

# THE OKLAHOMA BAPTIST CHRONICLE

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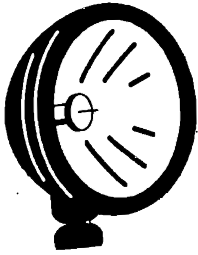
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Charles and Loretta Tatyrek



## ***Spotlight***

### **THE FIFTY PLUS CLUB**

One of the great blessings of being the historical secretary of the BGCO is meeting unique people. These meetings have inspired him to establish the "Fifty Plus Club." You may have heard of this since the *Baptist Messenger* ran a short article about it an August edition.

The Fifty Plus Club refers to those rare pastors who have stayed at the same church for fifty years or more. It is hoped that other churches will have seen the article in the *Messenger* and will submit other eligible names. There are no great honors related to this club membership from the Historical Commission except our office has sent each man a certificate of appreciation for their faithful service at one church. In addition, the names of all those qualifying were read at our fall Historical Society meeting. It is not unusual to find a pastor who has ministered for more than fifty years. It is rare, however, when they stay at one church for over that length of time.

The first the historical secretary heard of was Charles Caughern, who pastors at Summerfield, LeFlore Association. He was featured in the spring 2016 *Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle* and in the LeFlore Baptist Association newsletter. Then this past July, Charles Tatyrek, pastor at Willow Baptist, Spring Creek, was honored for his 50 years of service with an article in the Beckham-Mills Association newsletter and the *Baptist Messenger*. Both men served others churches before coming to their current church.

Bro. Tatyrek's ministry in many ways mirrors that of Caughern. Both acknowledge the benefits and blessings of a long ministry. Both seek no credit but give all glory to the Lord. Both speak highly of the church people they serve, of the love of the people and the great blessings of becoming a real part of the families.

Charles Tatyrek told of his rural church's ability to reach out by church van to children from quite an area. For years their "Big A Club" which met on Wednesdays after school, often ran well more than 35 children a week. Bro. Tatyrek remembers the old man he had witnessed to dozens of time who, at the age of 90 after a funeral, accepted Jesus as Lord. A woman about that age who was in a nursing center also accepted the Lord and had to be baptized in a bathtub. Both Charles and his wife Loretta were raised in the Spring Creek Church. Tatyrek's ministry prior to pastoring at Spring Creek included being Sunday school superintendent at the church, director of the Church Training, two jail ministries, and three years as pastor of Durham Baptist. He returned to Spring Creek in 1966 and currently does not plan on retiring.

Your historical secretary remembers the revival he did with Bro. Charles several years ago. Tatyrek was always a good soul-winner and the two men went to see a young big very tough tattooed motorcycle man who was known as a fighter, bully and ruffian. As the men knocked on the door, the man fled out the back and raced away on his motorcycle. His mother answered and said the man was afraid of Bro. Charles and the message he knew he would hear.

The longest pastoral ministry the historical secretary is aware of is a man in Texas. Bro. Fred L. Sain has served Prairie Hill Baptist since 1949, making it more than 67 years in the same pulpit and still going. If you know of a current or former pastor in Oklahoma who served more than 50 years at the same church, please let us know.



## **WILLIAM PACKER "W. P." BLAKE**

1857—1946

Inducted 2016

W. P. Blake was born on November 14, 1857, in Martinsburg, Pennsylvania. He was the son of James Blake Sr., a blacksmith by trade, and Margaret Ellen Brown. After attending public schools there, W. P. moved to Ohio in March 1875, to enter the printer's trade; then moving later that same year to Stinger's Glen, Virginia, to practice his trade. Attending the local Baptist church, he began preaching there and was licensed to preach in 1878. Discontinuing his printer's trade that year, he enrolled in a two-year course of study at the Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Kentucky. Ordained at Weldon, North Carolina, on December 12, 1880, 22-year-old W. P. accepted a call from the church there and was pastor from 1881 to 1883, when he succeeded Dr. Henry F. Bucker doing general missionary work among the Creek and Seminole Indians.

