

# Gardner Newsletter

Issue 65, Volume 17

Page 1

Winter 2014

## *Family and Friends Mourn the Passing of Don Griffes*



Those who attended Uncle Don's memorial service at Derby's Community Church on February 8th were blessed to experience a powerful array of emotions ranging from gut-wrenching sorrow to ebullient joy. This cauldron of swirling emotions was a recipe created by those who officiated and the individuals who participated in his service to help us all understand what defined Don Griffes and what made him the man he became and the man who will be so sorely missed by family and friends.

Let's talk about some of these emotions:

Love. This emotion was heavy in the air at Don's service. Don's brother, Dan, in his stirring eulogy filled in gaps about Don's early life that perhaps many people had not known, such as his time in Kansas and the beginnings of his sheet metal business.

Because Don is older by quite a few years, at first Dan loved his brother more like a father than as a brother. They came

to be brothers little by little as each proceeded through his life's journey, with Don assuming the role of mentor and life adviser for Dan.

Sadness and Grief. The congregation was brought to the abyss of sadness as three of Don's children – Mike, Jay and Sheryl – spoke of their feelings for their Dad. Sheryl read a moving tribute written by her niece, Kelsie Griffes, which had been posted on Facebook and the Gardner Newsletter website. Jay was overcome as he lifted his hand pointing heavenward and said, "Dad, we will see you again."

Sheryl pleaded with everyone to pray for each other - and to pray especially for family members; and in doing so, we should mention everyone specifically by name, - as her Dad had done over and over again.

Gary Hosford, Sheryl's husband and employee of NEVTEC, recounted how he asked Don for Sheryl's hand in marriage. He thanked Aunt Beulah and Uncle Don for their immeasurable influence in turning his life around

*Continued on Page 4*

# Gardner Newsletter

Issue 65, Volume 17

Page 2

Winter 2014



## 9 Things We Can ALL Learn From Billy Graham's Preaching

By: Dennis Phelps

[NOBTS.edu](http://NOBTS.edu)

Dennis Phelps is Director of Alumni Relations and Church - Minister Relations at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He also occupies the J.D. Grey Chair of Preaching.

From [www.sermoncentral.com](http://www.sermoncentral.com)

*(Editor's Note: I first heard of Billy Graham in the early 1950s*

*when my sisters and I lived with Grandma and Grandpa Gardner. Grandma (like Dennis Phelps' grandmother mentioned in the article) was one of Billy's most ardent fans. As the pianist of the East Charleston Church of the Nazarene, she would often play piano transcriptions of familiar hymns arranged by Tedd Smith (accompanist for George Beverly Shea) as church preludes.*

It began with my grandmother. At the simple kitchen table she would keep the prayer reminders for upcoming crusades. When the broadcasts aired locally, she would call and remind my mother to watch. We would gather and watch the hour-long production. This was long before Christian networks.

In 1988, I moved to the Twin Cities. My family often took guests

to the non-descript Billy Graham Evangelistic Association headquarters in Minneapolis. There, a staff member or volunteer escorted us throughout the simple buildings. At his final Minneapolis crusade, our young daughter responded to the invitation to receive Christ as her personal Lord and Savior.

Four generations—all touched by the faithful preaching of a simple son of a North Carolina farmer: Billy Graham.

Many volumes are devoted to Graham's life, organization, travels, crusades and life-long team. What about his preaching? He does not consider himself a great or model preacher, yet he has communicated the gospel effectively and internationally through pamphlets, crusades, radio, TV, magazines, interviews, movies, conferences and the Internet. What lessons about preaching can we learn?

### Flatten the Structure

Graham uses a modified form of Monroe's motivational sequence. He establishes rapport (identification), provides evidence that something is wrong (sin), announces there is hope (Jesus), assures that you can know Him, warns you to accept the consequences of your

choice, then invites you to respond now. In classical rhetoric, this is logos.

### Simplify the Message

Graham first believed he needed to cover the Bible in every message. Later, in response to his request for advice from Dr. Marcus Sloan (former Anglican archbishop of Sydney, Australia), he realized he could choose a single text, include the cross and resurrection, and call people to faith and repentance.

Though not an expositor, Graham focuses on the kerygma of 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. "There is a built-in power to the cross and the resurrection. It has its own communicative power. The Holy Spirit takes this simple message of the cross with its redemptive love and grace and infuses it into lives with authority and power."

