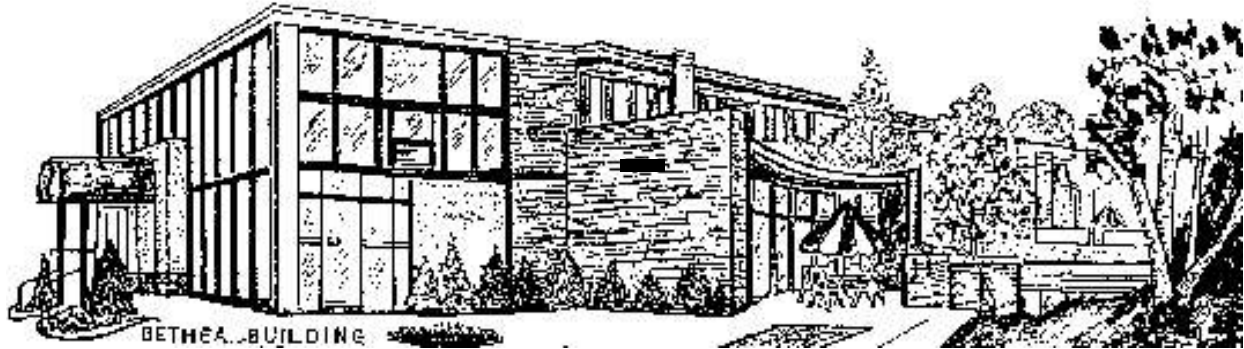


SERENDIPITOR



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A Blessing for the New Year Borrowed from the Franciscan Tradition

*May God bless each of you with discomfort
with easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships,
so that you may live deep within your heart.
May God bless each of you with anger at injustice, oppression,
and exploitation of people, especially children,
so that you may work for justice and live in peace.
May God bless each of you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain,
rejection, starvation and war,
so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.
May God bless each of you with enough foolishness to believe
that you can make a difference in this world,
so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.*

—Author Unknown



From Our Administrator --



I would like to wish you a very Happy New Year. If your Christmas was as fun, religious, and exciting as ours, then I know you had a wonderful Christmas. I am so

thankful that we have fun while still remembering that the LORD sent us the best gift we will ever receive, JESUS CHRIST.

We were very pleased to have Santa visit twice, once for the staffs' children and once for our health care residents. We had our annual off-off-off Broadway play; several groups came to sing to us, an open house for all of us who put up decorations, and many spiritual events.

This month as we celebrated the birth of Jesus we also celebrated the lives of Home Missionary Esther Russell who passed away on November 29, Deaconess Jean Hoska on December 21, and Ruth Palmer, an Outreach Patient, on December 24.

On New Years Eve there was a vigil of remembrance for all the saints who left us this year.

My hope for you is that you have a meaningful and Happy New Year.

--Nancy Garrison, Executive Director

Getting to Know You

"Getting to Know You" was a hit tune from the wonderful musical, "The King and I." Although in a much less formal manner, the Brooks-Howell staff and the Spiritual Life Committee of the Residents' Council decided to invite for lunch the clergy and spouses new to the Asheville District of the United Methodist Church, or to a new charge. Table conversation about who we are was followed by a brief sharing time focusing in on their call to the pastoral ministry and the visions and dreams they and their new congregations, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, hope to carry out. Out of the 16 new clergy, 10 attended, and two wives and one husband.

Christian hospitality truly is a gift of the Spirit!

--Pat Riddell

Happy Birthday, Channel 56!

Our own in-house television channel, Channel 56, WBHH, has just celebrated its first year of broadcasting. It started simply to present schedules for events happening in Brooks-Howell Home or events to which transportation is provided. Now, it has grown to include a live broadcast of services at Central United Methodist Church here in Asheville at 8:45 and at 10:55 on Sunday mornings for residents who are unable to attend services at their own church.

