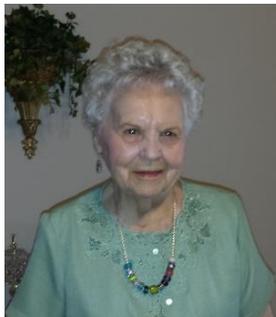




Volume 3, No. 5, May, 2015



Treasures Among Us

**Caroline Jane Alexander
Dixon, Missouri
Neighboring Treasure**

Up to this point, all the Treasures have been members of the Rolla Church of Christ. This month is a rare exception in that Caroline Alexander, a member of the Dixon Church of Christ, is featured.

On August 21, 1913, in the small town of Fairview, Oklahoma, a daughter was born at home to James Franklin and Alma Myrtle (Bailey) Shelton. They named their third child, Caroline Jane, after her grandmother. Caroline had two older siblings, Lorene Nellie and Thomas (Tom) Edward, as well as two younger siblings, James Monroe and Yvonne. Frank, her father, was a pharmacist and worked with his brother-in-law, who was a doctor.

At about the age of three, Caroline, her mother, and her two older siblings came to Missouri by train while her father came by covered wagon with the family belongings. Frank became a farmer for the rest of his working life.

Caroline attended a one-room elementary school where her favorite teacher was Miss Jones. When this favorite teacher was 100 years old, Caroline was fortunate to have pictures taken with her. The occasion was the wedding of Caroline's grandson, Shawn.

Caroline herself is now 101+. She remembers often riding a light tan horse to school rather than walking the distance of several miles. One day when school dismissed at day's end, Caroline found a mule tied where

she had left the nice tan horse. Her brother, Tom, thought he should have the nicer animal to ride to his girlfriend's house that evening.

Caroline completed her high school studies at this Maries County school, which by that time was a multi-room building. In 1929 she graduated from the 10th grade, which was the highest grade taught at that time. History was always her favorite subject.

She used to take eggs by horseback to the country market to have funds to purchase groceries. This was common in those days. Interestingly enough, she never broke an egg on those trips.

Caroline met a gentleman at a pie supper fund raiser for a country school. He was a handsome young man named Luther Jasper Alexander. He told one of Caroline's friends, "I'm going to wait for her!" They dated a short while, then in October, 1931, said their "I do's" at the Maries County Courthouse in Vienna, Missouri. She was only 18, and he was 22. Her sister, Lorene, from Wichita, Kansas, sent her a new navy lacy dress to wear for her wedding. Her mother was at her side, and Plezz, Luther's brother-in-law, stood with him.

"LJ," as Caroline liked to call her husband, was a truck driver. He moved livestock to the St. Louis markets. He later decided to raise Hereford cattle and do some farming while working for the Missouri Farmers Association Cooperative in Dixon.

Together Caroline and Luther raised eight bright and beautiful children. They were Buell Alphro, Hurschall Laroy, Jack Dean, Brenda Gay, Linda Mae, Luther Leland, Dariel Gene, and Angela Rena. They were a close knit family and enjoyed the tradition of getting together for a family reunion every Christmas Eve. This tradition started in the early 1950's and continues to this day. Caroline has never missed one of these reunions through 2014!

After more of the children were older and several were on their own, Caroline decided to go to work for Brown Shoe Company in Dixon, Missouri. She was 45 at the time. She did the fancy stitching on the top of the shoes and recalls making \$8.00 per day to start. She retired when she was 65.

Even though sewing was a necessity in the early days, it remained her hobby later in life; and she also loves to do handwork. She was such an accomplished seamstress that, if she saw clothing or handwork she liked, she could create her own patterns. This ability was put in use often in the early years as Caroline made many clothes for her children using her Singer treadle sewing machine. She loved to crochet afghans and other items, mostly for gifts to family members. Being the giving person that she is, all of the children have afghans and quilts she has made.

Caroline cherishes her family and still has five living children. She also has seven grandsons, five granddaughters, eleven great grandsons and nine great granddaughters. She is also proud of having nine great-great grandchildren. Her beloved LJ passed away in December, 1995, after 64 blessed years together.

She has traveled to Los Angeles, California, and through a number of states including Colorado and New Mexico. She has seen the Grand Canyon and the Painted Desert, and she has flown to Alaska. Caroline was 85 when she bought her first brand new car, a white 2000 Pontiac Sunbird Coupe with a sunroof. She loved driving it through town and to church.

