

# The Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle

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**Scott Phillips, left, leader of the BGCO Operations Team, presents Freida and Eli Sheldon with a gift during a reception held in their honor at the Baptist Building, March 14.**

## **Reception honors Eli and Freida Sheldon; Nigh named Historical Secretary**

**>> by Chris Doyle, Baptist Messenger Managing Editor**

*Editor's Note: This article is an edited version of one which appeared in the Baptist Messenger, reprinted with permission.*

Eli and Freida Sheldon were honored at a reception March 14 at the Baptist Building. Freida recently completed 14 years of service with the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) with her final position being Eli's ministry assistant. Eli retired as BGCO historical secretary Dec. 31.

For eight years, Eli served as BGCO historical secretary, working closely with the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission. Many will recognize him as the one who has visited churches during special occasions, making presentations on behalf of the BGCO and the Historical Commission.

"It is rare for (Eli and Freida) to not have a weekend where they are out at one of our churches recognizing that church's history, that pastor's tenure or the accomplishments of that congregation, and there are fewer things that mean as much to them as knowing there are others who recognize and appreciate their accomplishments, especially their fellow Oklahoma Baptists," said Scott Phillips, BGCO

Operations Team leader, during the reception. “Eli is the personal presence of Oklahoma Baptists in that church on that day, and that is especially meaningful for them.”

A longtime Oklahoma pastor, Sheldon’s last pastorate was at Oklahoma City, Crown Heights, where he served 28 years. He also pastored at Marietta, Eastside and Roosevelt, First.

“I never knew I would end up in a position like this,” Eli said about serving as historical secretary. “Every day has been fun. Every day is still fun. Every morning I wake up and say, ‘OK, Lord, what now?’ I don’t know what exactly it is going to be, but I know I will still be involved in research. In fact, one of the reasons I retired is so I can get more into research of (the) history of churches.”

Bob Nigh also was announced as the new BGCO historical secretary at the March 14 reception. Nigh retired last October after serving 18 years as managing editor of the *Baptist Messenger*.

“Oklahoma Baptists have a rich heritage and history. The Lord has prepared Bob to continue and expand the great work Eli has done, as we tell the story of what God has done through Oklahoma Baptists,” said Brian Hobbs, *Messenger* editor.

“I am honored to have been selected as the new historical secretary consultant for the BGCO,” Nigh commented. “I have a love of history, and marvel about how God has moved through and among Oklahoma Baptists for more than a century. I am looking forward to learning much more about His work in our state in the future.”



**From left, Bob Nigh, new BGCO historical secretary, and his wife, Glenda, are shown with Freida and Eli Sheldon.**

## Issue highlights Falls Creek Centennial

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Falls Creek encampment in the Arbuckle Mountains near Davis. In observance of that milestone, this issue of the *Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle* presents some historical highlights associated with what has become the world's largest, year-round, multi-purpose conference center accommodating participants of all ages as they seek to either establish or deepen a relationship with the God of the universe.

## Falls Creek Centennial weekend Celebration scheduled Sept. 2-3

>> *by Brian Hobbs Editor*

*Editor's Note: This article is an edited version of one which appeared in the Baptist Messenger, reprinted with permission.*

DAVIS—In the midst of the 100th Anniversary year of Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center, anticipation is growing for a major celebration weekend, Sept. 2-3.

The weekend, which is being planned by the Falls Creek 100th Celebration Committee, centers around two events, a Saturday evening youth concert and a Sunday evening classic worship service.

From 6:30-9:30 p.m., Sat., Sept. 2 will be the Falls Creek Night of Praise youth concert, featuring an assortment of musical artists, including Charlie Hall, Jami Smith, Matt Roberson, Cody Dunbar and special guests, The Skit Guys. Tickets to the Night of Praise, which takes place in the R.A. Young Tabernacle, cost \$5 each, and may be purchased at [www.fallscreek.org/100](http://www.fallscreek.org/100).

"We are truly blessed by how many talented musical artists have a connection to Falls Creek, and this Night of Praise will showcase what God has done at Falls Creek. I believe this weekend celebration will be especially memorable for all those who attend," said Andy Harrison, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO)



Falls Creek program director.

From 6-8 p.m., Sun., Sept. 3, a Falls Creek "Homecoming Service" will take place in the Tabernacle. The event will follow a classic Falls Creek worship program, featuring a Falls Creek Centennial Choir, sermon, recognition of special guests, commemorative video and other special parts.

There is no cost to attend the Sunday evening event. The Falls Creek campgrounds will be opened at 2 p.m. that Sunday, to accommodate those who wish to arrive early, and concessions will be available on the campgrounds. Singers also may participate in the Falls Creek Celebration Choir on Sunday evening, if they pre-register at [www.bgcoworship.org](http://www.bgcoworship.org) and take part in one of three regional rehearsals being held in August.

In a recent joint letter to pastors, BGCO Executive Director-Treasurer Anthony L. Jordan and Danny Ringer, director of missions in Beckham-Mills Association, who is serving as chairman of the Falls Creek 100th Celebration Committee, asked Oklahoma Baptist churches to make participating in the weekend a priority.

"We would not normally schedule an event on a Sunday evening, but we believe this one-time event will be spiritually important for Oklahoma Baptists," Jordan said.

Jordan, who has been asked by the Committee to deliver the sermon Sunday evening, said he believes a vast majority of Oklahoma Baptists have a connection to Falls Creek and a story of faith, and he anticipates a large number of Oklahoma Baptists will take part in the weekend.

"God has used Falls Creek to make an eternal impact on the lives of so many, including myself. We are so thankful to the Lord for these 100 years, and I am truly thrilled about the plans for this weekend," he said.

"We want pastors to promote the entire Falls Creek 100th Anniversary weekend to their congregation and among their community, and to pray that the Lord would move in mighty ways during the 100th Anniversary weekend," Ringer said. "From the youth concert on Saturday to the Homecoming Service on Sunday where we will be led by Bill Green in singing 'Saved, Saved,' this will be one unforgettable weekend. We believe God will move again at Falls Creek, where He has so many times before."

To view more information about the Falls Creek 100th weekend, visit [www.fallscreek.org/100](http://www.fallscreek.org/100).

# ***New book celebrates Falls Creek Centennial***

**>> by Dana Williamson**

*Editor's Note: This article is an edited version of one which appeared in the Baptist Messenger, reprinted with permission.*

Since Falls Creek was founded in 1917, just during the summer months alone, more than 2 million people have walked its 305-acre grounds in the heart of the Arbuckle Mountains in southern Oklahoma. More than 65,000 of those have professed Jesus as their Savior during that time, and thousands more have committed their lives to Christian service.

The camp, now a multi-purpose conference center, has a storied history, which has been preserved in a new book titled, *100 Years of Falls Creek: A Legacy of Faith*.

Researched and written by Dana Williamson, retired associate editor of the *Baptist Messenger*, and designed by Oklahoma City graphic artist, Rick Boyd, who has done numerous publicity pieces for both the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) and Southern Baptist Convention entities, the 120-page "coffee table" book commemorating Falls Creek's approaching 100-year anniversary depicts the 10 decades of Falls Creek in 272 photographs, a timeline and short testimonies from people whose lives were changed at the camp. The book also includes brief features on notable preachers and musicians, who helped make Falls Creek successful, as well as memorable pieces on the subjects of dress code, swimming and other recreational activities, first-aid and tent city.