We have movies regularly on Friday afternoons. These may be old favorites like "The Bells of St. Mary's" or "The Incredible Journey" or more recent movies. Occasionally, we have a drive-in show in the media room or chapel. This is especially effective with comedies as we enjoy laughing together.

Coverage of recent events here is presented by a slide show of photographs taken by Channel 56 staff. During the days just before Christmas, Debbie Pittman, our Channel 56 Manager, presented a day and night slide show of 600 photos of the events of 2011 at Brooks-Howell Home. Christmas music replaced our usual high quality background music, and every resident was seen.

Thank you, Debbie! You have brought a lot of joy to us.

--Ann Janzen



Christmas at Brooks-Howell Home

Note from the Editor: We have learned to expect a Christmas play during this season, written and produced by our playwright in-residence—Ann Janzen!

Scrooge and Santa???

An interview with Ann Janzen by Pat Riddell

On Wednesday, December 14, the BHH Players presented the annual Christmas play.

Ann, how did you arrive at putting Scrooge and Santa together in your play?

I thought of Scrooge in August, and waited for inspiration. Then suddenly I remembered that Santa and Matilda Claus were in residence here.* I thought the combination would be interesting.

Were you responsible for writing, directing and producing the play by yourself?

No, not really. I was just a center of conversation. There were so many helpers—such as Alycia Johnson to manage some parts and Ruth Planey who was in charge of the radio station.

Could you give us a brief overview of the play?

Scrooge has entered BHH as a resident. Scrooge and Santa have very different views, especially about Christmas. The reindeer are tired of running around the world. They want to play. However, they, like many of us, overdo it and end up covered with bruises and bandages.

What do you think was the funniest part of the play?

Scrooge, when he tried to turn the doorknob so he could get to the radio station.

What was the role of the three deaconesses?

Only once had Scrooge had a happy memory of childhood. It was the time that three deaconesses

had given him good food and something to drink. One good deed of kindness can be the motive for a change in attitude. Isn't that the message of Christmas? God gave God's Son so that all might be brought into a loving family relationship in God's kingdom.



Scrooge



Santa and Scrooge



Three Deaconesses are served tea



Young Scrooge with Deaconesses

(Continued p.4)

*Reference to last year's play

Christmas Play (Continued from p. 3)



Rudolph and the crippled reindeer, with an elf, the Manager, and a deaconess

The Cast (those shown in the photos):

- Scrooge–Stuart Bryan
- Santa–LeGrand Smith
- Brooks-Howell Staff–Carole Gilham
- Deaconesses–Amy Bronson, Nancy Garrison, Lucy Gist. Serving tea: Faye Hackney-Lance
- Young Scrooge–Samuel Owens
- Rudolph– Warren Owens
- Elf–Mylah Johnson
- Manager/Assistant –Alycia Johnson
- Crippled Reindeer–Irma Higgins, Pat Riddell

Photos–Esther Megill

Christmas Parties at Brooks-Howell

Two annual parties are held during December at BHH. The first one is the Employee’s Children’s party, which took place this year on December 21. Santa calls out each child’s name and they come forward and sit on his lap and tell Santa what they want for Christmas. Then they are given a bag of gifts and goodies. Afterwards, everyone goes to the Craft Room for cookies and lemonade. The residents thoroughly enjoy seeing the bright shiny faces of the children as they anticipate what Santa will bring.



Santa and Sierra Jo'Lee Kachline, daughter of Christy Kachline, CNA



Santa and Sarai Lee, daughter of Mike Lee, dietary aid



Beth Buckner, nurse, with her (unhappy) baby, Ella

Photos–Debbie Pittman

(Continued p. 5)

Christmas Party (Continued from p. 6)

The other party was held on Friday, December 23, for the Health Care residents. Santa arrived as everyone sang, "Santa Clause is Comin' to Town." Santa called the names and the elves gave out the gift bags. Each one received a gift picked out especially for them, as well as lotion, shampoo, toothbrushes, and other needed items. The residents seemed so surprised and appreciative for the gifts they received.