W. P. Blake married Loula Sophia "Louella" Gangwer on July 26, 1881, in Singer's Glen, Virginia, and to this union nine children were born: Silliash Irene "Tillie", Uarda, Elsie O., James Garfield, Mary Ellen Cira, William Packer "Bill" Jr., Ramona E., Raymond, and Nelson Morehouse.

The Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention of the Indian Territory was organized at Tahlequah June 1-2, 1883. Messengers

were present from three associations: Cherokee, Muscogee (Creek), and Choctaw. Officers elected at this meeting were: J. S. Murrow, president; A. F. Ross, vice-president; W. P. Blake, secretary; and Daniel Rogers, treasurer. The purpose of the convention was to unite all the Baptist churches of whatever tribe or nation of the Indian Territory in a common effort for the spread of Christianity. W. P. Blake, A. C. Bacone, M. Lambright, A. L. Lacie, and F. Vann were appointed to a committee responsible for drafting a constitution for the new organization and report on permanent officers for the convention.

Residing at Eufaula during this time period, Rev. Blake, together with A. Frank Ross, founded and edited a denominational newspaper entitled "Indian Missionary," a monthly edition which first appeared in August 1884. The first issue stated the newspaper's purpose as: "Above all other uses, the 'paper' shall be used to give the pure word of God to our Indian people. The 'paper' will of course be friendly to education, and farming will not go unnoticed." The contents of the paper, however, were devoted primarily to editorials on religious matters and to articles concerning missionary work in the Territory. Long signed articles on the interpretation of the scriptures were printed in installments. The "Indian Missionary" was published until 1891, when it ceased publication with Volume 7, issue No. 8, with Rev. J. S. Murrow its last editor. Later, Rev. Blake would also serve as associate editor of the "Western Baptist."

In the fall of 1884, W. P. went to Herington, Kansas; organizing and pastoring a church, which opened on September 1 of that year. Named the Levering Mission, Rev. Blake served for two years there.

In 1887, W. P. returned to Indian Territory as a missionary to the Seminoles at the request of Rev. John Jumper, formerly the tribe's Principal Chief and a well-known Baptist preacher. With Rev. Jumper's patronage, he was commissioned November 14, 1887, on his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday, as Missionary to the Seminole Government, by the American Baptist Home Mission Society of New York. He was appointed on December 1, of that year, as superintendent of the Seminole Academy for girls at Sasakwa, which averaged about 30 students. The Methodist Episcopal Church built the school in 1880, but in 1887, the Seminole took control of the school and Rev. Blake received his appointment. In 1892, the institution was moved south of Wewoka and in 1894 was consolidated with a new girls' boarding school called Emahaka Mission or Academy.

In 1894, W. P. became superintendent and postmaster of the newly opened Emahaka Academy. Emahaka, a Seminole word



meaning "girls' school," was located five miles south of Wewoka, on the Seminole-Creek Nation border. The academy building was an impressive stone and brick structure four stories high in its central part, with spacious porches on the two triple-storied wings that were accentuated by turrets on the southeast and northeast corners. Built in 1892-1893, the \$50,000 structure had accommodations for 112 students. Studies ranged from elementary arithmetic to foreign languages. The building had hot and cold running water, steam heat, and fireplaces. To qualify for admission, girls had to be between the ages of six and 18, and their band chief had to guarantee their "good moral character." The school was combined with Mekasukey Academy in 1911, but burned in 1927.

With the passage of the Five Tribes Act in early 1906, Seminole Indian education and control of tribal revenues passed to the U. S. Department of the Interior. Thus, at the end of the school term in May 1906, Rev. Blake resigned his position at Emahaka Academy to enter general mission work. Rev. Blake's relationship with the Seminoles brought him into close fellowship with the whole Nation, and the legacy of his service, over a 19-year period, is still remembered and felt to this day. Caesar Bowlegs, a prominent well-known member of the Seminole Nation during that time period, once paid a great compliment to Rev. Blake by referring to him as "the father of all the Seminole children." This compliment was the result of his serving at the school so long, some of the girls who were there in the early years, later sent their children.

