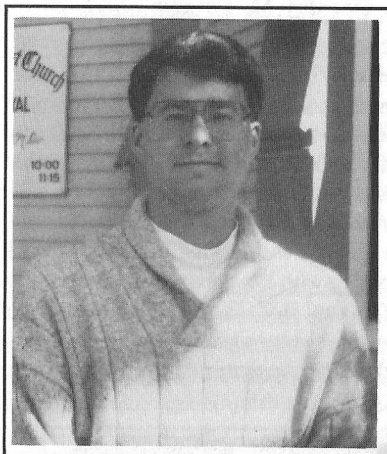


Some Thoughts on Christmas

by The Reverend Derrick Marshall



Rev. Derrick Marshall

I am sure that most of us are very familiar with the beautiful story by Charles Dickens entitled A Christmas Carol. So well known is this story that, for many people, it epitomizes Christmas.

What is generally not known is that Dickens actually wrote a series of Christmas stories, all of which deal with the theme of redemption. In his short story "The Chimes" we are introduced to a man named Toby Veck, a very poor messenger who managed to make a meagre living by running messages between Upperclassmen during the height of Victorian economic hardship.

Every day Toby would walk the streets of London in search for employment. He would often walk past an old church with a high tower, the chimes of which would periodically cheer him on cold winter days.

One cold December morning, when business was particularly poor, Toby was sitting in an alleyway, trying to keep warm. Being in a rather depressed state of mind Toby began to lament to himself the evil in humanity and he came to the conclusion that humanity was not worth God's while.

That very night Toby was beckoned from his sleep by ghosts from the chimes in the church tower which he had so often admired. He was brought to the very tip of the church steeple and shown a vast array of images; of countless deeds of love and sacrifice humans have shown each other throughout the ages. At the end of this wonderful, ghostly panorama Toby is shown a vision of the future in which his own beloved daughter is shown giving of herself, even to the point of death, for her child.

Finally, Toby relents, appeals to the ghosts for his daughter's well-being, and is convinced that, despite the sinfulness of the world, he must not give up hope.. With these words Toby goes his way rejoicing:

I know that we must trust and hope, and neither doubt ourselves, nor the Good in one another... oh Spirits, merciful and good, I take your lesson to my breast... I am grateful!

("The Chimes", Pp. 240-241)

Dickens' point here is well taken: we must not give up on humanity because the Divine has not. This Christmas we should rejoice that, in the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God's love and concern for His Creation is in full evidence among us, no matter how dark things might appear from our perspective.

ABF BULLETIN
NEXT ISSUE - MARCH 1994

ATLANTIC BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP BULLETIN

December 1993



ABF Executive members Ed Colquhoun, Adele Crowell, and John Churchill pictured during Fall Conference.

Highlights of Conference: pages 4 - 6

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Confessions of an Ecumenist

by Roger Cann ...page 8
and...many more articles

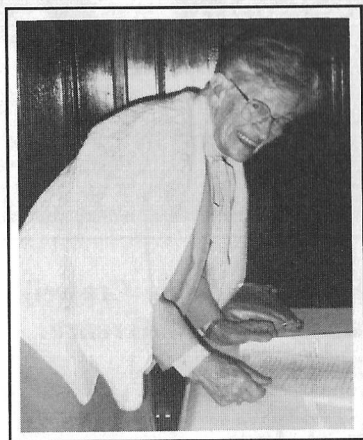


ABF EXECUTIVE

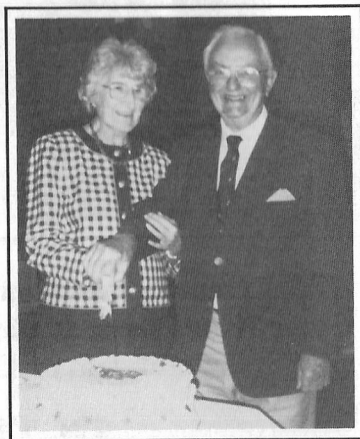
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50th Wedding Anniversary
Dorothy & M.R.B. Lovesey

BEST WISHES!

Partnership Of Hope With The Poor

"Headlines of Hope" '93 - an update from the Sharing Way - announced a new phrase being used to capture the essence of its ministry: "Your partnership of hope with the poor." The Canadian Baptist relief and development ministry "is focused on the poor...our primary concern."

We are reminded that The Sharing Way belongs to every member in our Baptist churches and is a partnership.

Perhaps this partnership should be kept in mind as many of our congregations prepare for their annual Christmas "parties". The extravagance of church suppers for members brings to mind this quote from Harvey Cox:

"We created our own cardboard world in which we prefer to live rather than in God's world."
(God's Revolution)

Church members gathering to feed themselves is hardly a way to show commitment to the world's poor and less-advantaged people.

