

Fall 2020

# Keystone Quarterly



**Jerry Jacobs, Sr.**

**Promoter and producer gets promoted to glory**

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**Additional Feature: Memories From Kempton**

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## A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello, Friends! WHAT A SUMMER! The past few months have been a mixture of activity, based on whether the concert locations were willing to meet during this current pandemic. I am hoping that as many of you that were able have gotten to attend at least one of the many southern gospel music events that have taken place near you.

Well, here we are in our Fall issue of The Keystone Quarterly. Time seems to be going by so quickly. It sure does make me think about what I may be overlooking in life and reminds me that I should be making the best of every moment. As you may or may not be aware, due to the pandemic and because some of our attendees have limitations at this time, we have decided to forego this year's Hall of Fame Banquet until next year.

Finally, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who are members of the PSGMA; we appreciate your continued support. If you are reading this and you are not yet a member, take a look at the back cover and sign up today!

We hope to see you soon!

Dave Theis, Editor

**PSGMA website: <http://www.psgma.com>**

**Due to the pandemic this year, the PSGMA has decided to forego this year's Hall Of Fame Banquet as scheduled, and have one next year on October 23rd, 2021, at the same location (The Open Door Church in Chambersburg).**

**We were also able to schedule the same featured group, The Kingsmen that night. At that banquet, we will be presenting awards to two years of Keystone Award recipients, as well as two years of Hall of Fame recipients.**

**See you there!**

## CONTACT INFORMATION & AD PRICING

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# FAITH

by Duane Nicholson

The subject of my article is the all-important powerful, sometimes unfathomable word spelled, FAITH. Hebrews 11:1 describes, in a short and to the point explanation, what faith is. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen". That, my friend, is a mouthful!

Let's face it, many times in life, we place our faith and trust in others without question. Of course, there are some who live with fears that are innumerable. But most people put faith and trust without hesitation. Examples are for you to ponder on how much trust you place in others. The scripture I quoted above is one of 39 definite scriptures on the subject of faith. Actually, our entire life as a Christian is based on our ability to trust God in our daily life journey. I doubt if there is anyone who, when things have gone wrong in one's life or the lives of others we know or read about, would wonder with the question, WHY? Songs have been written about God's ways. A gospel group entitled an album, 'The Mysteries Of His Way'. I think, because of the title of the album, it is known as one of the most iconic albums ever produced. I guess the premier question is why do we trust temporal things, but when it comes to spiritual trust, we seem to falter and sometimes blame God or lose trust in Him?

Perhaps this story that follows my opening remarks will help those struggling with the Faith aspect, regardless of the outcome. My first year in Bible School, I met

a young man who was a missionaries' kid, whose parents were missionaries in Indonesia for years. He actually came home for education and ended up in my school, and was somewhat bitter and away from God. He found a new relationship with God while at school, but had determined to never go back to Indonesia. He literally hated his experience of living there and I never brought up the subject.

Guess what? During a missions meeting, God spoke to my friend and in short, he did go back to Indonesia and spent almost 40 years in somewhat hard labors, because of the Muslim country he was in. Disaster struck when his wife was diagnosed with an incurable brain tumor. His only choice was to bring her home for treatments in hopes of saving her life. Finances were a big problem and also being near her doctor was a priority. They lived 150 miles from the city of Seattle, Washington, but could not afford to move there. My friend confided in me that he needed to have her close to her doctor for appointments. The 300 mile round trips was so hard on his wife and the expense was great. We prayed on the phone for a solution.