The book is divided into eras for easy reading, beginning with the founding of the camp, The Beginning in 1917; Establishing a Thriving Encampment (1918-29); Pre-War Growth (1930-45); Post-War Blessings (1946-69); Continuing the Tradition (1970-95); Building Toward the Future (1996-2016); 100 Years and Counting (2017).





Facts about Falls Creek, which may not be known by many, are scattered throughout the book—such as the make/model of the first car to travel over the rustic one-lane road in 1917, and that several Oklahoma governors have visited Falls Creek, and that two actually spoke at the camp.

“This beautiful book is a remarkable pictorial and written story of the mighty work of God at Falls Creek,” said Anthony L. Jordan, BGCO executive director-treasurer. “The story of Falls Creek is about people, not buildings or facilities. Page after page of this book reveal the impact of this wonderful place in the lives of countless people—including my own life. The reader will see 100 years of the powerful work of the Gospel on these grounds unfold before their eyes. This book is sure to stimulate a flood of heartwarming personal memories.”

Marty Harkey, chief development officer for the BGCO, who was a consultant on the book, said for those who have attended Falls Creek and for those who have only heard the words ‘Falls Creek,’ this book will be a trove of information and inspiration.

“The history and pictures depicting 100 years of this special place will remind readers of their time at Falls Creek and will encourage others to visit this life-changing location God has used to transform multiplied thousands of lives,” Harkey said.

Brian Hobbs, editor of the *Baptist Messenger*, who led in the production of the book, said the new publication will be of interest to people around the world because that’s how far the influence of Falls Creek reaches.

“Falls Creek has been the catalyst for thousands of Oklahomans as they have made their way into service as pastors, church staff, missionaries and teachers throughout the world,” said Hobbs. “This book will bring back memories of how far away they’ve traveled and yet how near to their hearts Falls Creek is.”

Books are available for \$25 each, and may be ordered online at [www.fallscreek.org/book](http://www.fallscreek.org/book), or by calling 405/942-3800, Ext. 4361. Supplies are limited.

## **‘Poet laureates’ extolled Falls Creek spirit**

**>> by Bob Nigh, Editor**

On Sept. 11, 1981, the Historical Commission of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) authorized J.M. Gaskin, director of history, to compile and edit a collection of poetry written by Albert McClellan and Sam Scantlan, who arguably would be on the list of icons from which two others would be selected to join Falls Creek founders J.B. Rounds and W.D. Moorer on the encampment’s figurative “Mount Rushmore.”

That poetry collection, *The Falls Creek Spirit*, was published in 1982.

McClellan, a prolific author, wrote several books, including *Rainbow South*; *The West is Big*; and, *The Faith We Hold*. He also served as editor of the *Baptist Messenger* from 1945-49, and later for many years with the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention. He first went to Falls Creek in 1935 and said, “For the next 15 years it was one of the main centers of my life.” Admittedly acquiring a “romantic view” of Falls Creek, McClellan unabashedly served as its lifelong advocate and in hands-on fashion as editor of the camp news and camp pastor.

“Still, everywhere I go,” he wrote in a letter to Gaskin, “I extol its greatness. This greatness I see in (1) the young people whose lives it has blessed; (2) in its ability to bring Oklahoma spiritual life to a sharp annual focus; (3) in the vast influence it has had on the churches; and, (4) in its stabilizing effect on Oklahoma church and denominational life.”

McClellan, who said he wrote about 600 poems, cited his many years of association and correspondence with Scantlan—each said he had about 1,000 letters on file from the other—in suggesting the title of the poetry compilation—*The Falls Creek Spirit*—taken from a poem of that title written by Scantlan.

In 1944, Scantlan was called to direct the Dept. of Missions for the BGCO and did double-duty as business manager at Falls Creek. During his ministry, his full-time pastorates included Shawnee, Rock Creek; St. Louis; Earlsboro, Fairview; Oklahoma City, Capitol Hill, and Beatty. He also was a prolific writer, authoring four books, *Andrew Potter, Baptist Builder*; *T.B. Lackey—The Man and an Epoch*; *Through God’s Revolving Doors* (a book of poems); and *A Manual for Baptist Associational Missions*.

Scantlan, who also served as BGCO president, said in an interview with Gaskin, “I love Falls Creek. It challenges me. The young people were grand indeed. I remember some special projects such as the

swimming pool, McKinney Chapel, the sewer system, two enlargements of the tabernacle, and building many roads—these were things we did during the years I was manager. Money was hard to come by in many of those days.”

Gaskin also asked Scantlan what prompted him to write poems about Falls Creek. He said, “The Falls Creek poems just came along spontaneously as I came and went from the grounds . . . these came right out of the inspiration of the moment, and that is the better poem.”

*The Falls Creek Spirit* contains 64 poems, 22 by McClellan, and 42 by Scantlan. Below is the title selection, penned by Scantlan, followed by a poem written by McClellan in honor of his friend.

### ***The Falls Creek Spirit***

Falls Creek Baptist Assembly is  
an enterprise of love;  
its spirit inspires enthusiasm,  
and invites us to action.  
While the incessant growth of  
the spirit and facility intrigues us,  
and lays claim upon our hearts,  
the spirit of those assemblies  
produces a love that is inexhaustible.

Thinking of the spirit in its early years,  
we look backward for a glance at  
cooking upon wood fires;  
living in tents—  
sleeping upon the ground;  
no electricity—no water lines;  
no modern equipment.  
And this enriches the lives of youth today,  
who have new and improved facilities—  
in what has become a modern, up-to-date city.

As of old, the spirit of Falls Creek  
breaks forth into singing—  
preaching and study,  
It is a lucrative place;  
producing a wealth of spirit,  
that follows youthful men and women  
until they surrender to the will of God.

The spirit of Falls Creek is  
the eye to pierce the darkness  
of human nature—the hidden potential  
to reanimate a flagging zeal;  
giving life to the full;  
even renewal of inward desire  
to follow the leading of  
The Holy Spirit of God.

Oh! Blessed Valley!  
filled with the bloom of youth,  
where greatness and fortune  
come to the fore in full power.  
You cannot smell, taste, hear or see  
this Falls Creek Spirit,  
but you can feel it in your soul.  
And this is the Spirit  
of Falls Creek Baptist Assembly.

### ***A Splendid Hush Pervades These Happy Grounds***

A splendid hush pervades these happy grounds,  
subdued are eager youth's tumultuous sounds.  
No cheering crowd cries out a victory yell,  
a hundred kitchens send out their noontime smell.  
The quiet field reflects the midday sun,  
no batter cracks the victor's winning run,  
no water splashes with the diver's plunge,  
no tennis ball eludes the player's lunge,  
no youthful climbers scale the rocky hills,  
no timid Sues parade with bashful Bills.  
There is a sound that fills the summer air,  
a song and calling voice so princely clear.  
Into this holy quiet God sends his power,  
For now prevails the Falls Creek preaching hour.