It was encouraging to hear about members of a certain church committee being asked to "brown bag it". ...Not a bad example!

As partners we have a responsibility to support The Sharing Way. Hopefully, our annual church budgets will show our concern for the poor.

"The world has enough for man's need, but not for man's greed."
- Mahatma Gandhi

Atlantic Baptist Fellowship

October 8, 1993

Dr. John Savage, Premier
Province of Nova Scotia

Dear Dr. Savage:

At the fall assembly of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship in Annapolis Royal, the delegates to our meetings directed me to write you about a matter of concern to us. The Fellowship is an organization of individuals and churches within the Atlantic Baptist Convention. Part of our mandate is to study and address matters of doctrinal and social concern. While our major theme in Annapolis was "The Face of Violence in our Society," we spent some time discussing the effects of gambling upon individuals and upon society in general. Specifically, I was asked to convey our concern about the introduction of casino gambling in our province.

We recognize the attraction of projects which promise economic development. However, in this case, the development would seem to bring in its wake social, economic, and spiritual costs which would cause an inevitable degradation of our society. If we could foresee the "tar ponds," surely we would look for different kinds of economic development.

Our dependent society does not need further inducement to profit without labour, nor do those with addictive personalities need another source of temptation. It seems to me that you do what you feel to be right. I know that you have taken a course with regard to taxation that is not popular, but which you feel is the right course to bring us out of a difficult situation. I hope that, in regard to casino gambling, you feel that the right course is to leave to others the supposed benefits and the very real personal and social costs.

Sincerely, Ed Colquhoun, President

ABF FALL ASSEMBLY

"The Face of Violence in Our Society" was the theme of the '93 ABF Fall Conference held at the Annapolis Royal First United Baptist Church. A summary of presentations follows.

Violence In Our Religious Tradition

Gerry Harrop

Two areas which need urgent concern are: our treatment of aboriginal people and the church's attitude to women.

- (1) The original French languages version of our national anthem contains the lines:
- your arm knows how to carry the sword,
it knows how to carry the cross.

Beginning with Columbus this is how we Caucasian Europeans came to this hemisphere. We came carrying both cross and sword. We came with firearms and firewater! We came denying native spirituality, herding native young people into boarding schools, where we tried to teach them to repudiate the faith of their own people and embrace ours, sometimes abusing them physically and sexually.

And now when we confront native violence in remote ghettos like Davis Inlet (violence against one's own person) and in our inner cities, with (in Nova Scotia) native unemployment running at 2½ times the general level, we must come to the realization that these tragedies are not due to the essential inferiority of these people, but is the result of how we have treated them. Some progress is being made in the political scene, but we in the churches must keep pressure on our governments to keep native rights on the front burner. And we must admit and repent of our history of violence against them.

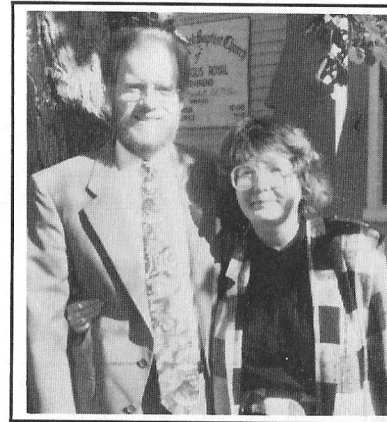
- (2) In the Halifax metropolitan area over the last year or so there have been about half a dozen unsolved cases of the mutilation and murder of young women. It is not safe for women to move about on our campuses, streets and parking lots. This upsurge of violence against women is the male reaction to the challenge the feminist movement has made against the subordination of women. Some men are reacting violently -- battering and beating.

What has this to do with the Church? No one alleges that we batter our women physically. But the fact remains that in this area the Church has been one of the most reactionary forces in society. When women and men are together, the attitude still persists that the woman's place is to serve and be subservient. Yes we are "cleaning up" our sexist language in liturgy and hymnody, and sometimes even in scripture translation. But we have a long way to go before Martin Luther King's "dream" of racial equality is realized in the realm of gender equality.

Violence Among Youth: The School Scene

Ed Colquhoun

Although the extent of violence committed by our school students is often exaggerated because of our fascination with the American scene, teachers in some Nova Scotia schools have real concerns. Non-violent conflict resolution is a popular in-service training topic these days. One observation which may be surprising is that some girls of Junior High age readily fight other girls whenever they feel that their social standing is threatened. Of course, the boys' battles to determine who is cock of the walk are in some ways as old as schooling of any kind. The presence on school grounds of older allies, and the continued bullying of some students makes for a difficult situation. There is also increased awareness on the part of schools of dating violence. Despite all these concerns, most students in Nova Scotia are not involved in violence.