The answer was beyond happenstance; it was a miracle. In the early ministry of the Couriers we crossed paths with a minister in PA who had a house full of boys and the boys grew up on our music. We saw them often. One such boy grew up and became one of the premier sellers of Christian books by major

book publishers. He lived in the Seattle area. While my friend was a missionary in Indonesia, a pastor from Seattle, who happened to be the pastor of my book seller friend's church, had gone to Indonesia earlier and held meetings for my missionary friend. Upon hearing about my friend's needing a place to stay in the Seattle area, he announced in church the need of a place to stay. Not knowing any of this, my friend called and said God had met the need. He explained that a couple who traveled all the time for business, had a complete downstairs area at ground level for them to use. Upon asking the name, my missionary friend told me the name of this publisher that I knew. Neither the missionary friend and the publisher knew the connection I had with both. We wept on the phone together about this situation. We had prayed and two weeks after our prayer, God sent one of my friends to help my missionary friend. By the way, the missionary's wife died a few months later, and the age old question arose, why? God sent comfort in time of need, but saw fit to take this sweet lady home. Our ways are not His ways. All He asks of us is that we "trust and obey, for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey". God gave freely of His Son, the ultimate sacrifice. Answers will only come when we seek Jesus. All sorrows will be erased when we see HIM. That is our greatest strength and the sustainer of this sometimes, tough life.

-Duane Nicholson

# VICTORY EXPRESS MINISTRIES



First and foremost, I would like to thank God for His blessings on our ministry for the past 43 years. I would also like to thank our Pastor friends from all over the country that have invited us to minister at their church in song and in the Word of God. We have truly been blessed over all these years and God still continues to bless. I am humbled that I have been inducted into the PSGMA Hall of Fame this year, 2020. We also would like to share that we have a brand-new recording that has just been released, "Ride Out Your Storm". This year has involved many storms, and we pray that this recording will bless you and your family. You can order them now for \$15 each, shipping included. Victory Express is an award-winning family Southern Gospel group from Mount Joy, Pennsylvania. We were also blessed in 2016 when we were awarded the Keystone Award by the PSGMA. We have been one of the top family Gospel groups for the past 40 years. One of our highlights is our annual Gospel Music Cruise that occurs every February with Victory Voyage. This coming February (2021), we will be sailing out of Mobile, Alabama to Progresso, Mexico and Cozumel, Mexico from February 1st – 6th. For info on the cruise, contact our office at (717) 653-8606. Victory Express is available for Revivals, Church Services, Concerts, Fairs, etc. If you would like to have us come to your event or church service, contact us at [victoryexpress17552@yahoo.com](mailto:victoryexpress17552@yahoo.com) or Victory Express, 437 Orchard Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552, (717) 653-8606 or (717) 342-1844. Once again, we would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support of our ministry over all these years. May God bless you richly.

From all of us at Victory Express, thank you.

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# Historian's Corner

By LJ Petersen, PSGMA Historian

## Steve Aungst Interview



For 40 years, 1975-2015, the Pennsylvania State Singing Convention (PSSC), also known by many as the “Martinsburg Gospel Concerts”, was held in a little town in central Pennsylvania, Martinsburg, PA, near

Altoona. One man, led by a desire to get the Gospel out to a fallen people, and with the help of a team of devoted volunteers, Mr. Steve Aungst, promoted the PSSC. Over the years, he had formed the Vicksburg Quartet, played piano for them, and “sang everywhere east of the Mississippi,” and had three touring buses over all of the years of the Vicksburg Quartet, ending in 1996. In addition to the PSSC, he promoted Gospel sings at Knoebels Amusement Park and Landisville Campground in Pennsylvania, and Cumberland Fairgrounds in Cumberland, Maryland. In mid-summer 2020, the Keystone Quarterly (KQ) wanted to find out more about Mr. Aungst and the PSSC that he promoted for all of those years, so they met with him and the following interview provides the details of the interview with Mr. Aungst -

**Keystone Quarterly (KQ):** When did the Martinsburg Gospel Concerts (MGC) start? Is that the correct title for the Gospel Concerts?

**Steve Aungst (SA):** The Pennsylvania State Singing Convention, or PSSC, started in August 1975. The correct name for the Martinsburg Gospel Concerts is the Pennsylvania State Singing Convention (PSSC).

