



Founded in 1899

ALUMNI NEWS

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Education for Time and Eternity

A newsletter for alumni of Oneida Baptist Institute

March 2009

Charles Goins Fourth president of OBI



At Homecoming, June 27, we will unveil the portrait of **Charles Goins**, president of Oneida Baptist Institute from 1934 to 1941.

Goins came from very humble beginnings on Beech Creek in Clay County. He was born in 1882, the sixth child of **Christina Goins**. They survived on the food they could raise and what was given to them by friendly neighbors. Charles Goins was an avid reader and attended a district school on Beech Creek whenever it was in session.

Goins first came to Oneida as a student in 1903. His grade school teacher at Beech Creek, **Mattie Marion**, asked him how he would like to go on to high school. Goins quickly replied, "I would like to, but I can't. I hain't got no clothes to wear and I hain't got nothing to pay my board." Marion gave him \$16 and sent him to ask **James Anderson Burns** if he could enroll as a ninth-grader. Goins learned that Burns would not turn him away because he had no money.

After Goins had completed two years at OBI, Burns and Marion arranged for him to go to Bowling Green Business University. He returned to Clay County, got his teacher's certificate and began his teaching career on Otter Creek.

Goins later transferred to Beech Creek where he met his future wife, **Sally Lyttle**, then only 15 years old. Sally wasn't yet interested in courting, so Goins decided to seek greener pastures in Denver, Colorado, where a teacher's pay was better. In 1912 Goins returned to Clay County to teach at Lower Beech Creek. He and Sally were married March 9, 1913. They had ten children: **Catherine; Layman; twins Leslie and Laddie; Clabe; Lou; Saul; Evelyn** and twins **George and Emma**, who died shortly after their birth.

James A. Burns asked Goins to come to Oneida and teach in 1915. Goins did not have a high school diploma, even though he had attended college in Bowling Green. He earned his Oneida diploma in 1923. Even without a high school diploma, Goins was known for being an excellent teacher.

In addition to teaching, Goins also served as office manager from 1915-1934. When Burns resigned as president **Thomas Adams** served as president for one year, 1921-1922. During this year, the school had no money to pay Adams or his staff. Adams resigned and the board of trustees named **Sylvia Russell** as president. Russell had nothing but high praise for Charlie Goins. She admired his business skills and teaching ability.

At times during Burns' second term as president, Goins acted as mediator between the board of trustees and Burns, who was away most of the time and needed money to fulfill his many speaking engagements. During these depression years, money was hard to come by and Goins struggled to find the funds that Burns requested.

In September 1934 James A. Burns, completely worn out and in declining health, returned to Oneida and resigned as president. In a letter to the trustees, Burns wrote, "Charlie has been more closely associated with me over a longer period of time than any of our other boys. He knows the home life of our people and his heart yearns for a chance for them to free themselves through Christian education from the bonds of poverty..." The board of trustees voted unanimously to name Charles Goins the next president of OBI. **L.D. Sandlin** praised Goins for having pulled the school through some difficult times.

Goins was president of OBI for seven years. Perhaps his greatest supporter and encourager was James Anderson Burns, who had given him some important advice: "Don't try to carry the whole responsibility on your shoulders. Get a corps of good lieutenants and trust them to carry out the details." Some who served with Goins were **Hugh Spurlock, Mr. and Mrs. John Gilbert, J.H. Walker, Melvin Davidson, Rev. and Mrs. G.R. Henson and Mrs. Della Ledford.**

When he resigned due to ill health in 1941 Goins said, "Seven years have passed and the work still survives. Does God not quite often select the weak things of earth to confound the mighty? I accepted the office of president with fear and trembling, knowing that no one could fill Burns' shoes. Yet the school has grown, we've stayed out of debt, added to our endowment and made considerable improvement on our plant." His last request to the trustees was that they name his long-time friend and classmate, **Saul Houchell**, as the next president of Oneida Baptist Institute. ■