Graham's preaching is directed to common people. His vocabulary is non-technical. His sentences are simple—and run-on at times. His model is Jesus, who used parables. "That is the only way I know how to do it. We must learn to take the profoundest things of the gospel and proclaim them in simplicity ... We must communicate so people will understand. So preach it with simplicity.

...People want simplicity, and I am sure that was one of the secrets of our Lord because the common people heard Him gladly; He spoke their language."

### Trust the Infallible Scriptures

Graham often quotes John 3:16. Behind him in stadiums is displayed "John 10:10" or "John 14:6." He seldom seeks to argue logic. He believes "the natural man cannot receive the gospel on his own devices because there is a veil over his mind and heart. This veil can only be penetrated by the Holy Spirit, not my argument or my logic."

However, Graham struggled early with the authority of the Bible. He settled his doubts one night on a tree stump in the mountains and decided to accept it by faith as God's Word. Drawing on Romans 10:17, he trusted God to honor the faithful proclamation of His Word. His sermons are filled with "the Bible says ..."

"First of all, I would say communicate the gospel with authority. Preach it with conviction and assurance, knowing that faith cometh by hearing the message and the message is heard through the Word of Christ. ... When you quote God's Word, He will use it. He never will allow

*Continued on Page 3*

## Continued from Page 2

it to return void. ... When I quote Scripture, I know I am quoting the Word of God. It is God's authoritative message to us. It is an infallible book. Let's never depart from that."

### Include Fresh Illustrations

Graham often uses recent, personal experiences, but without making himself the center or the hero figure. When using non-personal material, he is conscientious to give general attribution of the sources of quotes, statistics and published material. He avoids death-bed stories because he believes "it hurts the reputation and effectiveness of the evangelist, especially in America."

### Speak to the Heart

Graham speaks with unending compassion. His motivation not only is obedience to God's call, but also love for people. It is demonstrated in deeds (often behind the scenes), as well as the emotion of the sermon. In classical rhetoric, this is pathos.

When discussing 1 Corinthians 2:2 Graham says, "When I stand before an audience—I don't care whether it is in England or in Kenya or Ecuador or wherever it may be—there are certain things I assume are in the audience already. To every group—whether it is at a university or on a street corner, whether it is in Korea or whether it is in a tribal situation in Zaire or in New York City or here in the Netherlands—I know certain psychological and spiritual factors exist. ...These include:

1. Life's needs are not totally met by social improvement and material affluence;
2. There is an essential emptiness in every life without Christ and only God can fill it;
3. There is a cosmic loneliness in people;
4. People have a universal sense of guilt;
5. There is a universal fear of death."

### Offer an Early Appeal

Graham begins his appeal to respond very early in his messages. He does not wait until the conclusion. He often tells the listeners during the introduction what he is going to ask

them to do.

### Apply the Gospel Ethic

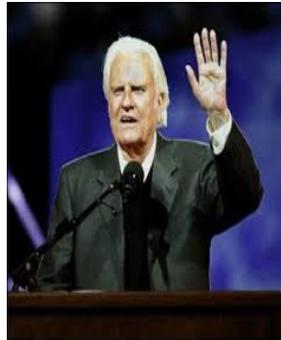
Bigotry. Economic disparity. Violence. Environmental abuse. Social injustice. Devaluing human life. Mass destruction. Graham addresses these social issues and more. "We also communicate the gospel by compassionate social concern. This is implied in the love we show others. I believe there is a social involvement incumbent and commanded in the Scriptures. Look at our Lord—we have a responsibility to the oppressed, the sick, and the poor...but the church goes into the world with an extra dimension in its social concern. We go in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. ...This is not just humanitarianism. It is compassion and love. We give because God gave."

### Live with Consistent Integrity

"All of these assumptions [of effective preaching] can be realized if we preach Christ, backed by a holy life and filled with the Holy Spirit. ... Our world today is looking primarily for men and women of integrity, communicators who back up their ministries with their lives. Your preaching emerges out of what you are; we must be holy people. ...The three common areas of Satanic attack against preachers are money, morals and pride; and we will battle them all of our lives." In classical rhetoric this is ethos.

Graham reacted against Sinclair Lewis' Elmer Gantry image of American evangelists who are manipulative, emotional, anti-local church, anti-intellectual and crave money. While in Modesto, California (1948), he and Cliff Barrows discussed all the things wrong with American itinerant evangelism and decided to do something to change it.