**KQ:** What was the motivation behind starting the PSSC?

**SA:** The Vicksburg Quartet used to attend Gospel sings in Mt. Nebo, West Virginia; that is where we got the idea. It was called the West Virginia State Gospel Singing Convention (WVSGSC). It is located near Charleston, WV. We went there for a few years, and observed their operation. At first, I was against establishing the PSSC, because I was afraid we, the Vicksburg Quartet as we were going to sponsor the PSSC, were going to lose our shirts. I drug my feet on it, but Jake Snyder and Larry Stump/Vicksburg Quartet members convinced me, and so we started the PSSC. To avoid confusion, we always had to make it clear that it was located in Martinsburg, PA and not in Martinsburg, WV. We actually had people go to Martinsburg, WV to find out that there were no Gospel sings there!

*Keystone Quarterly*

**KQ:** How did you establish your audience?

**SA:** We had a local radio station near us, which was a country radio station, and they knew us and got the word out about the PSSC. Also, our quartet was well known in the area, so everywhere we sang, we would advertise the PSSC. We were totally amazed how many people showed up for the first PSSC! The local radio station played our music, and early on, they helped out with the sponsorship of the PSSC.

**KQ:** Did you ever create a CD of all of the groups that sang there?

**SA:** We actually started off with Records, then 8-Tracks, later cassettes, and then CD's every year that we held the PSSC, featuring the groups that the audiences really liked that year. We would then sell the album from the previous year at the following year's PSSC. The money that was raised from the sale of the albums went to fund the PSSC the next year. Also, many groups would purchase several copies of the albums, sometimes up to 100 copies, and then would sell them on their product tables, alongside their own products. This also promoted the PSSC and made people aware of the annual concerts.

**KQ:** Why was Martinsburg chosen; why not somewhere else?

**SA:** Martinsburg was close to the home of the Vicksburg Quartet, about 6 miles from home. Martinsburg had a campground and a swimming pool, bowling alley and an old roller-skating rink, which is where we actually held the first PSSC. That first year, it rained “cats and dogs” and so we had so many extra people in the roller-skating rink. The fire and police departments came and the wires were actually smoking and the lights were flickering; I don't think that roller-skating rink ever had that much action. We managed to get the people out. We might have still had it inside in the roller-skating rink another year, but then we moved the PSSC outside.

**KQ:** Now that you were outside, did you have a band shell?

**SA:** A friend of mine had a tractor trailer with a flatbed, and he brought that to the campground and so we used that. We did not have a band shell.

**KQ:** Would you hold the PSSC at the same time every year?

**SA:** Yes, every 2nd Thursday of August would be the first day of the PSSC. It would run Thursday through Sunday.

*Page 7*

## Steve Aungst Interview (cont'd)

I think one year we held it five days, and it about killed us. I think one time we tried running it three days, but determined that the magic number was four; so, we held it four days the rest of years that the PSSC ran. The people who volunteered each year were totally exhausted. They would work for several days before the start of the PSSC, then would work during the PSSC, and then would work for a day or two after the conclusion of the PSSC, cleaning up the campground.

The Martinsburg Gospel Concerts went for several decades. Managing this event and scheduling the groups took a strain on me and my family, simply from a time consumption perspective.

**KQ:** What can you share with KQ and our readers on how you survived and overcame the challenges, if any, associated with hosting these events?

**SA:** This was my life; this was in my blood. Yes, I managed it, but I had a lot of volunteers supporting the PSSC. There were times when the Vicksburg Quartet was singing over 200 nights per year. I was also still teaching then, so there were many nights when I was up at night working on the convention. We put out a letter and sent it to the 500+ groups that we had already scheduled over the years and they helped to promote it. If someone wanted to sing, we would not turn anyone down; the only stipulation was that they had to sing Gospel music. We had all kinds of Gospel music; Bluegrass, Southern Gospel, Black Gospel to Contemporary. Contemporary was not the thing for Martinsburg, but we had it. Anyone could come in and sing, without advance notice, and sing. They would get to sing a song or two, and groups would get 15 minutes. It was difficult to manage, especially when we had managed three or four sings going on.

