

Gardner Newsletter

When you visit Massachusetts, be sure to take your kids to Boston Children's Museum

Sadly, I appear to be a skeptical old codger; so, when Jean Gonzalo's granddaughter, Emily Levesque, suggested I meet with Emily, her husband, Leo, and son, Leo Jr. at the Boston Children's Museum this past winter in December of 2023, I was a bit puzzled as to how that all would work out.

First of all, even though we had a mild winter it was still pretty cold outside, and I didn't see the wisdom of carting a toddler around in the cold.

Then there was the fact that 14-month old Leo, Jr. was just learning to walk and I wondered if he had the attention span to enjoy what the museum had to offer. To my astonishment, I was totally wrong on both counts!

The day turned out to be absolutely beautiful weather-wise as I met Emily and the two Leos in front of the museum on Congress Street in downtown Boston. They

arrived from Fall River, where Emily and Leo were visiting Leo's relatives who are from Massachusetts. They took the commuter rail from Fall River into downtown Boston's South Station and walked right over to Boston



Children's Museum pushing little Leo in a carriage.

My doubts were completely erased as I watched little Leo take advantage of many of the museum's offerings on all three of their floors. He enthusiastically walked/crawled to each new attraction with renewed energy getting more excited at every turn. I must say I was so pleasantly surprised that a 14-month old child would be so caught up

in everything. Clearly, I need to learn more about child rearing! But it was fun to observe how awesomely aware and engaging little Leo was of his surroundings.

After visiting all three floors of the museum, because it was such a nice day outside, the three of us (along with Leo Jr. in the carriage) walked over to historic Faneuil Hall where we enjoyed seeing the sights and sounds of a busy marketplace. After that, we all had dinner at Boston's Legal Seafood Restaurant, a renowned destination where many gather to enjoy New England's legendary culinary delights.

By that time, it was evening and we all walked back to South Station where the Levesques boarded their train back to Fall River.

For me, that was such a pleasant way to get to know my grandniece, Emily, and her husband and little boy. I'm hoping that you, too, will discover the wonders

of Boston's Children's Museum along with some children from your family.

Here is a blurb I found on the Internet about the Museum:

Take The Little Ones To The Boston Children's Museum

Let the children's imaginations run wild. Located on Children's Wharf, the [Boston Children's Museum](#) features award-winning exhibits and programs for toddlers to learn about culture, arts, the environment, and more.

Address: 308 Congress St, Boston, MA 02210

Hours: Open Wednesdays to Sundays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cost: \$22 admission; free for children under 12 months

The Boston Children's Museum offers parking validation for the Stillings Street Garage, the Farnsworth Street Garage, and the Atlantic Wharf Parking Garage. [Visit the website](#) for more information.



Top = Emily Levesque, Paul Gardner, and Leo Jr. in front of Boston Children's Museum.
Emily Levesque and Leo, Jr. exiting her car.
Middle = Leo, Jr. playing inside Boston Children's Museum.
Paul Gardner, Leo, Sr. and Leo, Jr. in front of Boston Children's Museum.
Bottom = Leo, Jr.'s first haircut.
Emily, Paul, and Leo, Sr. at Legal Seafood in Boston.



The Legends and Traditions Surrounding “The True Cross”

Christianity is the largest religion in the world, boasting more adherents than any other religion. However, as most everyone knows, there are many “flavors” of Christianity. Virtually all of them view the Roman Empire’s instrument of torture, the cross, as the true symbol of their faith.

Have you ever wondered what happened to Jesus’ cross? Known as “the True Cross,” for hundreds of years this highly venerated relic was thought to be lost.

Anti-Christian Romans sought to dispel any effort to spread the Good News; that included destroying objects from Jesus’s crucifixion.

According to tradition, the True Cross was buried in the grounds of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus.

Almost 300 years later, after Emperor Constantine’s conversion to Christianity, he sent his mother, St. Helena, to the Holy Land in search of the True Cross. According to legend, she followed the footsteps of Jesus—such as feeding the hungry and visiting the sick—on her way to Jerusalem. Once in the Holy Land, some legends say a commoner led her to the True Cross, while others believe that St. Judas Cyriacus helped her find it.



