) and another "Presto" (fast). I thought this to be conclusive proof, but if he was convinced, he never admitted it. John continued to teach his music classes that the mood of the song, the meaning of the words, determined the tempo. Although the occasional person would say that 3/4 time was waltz time, no one ever suggested that hymns written in 3/4 time should be sung as a waltz.

From the day we landed back in South Africa and I had my attack of bronchial asthma, I'd had a continuous struggle with this condition. The Benoni doctor was not familiar with the similar problem that had popped up

every so often during our 5 years in Pretoria, so with his consent, I returned to the doctor whom we had known. They had my records on file and soon I was back on some of the treatment that had helped me before. Attacks of bronchitis nearly always followed the onset of a cold, so it was a continuous battle at times, but otherwise my health was good. John was usually abounding with good health as long as his blood pressure could be kept down. He'd had a bad time of it in Kansas City until his medication was adjusted. Now, for a period of many years, his main complaint was the annual bout or two of flu that put him to bed for a day or two. His Venda friends named him, "The Old Man Who Never Gets Tired."

After a few months, John dropped out of the Pretoria and Boksburg white services except for occasional visits, and the Benoni young people's class was taken over by someone else, leaving more time for the work which we came to do with the other races. The boys and I were in the Benoni church much of the time, and I regularly taught the teenage girls at the mid-week Bible study. Some of the ladies approached me and asked me if I would resume the Bible class that we had started in 1957. After we had left in 1959, there had been a week day ladies' class for a time, with Tex Williams teaching, but now they were eager to have a ladies only class again. We began holding regular classes with no more than 7 or 8 ladies in attendance. Donna Horne was the only lady besides myself who had the confidence to lead a prayer or give a devotional, so we felt that it should be one of our goals to encourage more of the ladies to volunteer and to learn to do these things. Margaret Tonkin was one of the first to

say, "I'll try," and eventually there were several who became capable in these ways. We never did force anyone to lead a prayer or a devotional if they felt too shy, for we did not want to have anyone stay away on that account.

Margaret became outstanding in my mind for her willingness to help in every sort of way. If it was something new and different, she would modestly say, "I'll try," and try she did, and always did a commendable job. Very likely her example led many others to try also.

The Benoni ladies class became near and dear to my heart. As time passed and the church grew in numbers, the class grew as well, until in 1978 when we returned to America, there were 28 to 30 present at most classes, with at least 7 ladies taking turns, not just in prayers and devotionals, but in teaching the entire hour. We always had a benevolent project on the go. We collected usable clothing, repaired it as needed, and distributed it to the needy. Most of the distribution was left up to black preachers and leaders who were well acquainted with their members and knew who needed the help. There were some new garments knitted and some blankets knitted or crocheted, and some piece-quilts made for similar distribution. We ladies loved one another and enjoyed the fellowship and conversation that went on with these sessions, and we always ended with tea. The sequel to this story, as this account is being written, is that by the end of 1982, the class had grown to almost 40 and was going strong.

The long Easter weekend in South Africa is a time that is put to many uses. Everything except essential services is closed up from the Thursday evening before Easter until Tuesday morning afterward. This is the best time for

the white youth camps when Christian youth from all over converge upon a selected place for a 3-day camp, even traveling up to 1000 miles to do so. It is the time when many make the last trip of the season from inland to the seaside, for in the Southern Hemisphere, Easter falls in the autumn. It is also the time when many blacks from the cities make trips to their homelands, and hundreds of chartered buses are on the roads in addition to vans, trucks, and passenger cars, all loaded and overloaded with people and luggage. Garages are closed and mechanics are having their holidays, so travelers must carry their own spares and tool kits and know how to use them, or chance having problems along the way.

On our first Easter weekend since John began concentrated efforts with black people, he also "hit the road" but with a different purpose. Taking with him Simon Magugula of Benoni and brethren Manape, Malatje, and Ratau from Pretoria, he headed for Sekhukhuniland for a weekend of preaching. Jackson Sogoni was also to have made the trip, but as John wrote in a letter to some friends, "I don't know where I would have put him." Jackson was suffering from high blood pressure and was not well.