*(Albert McClellan wrote this poem in honor of his friend Sam Scantlan and his week of preaching at Falls Creek.)*

# Falls Creek plays important role in legacy of Oklahoma Baptists

by Bob Nigh, Editor

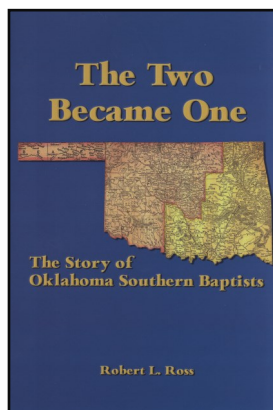
In 2001, Robert Ross, retired president of the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma, was commissioned to write the history of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) as part of its Centennial Celebration. The result was, *The Two Became One*, a 22-chapter, 385-page, well-researched and documented “genealogy,” of the BGCO going back well before the land runs of 1889 and the 1890s and the migration of the Five Civilized Tribes to Indian Territory, a scar on the history of mankind indelibly marred by the human tragedy that became known as “The Trail of Tears.”

Touching on the forays of Spanish explorers Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, who vainly searched for the “Lost City of Gold” in 1541, and Hernando de Soto, who scoured the eastern third of what was to become Oklahoma for the fabled fountain of youth a year later, and French explorer Rene-Robert La Salle, who in 1682, claimed the vast uncharted area west of the Mississippi River for France and named it Louisiana in honor of its King Louis XIV, Ross ties the birth of the state of Oklahoma on Nov. 16, 1907 to that of the BGCO a year earlier on Nov. 9, 1906.

Ross likens the creation, if you will, of the BGCO to a marriage—a unity of two bodies—the Baptist General Convention of Indian Territory and the Oklahoma Baptist State Convention—whose representatives met at a predetermined time, formed parallel lines and marched two-by-two to the Shawnee, Okla. Opera House and there forged the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

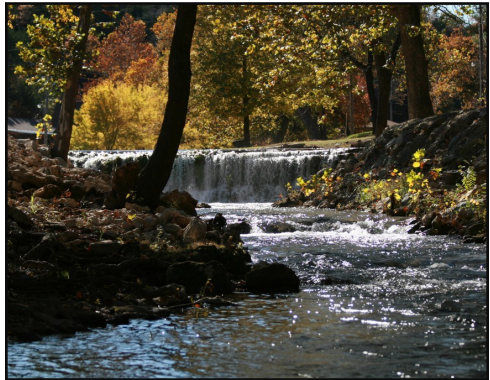
Ross’ book is sectioned chronologically like a sweet citrus fruit, divided by the years of service of its eight great leaders, followed by chapters about the Convention’s affiliates and major ministry components, including, of course, Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center, which, as Ross points out in his preface, he attended, “as a teenager where I first felt God’s call upon my life to preach.”

Following is a portion of Chapter 16 of *The Two Became One*,



"Falls Creek Baptist Assembly first met on August 16-26, 1917. Two hundred and seventy-three souls left civilization, such as it was in the early 1900s, and ventured into the backwoods wilderness of southern Oklahoma's Arbuckle Mountains. The mile-and-a-half road from Price's Falls built only a few months before by James Burley (J.B.) Rounds and his sons was their only way in and out of this isolated spot, and it was barely passable. If it rained, the road became nothing more than a rutted mud hole. Most of the campers arrived by wagon pulled by two mules.

"The buildings they found were less than imposing. These rustic wooden structures were hurriedly put up in the spring and early summer of 1917. At the center of the camp stood the tabernacle. It was a canvas canopy supported by three crude upright posts. Its dimensions were thirty-by-fifty feet. Other buildings surrounding the oval where the tabernacle was situated were a central dining hall, quarters for female campers known as Howell Hall (a.k.a. "No Man's Land), and another building called the Pollyanna Club House that was also a cottage for girls. In addition to these structures, the assembly had a residence for the camp's caretaker. None of the facilities had electricity, and, of course, no indoor plumbing. Water for drinking and bathing was carried from the creek where campers swam during recreation periods. Two outhouses were the only other facilities provided.



"The registration fee was \$1.00 and tents and cots were offered to the campers for a rental fee of \$1.25 for the ten-day period.

One of the scenic waterfalls from which Falls Creek derives its name.

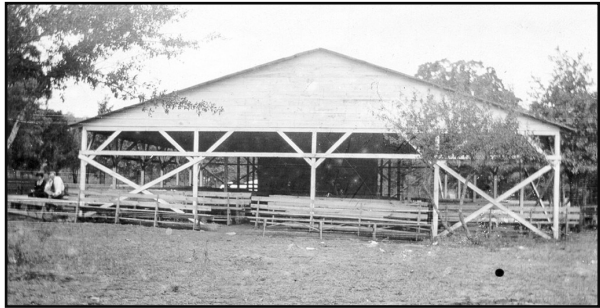
"Many campers slept in the outdoors under the stars and sought shelter under the tabernacle only when it rained. They boiled their water and cooked their food on open fires. The largest group of campers came from Shawnee. There were fifty-two of them, and they stayed in a large tent secured from the Fort Sill Army Post at Lawton. The second largest group was from Oklahoma City, with forty-one campers.

"For recreation, they had hard dirt tennis courts available for matches, and swimming was in a creek that meandered its way through the grounds. From the flow of that creek, there sprouted hundreds of small tributaries or falls that gave rise to the camp's name—Falls

Creek. The grounds were rugged; each day, the boys would cut away the underbrush and the girls would gather the brush into a large pile. After the services each night, they had a giant bonfire. Later that fall, fifty angora goats were brought in to clear the underbrush.

"The 273 campers who came and stayed in the hot days of August 1917 worshiped twice a day under the makeshift tabernacle and conducted classes in the shade of trees. During the ten-day encampment, Pearl and Bonnie Brubaker, from a nearby farm who had helped in the construction of the camp's buildings, were saved and were baptized in the creek. Rosalee Mills Appleby became the first young person at Falls Creek to make a decision of special service, declaring that God had called her to foreign missions. She later served as a long-time Southern Baptist missionary in Brazil."

In addition to Applebee, 12 other youth made a personal commitment to special service that first year.



Tripp Pavilion, used until 1928.

While much prayer, preparation and practical effort on the part of Rounds, (William Durant, 'W.D.') Moorer and many others had gone into the founding of Falls Creek Baptist Assembly and the initial year of operation, the two founders fervently prayed for spiritual results to "Prove their venture of faith valid," wrote Historical Secretary Emeritus J.M. Gaskin in *Sights and Sounds of Falls Creek*, his 1980 rewrite of his original *The Falls Creek Story*, published in 1967 on the occasion of the campground's 50th Anniversary:

"Moorer prayed that they might know the will of God in the matter of the assembly's future, and be willing to abide by it. Rounds worded his prayer something like this: 'Father, we've worked hard for this assembly, and we both love it too much. We might not be able to see your will. If you would have Oklahoma Baptists go on with an assembly at Falls Creek, show us, Father, so that we will know. Let us have at least one conversion.'"

God honored their prayers—and faithful hard work—with the aforementioned converts. Thus, the seeds were planted and a hallelujah harvest reaped as a result of the dreams Rounds and Moorer had for a special retreat to be nestled in the Arbuckle Mountains.



The water wheel at Price's Falls has welcomed campers and visitors to Falls Creek for generations.