St. Helena, mother of the Roman Emperor, Constantine

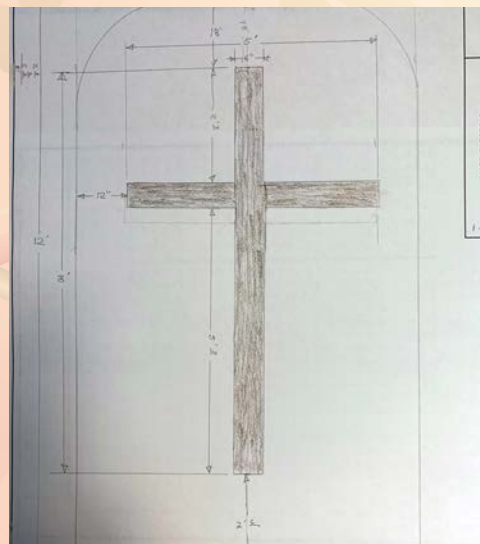
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300 years the Roman Constantine’s to Christianity, his mother, St. the Holy Land of the True According to St. Helena in Jesus’ by performing works of mer—as feeding

St. Helena found all three crosses buried in the ground but wasn’t sure which one belonged to Jesus. There are many different legends about how St. Helena and the bishop of Jerusalem confirmed which one was the True Cross. One myth claims the bishop of Jerusalem had an ill woman touch all three crosses. As soon as the woman touched the True Cross, she was healed.

Rod Ames’ Vision of the True Cross

How do you go from this?



To this?



**Begin by gathering wood
laying around Uncle Lyndol's
old sawmill.**

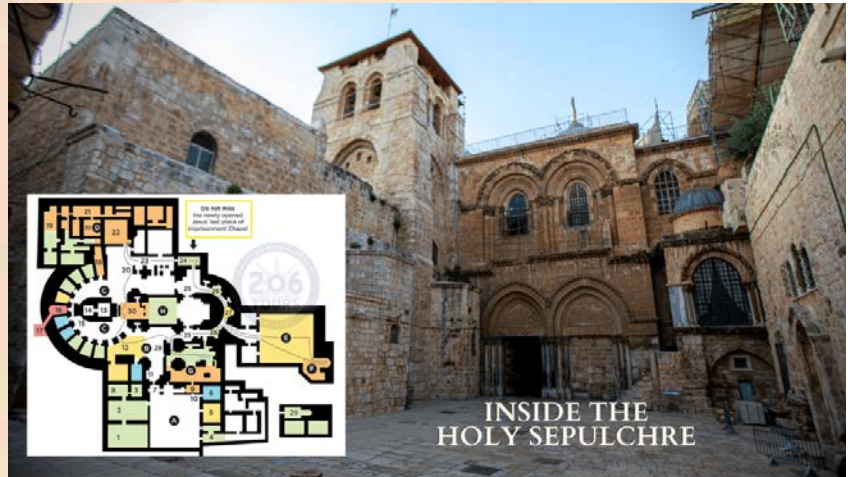


Lyndol Ames (Rod's Dad) at his sawmill



Upon discovering the True Cross, St. Helena ordered a church to be constructed on the site where she found it. This church is known as the Church of the Resurrection, or the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. St. Helena brought a piece of the True Cross back to the empire's capital city, Constantinople, and left another part at the Church of the Resurrection, where Christians made a yearly pilgrimage to see the relic.

Throughout the next thousand years, the piece of the True Cross at the Church of the Resurrection changed hands many times. It was captured in 614 by the Sassanid emperor, and then restored to Jerusalem by the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius. Later, when the Islamic rulers took Jerusalem at the beginning of the 11th centu-



ry, Greek Orthodox Christians protected and hid the relic of the True Cross, a small piece of wood embedded in a gold cross.

This relic was restored to the Church of the Resurrection when Europeans in the First Crusade captured Jerusalem. Finally, in 1187, it was captured by Saladin, the leader of the Muslim military campaign against the Crusader states in Levant. This piece of the True Cross has never returned and was last seen in the city of Damascus.

The piece of the True Cross that was preserved in Constantinople was shared among the Venetians and the new Eastern Roman Empire. However, threatened with bankruptcy, this new empire decided to sell the relics. St. Louis, King of France, bought several pieces of the True Cross and preserved them in Sainte-Chapelle

in Paris. Most of these relics disappeared during the French Revolution. All that remains are a few fragments and a Holy Nail; these are preserved with the other relics in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris.

Cousin Rod Ames' vision of the True Cross has been realized by the installation of the cross that he built by hand into the sanctuary of the Derby Community Church in Derby, VT, the gathering place of several of the Gardner Family's important events.

What you see on these pages is a pictorial narrative of how that artistic achievement came to be – a testament to the craftsmanship and carpentry skill of our own Rod Ames.

Next assemble, measure, saw, and plane prospective pieces of wood for the cross.