On December 1, 1898, at a meeting of the Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention called at Oklahoma City, it was mutually agreed to separate and form two conventions; one for Oklahoma known as the Oklahoma Baptist Convention, and one for Indian Territory known as the Baptist Convention of Indian Territory, which Rev. Blake remained affiliated with. The convention had served continuously since its organization at Tahlequah, though its name had changed several times. It is considered the point of beginning for the present Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, whose historical records date in unbroken succession to that first meeting in Tahlequah in 1883.

Soon after leaving the Emahaka Academy, Rev. Blake became superintendent of an orphan's home at Unchuka, Choctaw Nation and later served at the Creek Indian Orphan's Home in Okmulgee, Oklahoma, for two years.

At this time, great interest in establishing Baptist schools of higher education in Oklahoma led to several attempts, but it was a difficult endeavor. Three attempts to establish Baptist colleges in Okla-

homa: Oklahoma Baptist College at Blackwell in 1901, Southwest Bible College at Hastings in 1907, and Carey College in Oklahoma City in 1911, did not survive. During this period, however, Rev. Blake played an instrumental role in the founding of Oklahoma Baptist University at Shawnee, Oklahoma.

In 1906, the Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory Conventions were consolidated at Shawnee and at that meeting, an educational commission was appointed to study and investigate the need for a Baptist denomination school of higher education. Upon their recommendation that a Baptist University be established, a board of 15 trustees was approved on November 11, 1908, of which W. P. Blake was a member.

Articles of incorporation were drawn and filed on February 9, 1910, with the Secretary of State at Guthrie, Oklahoma; then the state capitol. They were signed by W. P. Blake, E. D. Cameron, and W. S. Wiley. The school was chartered as The Baptist University of Oklahoma, but on January 26, 1921, this was amended to read "Oklahoma Baptist University."

A site was chosen for the new school at Shawnee in the Pottawatomie Nation, and Rev. Blake moved from Okmulgee to Shawnee in 1910, to be closer to the newly founded school. The membership of the new school's board of trustees was expanded to 24 members, with Rev. W. P. Blake elected chairman. A building committee of 5 members appointed on February 10, 1910, included Rev. Blake to plan and let the contract for the building of an administration building. The corner stone was laid the following year and inscribed with the words: "The Baptist University of Okla[homa], founded 1910, A.D., Board of Trustees: W. P. Blake, Chairman; W. S. Wiley; F. M. Masters; W. A. Moffitt; D. Noble Crane; L. C. Wolfe; A. C. Washburn; P. J. Conkwright; G. E. McKinnis, Secretary; G. Maddox; R. E. Cornelius; G. W. Sherman; E. A. Wesson; S. Moore; D. N. Curb; William Crawford; E. D. Cameron; W. Taylor; A. M. Croxton; J. H. Jennings; F. M. Overlees; George L. Hale; Robert Hamilton, Corner stone laid February 22, 1911, A.D."

Oklahoma Baptist University opened to students beginning in the fall session of 1911, with classes meeting in the basement of the First Baptist church, Convention Hall, and the new Shawnee High School. By the end of this first semester, however, classes were discontinued due to financial difficulties. That first semester had been a period of struggle and sacrifice, but the deficit on operating expenses was too much. Work slowly continued on the administration building, however, while the school's finances were addressed. Luke-warm attitudes, drought, and general depressed business conditions

prevalent at that time in Oklahoma had contributed to the closure that first year.

Finally, the administration building was finished in 1914 and named Shawnee Hall. Rev. Blake worked tirelessly during this period to help the school recover and reopen, and the completion of Shawnee Hall rekindled great interest in reviving the school. Classes resumed in September of 1915, and Oklahoma Baptist University thrived and steadily grew. Today, Oklahoma Baptist University has become one of the leading Christian universities in the nation.

In addition to his missionary service and education activities through the decades, Rev. Blake gained denominational prominence by leadership in the Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention of Indian Territory, the Baptist General Convention of Indian Territory, and the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma as recording secretary of these bodies consecutively serving from 1892 to 1918.