Professionally, they incorporated (accountability and publication of all finances) and receive public salaries set and raised by an external board of directors (rather than love offerings, gifts and honorariums). Personally, they hold one another accountable in their private lives. This includes developing humble attitudes, always learning, involving others, receiving counsel, accepting responsibility and admitting wrongs. Graham has walked away from Hollywood offers for fame, business offers for financial prosperity and the prestige of a college presidency.



## *Don's Service Continued from Page 1*

### *Continued from Page 3*

#### Exercise the Promise of Prayer

Since the 1949 Los Angeles tent crusade and all-night prayer sessions, Graham has understood the role of prayer in effective preaching. "Saturate yourself in the Word of God and prayer. ...The Holy Spirit responds to the prayer offered to bless the simple, clear message of Jesus—His death, burial and resurrection—when it is proclaimed with confident faith."

With Professor Ellis of Princeton Seminary, Graham affirms, "You are never preaching until the audience hears Another Voice. ... We must hear the voice of the Spirit of God. ... The filling and anointing of the Spirit of God and preaching with authority is essential to preaching the gospel. ... The glorious fact is the Holy Spirit takes the message, no matter how weak, how primitively it is delivered, and communicates it to the heart and mind with power and breaks down the barriers. It is the supernatural act of the Spirit of God. ... In the final analysis, it is the Holy Spirit who is the Communicator."

Graham admits preparing a message is hard work. When asked how long it takes to prepare a message, he says, "A lifetime." This fall, we will hear his final message as a part of "My Hope America." Pray for Billy Graham as he once more shares the good news of Jesus with a lost world.

so that he could find God's path for him and his family. Other spontaneous vignettes about Don coming from the congregation solidified the palpable feeling of grief.

Humor: Rev. Howard and Rev. Gamble (the current pastor) are two pastors of the East Charleston Nazarene Church who have been in the church's ministry serving together with Don over the past 18 years. Rev. Howard led the congregation in song and shared remembrances of Don that often sparked laughter from the congregation.

Reverends Howard and Gamble also shared several stories that perhaps implied a sometimes contentious relationship, but one that, in hindsight, forged a stronger bond between pastor and parishioner.

Both pastors are convinced that when Don presented what they perceived to be obstacles, in reality those things became a tool God used to hone and sharpen their spiritual skills in order to make them better pastors and shepherds of the faithful.

Shirley Davis' inspired eulogy included narratives of how Don has been her father figure and spiritual mentor for over 25 years. She said her final goodbye to Don wittily informing the congregation of how Don used to always address her as "Surely, Goodness and Mercy."

All the eulogists mentioned Don's "loquaciousness" and how they had at one time or another been a "captive audience" of his often interminable anecdotes. The congregation responded with gales of laughter, - no doubt everyone having been caught up in the same situation during some of their interactions with Don.

Joy and Hope. Singing the old hymns always inspires joy in people. The hymn, "When We All Get to Heaven" expresses the ultimate joy that we all share. And the knowledge that Don has already made it there, sustains our hope that one day everyone will be reunited.

Cousin Teresa Vasko's soaring voice thrilled the congregation as she sang "His Eye is on The Sparrow," one of Uncle Don's favorite songs. Accompanied by Becky Griffes (Don's granddaughter), Teresa, clear voiced and pitch perfect, confidently and proudly sang the words, "I sing because I'm happy! I sing because I'm free! For His eye is on the sparrow and I know he watches me."

Dan Griffes' Homily. "Good is not Enough" is the theme infused throughout Dan's homily. As he stood in front of the microphone he celebrated his brother's life. He summarized the importance of Don's life into three significant categories: God first, family second, and public service third. To il-

# Gardner Newsletter

Issue 65, Volume 17

Page 5

Winter 2014

## Don's Service Continued from Page 4



Uncle Raymond and Dan Griffes

lustrate his point of "good is not enough" he drew upon his background in psychology and asked everyone to think of life as a broad spectrum: some of us are on one end of the spectrum, some are in the middle, and others are at the end.

The beginning of the spectrum contains those who are "take charge" people and those who often may be perceived as doers and leaders. The other end of the spectrum is made up of those who are, or are perceived to be, meek and humble and perhaps unassuming.

The rest of us fall somewhere in between those points. No matter where we fall within that spectrum (or how we are perceived to be within that spectrum) we all want to be good and do better.

Surprisingly, innately, we all have the tools to do so – we all have the little small voice within us that tells us what is right and what is wrong. We don't need anything else.