Newly ordained pastors of
the Glace Bay United
Baptist Church - Kirby
and Jennifer Smart

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Pastor's Viewpoint

Kirby Smart

Every two minutes a woman is raped. Every eighteen seconds a woman is beaten by the man she lives with. Every five minutes a child is molested. Every thirty minutes a daughter is molested by her father. (Compiled from: U.S.A. Dept. of Justice, the F.B.I. Crime Report, and the National Centre for Child Abuse.)

Statistics Canada reported last year that there were 750 murders in Canada in 1991. Out of these approximately 3/4 or 600 were committed by a family member, relative, or friend.

These brutal realities insistently call us who are Christian people to reflect upon our experiences and tradition and to act compassionately through our theological framework in a new and more humane way. Ministry is the task of all Christians, lay and ordained, at every level of the church from our smallest local parishes through denominational and ecumenical structures. The task of that ministry is to bring the healing and wholeness and liberation promised by God's grace to every facet of human life from personal woundedness to social and institutional structures. The pervasiveness of verbal, physical, mental, emotional, sexual, and spiritual abuse in our society challenges us to a significant, if not fundamental, reconstruction of our patriarchal mindset and traditional beliefs.

Violence And The Media

Terry Tingley

Messages that blare from TV, rock music, and movies amount to a second education for our children. This after-school curriculum plays a powerful role in the formation of values. Values inconsistent with the parents' are played out hour after hour in our own living rooms.

Majority of TV programs contain violence. During their school years children view some 200,000 acts of violence and about 40,000 murders. Researchers confirm that viewing violence breeds indifference to violence. It affects the behavior, beliefs, and feelings of heavy viewers.

Parents are advised to place limits on viewing programs and to guide children in selecting quality TV shows.

Our youth risk becoming insensitive to the horror of suffering if they are fed a steady diet of glorified violence.

New Year's Resolutions For ABFers

by Adele Crowell

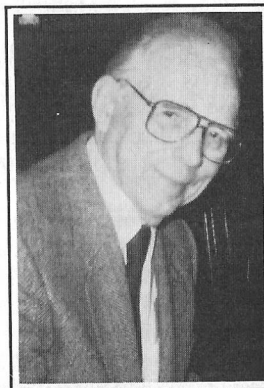
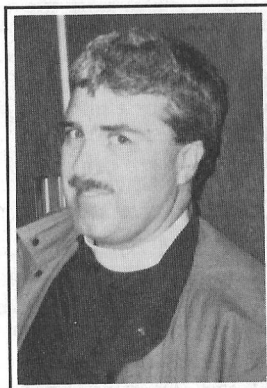
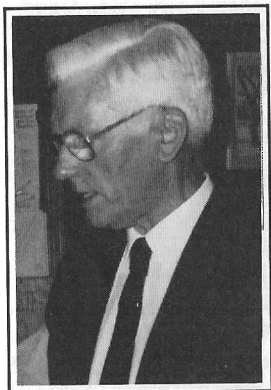


ABF FALL CONFERENCE

Opposite: Rev. Howard and Marilyn Taylor with President Ed Colquhoun

Centre: Rev. Robert Matthews, Rev. Dr. P.G.A. Griffin-Allwood; Rev. Vincent Rushton...

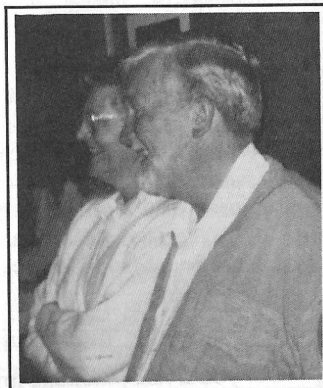
Bottom: Sadie Cann & Lois Tingley; Joy and Rev. David Shaw.



Rev. Adele Crowell

Soon we'll all be beginning a brand New Year! As ABFers we have beliefs and goals that we hold dear. However, in order to reach a goal it is good to keep it in the forefront of our minds. As friends of ABF we try to support one and another, to work for issues of freedom and justice within our denomination and to join with other denominations in our service of Christ. So here are some New Year's Resolutions to help us do those very things.