**KQ:** How did you manage four sings? Did you have three or four different platforms?

**SA:** The three or four sings were not over the same four days, but actually four different times during the year. We had a sing in June, August, and September. When the letter went out to the groups, it had a questionnaire and they would have to choose in which sing they wanted to participate.

**KQ:** How did you manage so many singing dates, and also teach?

**SA:** There were many Monday mornings when I would step off of the bus from singing all weekend at 6:30 in the morning, have just enough time to get a shower and get to school to teach. Our bus would occasionally break down out on the road, but we never missed school because of a bus breakdown.

**KQ:** Speaking of the bus, did you travel all over the United States?

**SA:** We sang in every state east of the Mississippi. Most of our singing was in West Virginia, Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania. We sang at churches, but we also got into the "Fair Business". We got connected to agents and they would book us for fairs. Sometime we would sing a fair every day, up to seven days in a row. At some fairs, we would sing six times per day, and at seven days per week, that is 42 sets per week.

**KQ:** If you were to pick the top 3 achievements resulting from Martinsburg Gospel Concerts, what would they be?

**SA:** Number 1: We lasted 40 years. Number 2: We gave a lot of people a chance to sing, and we gave a lot of people their start. Number 3: A lot of people got saved by hearing the Gospel through music. Every Sunday morning of the PSSC, we held a fundamental church service. We would always have a group who could not only sing, but also preach, like the Couriers, for example. Dave Kyllonen, of the Couriers, was the best at this. A lot of people were saved and lives were changed. People would come back 30 years later and would share how the PSSC made a difference in their lives.

**KQ:** Of all of the groups, both nationally and regionally known, that have sung at the Martinsburg Gospel Concerts, which ones have been most memorable?

**SA:** To me, the Blackwood Brothers; they gave us a quality program, and they were nice to work with. Another group is the Chuckwagon Gang. People loved the Chuckwagon Gang. In one of the early years, I brought in Doc and Chickie Williams from the Wheeling Jamboree. There was total silence; you could have heard a pin drop; they were all on the edge of their seats. People could not believe that the legend of the Wheeling Jamboree was in Martinsburg! In her career, Chickie Williams was the first to sell over a million records, based on the song, "Beyond the Sunset". One year, We also had the secretary from the Beverly Hillbillies, Mr. Drysdale's secretary, "Jane Hathaway" (Nancy Culp). We also had Jodie Miller there one year; she was known for the Motown song, "Baby, I'm Yours" and that went very well.

**KQ:** How has prayer impacted the decisions and focus of the Martinsburg Gospel Concerts, and give a couple of examples of how God answered specific prayers involving the concerts?

**SA:** The day before the PSSC each year, my team and I would have a breakfast together, and we would pray. Part of the prayer involved praying that we would not get upset or get on each other's nerves, that we would stay calm and

## Steve Aungst Interview (cont'd)

patient throughout the event. We would run 75 soloists and groups from 1:00 in the afternoon until midnight. Most Gospel sings have four soloists or groups and maybe up to six, but try running 70-75 in one day! Truly, there was a LOT going on. To get everyone in, we placed limits on how long they could sing. Soloists got two songs, a trio could sing three songs, and a quartet could sing up to four songs. To help with sound, we had to have several sound engineers, and they had to also be musicians, to really produce a quality sound, given the variation between that many singers and groups. They know what each singer or guitar player needed. When we were outside, we had to have a backup stage ready to go. We had our second stage in the cattle barn, with a full sound system up and ready to go. Sometimes, we lost valuable equipment when the rain would come in too quickly, because we didn't have enough time to cover it up. I also prayed that the Lord would help me be a good steward of the money that would be collected three times each day of the PSSC, and that the money would be spent wisely. Lastly, we would also pray that the people who came to the PSSC would get saved and receive a blessing. The Good Lord did answer our prayers and brought us through the 40 years.

**KQ:** Since the Martinsburg Gospel Concerts had been successful for all of those years, what motivated you to end the Concert Series, and what year did they end?