Attendance soared from 273 in 1917 to 474 a year later. Bolstered with the addition of a new tabernacle seating 500, thanks to funding provided by E.F. Tripp of Yale, who recognized the need to accommodate the larger crowds, attendance continued to grow steadily through the next 10 years and has done so for the last century.

It wasn't easy, but nothing worthwhile ever came by easily. It took the vision of Rounds and Moorer to see Falls Creek become a reality, but they had a multitude of others with their oars in the water, too.

For instance, J.B. Rounds, Jr. explains in *Sights and Sounds of Falls Creek*, the job of building the road into Falls Creek: "Our tools were three star drills, a sledge, two shovels, two picks, one grubbing hoe and a wheelbarrow. .... After three months of back-breaking labor, we finally had the rough part done, needing only to clear the right of way of small brush, debris, and a few large trees."

One of the most popular early-day Falls Creek preachers—E.E. "Hot Dog" Lee, said of the first encampment in 1917 in *Sights and Sounds of Falls Creek*: "We got off the train at Rayford Switch about six miles below Davis. We were met by a two-horse wagon. We had to get out and push to help get the wagon over those hills . . ."

Gaskin adds, "Lee's words became symbolic for many years to follow—Falls Creek would have never become what it is had not so many people like Lee been willing to "get out and push."



# Singers encouraged to join Falls Creek Centennial Choir

*Editor's Note: This article is an edited version of one which appeared in the Baptist Messenger, reprinted with permission.*

A Centennial Choir expected to be some 500 members strong will be a huge part of the Falls Creek Centennial celebration at the Homecoming Service, Sept. 3.

Randy Lind, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) worship and music specialist, said of the event and its significance. "For most people, depending on your era, you remember two things when you think of Falls Creek: the preaching and music. Oklahoma has a rich heritage of Falls Creek music, led by such pioneers as B.B. McKinney, Gene Bartlett and Bill Green."

Lind added that, as plans were being made for the Homecoming Service, a great emphasis was placed on the importance of including a choir in the festivities. That led Lind to write the lyrics of a song that celebrates the Centennial. He then sent the lyrics to composer Phil Barfoot and Rebecca Peck at LifeWay Christian Resources, who helped produce the song: "Legacy of Faith."

The lyrics read in part:

*"From one generation to another, we sing of Your great name,  
Declaring that there is no other Who has the power to save,  
So go before us, shine upon us the light of your sweet grace,  
As we pass along this timeless truth, our legacy of faith."*

"Thinking about the people who started Falls Creek and all of those in between, whenever they went to Falls Creek, people saw it through their lens," Lind said. "So, the legacy of people from the very beginning prepared the way for the next generation, not only for Falls Creek, but I believe that about life and ministry in general."

Looking forward to the service, Lind said, "I don't think it's any mistake that the largest book in the Bible is Psalms, the song book. Jesus even talks about the disciples singing songs, so from the beginning to the end of the Bible, there are people singing together."

All prospective choir members need to register online at [www.bgcoworship.org/falls-creek-centennial-choir](http://www.bgcoworship.org/falls-creek-centennial-choir). Those who register need to attend at least one rehearsal to participate. Music will be available only to those who register. This will help secure a seat for everyone and prepare those leading the celebration on Sept. 3.

## ‘Music in the Hills’

In Chapter 8 of *Sights and Sounds of Falls Creek*, J.M. Gaskin writes that “When the old timer said, ‘The whole bloomin’ falls has got religion,’ he was probably echoing his own emotional reaction to the music in the hills.”

While documentation of music/song leaders at Falls Creek in the early days is somewhat vague, Gaskin points out that Sydney V. Taylor, who “. . . led the music in several Oklahoma City churches,” led the music during the first 10-day encampment in August 1917. The music, Gaskin points out, was mainly congregational during the early years of camp.

“The 1919 assembly Souvenir Program listed a chorus, choir and orchestra” under the direction of J. Earl Mead. The program further stated, “Every church is requested to send singers to join this great chorus choir. Let’s make it 100 voices: Miss Roberta Worley will assist in directing the orchestra.”

From 1920-23, I.E. Reynolds and his wife from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, were in charge of the music, and after E.O. Sellers, head of the Music Dept. at the Baptist Bible Institute at New Orleans Seminary, led the music for a single encampment in 1924, God led who was to become one of the most influential figures in Falls Creek history to take the helm—Baylus Benjamin (B.B.) McKinney—who led music at Falls Creek for almost a quarter-century.

“By the time of his last year at the assembly in 1947, he had become a legend in the annals of the assembly,” Gaskin writes of the man who composed more than 700 gospel hymns, children’s songs and anthems.

After McKinney suddenly passed away in 1952, Albert McClellan wrote, “He never wrote songs for the sake of writing songs. His purpose was to honor Christ and to make plain the gospel . . . His down-to-earth spirit was always with him. He used to say, ‘Sing! Anybody that doesn’t sing ought to be in Sing Sing,’ and ‘the B.B. in my name means little shot.’”

Editor and composer of four hymnals and 19 songbooks, perhaps McKinney’s most fondly-remembered song is “Wherever He Leads I’ll Go.” Others favorites include “Have Faith in God,” “He Lives on High,” “Satisfied with Jesus,” “The Nail Scarred Hand,” “Let Others See Jesus in You,” “Breathe on Me,” “Glorious is His Name,” and “Lord, Send a Revival,” which was used as a theme song for many Billy Graham Crusades.

Graham has been quoted as sharing the story of how McKinney came up with the idea for his trademark hymn, “Wherever He Leads

I'll Go," relating that the song writer was visiting with a long-time friend missionary R.S. Jones, who had been told by doctors that he could not return to the mission field in Brazil for health reasons.

McKinney reportedly asked his friend what his plans were, and he replied, "I don't know, but wherever He leads I'll go."

That afternoon, McKinney, who was leading music at the Alabama Sunday School Convention where Jones was preaching, wrote the words and music to the hymn and, after sharing the story, debuted it at the meeting that night.

## ***Wherever He Leads I'll Go***

Take up thy cross and follow me," I heard my Master say; "I gave My life to ransom thee, Surrender your all today."

Chorus: Wherever He leads I'll go, . . . Wherever He leads I'll go, . . .  
I'll follow my Christ Who loves me so, Wherever He leads I'll go.

He drew me closer to His side, I sought His will to know, and in that will I now abide, Wherever He Leads, I'll go.

It may be through the shadows dim, or o'er the stormy sea, I take my cross and follow Him, Wherever He leadeth me.

My heart, my life, my all I bring To Christ Who loves me so; He is my Master, Lord and King, Wherever He leads I'll go.

"The Baptist Hymnal labels (the song) 'Falls Creek' because McKinney inseparably associated it with the encampment," Gaskin writes in *Sights and Sounds of Falls Creek*. McKinney loved to lead the Falls Creek throngs in singing it."

Ira Prosser served as music director at Falls Creek from 1948-53, and was succeeded by another leader of note: Gene Bartlett.

Bartlett, Gaskin writes, summed up his concept of what the design of Falls Creek music should be this way, "It is my desire that the Falls Creek music communicate with young people. We try to create an atmosphere that encourages them to commune with God."