Then bring the assembled cross home to do further work on it.



Mike Scytkowski (Rod's neighbor) painting the crossbeams of the cross.



Rod and Irene Ames in their garage posing in front of the finished cross.

Now mount the new cross in the sanctuary of Derby Community Church.



HOW IT ALL BEGAN - The lives and times of the Metcalf Family - PART I

By: Ruth Anne Metcalf and Geri Rosser



Ruth and Henry Metcalf



Multi-talented Henry Metcalf



Entrance to West Virginia Mine in the 1940's

(Editor's Note: You will recall that the last issue of the newsletter celebrated the 50th wedding anniversaries of various couples of the Gardner family. Ruth and Henry Metcalf's marriage was among those celebrated in that story. What is remarkable about the following article by Cousins Ruth Anne and Geri is how much more comprehensive information we learn about Ruth and Henry and their marriage and family life. If you read on, you can see how their lives intersected with many other people who are subscribers of the Gardner Newsletter. Perhaps you are among those mentioned.)

Henry Deforest Metcalf, our father, as he was named, was the only son of Ralph and Lois Metcalf. Apparently, from the pictures we collected, he cut quite a dashing figure, especially when he was in college. Even then he was beginning to feel the call toward the ministry.

In the summer of 1944, he was working as a student pastor at five churches in the hills of West Virginia. Hard work was never foreign to our father - or anyone in his family for that matter

- and this was no exception. Dad was working in a coal mine to raise money to support himself. He relates a story about one of his experiences in the mines which ultimately reveals much about his deep sense of faith:

"My in-mine partner was sick with the flu, so I went down the shaft by myself to try and keep our leading record up as much as possible. It was a very bad reef (shale-stone), so I put in extra posts to hold it up before I started. Then I set my charges, touched off the dynamite and waited for the dust to settle. As soon as it was clear, I started leading the waiting coal car. I was about half done filling the car when I heard a voice call my name: 'HENRY!'

It should be noted that even at my mature 20 years, I was scared spitless of the dark! I was shaking, but I made my way up the shaft to see who wanted me - NO ONE THERE! I nervously went back to work. After about three minutes I heard it again - ONLY LOUDER: 'HENRY!' This time I was ready. I leaped out, chased back up the shaft and looked in every corner - NO ONE THERE! I was very nervous now but went

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back to work. I was working for only a few minutes when I heard: 'SON, YOU'D BETTER MOVE!'

This time I jumped and wound up in a narrow cleft beside the coal car - the only place to go. THEN DOWN CAME THE WHOLE REEF! SHALE COAL AND DUST EVERYWHERE! After the dust settled, I very cautiously extricated myself from beneath the nearly solid rock slab covering the whole area and made my way back up the shaft and out of the mine. I was whole except for one thing - my tailbone hurt!"

Dad told this story many times as an example of God's divine protection and guidance in his life. After this incident, Dad was diagnosed with a pilonidal cyst on his tailbone, which needed an operation. He went home to Titusville, Pennsylvania where his parents lived, where a doctor performed the surgery.

After recuperation, he was able to get a student parish at a United Methodist Church in Riceville, Pennsylvania, where he pastored three small churches. He began attending Allegheny College as well. To earn some extra money, he drove a "defense" bus. He ferried defense workers from the country to several communities where they

worked in factories.



The United Methodist Church in Riceville, PA where Henry's first student parish was.

It was at this juncture that Mom and Dad's lives intersected.

"Part II of this great story will be featured in our next issue!"

Ruth Amy Gardner, the eldest of ten, and the daughter of Will and Olive Gardner, from Island Pond, Vermont, had been studying at Eastern Nazarene

College in the Boston area. She hoped to be a teacher, and she did indeed teach children in several communities in Vermont. One of them was in Irasburg, Vermont, where she often tells of her wonderful times with her favorite class in that town.

While still at E.N.C., Ruth had to have an appendectomy which was not healing properly. So, she and her good friend Betty Higgins left E.N.C., and came home.

Betty was a vivacious and talented person, who was about ten years Mom's junior. Mom and Betty had a lot of fun together. One of the things they did was to attend the Riceville Nazarene Church which was pastored by Reverend Wayne Acton.

ASIDE: Geri and I suspect that Rev. Acton, who was known for his sense of creative fun, may have introduced Mom and Dad! At the very least he probably encouraged the relationship.)

SEE YOU THIS SUMMER!

This might be your last reminder about attending the 2024 Gardner Family Reunion on July 13, 2024 at the NorthWoods Stewardship Center.