Oneida Baptist Institute: A vision realized

If you have attended Homecoming or visited OBI in the past two years, you have seen in front of the Sylvia Russell Hall a very attractive historical marker that was sent to us by the Clay County Chamber of Commerce. The marker, designed by the Kentucky Tourism Development Association, displays the following text:

As a young man, James Anderson Burns was drawn into the feuds his father had left Kentucky to escape. He was determined, he wrote, "to avenge the blood of my relatives." The next several years were punctuated with violence, until, after one conflict, Burns was left for dead. The badly injured Burns made his way up the mountain. When he came down three days later he was a changed man. He was determined to stop the feuding and "to save the mountain children from this terrible curse." But how, he asked himself, could he stop feuds that had persisted for generations?

Burns' answer was a school founded on Christian principles, a school where students would live, study, worship and work together. In the fall of 1899, at an emotionally charged meeting, the feud-weary people of Clay County embraced Burns' idea. Two weeks later, Burns laid the school's cornerstone, which he had shaped. Soon, men on both sides of the feud were laboring together. On Monday, January 1, 1900, Oneida Baptist Institute opened its doors to its first 100 students.

Over next three decades dormitories, classroom buildings and a gymnasium were added to the campus. New programs were added and a working farm established. In the years that followed, the school became part of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Today's Oneida Baptist Institute carries on the work begun by James A. Burns, stressing academics, Christian values, the importance of productive work and participation in co-curricular activities in a unique program that welcomes students of all religions and nationalities. ■



Looking back, looking ahead



In December Dr. Underwood received the following letter from Ronald Hacker, along with a contribution to the school in memory of his father and grandfather:

My father, **Marvin Hacker**, and most of his numerous brothers and sisters attended OBI. My father had quit school and gone to Ohio to seek his fortune when only a teenager. After marrying my mother, from Goose Creek, he realized the necessity of a high school education and returned to Oneida to get his diploma. I have never understood the arrangement but for some reason

Professor Burns' house up on the hill was vacant and my father and mother moved into the house until he received his diploma. My mother was pregnant with me at the time and she went to Corbin, where her sister lived, so that she could have me in Smith's Hospital. She immediately returned home to Oneida after I was born. I lived in Burns' house the first five years of my life. At the time, my grandfather, **Daniel B. Hacker** (pictured) was teaching at Oneida.

My earliest memories are of that house and the people that came to visit us there. My father, while attending school, also began cutting hair at a price of 25 cents a haircut. The **Davidsons** lived up the hill behind us, **Melvin**, I believe. I remember coming down the hill after a visit one evening and my mother breaking her ankle. She never fully recovered from the break that was not set correctly and suffered from her bad ankle the rest of her life.

My father could not continue his education at Eastern because of the inability to borrow money from any source. This would have been about 1933. He accepted a job as relief agent for the county when the federal relief program began. This entailed riding around his territory, up and down the creeks and hollows, to determine the amount of foodstuffs that the people had and whether or not they were eligible for "relief." He had to look in their cellars, their cupboards and their smokehouses. If sufficient food was available to sustain them for awhile then they were not eligible for the program. I don't think it took him long to realize some of the dangers of the job. Some folks were not easily denied eligibility and sometimes threats, real or implied, were made.

Some of the remembrances of my grandfather from these early years: I remember him reading his Bible while he leaned his chair

(See **Hacker**, continued on page 4)

OBI faculty and staff are different

By Dr. W. F. Underwood

Randomly ask ten of our students why they think Oneida is different and you'll likely get ten different answers. I think most would agree that one of the ways we are different is our staff. Our faculty and staff have always been a key to what makes OBI work. The personal attention and compassion they give to our students and their genuine interest in meeting the needs of our students sets them apart.

I experienced that when I was a student at OBI. **Ms. Wilson** was a devoted math teacher who loved and challenged us. **Ms. Bain (Rice)** was a demanding English teacher, but always made time to befriend her students. **Mr. Combs**, Dean of Boys, became a lifelong friend and father figure. My son is named after him and he was the best man when I married my Oneida sweetheart over 44-years ago. Other OBI faculty and staff also made lasting impressions in my life.