**SA:** I had 35 reasons to quit the PSSC and one to keep them going. The one to keep them going was that people really got a lot out of the PSSC. I would run into people and they would come up to me and say, "Man, I really miss that Martinsburg sing". I would have liked to have gone on, but I stopped the PSSCs because I wanted to, not because I had to. I was just plain tired and my 'main guy,' (Jake Snyder) came down with cancer and that was the message that it was time to quit. My volunteer people were tired as well. I had people who were with me from day one. Notably, the lady who made coffee was 90 years old and she was there every day of the PSSC for all 40 years. We also had some problems with some of the people in the town, with the sound coming from the PSSC. I was threatened to be locked up on account of the sound. Some of the complaining people lived over eight miles away, but the sound propagated along the mountains and they could hear it and they couldn't sleep. But yet, there is a nearby raceway and that makes more sound than the Sings did.

**KQ:** Tell us some about the venue at Martinsburg - was it in an enclosed facility or an outside event? Were they always outside or inside, or did the facility change over the years?

**SA:** We started in an old roller-skating rink, but they tore it down. Then we moved it outside, and then they built a big new building and we moved the Sings into that new building. Of note, the Genesis Gems, a Black Gospel group sang there. Then we moved it out of the new building and moved the Sings into the cattle barns. They had two cattle barns and then they added a third. What was not known by those who attended was that one week before the sings, they had over 300 cows in those barns for a cattle show! They would have to clean everything up before we moved in, and then on Monday by 10 AM, we had to have everything moved out to support yet another cattle show moving in after the sing.

**KQ:** Were the concerts always held during the day/evening, or was there ever an all-night Gospel sing, similar to the all-night sings held in the south?

**SA:** We would generally start at 1PM and I would try to have the program for the day finish by 11 PM. There were some years when we let them run until 3 or 4 AM. The sound guys would make breakfast to get us all going again for the next day. They took turns helping each other out, and they were mostly Vicksburg Quartet sound guys.

**KQ:** When did the Vicksburg Quartet start?

**SA:** The Vicksburg Quartet ran for 31 years. We started in 1965 and I had 42 people supporting the group. Another group that sang at Martinsburg was the Singing Rays, who was headed up by Ray Eutsey. His daughters sing with the group, New Journey, today. Ray was basically blind, but the Lord has healed him from blindness.

**KQ:** Did you start the group and what part did you sing?

**SA:** Yes, I started the group. I did not sing; I played piano; I am classically trained. I graduated from Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana, with a degree in Music and then I did Graduate work at Penn State University. Most of the Vicksburgs were also professionally trained and had music degrees. I started early in my life with music, by starting to take piano lessons when I was five years old.

**KQ:** Have you created a concert series historical article to this date?

**SA:** We appeared in a 2009 article in the KQ, and we were interviewed by the Altoona newspaper and locally by the Martinsburg community newspaper. I also did an interview with Luke Hess and his "Today and Tomorrow" magazine plus several other trade magazines, etc.

**KQ:** Are there any plans in place to possibly restart the MGCs in the future? If so, what are they? If not, why not?

## Steve Aungst Interview (cont'd)

**SA:** Absolutely not! At this time in my life I am worn out, kind of like the old Jake Hess song, "Wore Out!"

**KQ:** Are you currently involved in Gospel Concert promotions? What are your plans for the future?

**SA:** I am not directly involved with Gospel Concert promotions, but I have a friend/promoter in Altoona (Mr. Jim Daski) who does promote music, both Gospel and secular, and I help him from time to time. Because of the COVID virus, he has not had much going on this year. Jim had the Kingsmen and Ernie Haase and Signature Sound booked in 2020, but had to cancel everything because of the virus. In addition, Ernie Haase cancelled all of his concerts this year because of the virus.