The brethren in Tulsa had promised us a car to use for this kind of work, but we were still having to drive our '65 Chevrolet. The Chev was a good car, but the roads and trails that must be traversed in bush work were not suited to it or to any ordinary passenger car which is built too low. We didn't need a Jeep or Land-rover, but really were in need of a car that gave more clearance underneath than a Chev.

John recorded in his diary that he traveled 881 miles

on this weekend trip. It was noon of that Friday before they left Pretoria, and late in the afternoon when they arrived at their destination, 7 or 8 miles out of Lydenburg. They went to the home of David Phalane who works with the church in that area and lives on land belonging to a white farmer. A little road cut through the farm, with a gate which had to be opened along the way. Soon after they began talking with David, the farmer drove up in his truck, jumped out, fists waving, face red with rage. "You left my gate open!" he roared. It took John considerable time to calm the man down, and prove the Bible to be true, "A soft answer turneth away wrath." Among other things, John explained that he was a city man and had not realized the importance of closing a gate, whereupon the conversation ended with an invitation from the farmer to eat supper with him. John turned down the invitation because the black sisters had already prepared a meal. His actions were a living sermon to those who were watching.

On Friday night, John preached a lesson, then just before 11 o'clock, went to Lydenburg to the hotel. The brethren were to continue in an all-night service, but John was not up to that, knowing that Saturday was going to be a full day. At 10 a. m. on Saturday, he went back to the meeting place and found the black folks just washing and preparing breakfast. When he learned that they had either forgotten, or been unable to obtain communion bread for Sunday, he took Robert Moraba into town to try to obtain some Matzos. This is usually available in grocery stores in the cities where there are Jewish people, but Lydenburg is small, and only tea rooms were open on the holiday. As a last resort, brother Moraba went to a cafe where a

friend of his worked in the kitchen. He asked the friend to mix some flour and water and bake it on the grill. The result was as tough as shoe leather, but at least it was unleavened.

Saturday afternoon and evening were spent in Bible study, and the Sunday morning service was held at the same place. In the afternoon, Robert Moraba joined the five men who were already traveling in the Chev, and they headed for Driekop, across some terrible roads. A tire blew out and had to be changed, leaving no spare for any possible further trouble, and no chance of repair or replacement. After that, whenever they came to a really bad place in the road, the five passengers would get out and walk while John carefully eased the car over the rocks. After the service at Driekop, the car would not start. John, who was not a mechanic at all, thought surely they were going to be stuck there until at least Tuesday, and even then, it might be difficult to get a mechanic to come way out into the bundu, or to tow the Chev back to town. One of the black brethren who'd had some experience with cars crawled underneath and discovered that the fuel line had been pulled away from the fuel tank by a rock which they must have hit just as they parked the car. By great good fortune and a bit of ingenuity, the repair was made and they were on their way, so by 9 p. m. they were at Penge Mine where they met with a small group of Christians. There was no hotel there for John, but he made arrangements with a couple for private accommodations.

On Easter Monday, the men all traveled to Jane Furse Hospital where it was thought that there was a black man

wanting to be baptized, but the 150-mile round trip was for nothing, for the man was not there. Back at Penge Mine, they had several hours of Bible study and were to baptize three people, but the river was in flood and may have been dangerous, especially at night. Robert was to return and baptize the three in daylight. Some of the black men with John had to be back at work Tuesday morning, so they took Robert Moraba to his turn-off in the road, and headed back for Pretoria and Benoni. It was 5 a. m. Tuesday morning when John went to bed. A sleep until noon had John back in good condition, but the car needed two new tires and a shock absorber plus a permanent repair job on the fuel line connection.

AN ASSESSMENT October 1966 to June 1968

Excerpt from a letter to J. A. (Shorty) Winfield who was planning to come to South Africa.

. . . . I make trips out into the "reserve" areas, usually over weekends, sometimes longer. In the past year and a half I have made two trips to Vendaland (300 miles NE), one to Sekhukhuniland (200 miles NE), four to the Draaik-raal-Dlaulale area (160 miles NE), one to the Belfast-Elandshoogte area (200 miles E), one to the Marble Hall area (180 miles NE), and one to Pondoland (500 miles SE). For the next two or three months I have a trip scheduled for Vendaland, one to Sekhukhuniland (where at both places I will speak at chiefs' kraals), and one to Zululand (some 400 miles SE). This is besides my help with the 12 African churches on the Reef and the 4 around Pretoria,

and the 8 colored churches on the Reef.