Rev. W. P. Blake was a unique man who faithfully served his Lord as a Baptist minister, editor, educator, missionary, and denominational statesman.

Upon retirement, Rev. Blake settled in Hyattsville, Prince George's County, Maryland, to be near his son, William P. Blake Jr. and his family, who worked as an accountant for the U. S. Government. William Packer Blake died on April 4, 1946, at the age of 88. He was buried in Fort Lincoln Cemetery, Brentwood, Maryland, next to his wife Louella, who preceded her husband in death on January 8, 1945.

Submitted by Richard E. McCullough

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## ***“He Keeps Me Singing”***



**Paul D. Magar**

1944—1991

Inducted 2016

### ***“There’s within my heart a melody”***

It has been said that singing here on earth just prepares us for membership in the heavenly choir. Paul Magar sang his entire life and is singing now in heaven. There is a melody in his heart.

Paul D. Magar was born on July 2, 1944, in Great Bend, Kansas. He was the son of Rev. and Mrs. W. L. Magar of Wheatland, Oklahoma and he grew up in Southwestern, Oklahoma. He attended school in Maud, Oklahoma, graduating in 1962. He met and married Miss Judy I. Wilson of Wheatland, Oklahoma in 1965 and they had one daughter, Melissa Rene’, who was adopted in 1968.

Paul always enjoyed music and music became one of the most important aspects of his life. There was a melody in his heart. At the age of five, he was leading the rhythm band in his school. He was very active in music all through his school years and was involved in the vocal and instrumental organizations. He sang, he led, he wrote, he directed. He wrote several songs, some of which were published by Albert E. Brumley and Sons.

Shirley Glitsch, his sister remembers that he wrote a song called "God Kissed My Soul" which became his mother's favorite song.

While he was just a senior in high school, Paul served as a music and youth director. The melody in his heart led him to many churches and to serve the Lord as a soloist, as well as a music director. He served as soloist for the Capital Baptist Association in Oklahoma City; the Concord Baptist Association in Fort Smith, Arkansas; Benton County Baptist Association in Bentonville, Arkansas; and was a soloist at Falls Creek Baptist Assembly. Paul attended Oklahoma Baptist University, Central State University, and Northeastern State University where he received his Bachelor of Arts in Education.

### ***"Jesus whispers sweet and low"***

Paul Magar was the son of a Baptist preacher so he was taught to listen to the voice of Jesus from a very early age. Paul listened to the voice of Jesus through music even from his early years. His sister tells of the time when he was five years old. He, his mother, and Shirley were all on his bed late at night and Paul told them he had asked Jesus into his heart. Shirley says there was never much screaming in their home, but that night, when a five year old accepted the Lord, they all screamed. Listening to the sweet voice of Jesus, Paul was led to minister in several churches in Oklahoma and Arkansas. He served on a part time basis at Trinity Baptist Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas; Crestwood Baptist Church in Oklahoma City; Country Estates Baptist Church in Midwest City, Oklahoma; First Baptist Church in Siloam Springs, Arkansas; and Olivet Baptist Church in Oklahoma City.

That sweet low whisper of Jesus led him to become the Associate Director of the BGCO Department of Church Music in 1978. He was chosen to lead the department in 1989. Magar was asked what his favorite hymn was, and his response was, "Whatever hymn I am singing at the time."

### ***"Fear not I am with thee, Peace, be still"***

Paul Magar was not afraid of his future because he knew that Jesus was in his heart and with him. He had the peace that only salvation can bring. In his personal testimony, Paul accepted

Christ as his personal savior in 1951 at the First Baptist Church in Hammond, Oklahoma. He listened to God's voice and committed his life to full time Christian service in the summer of 1959 at Fall Creek Baptist Assembly. Paul once replied, "I know God is with me. He has opened many doors and offered many challenging opportunities as He has led me in His service."

One of his many challenges presented itself in the form of two large singing groups. Paul became a member of the Singing Churchmen of Oklahoma and organized a women's singing group, The Singing Churchwomen of Oklahoma, in October of 1989.