Santa with Pat Riddell



Santa with Elves Mylah & Samuel & Tracey Owens

(Alycia Johnson & Jeanneatte Byrd in background)



Gladys Kiger and Santa

Photos—Esther Megill

Kudos

Thank you goes out to the following individuals and groups who made Christmas at Brooks-Howell Home a little brighter:

Gary Mitchell & Harold Bales for leading Sunday Vesper services

Lee Taylor & Keith Megill for playing "Santa"

The Asheville High School Dance Team

The St. Paul's UMC Choir

The Asheville Cello Kids under the direction of Frances Duff

—Tracy Owens, Activities Director

At 7:00 a.m. on Christmas morning independent residents met in the Media room, then went to each of the health units and the dining room to sing carols. They were rewarded by a free breakfast from Brooks-Howell Home.



Samuel with Harry Burton Lewis, Cynthia Ward Elizabeth Howell in background

The Celebration of Advent

Throughout the Advent Season Sunday Vespers reminded residents of the joy of the season in a number of ways. The services began with the lighting of the candles in the Advent wreath, with scripture and prayers to emphasize the hope, joy, love and peace as gifts of Jesus' birth.

On the first Sunday a hymn sing was led by Gary Mitchell, music director of the United Church of Christ and long time friend of Brooks-Howell residents. Advent hymns, Christmas hymns and an occasional solo were enjoyed.

"Advent Around the World" on the second Sunday gave glimpses of the celebration in several lands where Brooks-Howell residents have served. Participants also read scripture in Portuguese, Urdu, and Spanish, as well as Scripture in English from the screen.

"The Best Gift" was the sermon title used by the Rev. Harold Bales on the third Sunday. He was formerly a pastor at Central United Methodist Church, and he remembered when pastors of that congregation also served as the Brooks-Howell chaplain. He spoke fondly of that great relationship.

A time of fellowship and sale and signing of his recent book followed the service.

The universal nature of God's gift of His Son was repeated in a different way on the fourth Sunday by the St. Paul's United Methodist Church chancel choir as they sang "A World of Christmas." The cantata, written by Joseph Martin and directed by Brad Curtioff, was in itself a tremendous gift to all worshipers.

We have been blessed by the vesper services, and we thank all who gave leadership.

–Virginia Miller



Veterans' Day Peace Service

On November 10, 2011, Brooks-Howell Home honored our veterans in a beautiful worship experience. These veterans represent several branches of the service:

Gerald Eisnitz–Air Force
Betsy Ewing–Navy
James Hipkins–Army
Joe Robertson–Army
John Smith–Coast Guard
Rick Garrison–Coast Guard

Steve Cooper, Director of Music and organist at Groce United Methodist Church, got our feet stomping as we sang patriotic songs. He led us into a more thoughtful frame of mind by reading a moving Litany for Peace.

Three Reflections for Peace, presented by Everett Woodcock, June Fischer and Alycia Johnson, inspired us to work for peace wherever we may be.

After the benediction in the chapel we moved to the foyer for the Dedication of the Tree of Remembrance. Then we gathered in the Garden of Remembrance for the dedication of Kenneth Glahn's sculpture that was inspired by the Sumi painting by the Japanese artist, Yasukiyo Nishoika. These liturgies were led by Nancy Garrison, Richard Smyth and Don Turman.

[These services were described in the November-December 2011 *Serendipitor*.]

–Alycia Johnson, Social Services



The Tree of Remembrance

From Our Chaplain—

Sacrifice

The most moving stories I read during Advent and Christmas were those in which people gave of themselves in order to bring happiness and joy to someone in need. As I reflect on these inspiring examples of the Christmas Spirit and think about my hopes for 2012, I cannot forget the words of Rev. Billy Graham in his recent book, *Nearing Home*:

"No matter who we are, retirement presents us with two choices. Either we can use it to indulge ourselves, or we can use it to make an impact on the lives of others. The choice we face is between empty self-indulgence and meaningful activity."