Bartlett served as director of the church music department for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and music director at Falls Creek from 1954-80. He was known affectionately as "Uncle Gene" to thousands of Falls Creek campers, and was the composer of numerous Falls Creek theme songs. He died July 10, 1988 of Parkinson's Disease.

Perhaps Bartlett's most significant composition was "Set My Soul Afire." Others of note included "Tell the Good News," and "We Lift

our Hearts in Songs of Praise,” “I Heard an Old, Old Story,” and “Christ was Born in a Distant Land.”

Bartlett served as music director at Falls Creek from 1954-1979 and was followed by Glenn Boyd, who remained for 10 years before returning to the mission field in Kenya, East Africa. Paul Magar was the music director from 1989-1991 until his life was cut short by a tragic airplane crash.

Bill Green followed Magar, and served from 1991-2004. Green became somewhat “famous” for his enthusiastic and energetic conducting of the hymn “Saved, Saved,” which became his trademark.

Green also served the BGCO as director of the church music department, and later as associate executive director/leader of the Church and Family Equipping Team. One of his major duties was overseeing the construction of improved facilities at Falls Creek.

On April 6, 2013, the choir loft in the new R.A. Young Tabernacle at Falls Creek was named in honor of Green and his wife, Linda.

According to the *Baptist Messenger*, BGCO Executive Director-Treasurer Anthony L. Jordan read a proclamation during a special ceremony that day: “For his 14 years of esteemed and excellent leadership of Falls Creek Youth Assembly as its program leader and as project manager during the building of the R.A. Young Tabernacle; and Linda Green as she has sacrificially and faithfully stood beside Dr. Green during his years of service; we therefore, joyfully and gratefully acknowledge their significant contribution by naming the choir loft in the R.A. Young Tabernacle as the ‘Dr. Bill and Linda Green Choir Loft.’”

The *Messenger* article continues, “After Jordan led the group in a moment of prayer, an impromptu singing broke out of the hymn, “Saved, Saved,” which Green famously led each week at Falls Creek. The longtime conductor immediately took to his role and led (An assembled choir), holding out each “Saved” in the chorus while some members pretended to do drum rolls.

“I have great love beyond what I can even express about Falls Creek. It is truly a hallowed and holy place,” said Green. “I had the privilege for many years to stand on the old Tabernacle stage and lead thousands of young people to sing praises to the Lord and also watch literally thousands of young people make decisions for Christ. I shall hold those memories in my heart forever.”

## **Set My Soul Afire**

Gene Bartlett, Jr.

Set my soul afire, Lord for thy holy Word,  
Burn it deep within me, let your voice be heard;  
Millions grope in darkness, in this day and hour.  
I will be your witness, fill me with Thy power.

Refrain: Set my soul afire, Lord, set my soul afire,  
Make my life a witness of your saving pow'r.  
Millions grope in darkness, waiting for Thy Word,  
Set my soul afire, Lord, Set my soul afire.

Set my soul afire, Lord, for the lost in sin,  
Give to me a passion as I seek to win;  
Help me not to falter, never let me fail;  
Fill me with Thy spirit, let Thy will prevail.

Set my soul afire, Lord, in my daily life,  
Far too long I've wondered in this day of strife;  
Nothing else will matter but to live for Thee.  
I will be Your witness as You live in me.

## **Saved, Saved**

Jack P. Scholfield

I've found a friend who is all to me;  
His love is ever true;  
I love to tell how He lifted me  
And what His grace can do for you.

Refrain: Saved by His Pow'r divine,  
Saved to new life sublime!  
Life now is sweet and my joy is complete,  
For I'm saved, saved, saved!

He saves me from every sin and harm,  
Secures my soul each day;  
I'm leaning strong on His mighty arm;  
I know He'll guide me all the way.

When poor and needy and all alone,  
In love He said to me,  
"Come unto Me and I'll lead you home,  
To live with Me eternally."



The Jordan Welcome Center, left, is the new “Front Door” of Falls Creek, connecting to the 50-room Thompson Family Lodge, right.

## **Centennial Campaign pledges, gifts fund New Falls Creek facilities, retire debt**

*Editor’s Note: This article is an edited version of one which appeared in the Baptist Messenger, reprinted with permission.*

DAVIS—Celebration, appreciation and thankfulness to God were the theme of the day Feb. 2, 2016 as Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) Board members, staff, donors and friends gathered at Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center to celebrate “God Did It Through Us” in providing \$55 million in improvements at the encampment.

As the Board gathered for its regular February meeting, the festivities included dedication and ribbon cutting ceremonies for the 50-room Thompson Family Lodge, Mathena Family Event Center and “Downing Way,” a landscaped walkway which ties the camp’s campus together.

The largest building addition, the Mathena Family Event Center was entirely underwritten by the Mathena family. It is a multi-use facility that features multiple, customizable meeting spaces, a large hall with state-of-the-art audio visual equipment, and a commercial-style kitchen that can accommodate formal dining for thousands of guests. The unique, monolithic architecture also boasts a major benefit to the Conference Center and its guests.

The four-story Thompson Family Lodge which was entirely underwritten by the Thompson family, rivals any upscale accommoda-

tions, and links the event center to the Jordan Welcome Center, which now serves as the “front door” to the conference center, and opens the door to Falls Creek operating as a year-round conference center serving groups of all sizes and all ages.

Downing Way is a lighted, landscaped concourse with three walkways providing access from the Raymond A. Young Tabernacle to the event center, the Wynn Center for World Missions and other areas of the campground. Members of the Mathena, Thompson and Downing families were present to participate in the dedication and ribbon cutting ceremonies for their particular structure or area. The Downing family's \$2.3 million matching gift enhanced giving opportunities related to the Falls Creek Centennial Campaign.

During lunch, BGCO Executive Director-Treasurer Anthony L. Jordan thanked God for His provision through Oklahoma Baptists in giving \$55 million since 1999 to pay for the improvements at Falls Creek. He also announced that with gifts in hand and when pledges have been paid, the debt on the Tabernacle has been eliminated.

“I do not know how to express to our God how awesome, how amazing, how incredible He is,” Jordan said. “And, I don't know why our God chose to place His grace and mercy and faith in the old Arbuckle Mountains of Oklahoma in a little dusty place called Falls Creek.



The 2,000-seat Mathena Family Event Center also connects to the Thompson Family Lodge, and is the campus' main dining facility.

## Through the years

The history of the Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center is packed with stories that, when combined, form a patchwork quilt of interesting and amusing anecdotes that help one appreciate the uniqueness of the camp's place in the history of the Arbuckle Mountains. J.M. Gaskin, in his *Sights and Sounds of Falls Creek*, includes many of those stories, some of which provide evidence of God's sense of humor. Following is a sample of those stories:

**A curiosity:** To some people, Falls Creek is a curiosity. In 1961, W.P. Mugg, gate keeper, said he met " . . . some strange and interesting people at the gate. Many people from other denominations come just to look around the assembly grounds. Often, groups come from other states who have heard about Falls Creek. Tourists come, wearing casual traveling clothes, wanting to see the people at the tabernacle during the services. Some people drive all the way up to the gate, thinking they are on the scenic Highway 77 drive. But perhaps the strangest visitor was a man traveling along Highway 77 who saw all of the other cars turning off the highway onto the Falls Creek road, so he just followed."