1. Tell a woman in ministry **"you're with her all the way"** and buy her lunch! (It isn't easy being a woman minister in Convention). If you want to be really radical, you could invite her to speak in your church.
2. Start a Bible Study in your church on the **historical Baptist Freedoms**. (Some of us have forgotten them, some new members have never heard of them.)
3. Use the term **"soul liberty"** in your conversation at least three times a day. (Your friends or colleagues will finally ask what does that mean? Be sure you can explain it. I recently explained it to my hairdresser. He was fascinated.)
4. Make an announcement at your **local Association meeting** concerning the coming program of A.B.F. and/or report on the previous program with great enthusiasm. (This resolution is only for the truly courageous or highly evolved A.B.F.'s)
5. **Invite a new person** to A.B.F. Fall or Spring Association. Provide them with transportation and a really great time. (Of course we ALWAYS have a great time at ABF.)
6. Think of ways to promote a unified Christian group in your Community which is interdenominational to deal with issues such as **Sunday shopping and Casino gambling**. There might be a vehicle in place in which to take action and it just needs some impetus or you may have to create a new one. We need to go beyond denominational barriers to have an impact on social issues in our communities.
7. **No more "wimping out"!** ABFers need to be more vocal about unjust situations. The place to start - our own Convention. Take a look at the issues coming up in August NOW and organize.



Confessions Of An Ecumenist

I. THE CHURCH

Roger Cann

Largely because I grew up within a family of Baptists, and participated in the life of a Baptist congregation from an early age, I take as a given that the local church is the Body of Christ in that place, endowed for its mission. I never thought of the local fellowship of believers as made up exclusively of Baptists. The youth programs I attended led me to see that the gifts of the Spirit for ministry are to be found in the ecumenical fellowship.

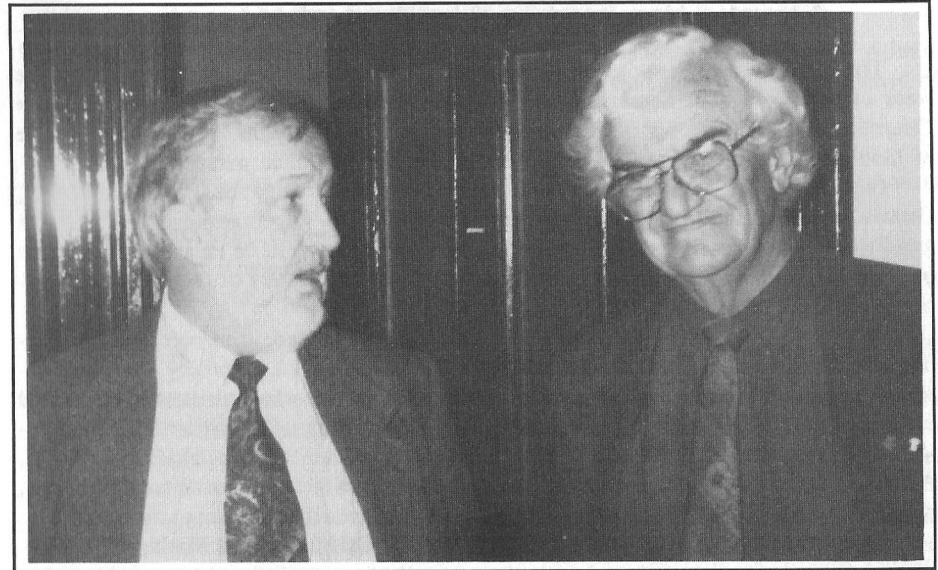
In India we welcomed the opportunities we had to participate in a host of ecumenical projects. There was no rule that such projects should include all denominations, rather each enterprise was as inclusive as we could make it. In the state of Andhra Pradesh there were ecumenical institutions for theological education, leadership training, publishing of educational materials and hymnaries, and for the production of Christian radio programming.

As a consequence I tend to emphasize an aspect of the Church which is not always given its due, and is expressed by the metaphor, "the Church is a Pilgrim People". The metaphor suggests a particular aspect of the life of the fellowship which is fundamental to my model of ecumenism. The pilgrim is a traveller, who is somewhat alien to his environment and pushing on to a sacred goal. The Church as a Pilgrim People is in the process of becoming. Its unity is not an end in itself, but rather that love, mutuality and faithfulness may be more fully demonstrated, and that witness and service more competently exercised.

The Church as God's instrument serves His purposes. God has not yet thought out all the forms in which He will shape His shalom. Therefore the Church will always be non-permanent in its composition, form and activity. For pilgrims there is little room for unnecessary baggage. Forms, rites, and organizations which impede the movement of the Pilgrim People will have to be adapted, or discarded. The historical bases for division have been preempted by the passage of time. The Church is the exodus community, pioneering the future to the world.

Without that vision expressed by the metaphor of the Pilgrim People, we cut ourselves off from what God wishes us to fashion for use in the future. The institutional needs of the fellowship will be met. I am certain that as long as we are faithful to our calling as people on the move, strategies of organization and forms of ministry will evolve which are suited to the needs of the moment. When we begin to see ourselves as having arrived, and that patterns of ministry, congregational life and church organization must be beyond questioning and preserved at all cost, then, to that degree, we have lost our way.