Steve was inducted into the Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame in 2004. Following the ending of the PSSC in 2015, he has managed an entertainment booking agency, booking all kinds of talent

from Elvis and Patsy Cline impersonators to ventriloquists. We are grateful for the time spent with Steve and we learned a lot about the Vicksburgs, as well as the history of the Pennsylvania State Singing Convention, and the person who originated it and fostered Gospel music of all kinds in Central Pennsylvania, Mr. Steve Aungst.

In conclusion, as the old saying goes, "hindsight is 20/20", 2020 will go down in history as not being a good one to look back on, and has been a very tough year in many ways. We pray for those families who have been adversely impacted by the virus, and we are grateful for the Lord to see us through. Despite these times we currently live in, it has been a pleasure serving as the Historian for the Keystone Quarterly. I had only two Historian Corner editions this year, but Lord willing, I will have three editions for you next year. Until then, stay safe, healthy, keep looking up and keep a song in your heart.

God Bless. LJ

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# Photo Album of PSSC Over The Years



# Photo Album of PSSC Over The Years

## SINGING CONVENTION

### SIDE ONE

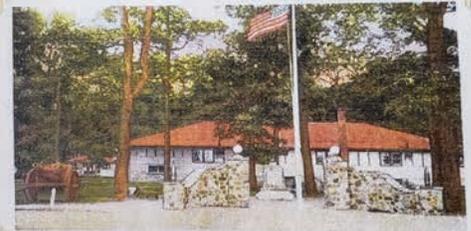
SAGA.....	"CARING" (Jacobs) .....	3:06
BLUE RIDGE.....	"THE ME I WANT TO BE" (B. Strelz) .....	2:40
DOC 'N CHICKIE WILLIAMS.....	"YOUR FATHER IS ALWAYS AT HOME" .....	3:20
	(D. Williams & V. Smith)	
BEAVER CREEK QUARTET.....	"WAIT'LL YOU SEE MY BRAND NEW HOME" (Goodman) .....	3:14
PELL BROTHERS.....	"TRIED BY FIRE" (W. Pell) .....	2:17
DeLAWDER FAMILY.....	"GOD WILL" (Wilkin-Loudermilk) .....	3:00

### SIDE TWO

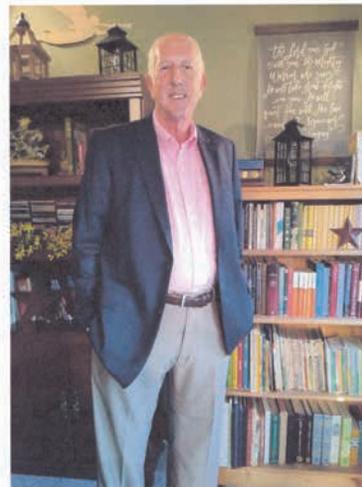
LaVERNE TRIPP.....	"HOLDING THAT NAIL SCARRED HAND" (LaVerne Tripp).....	2:15
SINGING INSPIRATIONS.....	"THE RAPTURE" .....	4:20
BRETHREN FOUR QUARTET.....	"GIVE THE WORLD A SMILE" (Deaton-Yandell) .....	2:46
JACOBS BROTHERS.....	"TURN YOUR RADIO ON" (Brumley) .....	3:47
VICKSBURG.....	"JESUS GOT AHOLD O' MY LIFE" (Dallas Holm) .....	3:38
CRUSADERS.....	"HERE THEY COME" (Wood & Glass) .....	

## Remember When

The entrance and pavilion to Morrisons Cove Memorial Park, Martinsburg, is shown in this post card from the collection of Randy Stoltz. The entrance was built in memory of soldiers and sailors of Morrisons Cove and was dedicated on July 4, 1934. The stones used in the center monument are from the Gettysburg battlefield. Men from Morrisons Cove were members of the Grand Army of the Republic 3rd Army, 110th Company C under the command of Major General Daniel E. Sickles. Company C fought on day two at Gettysburg with two men killed and 10 wounded.



Pictured above is the original building here at Morrison Cove Memorial Park. The first Pennsylvania State Singing Convention began in this building 38 years ago. It began to rain on the first song, and stopped three days later after the last song.