**Price's Falls:** W.D. Moorer's family had camped in the area near what is now Falls Creek for several years before he and J.B. Rounds selected it for the Assembly. Gaskin writes: "Moorer's camp sites were located somewhere just above Price's Falls on Falls Creek. This unusual stream gets its name from a series of cascades. It forms in the Arbuckle Mountains just west of Highway 77, and flows eastward to the Washita River, a total distance of no more than four miles from its head. The creek is spring fed . . . . The old water wheel below the present Falls Creek Baptist Conference grounds marks the location of historic Price's Falls, named for William Nathan Price, who probably came to the area in 1880. Price had a sawmill and a store at Dougherty about 1883-84, engaged in the logging business, and put in a grist mill at the (place). . . . He also had a sorghum mill just below the water wheel. . . . One day, Price was hauling a load of logs in the immediate vicinity of the water wheel, the logs came loose, rolled over him and killed him instantly. Through the years, the Falls continued to bear his name."



**Cash and carry:** “The *Baptist Messenger* announced on July 24, 1918: ‘Hacks and wagons will meet the trains at Rayford Switch. They will take you to the grounds at 25 cents per person and 25 cents for each large piece of baggage, grips and small baggage going free with passenger. If you wish to hike the mile and a half to the grounds you will be put across the Washita River in a boat for 10 cents. There will be no auto service on this road.’ Fortunately a day later, the *Davis News* reported that a new road had been completed to Falls Creek; one that would accommodate motorized vehicles.

**The ‘Bitter Enders’:** “In 1922 a ‘secret order’ was organized at Falls Creek known as the ‘Bitter Enders.’ Purpose of this organization was to encourage young people to stay through the last services of the encampment. The group would hold ‘initiation’ meetings on Signal Point, and the first year, it was stated, ‘It is organized for fun and to aid in maintaining the class work by holding all till the examinations are given on the last day.’” It was estimated that as many as 50 percent of the enrollment at the camp were prone to leave before camp ended, “yet, people expected full credit for the courses. This also caused a loss in (the) dining room because foods were purchased for so many people, so many days. Fred McCaulley planned special activities for the ‘Bitter Enders’ the last few days and people remained to ‘get in on the fun.’ There were secret handshakes, pass words, etc. This flourished for several years . . .”

**E, I, E, I, O:** The labor shortage in the early years made clearing the underbrush a problem. While the assembly was still young in point of years this terse announcement came out in print: “About 50 angora goats will be kept on the grounds to eat the underbrush.”

**The rat and the tithe:** “Carrell Hooper, manager of the Falls Creek grocery store, had a favorite story about ‘The Rat that got the tithe.’ Hooper says, ‘One of the largest rats that I have ever seen enjoyed several days of sumptuous living in the grocery store. Rat poison failed to kill him, rat dogs failed to catch him. Rat traps with cheese failed to lure him. After his devouring of 27 loaves of bread and 33 packages of family-size M&Ms, we became prayerfully concerned. We had heard it was unwise not to tithe. When entering the store one morning at 6:00, Mr. Rat had just started his breakfast of M&M candy. We saw him run between the potato bins. We set a large trap and put 10 pieces of M&Ms around it. God was good to him in eating the first nine pieces, but when he moved to get the

10th . . . The trap was thrown and Mr. Rat was caught by the neck. The tithe belongs to God.”

**A sticky situation:** “In 1965, a bus loaded with 38 campers from Schuler had a mishap when a two-gallon jug of maple syrup was broken in the aisle, and the bus stopped at Weleetka to have the aisle hosed out at a service station. The blame was all placed on the pastor, Billy Meeker, who was to serve as the group as cook. His specialty was hot cakes.”

**Civilian Conservation Corps:** As part of the national recovery program instituted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was organized in 1933. The public works project was administered by the U.S. Army; enrollees were paid \$1 per day, and were required to send \$25 of that back home to their struggling families. In 1933, two companies of the CCC—a total of 413 men—occupied buildings erected by the federal government on the Assembly grounds. CCC men did various types of conservation and infrastructure work, including building roads and bridges, planting forests of trees and constructing facilities at federal and state parks. The CCC lasted until July 1942, when the make-work program was no longer necessary because the United States’ involvement in World War II took most of the men into the military services.

**‘He slept over the hole’:** Robert S. Scales, pastor at Seminole, recalls a humorous incident, one which gave him a sense of “revenge” over some of the boys in his group one year. The fun-loving youths had moved Scales’ bed up on the roof, complete with bedding. Scales remembers: “Some of these boys had been slipping out at night through a hole. They would wait until they thought I was asleep and out they would go for a few minutes of harmless fun . . . . I let them slip out as I had the previous nights, but after they were gone, I moved my cot over and slept over the hole for the rest of the night. They did not get back into the cabin until the next morning.”

**When the rains came:** “Confusion and a bit of fuzziness sometimes reigned when the rains came to Tent City. A 1949 *Baptist Messenger* story describes some aspects of the hectic experience: “Many people live in Tent City at Falls Creek. They say that life out in the open is grand—except when it rains. An old Falls Creek tradition calls for citizens of Tent City to sleep in the tabernac-

le when the showers come at night. With good humor and cheerfulness Tent City inhabitants speak of the Falls Creek 'sprinkler system.' Other 'plaints concern an air-conditioner that doesn't work in the daytime and a heater that doesn't work at night. A non-existent hot water tank also gives much trouble. Tent City is built on sandy, sloping ground where the water quickly runs off or dries. It is not unusual, however, to see lines of sopping bedclothes which the unfortunate owner was not swift enough to gather in before the rains came."

**You just can't keep a secret at Falls Creek:** Franklin and Fannie Mae Segler shared a story of young love. Fannie Mae shares: "A noisy crowd of college students were making their way up the mountainside for a watermelon party. The service had just ended at Falls Creek that summer night in 1932. In the darkness a certain OBU blonde was stumbling along the rocky path with a friend. This was the opportunity for which the youth leader had been waiting. 'May I hold my flashlight for you?' 'Oh, thank you,' was the somewhat reticent reply. Little did she realize how definite was his purpose until his persistence was revealed in an extended courtship. Very much in love the young couple returned to Falls Creek two years later. On that trip a diamond ring was exchanged. They thought they were keeping their secret. On the second day . . . friends began to drop by to see the ring. How could they have known about it? Later that day the *Falls Creek Bulletin* carried a brief item. "Did you know that Fannie Mae McCord of Okemah has been hit on the third finger of the left hand with a stone? You guessed it. Franklin Segler, minister of music and education, Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Oklahoma City, is the guilty party. Congratulations."

**I shall remember:** Gaskin, who was born the same year Falls Creek was founded, and attended at least part of camp for more than three decades, said, "Falls Creek is a phenomenon. It is almost a 'miracle.' Its story would almost do good for a place in *Ripley's Believe it or not*. It is a good thing to bask in the glory of what we have at Falls Creek, and be thankful. It is a good thing, too, to anticipate the future—but who would dare contemplate what Falls Creek may yet become? But, it is almost imperative that we remember how it all began—I vow that I shall remember . . ."