“I guess you might call me a modern ‘circuit rider.’ And you might wonder how much good I can do, stretching my time and talents as I do. Believe it or not, I feel I am doing quite a bit of good, mostly in the realms of inspiring, encouraging, exhorting and teaching the groups as I meet with them from time to time. I can see growth in many places, both in numbers and in spirituality. I would be the first to admit that what we need is trained preachers among the various races and churches, but the laws of the country make it extremely difficult to do this without much more help than we have at the present. Our small force of workers is taxed almost to the breaking point. However, we have started the ball rolling for a preacher training school in Vendaland”

“If you get the idea that I am enthused about my work, then you have assessed my feeling correctly. It is hard work, especially all the traveling, but a very rewarding work”

Lessons From the Ants

Africa has many varieties of ants, from the tiny black ones that invade the kitchen and hide in the sugar and carry it away, grain by grain, to the feared army ants that wreak havoc, eating every living thing in their paths. The writer of Proverbs refers twice to ants: in 6:6 where the wise man advised the sluggard to look to the ant and be wise, and in 30:35 where we are told that the ants are not strong, but in their wisdom they prepare their meat in the summer. When we make a further study of ants and see how they live in colonies, performing various tasks and existing and working for mutual benefit, we can truly “go to the ant” and learn more than one lesson: how they cooperate, how they stay busy, not wasting time, how great colonies can be built by virtue of vast numbers, each doing a little bit.

Similar to the ant in its habits but not biologically related, belonging to a different order, are the termites. Usually thought of as nothing but destructive pests, they serve a place in ecology of the tropics where earthworms do not exist, enriching the soil by consuming and recycling dead woody matter. These termites build huge nests sometimes towering as much as 20 feet in the air, sometimes resembling Gothic cathedrals, sometimes more like huge mounds. The first time I realized what enormous structures these can be was on a trip through Rhodesia when our road had actually been sliced through one of the mounds - it was higher than our car, its diameter greater than the length of the car. On one trip which took us as far as Tanganyika,

we stopped to photograph a number of termite heaps, our son Don taking pleasure in scaling to the tops and waving a salute from each. No, the termites don't bite – they hate sunlight and are out of sight.

In an article in *National Geographic*, April 1978, the writer tells about the experience he had of eating the fried, salted termites, then packaged in plastic bags and sold in the markets of east Africa. These are the bodies of the flying stage of the insect. At certain seasons, numerous sexed individuals of the termite world develop wings and swarm for the purpose of mating and starting new colonies. The wings soon drop off, and the awkward, crawling insects, about an inch long, are easy to catch. The author tells us that the fried termite tastes like “fried pork rind, peanuts, and potato chips rolled into one.”

One day when John and I were traveling around Vendaland, visiting some of the church members, we drove into the yard of a family we had known for some time. Walking into the kraal, we saw that the young mother had a large flat metal dish from which her little children were hungrily scooping up handfuls of greasy little objects which we soon learned were fried “flying ants.” We declined the invitation to have some, but may have been more likely to accept had we then known of the flavor described in the *National Geographic*. Now if we could just find a marketable use for the type of termite that invades houses, we could more quickly decrease its numbers.

If you are thinking that the persons eating the fried termites were primitive and poor, let me hasten to say that

that particular family are better educated than average, and the man of the house owns a prosperous trading store, and a couple of trucks in his business. So their eating fried termites, caught in the wild, would be similar to an American eating the fish caught in a lake, or wild raspberries or blueberries found for free, and regarded as a great treat.

Once when John was driving his big truck to load up some benches for a meeting, he saw several individuals with long poles and baskets. He stopped the truck to ask if they wanted a ride, but they declined, saying that they were out looking for food. John was nonplussed: the poles were not for fishing — there was no water, no lines or hooks. He asked several people what kind of food they would be getting with poles and baskets, but they seemed to be embarrassed and would not answer. Finally, back at the place where our big tent was set up for the meeting, one of our preachers offered to show us the “food.” He brought a small brown paper bag which was greasy, as if it had some fried food in it. It was little greenish beetles which had been prepared, as I recall, by putting them into boiling water. There must be quite a bit of fat in these insects to soak through the paper bag as it did. The poles had to be used to knock the beetles out of the trees.