Editor's note: Dr. Roger Cann and his wife Sadie are retiring in Wolfville. They served as missionaries in India from 1956-68 and 1978. Among his appointments, Roger has served as associate secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches, and executive secretary for the department of communications of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec.



Dr. Roger Cann, former executive staff member of CBIM, and Dr. Gerry Harrop, retired professor at McMaster University, discuss current events during a break at ABF Fall Conference. Articles by both appear on these pages.

A Nation Divided

Gerry Harrop

Ordinarily we would not comment on political events in a publication such as ours--certainly not in a partisan way. But the federal election of October 25, 1993, confirmed something about the condition of our nation that many of us have long suspected. The fact is we are deeply divided.

Two historic political parties with a national perspective were decimated. The ruling Tories went into the election with 154 out of 295 seats. They were reduced to two--one in New Brunswick and one in Quebec. And, almost certainly, both of these were personal rather than party victories. The New Democrats were reduced from 43 to 9, electing nobody east of Winnipeg.

In their place has emerged two sectional, tribal parties with over 100 seats between them. The only purpose of the Bloc Quebecois, ironically now "Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition," is to take Quebec out of Canada. The members will either refuse to take the Oath of Allegiance, or will trivialize it. The Reform Party is no less sectional and tribal. It ran no candidates in Quebec. Its vision of Canada is an alliance of ten equal provinces, with no recognition of the "distinct society" that is Francophone Quebec. Bilingualism, biculturalism and multiculturalism would receive no government support under the Reformers.

It is fortunate that the government of the day has a strong majority from all parts of Canada. Its task whether it turns out to be to hold us together, or to negotiate the terms of separation, is a daunting one. If the next provincial election in Quebec goes to the Parti Québécois, and the following referendum opts for sovereignty, we will have to turn from marriage mediation to the divorce process. Mr. Chretien and his colleagues will need our prayers and our support, whatever our political orientation might be.

Atlantic Seminar In Theological Education

The 25th Atlantic Seminar in Theological Education was held in Truro during the week of June 6-11. The Seminar began with a church service at St. George's Anglican Church, Bible Hill. Throughout the week the theme, 'Fully Alive as Persons in the Image of God', was examined from biblical, theological and practical perspectives.

Biblical scholar, Walter Vogels, professor of Old Testament at St. Paul's University, Ottawa, concentrated his lectures on Genesis 1:26-28. Dr. Vogels explored the Yahwist and Priestly accounts of creation, reflecting on what it means to be created in the image of God. He examined the role of humankind as stewards/masters of the earth and partners with God.

Dr. Terry Anderson of Vancouver School of Theology made four presentations centred on the image of God as both substantive and functional. Looking briefly at the substantive image, his lectures emphasised the relational aspect of what it means to be created in God's image. Viewing the human image as distorted, he concluded that right relationship with God, with each other, and with the earth is needed to clear this distortion. Dr. Anderson explored current notions of liberal modernity which further distort the image, calling for a unity of diversity.

Praxis speaker, Dr. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, Calvin College, Michigan, also examined the relational aspect of being created in the image of God. A feminist with a background in psychology, Dr. Van Leeuwen used 'image' as both noun and verb, drawing attention to the relationship between the two. Using the metaphor or 'mirror' she explored relationships in light of oppression and subjectivity.

Tuesday evening saw the inauguration of the I. Judson Levy Evening Forum. Seminar participants were reminded of the contributions made by Dr. Levy and a plaque was presented to his daughter, Lynn (which will be given to Dr. Levy's wife, Ferne Levy) commemorating the event.

Tuesday evening's presentation was made by MicMac artist, Alan Syliboy, who shared his understanding and experience of spirituality, using his artwork as visible representation of his ideas. On Wednesday evening Cathy Smith, Marilyn Foote, and Joanne MacIntosh explored the image of God evolving from childhood through adulthood.

Thursday night's banquet was a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Seminar. A presentation was made to Rev. Doug MacEachern for his valuable contribution to the Seminar over the past 25 years.

At the business meeting on Friday, artist Regina Coupar was elected to chair the Seminar for 1993-94. She is the first lay-person/woman to hold this position. The theme for the 1994 Seminar is 'Christian Responses to Violence' to be held from June 12-17. The Seminar is open to all interested clergy and lay persons. For more information about the Seminar please contact the Registrar, Joanne MacIntosh, at P.O. Box 123, Truro, N.S. B2N 5B6 (902) 983-3392.

United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces Annual Assembly - August 18-21/93

ACTION Items:

Dr. Eugene Thompson reappointed Executive Minister until January 30, 1996.