**JOE TOMLINSON** has been writing, recording, traveling and singing from New York to Florida for more than 15 years and has written and recorded more than 50 gospel songs. Joe received the PSGMA Keystone Award in 2006 and is a lifetime member of the Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association.

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# Memories From the Ridge

*Randy D. Pensinger, Former PSGMA Historian*



Have you ever had one of those experiences where a couple people are sitting around a table or another room talking about everything in general and yet a whole lot of nothing in particular? Sure, you have. We all have had those experiences at some point in life. It happened to my wife

and I recently. We were looking through one of those Bonus Books one evening; you know the ones: they have all the coupons for the eateries, golf, theater, museums, etc. We happened across a couple of coupons for the WK & S Railroad. A flood of memories roared through my head like a freight train on a mission. It started with the first time I rode this train back in the mid-1980's. We really started reminiscing then. We discussed one of the only times she and I had ever been in that part of the state together. The time was August 2005, the week before Labor Day. If you haven't guessed by now, I am referring to the little village of Kempton, PA and the event was the final edition of the Blue Mountain Gospel Festival that would be held in that venue.

The Blue Mountain Gospel Festival had its beginning back in 1975. I don't recall all of the details about the startup or the ownership. I do know that J. R. Damiani of the Eastmen Quartet was integral to its start in the earlier years. He served as Master of Ceremonies for many years. Richard and Mary Carper of Garden Spot Promotions also played a very large part, not only in the formation, organization and startup, but in the continuing operation of the festival. And I know that many others played large roles in the continuing operation of the festival. It had many volunteers, from parking attendants to the First Aid people, to those that helped the campers find their campsite. But as this little article concerns itself more with memories than history, we shall continue on.

Who could forget the countless ones who accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior because of the message in a song or the Word of Ministry in a sermon from the Lesters and Dr. Jerry Goff? Or the friendships that were formed between campers, many of which continue to this day! Or the WK & S train whistle that seemed like it just had to blow at the very time when Joel Hemphill was having prayer or giving an altar call on the last Sunday afternoon of the festival.

Here's one for you: How many remember the storm that blew through there and they had to line up about seven

*Keystone Quarterly*

of the entertainer coaches beside the tabernacle to keep people, chairs and sound equipment inside and on the stage? I believe the Happy Goodman Family was involved with that one. How about Gary Shepard hitting golf balls down the back lane in preparation for the Singing News Golf Tournament? Does anyone besides me remember sitting and listening to the various artists and watching the deer play in the big field on the hill? I remember the two-mile plus walk around the "Loop" as we called it, talking to the locals and listening to their stories about how much they enjoyed listening to the music. Another memory that stands out about those morning hikes is the year that the Society for Creative Anachronism held an event at one of the farms along our route. It was like stepping from the 1980's back to the 1600's. You should have seen the colors of the tents and the costumes!!

Do you remember all the vendors and the food stands and all the artists' tables? Do you remember all the ice cream socials and pot luck dinners in the big red barn? Do you remember the "Artists Wall" in the backstage area? Hundreds of names of individual artists and groups of artists were written there. Some were extremely famous and others not so much. But all of them stood on that stage for one day out of one week of the year and shared the music and ministry of the finished work of the Cross of Jesus Christ. So many memories and not enough time or space to discuss them in more depth.

Those days are gone now. The stage is shuttered, the tabernacle filled with used cable spools and a few broken picnic tables; a cattle barn built where campers used to park. The festival grounds are quiet now. The festival in a shortened version moved to the Lebanon area in 2006. And yet the memories remain. Memories of all the Gospel artists who shared Christ's message of forgiveness in a song, a prayer, or a testimony. The friendships, food, fun and a peace that can only come from being in the center of His will. Yes, as I rode that old train again just a few short weeks ago and as I drove around the festival grounds, the memories remain; etched forever in the fabric of time and space and imprinted forever in the back of my mind, to be recalled again and again in thought or conversation. And they still bring a calmness to my spirit as I reflect, not only on the memories, but the beautiful Gospel message, the Good News, that was evident in every song, every prayer, every testimony and every sermon that ever came from the stage of the Kempton Community Center Fairgrounds.