We were reminded of an incident when we lived near the Indian Ocean at Port Elizabeth. Echols and we used to go out to the rocky shoreline where at low tide we could pick up shell fish called pericloves. Out of a shell the size of a fist, the only edible portion was the foot, about the size of a man’s thumb, so we had to bring home a sizable sack of pericloves to make a meal. We would plunge them into hot water, pull out the little animal, cut

away the "foot," and discard the rest. These edible parts were processed in the pressure cooker for a time, since they were a muscle and inclined to be tough. We would then dip the pieces in batter and deep-fry them. As we sat at the table feasting on pericloves, a black brother, Timothy Zimba came in. We offered him some, but he refused with a grimace and said, "You white people will eat anything!" Yes, and John the Baptist ate locusts.

In certain regions of northern South Africa and Rhodesia as well as other places, there is a mopani tree which features in two ways. Our first knowledge of it is that the center part of the trunk and main branches is extremely hard, so hard in fact that termites cannot eat it. It is much sought after for poles in the construction of huts, particularly for the roofing poles, and one of the poles is also used for the pounding of corn or other grains to make meal. At certain times of the year, there is a harvest of another kind among the mopani trees, when there is a great fat caterpillar that feeds upon the leaves. These "worms" are collected, treated (soft interior squeezed out), and dried. High in protein, as are the flying ants and the green beetles, mopani worms are a much sought-after food. In the city areas where there are no mopani trees and no direct source of supply of the dried worms, a small bag of them brought in from the country will fetch a handsome price.

John was always willing to try every new and strange food and tried often to get the Venda people to prepare him some mopani worms, but they always said they were sure he wouldn't like them. One Venda lady finally gave him a small package of the dry ones and she

wrote down a “recipe” so that I could prepare them. I put the package in my cupboard – rather far back – and every once in a while I would take it in my hand, turn it over, look at the recipe, and then decide, “Not today.” That “today” never did arrive. And it never will, in my house.

Perhaps some day in the future, we will find sources of food where we do not now look for them. The idea of eating insects and worms is repugnant to many. But look how fat the robins get. Well, the robin is a bird, and worms are “for the birds.”

SABS Lectureship

Just as SABS itself had a small beginning, so the first lectureships were very limited. The lectureship concept, well known in America, was new to South Africa. The first one or two had a comparative handful in attendance, consisting mainly of preachers and a few Benoni people. The first session of ladies was held in a small classroom with not more than 14 or 15 in attendance. My subject was "The Ladies' Bible Class," another nearly new concept in South Africa. The ladies showed great interest in the sample study books I had with me, and some groundwork was laid for spread of the idea to other congregations. The daytime lectures in the Benoni church auditorium were well prepared and well presented but not well attended. Night sessions drew fair local Benoni crowds.

Each year, the popularity of the lectureships grew, and after several years, the occasion became the high point of the year for Christians from Cape Town and Port Elizabeth in the south, all the way to Salisbury and Nhowe Mission to the north. In 1981, 60 Cape Town people chartered a bus to make the trip. A number of people use part of their annual vacation time to attend, and some families keep their children out of school, believing that the days at the lectureship are more beneficial than the same number of days in school. Usually the dates for the lectureships are scheduled to fall within the time of the school break between third and fourth terms for at

least two of the four provinces.

Families are encouraged to attend and when the number of children grew great enough that their activities caused discipline problems, we began to provide special activities for them. At first these were mainly of an entertainment nature, such as cartoon movies, but later we added Bible puppet productions. When we moved into the facilities of the large new Benoni building and had numerous rooms available, Peter Mostert, then a SABS student, hit upon the idea of structured Bible study for two or three hours each day, in addition to the puppets and movies. Peter contacted Bible School teachers all over the Republic, asking if they would be willing to teach one hour during the week, what age group they preferred, and which of the adult lectures they would least object to missing so as to be available. He then made up a schedule of classes and asked each teacher to bring her best or favorite lesson. In most cases, this "pot-luck" of lessons worked out, but one class had four lessons about David and Goliath, so the next year, a special course of study was prescribed with greater success.

