

A Bit of Centennial History

by Karen Orlando

As we venture through the 100-year history of Carmichael Presbyterian Church, how fortunate we are to have personal recollections from different times in our past. A few come from our own members.

Carolyn (McAllister)

McGregor grew up at the rural area of Fair Oaks and Jacob Lane. Her grandfather came to Carmichael in 1910 and was a hops farmer along the American river, what we now call American River Drive. She recalls being able to stand on her back porch and see the orange school buses leaving Arden School (now Arden Middle School) as there were so few trees between them to block the view. The family attended Westminster Church in Sacramento, but in 1944 Carolyn's father joined the Navy and went off to war. Her mother Barbara, struggled with gas rationing. She soon decided she needed to look for a church local to the family. It was then she found Carmichael Community Church up at Fair Oaks Blvd and Marconi Ave. The community church, although with diverse denominational interests, was affiliated with the Presbyterian faith. It soon be-

came the home for the McAllister family.

The mid 1940's to the mid 50's saw prosperity returning to Carmichael and its community church. Under the leadership of Rev. James Comfort

Smith, with no air conditioning, he left his windows open. She was six years old when she asked her mother why Rev. Smith was hollering. Her mother explained that he was practicing his sermon. He was known for his resonating voice.

Carolyn's early childhood memories include a celebration of George Washington's birthday in the basement of the old church. Her job was to put little silver hatchets at each place setting. What she remembers was the terrible smell. Her mother, Barbara, saved one of the hatchets. When her father was finally home, they all realized the reason for the bad smell was the hatchets were painted with the lead paint used on airplanes.

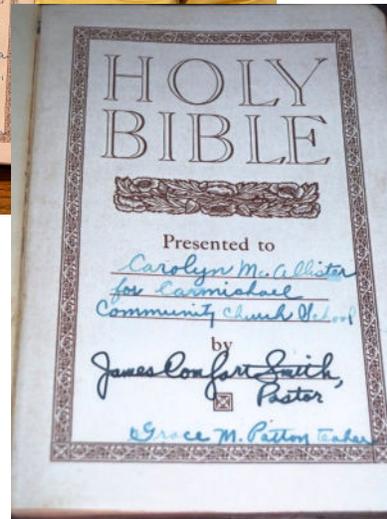
When she was in her early teens the youth group wanted to have a dance in the building that had once been the sanctuary. The youth went to session to seek approval for the desired

dance. Despite the fact the building was no longer the sanctuary, session said no to the dance request on the grounds that the sanctuary had once held sacred events such as weddings and a dance

(Continued on page 3)



Longtime Carmichael resident and CPC member **Carolyn McGregor** shows off the Bible presented to her as a child at CPC by Rev. James Comfort Smith.



Smith, there was an expansion of the church facilities. The chapel, parlor, center wing, and the sanctuary were built during that time. Carolyn remembers that when Rev. Smith came to the church, he rented a room above a neighbor's garage. In those days

... Centennial History ...

(Continued from page 2)

there would just be inappropriate.

In 1958, Gordon and Carolyn were married by Rev. Dr. Pyron McMillen. The wedding cake was set up in the Mahogany Room. She still has the linens given to her by Mrs. Hertzog, who was her mother's constant companion in the church kitchen.



Top: Gordon and Carolyn McGregor cut their wedding cake in the Mahogany Room at CPC in 1958, Bottom: Carolyn has kept her mother's church ensemble, including hat and gloves as a reminder of the fashion of the times.



wear a hat and gloves to church. Carolyn has her mother's ensemble beautifully stored in a Weinstock Lubin box. Among the other things she has saved is the childhood bible that was presented to her by Rev. Smith. As the years have gone by, Carolyn has worn many hats at CPC. From those early days as a Sunday School

teacher to helping faithfully at SOS, and now leading Presbyterian Women. The stories

In the mid 60's they joined a Mariners' ship. They also taught a rambunctious third grade Sunday School class along with friend Dorothy Morrison. Carolyn and Dorothy were the first two ladies to shockingly wear pantsuits to a Sunday service. Dorothy's was solid pink and Carolyn's a pink pattern. Rules of fashion being stricter those days, her mother was the last lady to

are plentiful. The memories they represent are bursting with happiness and love. Times of friendships and family, all centered around a faith filled journey decades in the making. Some might say, the journey continues.

California International Marathon Delays



The 39th Annual California International Marathon will be held Sunday, December 4,

causing some intersections near the church to be closed. The race starts at 7:00 a.m. near Folsom Dam and travels Oak Avenue, Fair Oaks Blvd, and J Street to the Capitol.

Intersections will be closed only while the race comes through, but be prepared, if necessary, to leave home early and avoid the racecourse on your way to church. For a complete road closure listing, go to <https://runsra.org/california-international-marathon/course-information/>

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