She has a collection of teapots and a collection of porcelain dolls, all displayed in several curio cabinets. When she was 97 years old, she made 17 hand embroidered table runners for Christmas gifts.

Some of Caroline's favorite things are chocolate pie and the color red. Her favorite actor is Clark Gable and her favorite president was Franklin D. Roosevelt because of the things he accomplished. She also enjoys listening to the Springfield News.

Caroline has been a member of the Dixon Church of Christ since about 1948. She reminds us, "Do unto others as you would like done unto you, and always give people the benefit of the doubt." Her children say their mother is "a peacemaker."

Caroline lives by the principle of being honest with one another. There is no room for liars and cussing, which in the old days, resulted in getting your mouth cleaned out with soap. She obeyed the gospel as a young adult. She placed her membership at the Dixon Church of Christ a year or so after it was established when LJ was baptized.

She has always lived a life of example as a Christian wife before her family and the church. She is still living this Christian example today as a mother and grandmother. Her influence is currently seen in her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Caroline's life story and her age of 101+ make her a true treasure in our sisterhood.

Several of her descendants are members of/attend Rolla Church of Christ. They include Gay Warman; Jessica and Isabella Lane; Courtney and Brad Nivens and their children Joel, Cassidy and Gracey; Terry Baker and daughters Marissa and Regan; Tina Robertson and children Nick, Emily and Tucker. Former members include Jack Alexander, Brenda and Johnny Aaron, and Brandon and Somer Overshon and their children.

NOTE: *This is the 17th in a series highlighting noble Christian women. We truly have many "treasures among us" in the women who exemplify Christianity in all its facets and have much to teach us all.*

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MOTHER

Mother is the greatest female influence in my life. She left this earth March 3, 2011. Since then, I have begun to fully understand just how much she profoundly cemented my love for God from my first memories and how deeply she influenced my life and thinking. When she went the way of the earth, I lost the motherly bulwark and mainstay of my existence.

Joyce was well trained by her father, Marion Edward Haines; and she, too, developed his same deep love for Jehovah God. He passed that love to his daughter, and she passed it to me.

My very first memories of Mother were of going with her to Church. I remember the feeling of reverence she instilled in me when we would enter the church building. I was to be quiet, walk softly, and whisper if I had to talk at all. I was to nod, smile graciously, and help immediately if I saw anyone needing help. I must have been all of three or four. Mother would say, "You are in

God's House, and He is the King of Kings. You must behave accordingly."

I was taken to all services; mother converted me. At ten I was baptized, and then Mother began teaching me in earnest. The summer I was fifteen, I read the Bible through from cover to cover. That same summer I made it my goal to become a missionary. I had never considered any other occupation because Mother had told me when she first held me that she dedicated me as her firstborn to the Lord like Hannah did with Samuel. I rose willingly to her expectations.

I told Mother my goal. She told to me to begin praying for the man God had prepared for me. She said I needed to pray for his well-being and God's protection and guidance for him and then pray that I would recognize him when I met him. I did so faithfully for three years. God answered my prayers in all things.

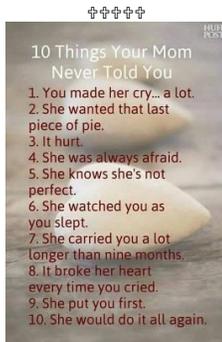
After Kim and I married and moved to Thailand, Mother faithfully wrote me each week until we got a computer and Internet service. Then we wrote each other every single day. Even though I saw Mother probably six times in the thirty-eight years before she died, we never lost touch.

Mother continued to teach me by example through her writings. We continued to discuss things pertaining to God, the Church, country, and family in the manner of very close friends. I was heartbroken when I no longer got a letter. Even today, it is the little things that trigger the loss that will always be there.

As far as I know, Mother had read the Bible from cover to cover over fifty times; and she would constantly find new gems and jewels therein. She would write, "You'll never believe what I found!"

I feel both privileged and blessed to have had this woman as my mother and as my most valued Christian influence.

Rebecca Voraritskul, Khon Kaen, Thailand
©December, 2014



Fountain or Drain?



Have you ever seen one of those fancy water fountains? Sometimes there are colored lights under the water and as the plumes of water shoot up into the air on a summer's

evening, the red, blue, or green lights turn them into a concert of colors.