Accommodation for out-of-town visitors posed a problem from the very outset. Benoni boasted only two small hotels, one of which later closed down. So, most lectureship guests are put up in the homes of Benoni members. South Africans are a hospitable people in many ways, but the idea of keeping perfect strangers in their homes was so new that it took some teaching and convincing to make them willing to give it a try. Before the first lectureship, we called a meeting of the ladies and had a thorough discussion of the matter, from how best to organize the households to make the bathroom facilities trouble-free

for extra people, to foods that could be prepared ahead of time and/or fixed quickly so that hostesses would not have to miss the lectures. We exchanged quick-to-fix recipes and discussed simple menus, pointing out the need for emphasis to be on the spiritual food of the week.

In many cases, the Benoni families found that they made fast friends with their guests. Some requested having the same people to stay with them year after year, while others enjoyed having different people each time. A few of the guests failed to fit into the homes where they were placed, but such was to be expected — all are human. Once, we put out a little semi-humorous brochure on how to be the most sought-after lectureship guest, in which we made some needed hints about being tidy, punctual, considerate of the host and hostess, etc. One or two recipients of the brochure were offended, but likely it was a case of the “shoe fitting.” When the list of out-of-town guests passed the 200 mark, Benoni homes were taxed to the limit, some families housing as many as 18 guests.

The SABS lectureships have always ended with a banquet and a program of entertainment. Usually, the food is catered so that the Benoni ladies who have been busy all week can have a chance to relax. The banquet has grown into a special occasion for all ages including young people from churches all over the country. With lectureships and youth camps, acquaintances have spread nation-wide, and deep friendships have been formed, the closing moments of banquet night being marked with poignant good-byes.

Just as the closing of the banquet night means

farewells until the next year, so the opening day of the new lectureship is a day of happy reunions, embraces, and handshaking. There is no doubt whatever that the lectureships have been the greatest unifying influence among the churches of Christ in Southern Africa.

Most of the SABS lectureships have had at least one overseas speaker other than missionaries already in South Africa to feature on the program. This is a good extra attraction, although the number of very capable local speakers increases year by year. Many of the visiting speakers are from congregations supporting missionaries or works in southern Africa. Overseas speakers include:

- 1970 — Sherman Cannon
- 1972 — Frank Pack
- 1973 — Harvey and Celia Pruitt, Jimmy Jividen
- 1974 — Lindsay Garmon, Darrell Rickard
- 1975 — Bill Hatcher
- 1976 — Harvey Porter, Roger Johnson, Leonard and Marguerite Gray, Wade Phelps, James Carley, and Donna Steward
- 1977 — Virgil Poe
- 1978 — Joe McKissick, John Bannister
- 1979 — Perry Cotham, Joe Watson, J. T. Stanfill
- 1980 — John Maples, Jr.
- 1981 — Tom and Doris Cunningham, Ken Dye
- 1982 — Ben Zickefoose, Jack and Ann Exum, and John Cannon

1983 — Tex and Mary Jane Williams, Charles Prince

Each of the lectureships has a specific theme, and much planning goes into the programs. SABS staff meetings begin early in the year, and the director begins many months ahead of time to write letters to speakers and to coordinate all of the events. Compared to lectureships at Abilene Christian University and other large institutions in the U. S. where attendances are as high as 5000, the SABS lectureships are small, but for South Africa in its present stage of development, they are a big event.

John was the director of the first 12 lectureships, and he kept records of them all. In his report on the 7th lectureship in 1973, he recorded the high nighttime attendance of 410, with day time lectures showing 110 men and 108 ladies. The 410 figure was, up to that time, the largest audience of white people in the church of Christ in South Africa. Later audiences regularly fill Benoni's new 620-seat auditorium to overflowing.

The 1975 lectureship brought one significant event into our personal lives, bringing back memories of our arrival in Africa in 1949. "Auntie Gladys" Claassen, one of the first ladies we met upon our arrival in Bulawayo 26 years before, came to the lectureship — her first. It was also her first plane trip. No longer young in years, her sharp mind was undaunted by the passage of time. She stayed in our home, and we had time to reminisce. (Auntie Gladys' daughter, Lois and son-in-law Mel Sheasby attended SABS. Mel and Lois then earned Masters Degrees from ACU and are, at this time, on the

permanent teaching staff at SABS. Her other daughter, Rhona Menage, has been serving as house mother for the girls' dormitory at SABS). One of our many South African stories had made full circle.