(Billy Graham, *Nearing Home: Life, Faith, and Finishing Well*; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011, 42-43)

Making a positive impact on the lives of others is a very high goal for the New Year for all of us and may require more than usual attention to the lives and needs of persons both nearby and far away. Living for others does not mean that we ignore our own needs but it could mean personal sacrifice in some important ways. For me it could mean



- sacrifice in order to keep myself holistically fit in mind, body and spirit;
- sacrifice to give priority to prayer and deeper understanding and practice of the Bible;
- sacrifice of self interest to enter more completely into the struggles and joys of others;
- sacrifice of possessions in order to empower others to overcome ignorance and poverty.
- sacrifice in order to understand injustices and to be on the side of preventing them;
- and sacrifice in order to understand and be involved in creating a better United Methodist Church through the General Conference in April.

This challenge to sacrifice is one that I want to accept for this New Year.

--Don Turman, Chaplain

Vigil of Remembrance

The second annual 24-hour Vigil of Remembrance was held in the chapel from 3:30 p.m. on New Year's Eve until 3:30 p.m. on New Year's Day. The purpose of the Vigil was to provide an opportunity for residents, staff and families to honor the memory of the 18 Brooks-Howell Home residents who died in 2011.

At the opening service the name of each person was read by Chaplain Don Turman and a ceramic star for each was hung on an evergreen tree by Sheila McCarty. This was followed by a "memory time" of sharing remembrances of each person. During this time a photograph of each person was projected onto the media screen.

The chapel was lighted and recorded music played continuously for the 24 hours of the Vigil so that people could come at their convenience. Candles and photographs of each person were placed in the windows and detailed biographies were available in a Book of Remembrances.

Deaths in 2011

1. Neal Wyndham - January 6, 2011
2. Rebecca Sue Craig- January 9, 2011
3. Nora Marie Lamb - February 13, 2011
4. Pearl Auldredge Howard - February 28, 2011
5. Betty Jane Fonner- April 2, 2011
6. Rosema Jasmine Brewer - April 24, 2011
7. Patricia Eileen Richardson - May 2, 2011
8. Marcella Rachel Mathys - May 3, 2011
9. Barbara Stauffer Davis – May 20, 2011
10. Truby Ledbetter Painter - May 31, 2011
11. Ruth Zingg Leutenegger - June 22, 2011
12. Helen Henson Grant - August 11, 2011
13. Jane Swagler Oehmler – October 23, 2011
14. Catherine Van Doren Rabb - October 26, 2011
15. Alfred Grasso - November 4, 2011
16. Esther Mae Ferree Russell - November 29, 2011
17. Jean Marie Hoska - December 10, 2011
18. Ruth Gwaltney Palmer – December 24, 2011

--Don Turman

In Memory—

Esther Mae Feree Russell

March 12, 1918

November 29, 2011



Esther was born March 12, 1918, in a Methodist parsonage in Bonair, Iowa. She grew up in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where Park Avenue Methodist Church and Red

Rock Camp Meetings played a significant role in her life. She attended John Fletcher College (now Vennard College) in University Park, Iowa, where she met her future husband, Arthur Russell. They were married June 20, 1937, and served ten years as an Evangelical pastor-and-wife team in rural Iowa churches, twenty years at Red Bird Mission in southeast Kentucky, and eleven years in central Kentucky United Methodist Churches.

Esther's many talents included singing, playing and teaching the piano and autoharp, painting, drawing, writing and speaking at Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) churches around the country on behalf of Red Bird Mission.