### ***"In all of life's ebb and flow."***

But life sometimes does not go as we humans have planned. There are good times and bad times. Paul's life was no different. Serving in the capacity of BGCO Music Department head and a member of the Singing Churchmen and organizer of the Singing Churchwomen, Paul traveled the country and the state of Oklahoma. A tragic plane crash on January 14, 1991, ended his life here on earth.

William Tanner, BGCO executive director, said of Paul Magar, "He served as the director of the church music department and was one of the most beloved Baptist Church musicians in Oklahoma and the Southern Baptist Convention. Thousands of teenagers remember him as a composer and conductor of music for Falls Creek Baptist Assembly."

### ***"Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, sweetest name I know."***

Four musicians said that name when they met Jesus in person the night of January 14. Paul Magar; his wife, Judy; Mary June Tabor BGCO assistant director of church music; and Jim Woodward, artist-in-residence and former dean of the college of fine arts at OBU and church music consultant for the BGCO had been at Woodward First Baptist Church for a Singing Churchwomen concert. They took off from Woodward after the concert and were on their final approach to Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City, when the plane went down northeast of Newcastle.

***“Fills my every longing”***

Paul's wife, Judy felt a longing to be with her husband on his final trip, even though she wanted to stay and be with her daughter. God filled that longing in a very real way. They were together even in death. Paul's daughter, Melissa, said that she was awakened the next day by a phone call from a friend asking if she was all right. Melissa said she had a sinking feeling but she had heard nothing. She was 22 at the time and was eight weeks pregnant. She remembers her mother saying to her before they left for the trip, “I really don't want to go, I want to live to see our grandchildren, but I need to go and be with your father.”

***“Keeps me singing as I go.”***

Paul Magar sang as he went through life and is still singing today. William Tanner said, “The whole life of Paul Magar was dedicated to caring and sharing great Christian music with churches across our state.”

Charles Collins, retired minister of music at Broken Arrow First, responded to the audiences of the Singing Churchmen that Oklahoma Baptists have an outstanding tradition of champions in the state in more than just football. “We have a great heritage in our church music department. God has blessed us with great leadership. That heritage goes back to B. B. McKinney, who led music at Falls Creek for 20 years, then the Gene Bartlett, Boyd and Magar. God called home some of His choicest servants, but God has blessed the seeds they sowed.”

God kept Paul Magar singing to the very end of his life. What a great way to go into eternity for a musician.....singing God's praises. May we all wish for the same theme.....“He keeps me singing as I go!”

Submitted by: Martha Ray



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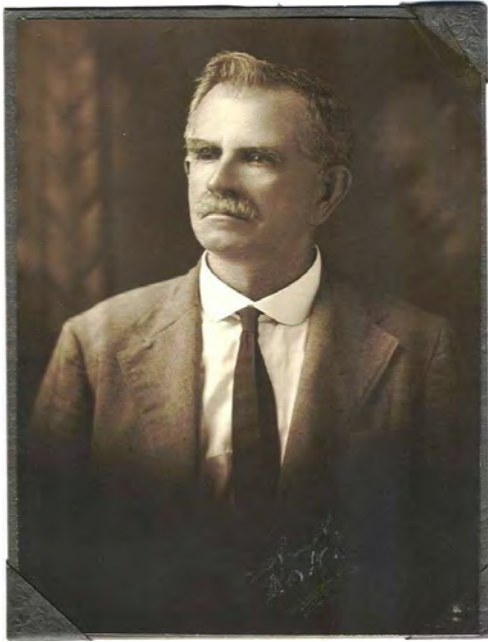
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## **ALONZO NUNNERY**

1861—1939

Inducted 2016

The Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma was only a year old when Alonzo Nunnery came to pastor in Oklahoma. The young convention had formed as a merger in 1906 from the conventions in Indian Territory and Oklahoma Territory. Nunnery came to the state to pastor in Granite, Oklahoma, from Tennessee. Nunnery spent from 1907-1939 as a pastor in Southern Oklahoma, and undoubtedly left a mark on the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO). His contribution, though less than desirable, helped the fledgling convention cement its beliefs and firm stand in their convictions.