Miss Marilyn McCormick appointed Director of Christian Training for five years.

Continued on page 11

Rev. Ronald G. Baxter elected as Vice-President. Rev. Baxter was Director of Admissions at ADC (1991-May 1993). He was Convention rep on Camp Wegesegum Board of Directors 1979-1986.

Resolutions on Gambling

AUBC delegates passed the following resolutions brought forward by the Social Action Commission:

- renewed opposition to casino gambling;
- oppose the availability of video gambling machines in public areas;
- oppose the use of gambling as a means of securing government revenue.

I. Judson Levy Memorial Chapel Bell Fund Launched

In July of this year a group of former students, staff and faculty who were at Acadia during the ministry of Dr. I. Judson Levy gathered for a Chapel Reunion. A good deal of interest was expressed in placing a suitable memorial to Dr. Levy in the place where he last ministered.

Following graduation from Acadia University in 1931, Dr. Levy spent four years as Boys' Work Secretary with the Maritime Religious Education Council. He undertook further study at Andover Newton Theological Seminary and then began a distinguished pastoral ministry in Baptist churches in Sussex (NB), Charlottetown (PEI), Moncton (NB), St. Catharines (Ont), and Hamilton (Ont). In many ways the climax of his career was his eleven-year chaplaincy at Acadia. He provided stable and compassionate leadership during years of student unrest and uncertainty. The Sunday evening chapel services were an important feature of campus life.

It was decided by an *ad hoc* committee that a chapel bell would be an appropriate memorial to Dr. Levy as the chapel symbolized what he held most dear to the faith and worship. Approval was received from the University administration to proceed with this project and a special appeal has been launched to raise the necessary funding to offset the expenses. The new chapel bell will cost, including installation, approximately \$25,000 and should be in place by Spring 1994. In accepting this gift, the University administration also expressed the wish that the bell be used on occasions of importance such as Conventions, Installations, or at times of general celebration.

Dr. Athol L. Roberts, Honorary Chair, stated "it is a special privilege for me to ask for your financial assistance for this worthy project to remember our great friend and 'Chaplain Extraordinaire' - I Judson Levy."

Anyone interested in contributing to this special fund should direct their gift payable to Acadia University and earmarked for the **I. Judson Levy Memorial Bell Fund** to the Support Services (External Relations) Office, Box 90, Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0.

(Dr. Levy was editor of the ABF Bulletin - 1976-84)

News Brief

Camp Wegesegum

Update - members of the Board met with the Baptist representatives and issues were resolved. Members attending the anniversary weekend wished us to continue under the umbrella of both denominations. An Ad Hoc committee has been set up to prepare a new Mission statement to be presented to both denominations (United and Baptist).

Book Review

Roger H. Prentice

Champions of the Truth: Fundamentalism, Modernism, and the Maritime Baptists by G.A. Rawlyk (Published for Centre for Canadian Studies, Mount Allison University by McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal & Kingston, 1990) \$11.95 paperback.

One of the more interesting and valuable publications to date about Maritime Baptists has been written by George Rawlyk. Published as a result of research for his Bell Lectures in Maritime Studies, given in 1987 and 1988 at Mount Allison University, Rawlyk offers a fresh understanding of one of the crucial periods of Canadian Baptist history. He has obtained a great amount of new material, particularly from the T.T. Shields papers held by Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto. He has also found a wealth of information concerning J.B. Daggett and J.J. Sidey, two Maritime Baptist ministers who were the focus of an independent movement which split from the United Baptist Convention.

Of particular interest to Baptists today is his unfolding of the Daggett-Sidey story of the 1920's and 30's. It is compelling reading for those who wish to understand subsequent developments and their context.

Sketching the proud history of the Maritime church, particularly the Baptists, Rawlyk tells of the unique character which has influenced them greatly. He uses this information to show why the Daggett-Sidey split from the United Baptist Convention was unsuccessful in its day, and the dangerous developments since.

"In the twentieth century much of what would be preached by the new prophets of evangelical consumerism and greed would, in fact, be the antithesis of nineteenth century evangelicalism." (p. 37) The information revealed by Rawlyk that Daggett and Sidey were privately influenced through personal letter-writing with T.T. Shields shows that they did not understand the Alline-Garettson New Light experience, still present in the Maritime Baptist spirit.

Disarmingly conversational, yet tightly scholastic, this book should make for fascinating reading amongst Atlantic Baptists today, who have been starved too long of their own history. By reading this book they will appreciate once again the great heritage which is theirs, and the danger of losing it today to those ignorant of it. As Rawlyk says, "Since 1927 to 1930, the period of the schism in both Central Canada and the West, Canadian Baptists have become increasingly irrelevant, defensive, and ignorant of their richly textured historical and theological heritage." (pp. 79-80)

News Brief

Fastest Growing Religious Movements

Fundamentalism, along with Pentecostalism, is one of the fastest growing religious movements in the world.

