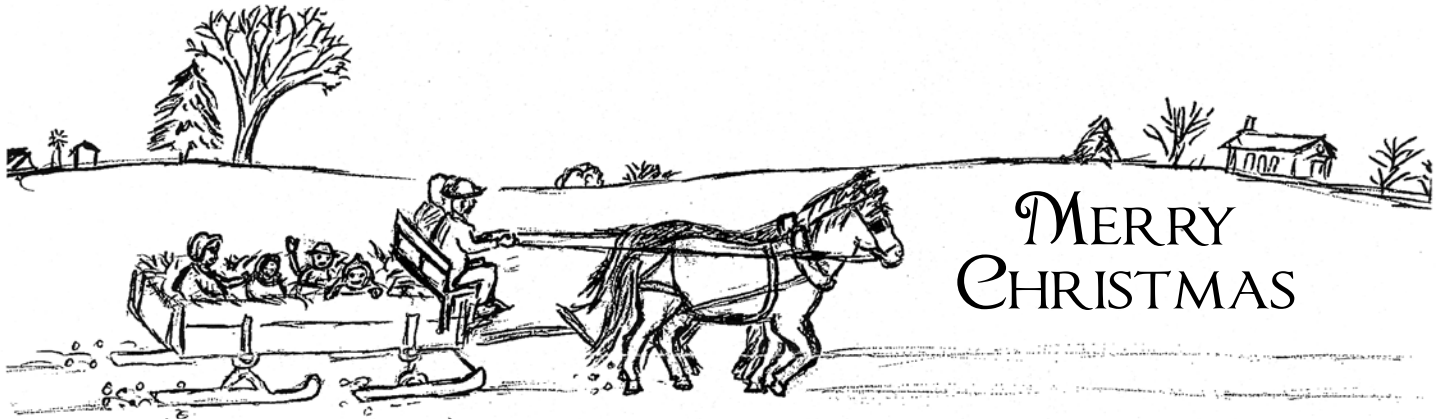


# RED OAK GROVE REPORTER

Issue No. 7

December 2010



## *Three remember Red Oak Grove Christmases*

Three former members of Red Oak Grove Presbyterian Church reminisced recently about Christmas Eve programs there in days gone by. They are Edith Tittle Hass, 96, of Mechanicsville; Verna Hale Kimberling, 96, of Tipton; and Cecil Mathias, 92, also of Tipton. Visiting with them was a delightful “time trip” to yesteryear.

Mrs. Hass said she attended church at Red Oak Grove “from the time I was very small” up to the final service in December 2006. At 14 or 15, she was one of a group of young people who chose to become church members by baptism. On Aug. 27, 1938, at the age of 24, she married Harold Hass and they continued to worship at Red Oak Grove.

“I remember taking the bobsled over close to the parsonage (across the road north of the church),” said Mrs. Hass. “They had a long shed to put the horses in.” Later, when cars edged out horses for transportation, the shed was removed.

Mrs. Hass has fond memories of Christmas programs of long ago. “We had such a good time,” she said. “We had little skits, mostly stories from the Bible, and family subjects. Children always acted out the Christmas Story.” A lightweight, homemade curtain was suspended from a wire stretched above the stage; it could be closed between skits.

There was always a Christmas tree, said Mrs. Hass. Was it homegrown? “Oh, yes, you didn’t go out and buy a tree, you got a cedar from someone’s grove,” she replied. She recalls popcorn strings, and homemade red and white decorations. *(Continued on reverse)*

**TWO EXTRA PAGES – This issue of the Red Oak Grove Reporter has a second sheet that provides two extra pages. On Page 3, view photos of the two new informational kiosks completed in August 2010. Page 4 contains a list of the generous donors whose gifts helped to make possible the construction of the kiosks. A sincere thank-you to all who donated!**

### *Three Remember, continued*

Mrs. Kimberling, born Verna Hale in 1914, attended Red Oak Grove Church from early adulthood. On Christmas Eve 1935, she married Vern Kimberling in Rock Island, Ill. He worked for other farmers by the month, saving money, and in 1944 they bought a farm.

Mrs. Kimberling recalls, as a young wife, portraying an angel in the Christmas program. She also remembers a wonderful Christmas Eve sermon by the Rev. Louis Penningroth, a “native son” of the area. Another cherished memory is that of a Christmas Eve candlelight service at Red Oak Grove, with lighted candles placed on each window sill.

She also remembers her youngest child, Victor, at age 4 or 5, memorizing his “piece” for the Christmas program perfectly. But on the night of the program, he pretended to be fast asleep on the pew with his parents when his name was called to recite. However, he soon “woke up” when his turn was safely past!

Mr. Mathias and his late wife, Norma, attended Red Oak Grove Presbyterian Church starting in 1947, when they moved to the area. They joined in 1956. The younger two of their three sons, Larry and Randy, were baptized at Red Oak Grove. (Eldest son Ron was baptized at Rochester, Iowa, where the family lived previously.)

By the time Cecil began attending, the church (built in 1921) had electricity, but he said there were never electric Christmas lights on the tree. The same type of homemade decorations – paper chains, popcorn garlands, and so on – were still in use.

He said, “Santa was always part of the Christmas program, up on stage (after the Bible skits). Each of the kids got a goody sack with a popcorn ball, an apple, homemade fudge and some storebought candy.” However, one adult member was so fiercely opposed to Santa Claus in church that he resigned as an elder!