In attendance at the 1974 lectureship was Rorey Massey of Bulawayo. Rorey intended to attend SABS beginning in 1975. At the close of one of the evening sessions at the Laer-skool hall in Northmead, most of the crowd had dispersed, but a few remained, lingering in friendly conversation. Among them, fortunately, was Dr. Des Stumpf of Cape Town. Someone came on the run to say that Rorey was having a heart attack by the gate at the bottom of the drive. Dr. Des raced to the scene and did all he could, but to no avail. Rorey had suffered an attack of a sort that no doctor could have saved him, even if he had been present at the very instant of onset.

At the close of the 1974 lectureship, John was supposed to have taken overseas guests on a tour of Vendaland and Kruger Park, but he began to experience some strange feelings in the region of his heart. It was not a pain, he said, but a "crawly" feeling, and he was very tired. Jerry Hogg did the honors for the visitors while John rested and saw a specialist. An electrocardiogram showed slight coronary blockage, and the blood pressure reading was slightly elevated, but the doctor thought a change of medication, careful eating, and daily exercise would be sufficient treatment. There had certainly been stress to help bring on the problem, if indeed stress is to be blamed. Not to be defeated by a symptom or two, John was on his way to Maun, Botswana in just a few weeks.

By 1977, the new Benoni building was ready for use

by the lectureship. The old building had become a fellowship hall, the old cry room having been expanded and furnished as a small kitchen. For the first time since the early meetings when our numbers were small, there was ample space for everything. The ladies' sessions had become so popular that they were given the auditorium while the men used the fellowship hall, and classrooms were used for smaller groups, for children's classes, and for an attended nursery for babies.

The 1978 lectureship, SABS's 12th, was John's last as director. We returned to the states shortly afterward. We had made plans to return for lectureship '81 and had obtained new passports and visas, but John was "called home" before that time. South Africa had been our earthly home for many years, and I felt the need to make the journey to see old friends, even without John. This I did, and found the visit to be therapeutic. Most of the white people I wanted to see were at the lectureship, and I was able to make visits to a number of black areas, particularly Vendaland, Daveyton and Thokhosa.

The earlier lectureships involving the white churches had an occasional non-white visitor. As years passed, a few more came from time to time, especially after the new Benoni church building was available for the large evening sessions. It was even noted by the more tradition-bound folk that there was no segregation in the seating but that all races were seated together. The first black person to address the lectureship was Simon Magagula when he gave his report on the Daveyton congregation in 1978. Sleeping accommodations and restroom facilities for separate racial groups could continue to be a

problem as long as the laws of the land so regulate and old traditions hold on.

A giant step for the brotherhood of Christians in South Africa was made at lectureship '83 when a busload of 70 people, some of them colored, made the thousand mile journey from Cape Town. Peter Manuel, a colored minister from Cape Town was one of the principal speakers, and some colored people were accommodated in the homes of white Benoni members. Such is not against any law.

Brother Manuel is reported to have said he wished he could be referred to simply as "brother Manuel" without any reference to the fact that he is colored. Many white brethren agree in principle, but old habits and procedures die hard, and no offense is intended. The future looks great for lectureships and for the spread of fellowship across racial lines and in every direction.

Beauty

Jessie Lee Caskey was in my kitchen, giving me a home permanent. Betty, my housemaid, watched with interest and began to giggle. "You white people want your hair to be curly and we black people try to make ours straight."

Betty was right. There are as many ideas about beauty as there are people: from the sophisticated lady with her elegant coiffure to the primitive one with her hair plastered with mud and fat; from the flawless matte complexion of the European lady to the oiled, scar-marked face of the African belle; from the modern city lady with her eye makeup, lipstick and blushers to the lady in the bush, painted with her red ochre – all trying to improve upon Mother Nature.