Here Dan diverges from his psychology background and brings in the Divine because he reminds us that all of us, no matter where we may appear on the spectrum, are good – and in spite of that, it is not enough. What makes it "enough" is a personal relationship with the Savior.

to being better than we are - especially within our personal relationship with Christ, and then look forward to being reunited with Don and all our loved ones as promised in God's Word.

Dan introduced his pastor to the congregation who was a special guest at Don's service.

Gardner Cousins. The Gardner Cousins were especially well represented at Uncle Don's Service. The Gardner Cousins are the offspring of the "Original Gang of Ten." Four of Uncle Adelbert's five girls attended: Adele, Becky, Diane and Cindy. Aunt Elinor's daughter, Nancy, with her husband, Dan Whitney, was there. Earl's son, Paul, and Raymond's daughter, Gloria, traveled together to the service.

Many within Don's family are Gardner Cousins too. They include: Len Griffes (his wife, Donna), Jay Griffes (his wife, Kim), Sheryl Hosford (her husband, Gary), Sharon Manchester (with her daughter Sarah). Aunt Elizabeth's daughter, Teresa Vasko, was the soloist. Many of the Gardner Cousins' offspring – a new generation of cousins – attended also. (Please accept my apologies if I missed anyone.)

Original Gang of Ten Members who attended are: Beulah Griffes (Uncle Don's wife), Lois Cardwell, and Raymond Gardner. (See picture below. Shirley, Don's eldest daughter, is also pictured.)

During the reception there were rumblings of a Gardner Cousin Reunion event happening in the near future. Could this be real? Who will be the architect of such a momentous event?!



Some of the Gardner Cousins: Gloria, Paul, Cindy, Diane, Becky, Adele

Let's all adopt the three foundations of Don's life as our own – God, family and public service – commit ourselves



# Gardner Newsletter

Issue 65, Volume 17

Page 6

Winter 2014

**Earl Gardner served aboard the Navy supply ship USS Laramie during World War II. Here is his ship's story. Earl, Clayton, Adelbert, and Raymond Gardner are all members of the "greatest generation" who served in World War II.**

**W**aging a ceaseless battle against nature and the powerful fleet of Nazi undersea fighters, the USS Laramie, fleet oiler, now moored at Fallsway Pier in downtown Baltimore, is one of the unsung heroes in the important battle of supply. The auxiliary tanker, affectionately known to her crew as "the Gallopin' Goose," is truly the ship "that came back." The Laramie is one of an armada of fighting ships that will be in Baltimore for the Navy Day celebration on Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Severely crippled in a submarine attack during the dark days of the early Atlantic U-boat campaign, the "Goose" limped back into the security of American shipyards where she was quickly repaired and reassigned to the dangerous North Atlantic routes.

Several members of the crew of 230 gallant navy fighting men who manned the ship that fateful evening of August 29, 1942 are still aboard the ship. Closest to the scene of the blast was James Michael Starr, of Logan, West Virginia, who tells this vivid story in his own words.

"We were steaming north en route to Greenland passing through Belle Isle Straits between New-

foundland and Canada, when at about 9:25 p.m. at night we heard a loud explosion that seemed to come from another ship in our convoy. A large part of the crew, including myself, hurried topside from the forward living compartment. About 300 yards off the port bow we could see the flames from a burning and sinking cargo ship that had been in our convoy.



"It couldn't have been more than two or three minutes before a torpedo ripped into our port bow directly under where I was standing. The force of the explosion blew off my life jacket and shoes and sent me hurtling through the air. I landed on the forecastle,

about eight feet higher than the main deck on which I had been standing. The ship quickly listed heavily to port and I was saved from going over the side by another seaman.

"Regaining my bearings I climbed into the forward gun mount, but it was impossible to open fire because gasoline six to eight inches deep sloshed around inside the mount. The decks were drenched with gasoline from the cargo tanks and poultry that had been blasted out of the reefers and the forward hold.

"The submarine was never visible at any time,

*Continued on Page 7*

# Gardner Newsletter

Issue 65, Volume 17

Page 7

Winter 2014

*Continued from Page 6*

although gun crews which were not hampered by gasoline about the decks sent up a continuous barrage of star shells illuminating the sea for miles around until all of that type of ammunition was expended.”

The torpedo struck the ship just forward of the cargo tanks plunging into the refrigeration compartment. Just aft of the gaping hole left by the missile were the tanks laden with aviation gasoline.

Five of the fighting sailors were victims of the undersea attack. Burial at sea for four of the victims was held the following day. The fifth had been washed overboard in the initial blast.

The vessel limped into Sidney, Nova Scotia, for preliminary repairs then steamed back to the States.