Art and Esther had fifteen very active retirement years in the mountains near Greenville, Tennessee, with a unique ministry, including outreach to street people, leading weekly services for the disabled, helping in prison ministry, leading spiritual growth retreats, making and decorating clay pots (they were "claymates") and presenting inspiring programs including "The Circuit Rider" and "A Sermon in Clay." Their last move was to Brooks-Howell Home in Asheville, North Carolina in 1992, where they set up their pottery, led weekly devotions and were active in Christ Church in Weaverville. After Arthur went to his heavenly home in 2000, Esther began attending the Asheville Bible Church, which was within walking distance.

Surviving are son David Russell, daughters Margaret Cleaver and Rebecca Cutshall, seven grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren. Preceding her were her parents, Earl Cleveland and Lovica Todd Feree, a brother, Paul Feree, two

sisters, Lois Kocher and Joyce Couch, a grandson, and her husband of nearly 63 years, Arthur Russell.

With all her heart Esther said her lifetime scripture verse is true: Psalm 37:4 *Delight thyself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.* And she would add, with a twinkle in her eyes, "Oh, yes, and more, besides!"

Jean Hoska

September 1, 1930

December 10, 2011



Jean Hoska was born in Minneapolis, MN, the only child of Raymond and Florence Hoska. After graduating from High School, she worked at a life insurance company to earn money for college.

In September 1949 she enrolled in the University of Minnesota. She majored in elementary education and after graduation taught for two years. In September 1958 she enrolled in Hartford Seminary in Hartford, CT, and obtained a Master's Degree in Christian Education.

In the summer of 1960 she began working with the Woman's Division in the West Washington Group Ministry with a full time rural worker. The job involved working with local people in developing and supporting Vacation Bible School in each church. That summer she was assigned to work in the Kickapoo Area of Wisconsin. Most of the work was with children, youth and women.

She was commissioned a Deaconess in January 1963, and in September moved to Northeastern Missouri. When the minister was moved, she inherited the leadership of an adult Sunday School class of mentally challenged adults. In 1971 she was given a sabbatical leave in order to take classes at Peabody College in Nashville, TN. She graduated with an Ed.S. degree (Specialist in Education).

(Continued p. 9)

Hoska (Continued from p.8)

She became an associate professor at Tennessee Technical University in Cookeville, TN, preparing teachers to teach students with special needs. Later she worked in Cumberland County, teaching special education students.

In 1990 several of the parents of her students wanted some activities during the summer for her students. A one-week day camp grew out of this idea. Adults and youth from First United Methodist Church of Crossville helped each year. The camp continued for about ten years until more of the students were required to attend summer school.

Jean retired in 1995. She moved to Brooks-Howell in the spring of 2006. She became a member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church and until recently had taught a "Sunday School" class to Brooks-Howell health unit residents each Saturday morning.

I Remember—

I never wanted to be a Deaconess, but God apparently had different plans for my life. During my childhood and youth my family and I were active in our local Methodist Churches in Louisville, Kentucky.



Then the war began, and following graduation from the University of Louisville I entered the WAVES. My mother said, "Betsy, be sure to find a church to attend wherever you are sent."

After the war I entered Scarritt College for Christian Workers in Nashville, Tennessee. Later I went to work for the General Board of Missions of the Methodist Church in New York. There Mary Lou Barnwell, head of the Deaconess Office, began to challenge me to become a Deaconess.

That was the beginning of a life that enabled me to become a world traveler.

After some years in New York I was elected Director of the Deaconess Office of the Methodist Church. Thus began my first trips to Europe, where I discovered a strong presence of serving in nearby schools, hospitals, churches and wherever there was need. The European Deaconess Movement began in Germany with the pietist renewal within the Lutheran Church in the mid 1800s. In Scandinavia and in Germany there are small Methodist Churches, but they also have deaconesses.

In time I became the Associate General Secretary of the Board, and later was elected president of the World Diakonia. This gave me the wonderful privilege of visiting and learning about deaconesses in the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, and sharing with them in our every four-year World Diakonia Conferences, and other meetings in between Conferences.