During the Christmas holidays we are often blessed to receive words of encouragement and praise, usually included with a gift to this ministry. I would like to share part of one such letter. I will not reveal the name of the student or the teacher the parent is commending. I will tell you this student came to us from Texas with average grades but had made some poor choices. This young man was with us for three years. During his senior year his lowest quarterly GPA was 3.71 and his highest was a 4.0. Here is part of the letter:

"Last year, I gave a year-end gift in honor of my dad who passed just before my son's graduation. This year I would like to give \$1,000 in honor of my son and Mr. ?. I do so because the two of them demonstrate the power of relationships in changing lives. Mr. ? believed in my son and my son was open and accepting of his guidance and friendship. My prayer is that each of your staff is aware that they have the power to transform the life of a child at every interaction. To say to a student, 'I believe in you even when you don't believe in yourself' changes lives. Every child deserves a champion the way that Mr. ? has been there for my son..."

The teacher this father referred to is an Oneida graduate himself. He came to OBI in the late 80's because of conflicts with his adoptive parents. He lived in the dorm for six years. He was never a discipline problem and was always respectful. If he were writing this article I suspect he would identify at least one teacher/coach who was helpful to him when he was struggling with some personal issues. After he graduated from college he returned to Oneida. He is highly respected among our students and faculty. OBI was just what he needed at a critical time in his life. Now he is providing the same loving guidance and compassion he received. God has surely blessed this ministry with wonderful faculty, staff and friends who help make all we do possible. ■

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CORRECTION: The January Alumni News "In Memoriam" column listed **Bill Roberts '62**. It should have read: **Bill Roberts '65**.

Fannie Hensley Class of 1936

Fannie Hensley Arnett Murrell was one of ten children of **Frank** and **Georgia Hensley**. Her grandparents were "**Big Henry**" and **Louisa Hensley**. In 1899 when **James Anderson Burns** laid the cornerstone for the first building that would become Oneida Baptist Institute he did it alone, pledging his life to building a school that would put an end to the feuding and killing in the area. Burns didn't work alone for long; people began to bring lumber and offer labor to build their school. "Big Henry" Hensley sold his hogs and gave the first cash donation--\$50, a large sum in those days. **Darrell C. Richardson** wrote in *Mountain Rising* in 1986 that over 300 direct descendants of Big Henry Hensley had attended the Oneida school. Fannie Hensley, class of 1936, was one of the three hundred.



Education was important to Fannie; she was very proud of her Oneida diploma. Her most precious possession was her OBI class ring that her brother, **Carlos**, bought for her. Fannie was a witty, smart, hard-working girl. She loved people and had many friends. Fannie married **Brownlow Arnett** on November 7, 1936. They had two children: **Lillias Yvonne** and **Brownlow Junior**. Both attended Oneida Baptist Institute; Lillias graduated in 1956, 20 years after her mother.

The Arnett family moved to Dayton, Ohio in the early years of World War II. Fannie and Brownlow both worked at Delco Products making airplane parts. After several years the family moved to Oak Ridge, Tennessee and Brownlow worked in the "Atomic City." They moved back to Oneida in 1951. Fannie got a job at OBI working for **Mrs. D. C. Sparks** and later worked at Oneida Elementary School while taking classes at Eastern Kentucky University. Brownlow worked in maintenance at OBI, hauled coal and was a Deputy Sheriff for **Mose Hignite**. In 1963 Brownlow and Fannie went into business for themselves, building "The Country Kitchen" at the end of the old wagon bridge in Oneida. They had only had the restaurant a year when Brownlow died February 27, 1964 at age 48. Fannie ran the restaurant by herself until 1973, when she sold it and moved to Ohio with her daughter, Lillias.