Born in Camden, Tennessee, on September 18, 1861, little is known about his early life and childhood. The son of Nathaniel Nunnery and Isabella Francis Brewer, he married Eliza Victoria Johnson on October 21, 1883, in Benton County, Tennessee. Prior to coming to Oklahoma, Nunnery served as pastor at Royal Street

Baptist Church in Jackson, Tennessee. The advertisement for the Beech River Baptist Association meeting in 1905 lists him as a "prominent" minister who will be in attendance and preach. He was well respected in Tennessee and at the time was regarded as one who "stood four-square for the Master's cause as represented in the Tennessee Baptist Convention."

Nunnery moved to Oklahoma to pastor at Magnum in 1907, and soon thereafter started his own newspaper, *The Baptist Worker*. He moved to Granite in 1911, taking the paper with him, and then to Chickasha in 1921, where the newspaper was published until his death.

There was no official newspaper in Oklahoma at the time he started it, and it was welcomed by many as a source of news and information. It quickly moved from being published monthly to being published weekly. In 1912, C. P. Stealey started his own newspaper in Oklahoma City called *The Baptist Messenger*, using the Southern Baptist Convention which was held in Oklahoma City that year as in impetus. The *Messenger* took off quickly in Oklahoma, and led to its purchase by the BGCO in 1919 to be the convention's official paper. The BGCO had only two executive directors up to this point, J. C. Stalcup and F. M. McConnell. Both of them deemed *The Baptist Worker* as not worthy of being an official state paper. Stalcup stated the paper did not meet the standards for a "good, religious, up to date Baptist newspaper."

From the beginning of his paper, Nunnery was harsh on the new state convention and its directors and other officials. Nunnery was a devoted proponent of Landmark theology.

It's worth noting that for most of Nunnery's time in Tennessee, the state paper was led by J. R. Graves, the noted leader of "Landmarkism." There is no doubt that Grave's writings, if not Graves himself, had impact on Nunnery and his theology.

Nunnery was brutal in his attacks against anyone he disagreed with, and used his own paper to promote his beliefs. He attacked the conventions promotion of the Southern Baptist Convention's 75 Million Campaign, Falls Creek, policies in the Oklahoma Baptist Orphan's Home, and the convention's purchase of Stealey's *Messenger*, among other things. His column in *The Baptist Worker* and other avenues laid harsh charges at the feet of BGCO directors.

In both 1918 and 1919, Nunnery and his church were denied a seat at the state convention. In 1919 he had brought a large delegation with him to support him, but the credentials committee found him to be "not in sympathy and cooperation with the convention," as well as "out of harmony with the BGCO as to policy, plans, personnel, and principles." The 1918 and 1919 minutes of the BGCO An-

nual Meeting listed in detail numerous charges against Nunnery, using words from his own paper against him to verify their claims. Nunnery was given 35 minutes to defend himself at the 1918 meeting and the convention upheld the ruling of the credentials committee. In 1919, F.M. McConnell made the motion that Nunnery be given "all the time he wanted" to answer the challenge of the credentials committee. A standing vote was taken and Nunnery was denied a seat by a count of 491 to 53.

After the 1919 meeting, Nunnery withdrew from the BGCO, starting the "Baptist Convention of Oklahoma" at Chickasha on Oct 5, 1920, with 101 messengers from 48 churches present. This body increased in membership every year and merged with the "Baptist Missionary Association of Oklahoma (Landmark)" in 1925. He split from them again in 1927 over control issues. Nunnery was also leader of an orphanage he founded in 1921 until he was ousted by the Landmark's, resulting in all authority being taken away in 1930. He continued as editor of the *Baptist Worker* until his death in 1939, at which time publication of the paper ceased.