Thank you, Lord Jesus for allowing me to be a witness to all of what was the Blue Mountain Gospel Festival.

# In Memoriam

JERRY JACOBS, SR.

PROMOTER AND PRODUCER GETS PROMOTED TO GLORY



Gerald (Jerry) E. Jacobs Sr., aged 75 of York PA, was welcomed into the arms of Jesus on August 17, 2020 at York Hospital, surrounded by his family. Jerry was born in Hanover, PA on July 21st, 1945, son of Carl E. and Jean Jacobs. Jerry graduated in 1963 from Bermudian Spring High School in York Springs. After graduation, Jerry worked at AMF plant in York and was vice president of the Union in York County. In 1973, Jerry started the Jacobs Brothers Television Ministry and promoted gospel concerts at the York Fairgrounds in Memorial Hall, the All-Night Gospel Sing in the North at Valley View Park, and at the King's Kids Camp in Dillsburg. Over the next 43 years, more than 150 Gospel groups blessed people with the finest music on earth, gospel music! He helped found various Christian Television stations and networks, including Channel 49 in Red Lion, channel 68 in Chambersburg and the global broadcast of Keystone

Inspirational Network. He hosted a program called "Keystone On The Line", which aired "live", reaching 40 million homes with a call-in Prayer Line. At the time of his passing, Jerry was still producing 'The Praise Center' show and the Jacobs Brothers weekly program. His TV ministries, radio programs and gospel music concerts have reached millions of people around the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jerry and his son, Jerry Jr., produced and directed thousands of Christian television shows, documentaries, and commercials. Television and media were an expression of his heart to bring people into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. On October 26th, 2019, in Chambersburg, PA, Jerry was honored to be inducted into the Pennsylvania Southern Gospel Music Association's Hall of Fame for his life work in the promotion of Gospel Music through television and radio.

At the ceremony Jerry said, "As long as the Lord gives us strength, we will continue to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ through Gospel Music".

He was a kind and loving partner to his spouse Susan (Susie) R. Jacobs, as well as an amazing father to their six children. Jerry Jacobs Jr. and (wife Kristin) of New Cumberland, Susie Jacobs Andrews (and husband Shawn) of Dillsburg, Michelle Jacobs of York, Kristen Jacobs Mondick of Mechanicsburg, Michael Jacobs of York, and Paul Jacobs (and wife Amanda) of Dallastown. Jerry was the proud grandfather of 12 grandchildren and 1 great grandchild.

He is also survived by 5 brothers and 1 sister. Bob Jacobs (Mechanicsburg), John Jacobs (Palmyra), Richard Jacobs (South Carolina), Donna Jacobs (New Cumberland), James Jacobs (Mechanicsburg), Michael Jacobs (Dillsburg) and was preceded in death by brother Jeffrey Jacobs and sister Jeanne Jacobs.

Jerry was known for his resilience and strength and overcame several health challenges over the last year. He was a visionary and a kingdom builder who believed that "we can do everything through Christ who gives us strength". His continual hope was that people would come to know Christ. He was known for his generosity and would not hesitate to help others. Jerry had the heart of Christ and it was not uncommon for him to stop everything that he was doing and pray for his friends and family. The impact and legacy that he leaves his family and friends is truly extraordinary and quite remarkable.

*Donations and contributions to further the television ministry can be made in memory of Jerry E. Jacobs to "J and S Video Productions Company, Inc" and mailed to 211 Pauline Dr., #302, York, PA 17402.*

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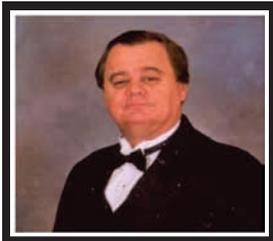
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