Fannie married twice after Brownlow's death. Both husbands preceded her in death. Fannie lived with her daughter in East Bernstadt for several years. In 2003 she moved to the Laurel Heights Home for the Elderly in London, where she died at age 93 from a massive stroke on October 6, 2006. Fannie and Brownlow are buried in the Irvine Hill cemetery in Oneida with her parents, grandparents and many other relatives. ■

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(Hacker, continued from page 2)

back against a fence. When he became ill and could no longer teach, my father was asked to teach his classes for the remainder of the school year. I remember going into the room where he lay dying and watching women press water-soaked cloths to his lips. When he died in 1936, he was buried behind the school but it wasn't until the 1950's that the current headstone was purchased for his and **Alabama Hacker's** graves. Upon the death of my grandfather, my father took his family to Hamilton, Ohio, where the rest of the family had settled. There he became a paper-maker at Champion Paper and Fibre Co., working until his retirement in 1969. He died in 1971.

I followed my Grandfather Dan's footsteps and taught social studies in high school for 35 years. A couple of times I visited Oneida with my parents while I was in high school. One visit was after a devastating flood had greatly damaged the town and the school in the late '40's. I still have photos of the destroyed gymnasium where my Uncle **Quentin** had played. About six or seven years ago my wife and I visited Oneida and went up to see Professor Burns' house. We learned that the house had been purchased by **Barkley Moore** and that after his death his parents still lived there. We were delighted to visit with Barkley's parents. They graciously showed us around the house and we were very glad to see that it had been maintained in very good condition. **Mrs. Moore** recounted tales about my grandfather, she having been one of his pupils.

So, you see, my family has deep roots in the OBI saga and it is with interest that I learn of its history and the methods used to carry out its mission. From what I have learned the school played an important role in the education and development of the people in eastern Kentucky and that role has expanded to include other areas of the world as well. You have now entered your second century of work and we sincerely wish you and the school well as you go forth in pursuit of your goals. ■

-- Ronald and Lorraine Hacker, Hamilton, Ohio

ALUMNI NOTES

Dear Friends,

Homecoming 2009, June 27, will be here before we know it. As I said in the last issue, we will unveil the portrait of Oneida's fourth president, **Charles Goins**. We will invite family members to participate in the unveiling. All alumni who were students during the years that Goins served as teacher or president will be recognized. (Those years are 1915-1941.)

The following classes are having anniversary celebrations this year: 1939, 1944, 1949, 1954, 1959, 1964, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, and 2004. Individual class letters will be going out soon. Last year, **Lizzie Allen Barrett**, class of 1933, came to celebrate her 75th anniversary. I have already heard from several in the 50-year class who plan to be here this year.

All basketball players (guys and girls) are invited to participate in the alumni basketball game, even versus odd years, at 1:00 p.m. in the Sparks Gym. Bring tennis shoes and dark shirt for even years and light shirt for odd years.

I hope you saw the announcement in the Oneida Mountaineer about the Alumni and Friends Dinner and play on March 28. The Oneida Players always provide us with an enjoyable evening. Hope to see some of you here for that and many more at Homecoming.
Sincerely, Myrtle Webb Cooke ('60)

Lois Christensen, Dublin, Ohio sent a contribution to honor her mother, **Belva DePew**, who will celebrate her 100th birthday March 29. Belva is from Hector, Ky. and attended Oneida for two years, 1924-1926.

Betty Barger Pace '59, Winchester, Ky. has published a new children's book, Abraham Lincoln.

Coy and **Betty Queener Powell** '65 & '66, Connersville, In. are the proud grandparents of **Elizabeth Pickering**, born Nov. 13, 2008.

Larry Arnett '65, Frankfort, Ky. sent us his latest book, The Official Guide to KY Military Facts and Trivia.

Sarah Perrine '94 spent the summer of 2008 working at the U.S. Embassy in Bulgaria. She has recently accepted a position with a foundation that works with the Roma youth in Bulgaria.

Ryan Young '03 is enrolled at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. He will graduate May 2011 as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

Jonathan and **Michelle Barnes**, OBI teachers, with sons **Josh** and **Joe** have a new family member, **Melea Yvonne Barnes**, born Feb. 9.