I rejoice to see the new thrust of the deaconess and home missionaries movement within the General Board of Global Ministries (now once again in the Women's Division), and our sharing in their training sessions here at Brooks-Howell Home.

What a wonderful life God has given me!

—As told to Pat Riddell by Betsy Ewing



The new deaconess/home missionary pin

He Came But Once

He only came once

But once was enough

This Babe.

To be who he was

and do all he did.

This one who reigns supreme!

Yes, he still does.

He is still being

and doing

and loving

as he always has and will.

Praise God for his gift to us,

Yeah, even you and me.

–Linda Frost, former resident

Explain God

Explain God is a third grade homework assignment

written by 8-year-old Danny Dutton

from Chula Vista, California.

One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes these to put in place of the ones that died so that there will be enough people to take care of the things here on earth. He doesn't make grownups. Just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way he doesn't have to take up valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that up to the mothers and fathers. I think it works out pretty good.

God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on as some people, like preachers and things, pray other times beside bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to radio or TV on account of this. As he hears everything, not only prayers, there must be a terrible lot of noise in his ears, unless He thought of a way to turn it off.

God sees everything and hears everything and is everywhere. Which keeps him pretty busy. So you shouldn't go wasting his time by going over your parents' heads and ask for something they said you couldn't have.

Atheists are people who don't believe in God. I don't think there are any in Chula Vista. At least there aren't any who come to our church.

Jesus is God's son. He used to do all the hard work, like walking on water and doing miracles and trying to teach people about God who didn't want to learn. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and they crucified him. But he was good and kind like his father and he told his father that they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said OK. His dad (God) appreciated everything he had done and all his hard work on earth, so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in Heaven. So he did.

And now he helps his Dad out by listening to prayers and seeing which things are important to God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself without having to bother God. Like a secretary, only more important of course. You can pray anytime you want and they are sure to hear you because they got it worked out so one of them is on duty all the time.

You should go to church, because it makes God happy, and if there's anybody you want to make happy, it's God. Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun, like going to the beach. That's wrong and besides, the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway. If you don't believe in God you will be very lonely because your parents can't go everywhere with you like camp, but God can. It's good to know he's around when you're scared of the dark or when you can't swim very good and get thrown in real deep water by big kids.

But you shouldn't just think of what God can do for you. I figure he put me here and he can take me back any time he pleases. And that is what I believe in God.

[This was published in a church bulletin in St. Columbia's in York, England, and submitted by Helen Mandlebaum some years ago.]

BIRTHDAYS



RESIDENTS

1 PAULINE GIBBS
1 RUTH STEWART
4 DELORES CARNEGIE
10 FUSAKO KRUMMEL
22 HELEN MANDLEBAUM
23 ESTHER JONES
24 LOISE GEORGE

EMPLOYEES

4 ALMA HEINE, DIETARY
5 ROSILAND WHITELEY, NURSING
9 PAMELA VAN ALLEN, NURSING
27 SHARON GOGGANS, NURSING
27 SHEILA FREEMAN, RESIDENT SVS



RESIDENTS

3 ANN JANZEN
11 RUTH CLARK
18 BETTY LETZIG
25 ARLENE MERRITT
27 ESTHER MEGILL

EMPLOYEES

1 DEVLYN O'CONNOR, NURSING
3 FRANKIE HOLLEY, NURSING
5 DEBRA LAMBERT, ENVIRONMENTAL SVS.
8 KATHLEEN GOLDWORTHY, ADMINISTRATION
10 BRUCE DICK, DIETARY
11 BETH BUCKNER, NURSING
16 SUSAN ROBERTS, NURSING
18 DAVID CARTER, ENVIRONMENTAL SVS
19 OTOKO UMEMBUDI, ENVIRON SVS
24 LATONYA LEE, NURSING
27 ALICE LUTHER, NURSING
28 JULIE LATINO, ENVIRONMENTAL SVS.
28 VERONICA QUINTERO PEREZ, ENVIRON SVS