This is the conclusion reached by two U.S. scholars after five years of research.

University of Chicago divinity professors Martin Marty and Scott Appleby have found common links between such diverse groups as Islamic fundamentalists, radical Zionists and U.S. anti-abortionists.

These links include anti-feminism, anti-pluralism and anti-liberalism.

As well, the scholars have found that although most fundamentalist movements profess to be against violence, there is almost always a statement from a holy book or a teaching which urges adherents to pick up the sword if the faith is under attack.

Living Religions VIII - The Baha'i Faith

By M.R.B. Lovesey

The beginnings of the Canadian Baha'i Community date from 1902 when May and Sutherland Maxwell formed an organized Baha'i group in Montreal. The movement spread from there all over Canada and today there are hundreds of Baha'i communities all over the country with thousands of committed adherents. The Canadian Baha'i architects, Sutherland Maxwell and Jean Louis Bourgeois respectively, designed the most important buildings in the Baha'i world, the Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel and the North American House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois, U.S.A.

I. Baha'i History.

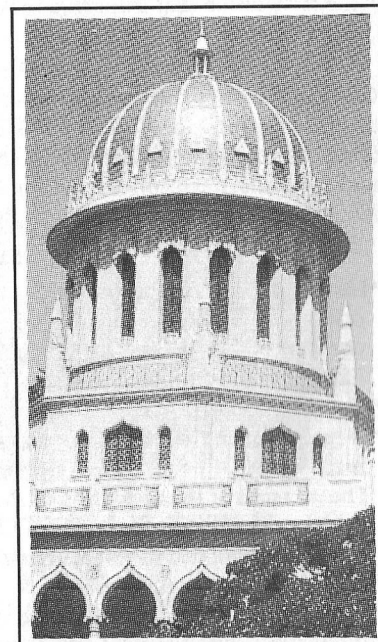
The Baha'i Faith was founded in Persia (Iran) by Mirza Husayn-Ali (1817-1892), known as Baha'u'llah, the "Glory of God." The word Baha'i comes from baha ("glory" or "splendour") and means a follower of Baha'u'llah. The Baha'i Faith evolved from the Babi Faith, founded in 1844 by Mirza Ali-Muhammad (1819-1850), known as the Bab or "Gate." The Bab proclaimed that he was not only the founder of an independent religion, but the herald of a new and far greater prophet or messenger of God, who would usher in an age of peace for all humanity. In 1863, Baha'u'llah declared that he was the one prophesied by the Bab.

This new religion was swiftly and savagely persecuted by the dominant Muslim clergy. The Bab was arrested, beaten, imprisoned, and finally, 9 July, 1850, executed in the public square of Tabriz. Despite his high birth as a member of one of the great patrician families of Persia, Baha'u'llah was caught up in the violence unleashed against the Babis that broke out after Bab's execution. He suffered the loss of his worldly possessions and was subjected to imprisonment, torture and a series of banishments. He died at Bahji, just north of Acre in 1892 and is buried there. His teachings spread rapidly beyond the confines of the Middle East, and his shrine is today the focal point of the world community which his teachings have brought into being.

II. The Principles of the Baha'i Faith.

Baha'u'llah taught there is one God whose successive revelations of his will to humanity have been the chief civilizing force in history. The agents of this process have been the prophets, the Divine Messengers (such as Abraham, Moses, the Hebrew prophets, Jesus, Baha'u'llah) whom men have seen chiefly as the founders of separate religions but whose common purpose has been to bring the human race to spiritual and moral maturity. Humanity is now coming of age. It is this that makes possible the unification of the

Continued on page 14



The Shrine of the Bab, Mount Carmel, Haifa, Israel. The site was chosen by Baha'u'llah as the focal point of the world centre of his Faith.

human family and the building of a peaceful, global society. Among the principles which the Baha'i Faith promotes as vital to the achievement of this goal are:

- * the abandonment of all forms of prejudice.
- * assurance to women of full equality of opportunity with men.
- * recognition of the unity and relativity of religious truth.
- * the elimination of extremes of poverty and wealth.
- * the realization of universal education.
- * the responsibility of each person to search independently for truth.
- * the establishment of a world federation.
- * the recognition that true religion is in harmony with reason and the pursuit of scientific knowledge.