The Laramie has a long and interesting record. Ploughing through the briny deep at only 10 knots, the big tanker made an easy target, but the efficiency of various detector gear and speedy escort ships averted several potential undersea attacks.

Shuttling oil and gasoline to important Army and Navy bases in the North Atlantic was the assigned task of the veteran oiler which on several occasions sailed without escorts. In addition to her valuable tank cargo, the ship often was laden with bombs and other ammunition



piled high upon her decks.

The submarine was not the only menace to shipping on the routes assigned to the Laramie. Fog, gales and ice were relentless enemies to all shipping in the far North Atlantic areas. Carrying the fuel to Greenlandic bases in early winter always meant hours and hours of ice breaking and intricate maneuvers and navigation through berg-spotted ice fields, often in sub-zero temperatures.

The “Gallop’in’ Goose” ranged far over the Atlantic area,

crossing the equator on July 15, 1941 and steaming over the Arctic Circle on frequent occasions to deliver fuel and supplies to American military outposts in the barren wastes of Northern Greenland.

Many depressions caused by contact with heavy cakes of floating ice and small icebergs are still visible in the ship’s hull.

Contract for the construction of the USS Laramie was placed by the Navy Department for the Emergency Fleet Corporation on August 29, 1918 during World War I. The construction was undertaken by the William Crump & Sons Ship and Engine Building Company of Philadelphia. The keel of the tanker was laid April 14, 1919 and seven months later, on November 29, 1919, the big ship slid down the ways christened the USS Laramie by Helen Cramp Cookman of Philadelphia.

Preliminary trials were held February 13 and 14, 1920 and the oiler was delivered to the government on February 19, 1920 and commissioned as a unit of the Atlantic Fleet the same day.

*Continued on Page 8*

# Gardner Newsletter

Issue 65, Volume 17

Page 8

Winter 2014

*Continued from Page 7*

The navy-manned oiler began its vital role of supply, but soon the Navy found it had an already adequate auxiliary fleet and the Laramie was decommissioned and placed in "red lead row" in Philadelphia.

In September, 1939, the flame of hatred spread across Europe and half the world was plunged into war. Shipping became more vital as nation after nation was involved in the spreading conflict. In 1940, the old Laramie was brought out of retirement and re-commissioned a first line Navy ship under the command of Commander J. J. Hughes.

The war time duties of the "Gallopín' Goose" has taken it into the American and European theatres of war. The skippers of the veteran auxiliary have included Commander P. M. Money, USN, Commander W.S. Keller, USN, Commander R. B. Holdorff, USNR, Lieutenant Commander George T. Wold, USN, and its present captain, Lieutenant Commander George A.

Tredick, Jr., USNR.

The veteran crew of the "ship that came back" is composed chiefly of reservists who left jobs and positions in the factories, offices and on the farms to keep America free. Most of them now are busily counting points, anxious for the day when they may return to their homes again. Meanwhile, Navy boards are making plans for the second de-commissioning of the USS Laramie, one of the Navy's fleet of unheralded auxiliary vessels, which won the war of supply.

Note: November 2, 1945

At the present moment, the USS Laramie is undergoing de-commissioning. It started the day after we left Baltimore and will be over in two week's time from now.

*Earl A. Gardner*



## Grandma Gardner's Piano Needs New Home

**H**ow would you like to own Grandma Gardner's piano from the "old homestead?" Strange as it may seem, the Dezotelle's of Belvidere, VT are in possession of that very piano. They are looking for someone musical in the family who would like to have it in their home. Because of remodeling, the Dezotelle's no longer have room to keep the piano. Cindy Dezotelle, Uncle Adelbert's daughter, says

that Aunt Ruth (when she moved from the old homestead) gave the piano to Tom Gardner, one of Adelbert's sons and Cindy's brother, and that Tom, in turn, moved it to Randy and Cindy's house where it resides today.

The picture at left shows Aunt Elizabeth and Aunt Ruth (who is at the keyboard). Whether or not this is the actual piano at Randy and Cindy's house is unclear, but the picture does seem to have been taken at the old homestead. If not there, then

perhaps this is a picture taken at Aunt Elizabeth's home in Lyndonville. (Cousin Teresa most likely will know for sure if this is Aunt Elizabeth's living room or not.)

In any case, if you would like to have the piano, please contact Cindy and Randy Dezotelle at 2412 Back Road, Belvidere, VT 05422. Telephone: (802) 644-6735.

Let's try and keep the old piano in the family!