### **IN MEMORIAM**

Georgia Spencer McLellan, 76, of Tipton died Oct. 21, 2010. The widow of Kenneth McLellan, she was active in the Tipton Methodist Church and other local organizations. Her funeral was Oct. 25, with burial in Red Oak Grove Cemetery. (*In 1920, Mrs. McLellan’s grandmother was the midwife when Cecil Mathias’ brother was born.*)

### **2010 IS WANING**

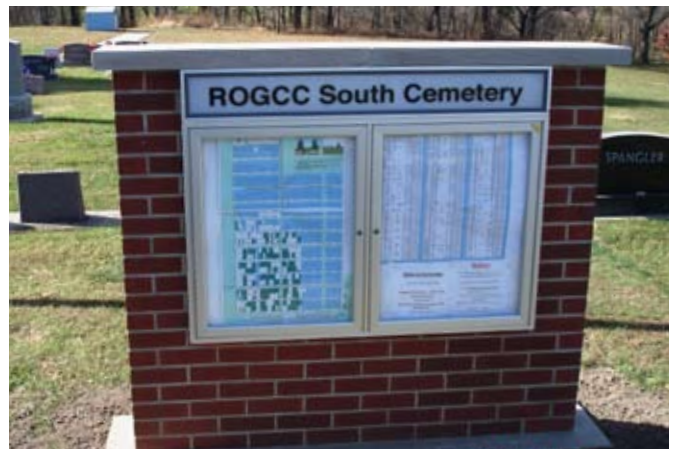
Gifts to Red Oak Grove Cemetery Association are tax-deductible. If interested in making a year-end gift, contact Board president Bob Rickard at (563) 886-6018, or P.O. Box 452, Tipton, IA 52772, or [bbrick@iowatelecom.net](mailto:bbrick@iowatelecom.net). Donations of any amount are gratefully accepted.

## Two new kiosks at Red Oak Grove Church and Cemetery



A proposal for two informational kiosks was approved at the Red Oak Grove Cemetery Association's Annual Meeting May 16, 2010. The kiosks – one near the church and the other near the South Cemetery entrance – were built by Esbeck Construction in July-August 2010.

Total cost was \$9,594. Generous donors contributed \$3,745 ( The donor list is on reverse) and a Community Foundation of Cedar County grant provided \$4,000. Still remaining to raise is \$1,849. Sincere thanks to everyone who has donated so far. If you would like to help, please contact Bob Rickard, Board president, at P.O. Box 452, Tipton, IA 52772, (563) 886-6018, or [bbrick@iowatelecom.net](mailto:bbrick@iowatelecom.net).



## **Donors to the Kiosk Fund of Red Oak Grove Church and Cemetery (as of Nov. 30, 2010)**

Scott and Karen Anderson, Tipton, IA  
The Bell Family; Keith Bell, Tipton, IA  
Wayne and Joan Brown, Stanwood, IA  
Paul Buchmayer, Iowa City, IA  
Cedar Lodge No. 11, Tipton, IA  
Freda Chambliss, Tipton, IA  
Ruth and Kris Clark, Tipton, IA  
Josh and Kristi Crist, Tipton, IA  
Stephen and Gloria Dee, Cordova, TN  
Glenn and Ellen Fear, Tipton, IA  
Nora Fulwider, Tipton, IA  
Vera Heck, Guernsey, IA  
John and Kay Hegarty, Swisher, IA  
John and Trudy Hegarty, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Mike and Brenda Herring, Mechanicsville, IA  
Dwight and Debra Hughes, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Max and Judy Keller, Tipton, IA  
Vesta Kern, Guttenberg, IA  
Cathy Knepper, Kensington, MD  
Dan and Kathy Laing, Tipton, IA  
Phyllis Lenschow, West Branch, IA  
Cecil Mathias, Tipton, IA  
Ron and Carol Mathias, Davenport, IA  
Ron and Sandra Moreland, Tipton, IA  
Howard and Virginia Osborn, Midland, OH  
Gary and Lori Ostrich, Stanwood, IA  
Steve and Susan Ovel, Cedar Rapids, IA  
Bob and Barb Rickard, Tipton, IA  
Neal and Judy Smith, Stanwood, IA  
Sonny and Marge Stonerook, Tipton, IA  
Karen Safley Taylor, Springville, IA  
Laura Lee Hawley Thumma, Stanwood, IA  
Ron and Daisy Wingert, Tipton, IA  
Virginia Youngker, Cedar Rapids, IA

### **Donald Ray and Mary Louise Challis Memorial**

Dwight and Dianne Ryan Glenney and Kate Glenney, Muscatine, IA

### **John Whiteley Davis Memorial**

Ruth Davis Grisham, Lisbon, IA

### **Mearl Laing Memorial**

Virginia Laing, Tipton, IA

### **Alice Rigby Foundation**

Ann Wurr, Petaluma, CA

### **Alice Rigby Memorial**

Mack and Mary Staton, Santa Barbara, CA

### **Washington and Lydia Barr Rigby Memorial**

Steven W. and Mary Lou Morrison, Emmetsburg, IA

### **Smith Foundation**

Keith and Virginia Smith, Farmington, MO