For Baha'is the basic purpose of human life is, in essence, to know and to worship God, and to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. This involves and demands the development of good character, which is achieved through prayer, meditation, and work done in the spirit of service to humanity. Baha'is require monogamy, discourage divorce, and make marriage conditional on the consent of both parties and their parents. Baha'i law prohibits the use of alcoholic beverages and narcotics.

III. Selections from the Writings of Baha'u'llah.

- *He is indeed a true believer in the unity of God who, in this Day, will regard Him as one immeasurably exalted above all the comparisons and likenesses with which men have compared Him. He hath erred grievously who hath mistaken these comparisons and likenesses for God Himself.
- *Blessed is he who prefers his brother before himself.
- *O people of the world! The religion of God is to create love and unity; do not make it the cause of enmity and discord.
- *The measure of the revelation of the Prophets of God in this world, however, must differ. Each and every one of them hath been the Bearer of a distinct Message, and hath been commissioned to reveal Himself through specific acts. It is for this reason that they appear to vary in their greatness.
- *The fundamental purpose animating the Faith of God and His Religion is to safeguard the interests and promote the unity of the human race, and to foster the spirit of love and fellowship among men. Suffer it not to become a source of dissension and discord, of hate and enmity.

* * * * *

With no public ritual or priesthood and no really authoritative scriptures, and claiming to be a scientific, undogmatic faith, the Baha'i Faith has spread with remarkable speed throughout the world. Its similarities as well as its profound differences from the Christian Faith are obvious. Yet many ex-Christians, some of a philosophical turn of mind, and especially some who have been thoroughly disenchanted with all organized religion, have been and are being drawn to it. For further reading, see:

- Esslemont, J.E. Baha'u'llah and the New Era: An Introduction to the Baha'i Faith. 3rd. ed., rev., 1970. Wilmette, Illinois: Baha'i Books.
- Faizi, Gloria. The Baha'i Faith: An Introduction. 2nd. ed., 1972. Printed in Lebanon.
- Hinnels, John R. (ed.) The Penguin Dictionary of Religions. Penguin Books, 1988. See article "Baha'is," et al.

Friends of the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship

FRIENDS are sympathetic to the aims of the ABF, which are:

- (1) To witness to the freedom implicit in the voluntary principle in religion which is the essence of the traditional Baptist position;
- (2) To affirm and celebrate Baptist participation in, and witness to the whole, visible, catholic and evangelical church of Jesus Christ;
- (3) To strengthen the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces and to encourage it to strive for the above;
- (4) To provide a forum for the discussion of doctrinal and ethical questions and social problems and policies in that spirit of tolerance and mutual respect which issues from Christian love;
- (5) To publish, at regular intervals, a Bulletin which seeks to further these aims and which describes the activities of the Fellowship and announces the agenda for its general meetings which will be held in the spring and in the autumn of each year.

FRIENDS undertake:

- (1) To pray for the life and work of the Convention and the Fellowship;
- (2) To seek other committed Christians to join the Fellowship;
- (3) To become better informed about current ethical and theological issues;
- (4) To pay an annual subscription, minimum \$10.00;
- (5) To respond, as circumstances permit, to requests for financial support.

Please cut off along this line
and mail to:

Dr. Dorothy M. Lovesey
P.O. Box 68, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0
Tel.: 902-542-5264

Please enrol me as a FRIEND:

Name and title.....
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FRIENDS OF THE ABF—UPDATE

By Dorothy M. Lovesey

We wish to report that the 1993 target of "250 Friends of the ABF by the end of 1993" is two short of our goal. There is yet time for you to join our number! We are always glad to have new Friends and we are constantly reminded by them of the need that is being met by the ABF and the urgency of the task on hand.

Recently we had the sad task of bidding farewell to Mrs. C.B. Lumsden who has taken up residence with her daughter in Comox, B.C. Wolfville will not be the same without her! Her commitment to the ABF continues, though, through the venue of the Bulletin and the "Friends."



At this time we want to feature two valued "Friends" of the ABF, the Reverend Donald E. and Hetty Jackson, of Wolfville. Don, following his years of school in Halifax, attended Dalhousie University where he graduated B. Sc. The war being at its height, he then served in Canada and overseas with the RCAF as a navigator-instructor, 1942-46. In 1947 he was married to Hester Ann Beach, known to all as Hetty. Answering the call to full-time Christian service, Don studied at Acadia, 1947-50, graduating B.A., M. Div.

Don and Hetty served various churches over the years, including Aylesford and Perth-Andover. Then Don became head of theological studies and Dean of the United Baptist Bible College for seven years. Service in Quebec followed, after which he became associate pastor of the Baptist Church in Moncton. In 1980 Don was president of the ABF. Prior to retirement the Jacksons served the Port Williams Baptist Church. Hetty's talents at piano and organ are much in demand.