## NECROLOGY

Jan. 1–Dec. 31, 2016

**Abernathy, Jerry Don, 78**, died Dec. 7. Abernathy pastored many churches, and led many revivals, crusades and summer assemblies. He served as the state director of evangelism at the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO) and two terms as BGCO president. He also served as the Associate Sunday School director for Arkansas Baptists, president of the Arkansas Baptist Pastors' Conference and was a member of Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

**Aguilar, Alicia**, died April 11. She was the mother of Carlos Aguilar, Hispanic Ministries Pastor at Poteau, First, and President of the Oklahoma Hispanic Fellowship.

**Babb, Bob**, died July 9. He was the husband of Sheri Babb, retired BGCO Childhood Ministries specialist.

**Brown, Willena**, died Aug. 30. She was the sister of Jan Story, BGCO administrative assistant.

**Cathey, Sam, 81**, died March 8. A long-time evangelist, he was called to preach at age 16. His first pastorate was at a newly-established mission when he was 17. He became a full-time evangelist in 1967 and preached across the country in revivals and evangelistic meetings for almost 50 years. He received the BGCO's "Beautiful Feet" Lifetime Evangelism Award during the State Evangelism Conference in 2015.

**Cramer, Nancy** died Feb. 1. She was a retired BGCO employee.

**Cummings, Leah** died Sept. 11. She was the daughter of Pastor Kyle and Bonnie Cummings of Hugo, Oak Grove.

**Cunningham, Dr. J. Norman "Doc"**, died May 3. He was the father and father-in-law of Tracy and Bob Mayfield, BGCO Sunday School/Adult Ministries specialist.

**Curtis, John, 88**, died Aug. 5. He was the former pastor of Muskogee, Lawrence St., and served in full-time ministry for 50 years.

**Dodd, Peggy, 88**, died July 19. She was the wife of Harry Dodd, former director of Falls Creek Baptist Assembly for 17 years. She was a pastor's wife in Medina, Ohio, Oktaha, First and three churches in Checotah. She managed the medical clinic at Falls Creek

**Downum, Larry, 76**, died Feb. 16. He was pastor of

Oologah, First, previously pastoring at Locust Grove, First and Mannford, First. He also briefly had a gospel music radio show through Rogers State College.

**Ellenbrook, Carolyn Kay, 72**, died Jan. 24. For 27 years, she served as the associational clerk with the Comanche-Cotton Association (CCBA), retiring in 2012. She also served on the CCBA assist team for many years and on its WMU Council for more than 20 years. She served five years as state WMU president, four years on the BGCO board of directors and a five-year ex-officio term, three years on the BGCO Historical Commission and as a preschool volunteer consultant.

**Everhart, Jack, 83**, died Nov. 30. He was a retired missionary to India and South Korea.

**Flournoy, Jeff, 59**, died May 28. He was a chaplain with the Oklahoma Dept. of Corrections at Atoka and Stringtown.

**Garlow, Lyle, 89** died Nov. 24. He was the former BGCO associate executive director, and worked for the Convention for 35 years. He also worked in the BGCO Religious Education Dept., as program director at Falls Creek and as president of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission.

**Gore, John**, died July 30. He was the son of Tim and Deanne Jones, Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children development representative.

**Gore, Stacy**, died July 30. She was the daughter-in-law of Tim and Deanne Jones, Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children development representative.

**Harris, Preston**, died Aug. 16. He was the music/education minister at Elmore City, First.

**Hazelrigg, Kristi, 50**, died Oct. 11. She was the wife of Brent Hazelrigg, youth minister at Midwest City, Country Estates, and a former member of the Singing ChurchWomen of Oklahoma.

**Henderson, Jo Ann**, died Sept. 5. She was the mother of Griff Henderson, pastor of Edmond, Waterloo Rd.

**Hendricks, Velma Herren, 107**, died Aug. 18. She was the wife of Louis Hendricks, who served 40 years in five pastorates in Oklahoma and California. She was a teacher, conference leader and speaker at church, associational and state meetings and served Oklahoma Baptists as state Young Women's Auxiliary director and church library consultant. In 1955, the Southern Baptist Convention named her one of the top 20 outstanding minister's wives.

**Hooper, Carrell, 96**, died Jan. 21. He surrendered to the ministry in 1946 and started a mission from Durant, First, later organized as Durant, Fairview, where he served as pastor for seven years. He later served as Director of Missions for Bryan Associa-

tion for 27 years and was an Oklahoma Highway Patrol chaplain. After retirement, he continued to serve in smaller churches as a supply pastor.

**Jones, Janie, 83**, died Sept. 29. She was a member of Anadarko, Indian Capital. She and her husband, Billy, served as home missionaries under the Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) for 45 years.

**Jones, Stephen, 23**, died Sept. 27. Jones was the son of Philip and Shanna Jones. Philip Jones serves as smaller in attendance church strategist for the BGCO and formerly served as pastor of Del City, Sunnyside Southern.

**Kimble, Wanda**, died Nov. 30. She was the grandmother of Shasta Kimble, administrative assistant to the BGCO Operations Team.

**Koch, Darlene, 84**, died Oct. 3. She served as director of Childhood Education for the BGCO for years, retiring in 1997.

**Koonce, Paul, 61**, died July 10. He pastored three churches in Oklahoma and Missouri, and served in various leadership positions with the BGCO, most recently as Director of Missions for Washington-Osage Association for 18 years. He led students and adults on mission trips to Leon, Mexico and Malawi, Africa, sharing the Gospel, planting churches and developing leaders.

**Langland, Ellen**, died March 30. She was the state WMU president at the time of her death.

**Mathis, Fannie**, died July 9. She was the wife of Vic Mathis, consulting architect for the new tabernacle and other facilities at Falls Creek. The "Green Room" in the tabernacle at Falls Creek is named after the couple.

**Matlock, Charles Lee, 67**, died April 22. He was a part-time maintenance worker at Falls Creek after retiring in 2014 following 18 years' service at the encampment.

**McClain, Glen "Mac", 96**, died Aug. 3. He was the husband of Mary McClain, former state WMU president.

**McCoy, Troy, 88**, died Dec. 15. He served in music and education ministries in Oklahoma and Texas churches.

**McGlaslin, Luther "Luke", 58**, died Nov. 30. Luther served as pastor of Enid, First Indian for the past several years.

**McGrath, Charles, 86**, died March 19. He was the father of Randy McGrath, BGCO MCrew member.

**McMurrain, Hugh, 90**, died Dec. 18. He was a preacher, educator, musician, and administrator for more than 65 years at churches in Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. He served at Oklahoma City, Village from 1972-96.

**O'Donnell, Elizabeth "Betty",** died Sept. 1. She was the mother

of Neil O'Donnell, Director of Missions for LeFlore Association.

**Pittman, Carolyn** died Dec. 10. She was the mother of Terry Pitman, pastor of Paden, First and former BGCO Board member.

**Reed, Hershel** died Nov. 14. He was a retired pastor and father of Aaron Reed, pastor of Antlers, First.

**Renfroe, Mildred** died in January. She was the wife of former Falls Creek director Ralph Renfroe.

**Sammons, Vina, 91**, died May 19. She was the wife of J.R. Sammons, who served in many Oklahoma churches over 40 years, including Norman, Franklin; Oklahoma City, Westlawn; Dill City, First; Elk City, Eastside; and Elk City, Fairview. They also served with the Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) in Nevada.