Many black women merely keep their closely kinked hair cut short and covered with scarves or berets, but the younger generation in South African cities today are changing that long-standing custom. Some let their hair grow longer and rake it out into an "Afro," some have their hair straightened and imitate the hair-do's of white women, while very young girls often have corn-rows of very tightly braided strands that are laid down, row upon row. Today's special makeup for the dark-skinned lady has reached the city shops.

In rural areas, the old-fashioned efforts at beauty can still be seen, some of the painting of faces and bodies having relationship to some ceremony in the life of the

individual. Xhosa boys, during their initiation, are painted white all over. Sometimes one may see people with faces painted white, yellow, or orange, creating a mask-like appearance.

Women's hair may be plastered with red mud, or a combination of mud and grease, and perhaps decorated with beads. Sometimes heads are completely shaved, whether for cleanliness or convenience. Ndebele women may shave a wide strip across the top of the head, from ear to ear, to facilitate the wearing of beaded ornaments. A Swazi man may plaster his hair with a mixture of soap and bleach, allowing it to dry into a cap-like shape, to remain that way for some days, after which he will wash it out and find his hair to be reddish and straight. A Swazi girl may have her hair stiffened with mud, pushed into cap-like shapes, dried, and painted with colorful designs. One of the most unusual hair styles was worn by a man in the eastern Transvaal. His head was shaved except for a small patch over the center of his forehead. That hair had grown three or four inches long and was twisted to a point. When he came out of the water after his immersion, he posed for a picture with a large shimmering drop of water about to fall from the tip of that twist of hair.

Black women who have carried loads on their heads since girlhood have developed a smooth, gliding stride. White women would do well if they could walk as beautifully. Accustomed to walking many miles at a time, they move easily, and walking barefoot, their stride is natural, not crippled by stylish shoes or high heels that throw the entire body out of line.

The wearing of beads has always been popular in the

black tribes. Before traders arrived with their colorful glass beads, the people laboriously fashioned them by hand, one at a time, from sea shells or the shells of ostrich eggs, and from colorful seeds. Once a ready supply of beads became available at trading stores, the making of all sorts of beaded ornaments became easy, and beadwork soon became a popular souvenir item among white visitors. Beads became the symbol of a black woman's wealth. On special occasions, the Ndebele women, for instance, will load themselves down with enormous bead-wrapped circles of straw, from smaller bracelets and anklets to large circles worn all up and down the arms and legs, and even larger circles around neck and waist. In addition, the more affluent among them will have a sort of apron of solid beadwork, and perhaps assorted strips of beadwork fastened to their skirts.

The colors of the beads have come to have meanings, and a girl may tell a story to those who can "read" her beads. To the Zulu, white is for purity and true love, red for intense love, blue for loneliness, green for extreme loneliness or pining, yellow for jealousy, pink for poverty, and black for anger, hurt, or jealousy. A group of white boys went from Benoni to Swaziland where they assisted in the construction of a church building. They were intrigued by the various pieces of beadwork: bracelets, necklaces, and strips of woven beads to pin onto a garment as an ornament, so they bought some of them and put them on. A group of Swazi girls passed by, and when they began to giggle and point, the boys wondered why. The girls refused to tell, but later the boys learned that one of them was wearing a bracelet that announced him to be a

virgin. It reminded me of the lady who laboriously copied some Chinese letters and embroidered them on a blouse, only to find out that she had copied a laundry list. Beads or words, it pays to know what they mean.

Zulu men and women sometimes have large slits in their earlobes into which they can insert wooden discs some two inches in diameter and $3/4$ of an inch thick. With the discs removed, the earlobes hang down and swing back and forth with the person's movements, but with the painted discs in place like large earrings, they are picturesque.

Once when I had been teaching a class of Christian women in Vendaland, one of the ladies had a question. Her people wanted her to have her baby girl marked with scars on her face and abdomen, and she wanted to know if a Christian mother could do this. My first thought was that if it was merely a custom and thought to be marks of beauty which would make the girl more desirable when she grew up, there could be no harm in it. The ladies explained, however, that the problem was not as simple as that. It was custom, to be sure, but it had a significance to the Venda people that would be contrary to Christian teaching. In that case I had to advise the mother to do her best to keep the family from having the baby marked. This may have been difficult advice to follow because aunts and other older relatives would have more to say in the matter than the young mother.