It might seem strange to some to nominate a character like Nunnery into the Oklahoma Baptist Hall of Fame, due to how he left the BGCO and blasted it every chance he got. The contributions of Nunnery to a young convention, however, must not be overlooked. His attacks led the convention to establish basic doctrines from its very beginnings that clarified their polity and practices. The BGCO stood firm on the Baptist principles of autonomy of churches and freedom of speech and expression. They did not lower their standards to that of Nunnery by engaging with him in his wild speculations and attacks. Had the BGCO purchased his paper and allowed him to be the editor, it would have been a sad history to remember. Instead one can look back with admiration for the stand which they took against shameful journalistic practices and antagonism. Those early men like Stalcup and McConnell set the standard which is still held by the BGCO. The conflict with Nunnery, although undesirable, gave them the chance to establish Christian guidelines for Oklahoma Baptists that continue to be used today.

Submitted by Luke Holmes

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## **BILL SISSON**

**2016**

### **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD**

This year's recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission is Bill Sisson, a long time pastor and mission worker. Bill began his mission service at Grace Rescue Mission in Oklahoma City in 1979. Prior to that time, Bill pastored several churches in Oklahoma. He served as the director of the Grace Rescue Mission and their Clothing Store until 1981.

He returned to church staff positions until 1991 when the Capital Baptist Association ask him to serve as director of the Baptist Mission Center, on Exchange Avenue in Oklahoma City. He served the Lord in that position until 2002 when he created and became the health care ministries coordinator for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma with a primary focus of establishing free clinics. While he claims he is retired, he is still heavily involved in continuing to establish free health and dental clinics all over Oklahoma. This year, he is scheduled to teach the "How to Start" aspects of establishing such clinics at the annual National Dentist Fellowship in

Nashville, Tennessee. This is his fourth year to speak at the dentistry fellowship. In 2005 he was elected National American Dentistry Mission Director.

As a result of his work among Oklahoma Baptists, Bro. Sisson has gained national attention and has established clinics in fourteen other states. In addition, Bro. Sisson has worked as a church planter with the North American Mission Board in the Tri-State area of New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut, and was involved in 1997 with the establishing of Hope and Resource Clinic for Women which served the Hispanic community of the Stockyard area of Oklahoma City. Bill and his wife June, are faithful members of Meadowood Baptist, Midwest City, Oklahoma, and were blessed with two children.



## **2015 WINNER**

### **GASKIN BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORY AWARD**

There were two writers who worked together to produce the 2015 award winning church history. They were Angela Seefeldt and Hugh Keen who collaborated on *One Hundred Years Strong*, the history of Southern Hills Baptist Church (SHBC) in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Angela joined Southern Hills with her family when she was a young teenager in the early 1970s. She has served as church clerk and administrative assistant at SHBC from 1989 to the present. Her faithful service and knowledge of the church was a tremendous aid in putting the writing together. Of the experience she remarked, "It was a sincere pleasure working with Hugh Keen and his wife, Virginia, on the Southern Hills Baptist Church Centennial History Book project. We also thank our great team of contributors and proof-readers as well. Thank you to the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma for recognizing our church."

Hugh Keen has been a historian and genealogist for over forty years. He expressed his appreciation in aiding in the work by saying, "Accepting the assignment of working with Angela Seefeldt to research and write the history of SHBC was an easy decision for me as five of the original members of what was then Bethel Baptist Church were members of my mother's family." Hugh has attended Southern Hills since 1984. He was baptized and became a member of the church on November 16, 1997. Congratulations to both Angela and Hugh on a service well-done for the Lord.

**Angela Seefeldt and Hugh Keen show materials used in their research.**



# **Oklahoma Baptist Historical Society**

Annual Meeting - October 8, 2016

## **MINUTES**

The Society met on Saturday morning, October 8, 2016, at Camp Lela Baptist Assembly located north of Glencoe, Oklahoma. L.M. Woodson called the meeting to order, quoted Psalm 121 and opened the meeting with prayer.

### **Business Session - Part One**

1. The minutes from the 2015 Society meeting held at the Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center were read and approved.

2. Archive Meeting Report by Ron Fannin

On September 8th, Eli Sheldon (BGCO Historical Secretary), Richard McCullough (Commissioner) and Ron Fannin (Commissioner), traveled to Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Oklahoma, to meet with Rachel Hawkins who serves as Director of Library and Archives Services. They were able to view the scanner purchased by the Society and to hear an update on the progress of scanning materials that will be made available on the internet.