**Shelby, Corky**, died Oct. 25. He was the son of Joyce Shelby, former board member and advisor to The Baptist Foundation.

**Siler, Murel**, died July 30. She was the mother of LeFlore Association administrative assistant Valorie Brown.

**Silvernail, Linda, 74**, died April 5. She was the former receptionist for the *Baptist Messenger* and contributions clerk for Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children.

**Singleterry, Steve**, died March 14. He was the former administrator of the Owasso Campus of Oklahoma Baptist Homes for Children.

**Smith, Cara** died July 26. She was a former assistant to Bill Green, former BGCO associate executive director and CAFE Team leader and she also served as a LifeWay consultant.

**Snow, Butch**, died April 17. He was the father and father-in-law of Shelley and Kerry Urton, BGCO Outreach and Finance teams.

**Steverson, Arol, 88**, died July 9. He served as a chaplain at the Oklahoma State Reformatory at Granite for 31 years while also serving in supply and interim in area churches, the longest at Willow for almost 30 years. He also served as clerk for Southwest Association and on the board for the Southwest Baptist Camp.

**Stone, William Robert "Bill"**, died April 9. He pastored churches in Oklahoma and Texas, and ministered to young people at Ki-amichi Baptist Assembly and Falls Creek. He moved to Hugo in 1979 and pastored several churches in the area and Frisco Association.

**Sullins, Cloyd, 81**, died Nov. 7. He pastored six churches in Oklahoma and Illinois for 31 years before his appointment as missionary in Colorado, Indiana and Alaska. He also served as executive director of Alaska Baptist Convention.

**Taylor, Linda** died Sept. 28. She was a retired missionary who served in Nigeria, and was a member of the Singing ChurchWomen

of Oklahoma.

**Telford, Pam**, died July 28. She was a long-time worker at Falls Creek.

**Throne, Albert "Bud", 86**, died Feb. 11. He had served as director of missions in Banner Association for several years.

**Ward, Chester, 70**, died Oct. 2. He was pastor at Shidler, First. He formerly served as director of missions in Pittsburg and Kay Associations. He also pastored in McAlester and Checotah. He served on the boards of The Baptist Foundation and Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

**Warren, Anita**, died Aug. 25. She was the mother-in-law of Lori Warren, BGCO executive assistant.

**Whitlock, Harold, 98**, died March 8. He served several Oklahoma churches from 1955-66, including Denver, Sinclair and Wayne, First, all in Union Association; Newcastle, First and Oklahoma City, Millwood. He was the grandfather of Oklahoma Baptist University President David Whitlock.

**Wilburn, Roy, 79**, died October 13. He pastored numerous churches throughout Oklahoma for 59 years. He managed the Integris Retirement Center in Cordell until retiring and moving to Baptist Village of Oklahoma City, where he volunteered and was employed part-time.

**Williams, Joe, 80**, died Dec. 24. He pastored churches in Oklahoma for more than 30 years, and was honored numerous times for his service as a chaplain across the U.S., especially following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. He was the founder and director of the Oklahoma Traumatology Institute and served as the first chaplaincy specialist for the BGCO, as well as a chaplain for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

**Winter, Connie**, died Sept. 6. She was the mother of Seth Winter, BGCO Print Shop employee.

**Wooten, Horace**, died Sept. 10. He was the grandfather of Sarah Wooten, BGCO ministry assistant.

**Wright, Jonathan, 31**, died April 22. He had worked off and on in various positions at Falls Creek since 2008, most recently as caretaker.

**Zumpfe, Mark**, died March 31. He was the step-father of Ryan Bauer, CrossTimbers Camp manager.



# Memorial Gifts

On Sept. 8, 1998 by vote of the Historical Commission, a memorial fund was established whereby a gift of \$25 or more may be made to the Gaskin Historical Archives and Library Forever Fund in memory of a deceased relative or friend.

***Ramona Allen***, Wilburton;

Given by John and Pat Hart

***Ramona Allen***, Wilburton;

Given by Delmer, Charity and Tim Allen

***James Ball***, Claremore;

Given by Lemuel Ball

***Margie Ball***, Claremore;

Given by Lemuel Ball

***Bob Burrows***, Amarillo, Texas;

Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***Pluma Cantrell***, Sallisaw;

Given by Del and Ramona Allen

***Rose Chronister***, Wilburton;

Given by Sans Bois Baptist Association

***E. Farrell Dixon***, Tulsa;

Given by Curtis and Betty Dixon

***Donald R. Dunn***, Chickasha;

Given by Jimmie L. Dunn

***Betty Farris***, Muskogee;

Given by Del and Ramona Allen

***Virginia Ann Fry***, Claremore;  
Given by Lemuel Ball

***Helen Isom Gaskin***, Durant;  
Given by Patricia A. Roberts

***Joseph Alexander Gaskin***, Cartersville;  
Given by J. M. Gaskin

***Jim Glaze***, Montgomery, Alabama;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***George Hill***, Coalgate;  
Given by Margaret Hill

***George Hill***, Coalgate;  
Given by J. M. Gaskin

***Mrs. Carrell Hooper***, Durant;  
Given by J. M. and Helen Gaskin

***Carleen Jones***, Oklahoma City;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***Norma Jordan***, Bartlesville;  
Given by the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission

***Nadean Justice***, Oklahoma City;  
Given by J. M. Gaskin

***Murray Leath***, Plano, Texas;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***Dick Lovelady***, Bethany;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***Clara Luedecke***, Weatherford, Texas;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***Carl Mackey***, Kingfisher;  
Given by Jonell Crawford

***Charles Mackey***, Durant;  
Given by Mrs. Robert Mackey

***Burl Mackey***, Kingfisher;  
Given by Jonell Crawford

***Robert Mackey***, Durant;  
Given by Mrs. Robert Mackey

***Lee McWilliams***, Durant;  
Given by Patricia Roberts

***Maye McWilliams***, Durant;  
Given by Patricia Roberts

***John H. Morton***, Durant;  
Given by Bill J. Morton

***Emma L. Shoemate Morton***, Durant;  
Given by Bill J. Morton

***Wenonah Willene Pierce***, Fayetteville, Arkansas;  
Given by the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission

***Wenonah Willene Pierce***, Fayetteville, Arkansas;  
Given by Del and Ramona Allen

***John D. Riggs***, Durant;  
Given by J.M. Gaskin

***Todd Sheldon***, Dallas, Texas;  
Given by the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission

***Todd Sheldon***, Dallas, Texas;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***John L. Smith***, Marlow;  
Given by Winfred Knight  
***William G. Tanner***, Belton, Texas;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***James Timberlake***, Atlanta, Georgia;  
Given by Kathyryne Timberlake

***Thelma Townsend***, Oklahoma City;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***Lawrence Van Horn***, Oklahoma City;  
Given by Marlin and Patsy Hawkins

***H. Alton Webb***, Anadarko;  
Given by J. M. and Helen Gaskin

***Almeda Welch***, Durant;  
Given by J. M. and Helen Gaskin

***Hazel Marie Williams White***, Wilburton;  
Given by Del and Ramona Allen