I've even seen a fountain that was programmed to shoot its sprays in time to music, with short spurts of staccato rhythm and tall, majestic geysers for the dramatic passages of music.

It's fascinating to watch and people are drawn to these fountains. Fountains use the same water over and over again. A spray of water goes into the air and returns to the fountain to be used again.

No one stands around and watches the drain in the fountain. When a cleaning is necessary, the plug is pulled and the water goes down the drain. The drain only takes the water - it doesn't give it back.



God showers us daily with bountiful blessings. Do we use them in glory to His name, like the fountain? Do we enjoy them over and over and share them with others? Or are we like the drain, drinking them in and selfishly keeping them only to ourselves?

Acts 20:35b, says, "...remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Lorna Smith, Lubbock, TX
©2014

A Lonely, Faithful Vigil

Tonight we sang for the residents of a local nursing home. It is December, so we were singing Christmas carols. Some residents sang along with us; others just vacantly gazed into space or methodically ate their food.

One lady was seated with her back to us, and I had barely noticed her. About halfway through our time there, her husband came in and sat down to her left. I did not see her ever look at him or acknowledge him. Several minutes later, I noticed that he was quietly watching her eat her dinner, which she was doing with apparent enjoyment. But she did not look at him or say anything to him.

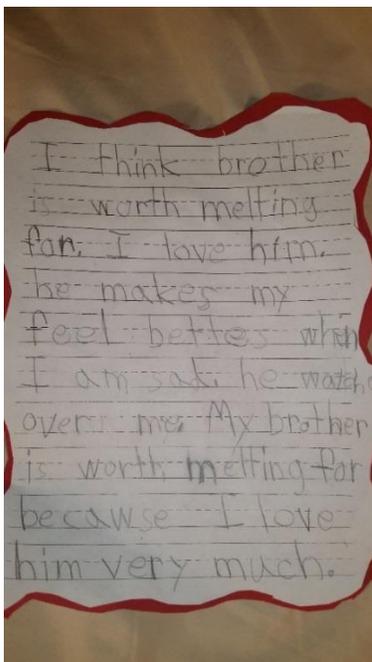
For the rest of the time, he watched her. I couldn't read his expression, but I wondered what he was thinking. Was he remembering long ago days of their romance? Was he thinking she is still as beautiful to him now as she was then? Was he hoping her memory would miraculously return and they could resume their happy life together as before?

When we left, he was still patiently sitting there watching her--such a seemingly lonely, faithful vigil.

Evelyn Waite
©December 8, 2014

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MY BROTHER IS WORTH MELTING FOR



Written by **Kylie Hankins** who is seven years old and is in 1st grade. She lives in Edmond, Oklahoma, and her brother's name is Zane. She wrote this for him at school. Used by permission.

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BISCUITS AND HOG TROUGHS

I was reading in Luke 15 about the prodigal son wanting food from the pig pen, and I remembered something my husband shared with me many years ago.

When he reached dating age, his dad gave him some advice about how to look for a girl. "Billy," he said, "Don't go looking for a biscuit in a hog trough."

For those of you who are not familiar with the way we fed hogs in times past, let me bring you up to date. There was a bucket that sat someplace, either in the kitchen or on the porch. Throughout the day, all types of food scraps were tossed into the "slop bucket." This included many not-so-pleasant items, such as chicken innards, coffee grounds, grease, and leftover biscuits. At the end of the day or the next morning, this mixture was poured into the trough where the hogs ate. It was a disgusting-looking mess. True, there were biscuits floating around on the top of the swill, but we would have never even thought about retrieving one.

The point Papa Watkins was making is that there are places you do not want to go to find the girl of your dreams. A bar, and X-rated movie, a wild party, or other such places do not appeal to girls (or boys) who are trying to live right.

In case you're wondering, my husband found me in church, and we were married 55 years before he went to be with the Lord in March of 2013.

Follow my father-in-law's example and teach your kids how to search for that perfect mate—or find good friends—before they make a mistake that will impact them for the rest of their lives.

Jeanetta Watkins, Adamsville, AL
October, 2014

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Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by Kathy Webber and Evelyn Waite, members of the Rolla Church of Christ. If you would like your sisters in Christ or your relatives, friends, co-workers or neighbors to receive it, you can share your copy with them. If they would like to receive it, please send their email addresses to evelynwa@fidmail.com. *Sunrise* may also be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveandlove.org>. Once there, click on Resources, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

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