3. Historical Secretary's Report by Eli Sheldon

Dr. Sheldon reported that his office has had a busy year of producing the Oklahoma Baptist Chronicle, circular letters for the Society, preparing certificates for churches having significant anniversaries and traveling across the state to present many of those certificates.

He also shared that he will be retiring at the end of 2016 with plans to devote more of his time to research and helping churches write and preserve histories. Freida Sheldon will also be retiring as Ministry Assistant.

4. Old Business – none.

5. New Business

The following were nominated by Ron Fannin; seconded by Bill Rains, to serve as Society officers in 2017:

President: Weldon Foster

President-Elect: Wayne Childers

Secretary: Michael Dershem

Passed by acclamation.

### **Business Session Part Two Awards and Induction Ceremonies**

1. Distinguished Service Award by Luke Holmes

This year's award goes to Bill Sisson. He is a long time pastor, missionary and has led in the organization of many health and dental clinics. He has also served as a Church Planter with the North American Mission Board.

2. Church History Award by Wayne Childers

There were five entries this year and each history was done well. He described the criteria that goes into selecting the award. This year's award goes to Hugh Keen and Angela Seefeldt who wrote "100 Years Strong" - The History of Southern Hills Baptist Church - Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Note: These awards will be presented at the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma which will be held in November.

3. Oklahoma Baptist Hall of Fame Inductions(Moderated by L.M. Woodson)

Inductee William Packer (W.P.) Blake (1857-1946) - He was a long-time missionary, Indian School superintendent and the editor of the *Indian Baptist Missionary* newspaper. His monograph was written and presented by Richard McCullough.

Inductee Paul Magar (1944-1991) - He was a long-time Oklahoma Baptist minister of music, Falls Creek Baptist Assembly

music leader and the head of the BGCO Music Department at the time of his death in a plane accident. He was a member of the Singing Churchmen of Oklahoma and had organized the Singing ChurchWomen of Oklahoma. His monograph was written by Martha Ray and presented by Bill Rains.

Inductee Alonzo Nunnery (1861-1939) - He was an early day Oklahoma pastor and the owner and editor of a statewide newspaper *The Baptist Worker*. He was a leader among the Landmark Baptists and as a result of his errant beliefs helped the newly formed Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma analyze and confirm its Southern Baptist beliefs and convictions. His monograph was written and presented by Luke Holmes.

The 2017 meeting of the Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission and Society will be held October 6-7, 2017 at Portland Avenue Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Ron Fannin made a motion that the Society express its appreciation to Eli Sheldon for his 9 years of service as the BGCO Historical Secretary and to Freida Sheldon for her 15 years of service to the churches of the BGCO. Motion seconded by Richard McCullough. Motion passed.

A motion to adjourn was made by Luke Holmes and was passed without a second. A closing word of prayer was led by Richard McCullough.

There were 14 in attendance with three of those being members of the Paul Magar family.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Dershem  
Recording Secretary  
Oklahoma Baptist Historical Society



## **Dr. Sheldon and Wife to Retire**

At the annual Oklahoma Baptist Historical Commission and Society meetings, October 7-8, 2016, at Camp Lela, Bro. Eli Sheldon, and his wife Freida, officially announced their retirement at the end of this year. This comes after several months of prayer and seeking God's will for the future.

Owning to continued research into early Oklahoma Baptist history, Bro. Sheldon stated he is too busy to keep up with the duties of the office of Historical Secretary, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. Freida has agreed to enter into this new phase of life with him.

Bro. Sheldon believes God is leading him to continue researching and helping early Native American Churches to produce written histories. He also hopes to aid every church in Capital Baptist Association to write an accurate and up to date history of their work. His plans include supply preaching, and when called upon, leading in clinics, conferences, and revivals with an emphasis on the faith, work, and historical results of baptisms among Oklahoma Baptists.





# Memorial Gifts

On September 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

*Memorials*

***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