

My Green Lake Story: Sheldon Jackson

I have always believed that God had his hand in my affairs in the summer of 1948. When I was discharged from the Navy after WWII I expected to go home, marry my girlfriend and live out my life as originally planned. Like so many wartime relationships it soured, leaving me bitter and angry. My uncle W. W. Adams was to attend a conference at Green Lake and I volunteered to take him there.

Meanwhile Mary Jane Miller, a student at William Jewell College, answered a bulletin board posting for a lifeguard at Green Lake...she too had WWII hurt to deal with. Her close brother was killed in the South Pacific, and her family was breaking up too.

She got the lifeguard assignment plus checking the sailboats in and out. With nothing to do til it was time to take my uncle back, I decided to check out a sailboat. So, we met and afterward she offered to show me around the grounds. The tour ended at the prayer tower.

After taking Uncle Bill home I was excited to tell my two sisters and my parents about this turn in my life. The results were that I took my two sisters back to Green Lake to meet

Janey. There was approval all around. New relationships called for new plans. After a year of courting by mail (not recommended) we were married and she finished her last quarter of college. Then we moved to Lansing, MI while I finished my final requirement for graduation. We both felt we should raise a family to serve the Lord. We built a house, became active in our local church and raised three godly daughters.

Today I am 95 years old, and Janey went to be with the Lord three years ago. We had 66 wonderful years after the prayer tower. I wish I had space to tell all that God did in those years including two church plants. Our girls have each had a ministry of their

own. Becky married a Christian doctor. Dee, her husband and I conduct an in-house church here at Reflections (senior living facility). Debbie is the wife of Pastor Cal Sears of Abbe Road Baptist Church in Elyria, OH.

Praise God for The Green Lake part in my life. I will continue to pray that God has further plans for it.



Above: Sheldon and his lifeguard Janey

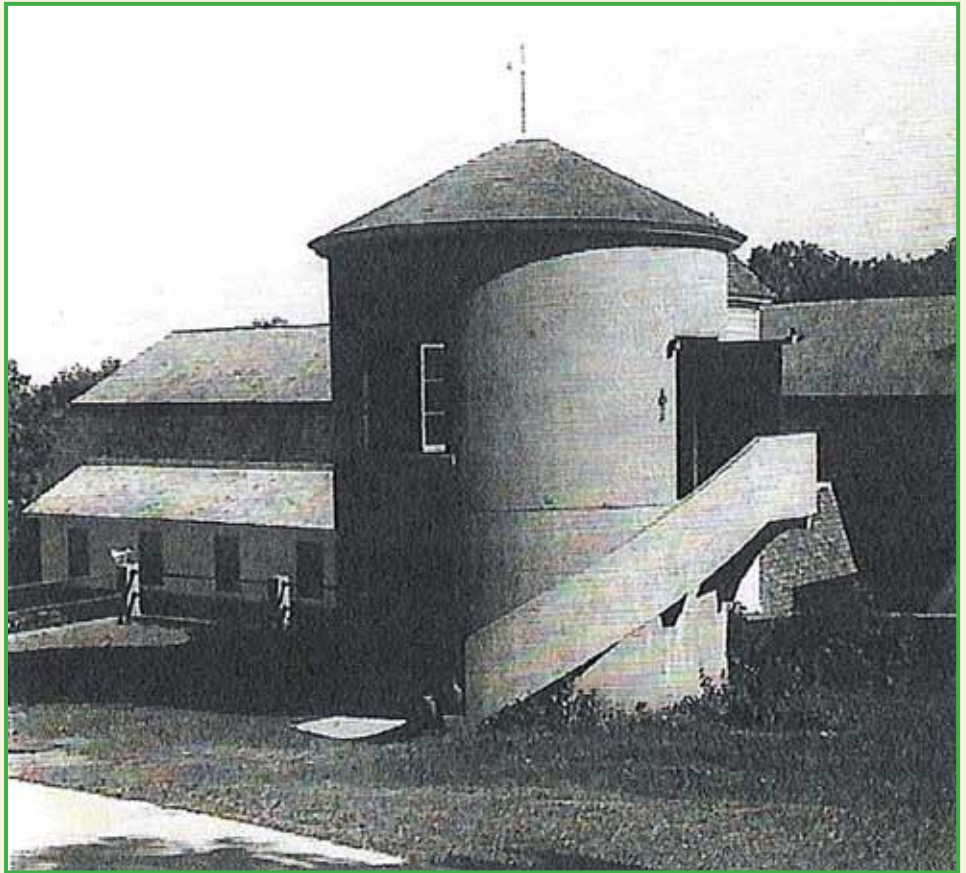


Left: checking out a sailboat

A Trio of Love

It was just an old silo standing like a monument marking the site of a once active farm near Green Lake, Wisconsin. As time passed, the property was purchased by the American Baptists. Included in their renovations, they rescued the old silo from sinking into the weeds festooned with ivy. With a lot of loving care and a new name, the Prayer Tower was ready.

On our second day together, Janey took me to the Prayer Tower. Inside there was a kneeling bench and an open Bible. As we knelt to pray we felt a deep reverence and spiritual kinship. We were setting a pattern. We vowed we would pray together every day, no matter what. We kept that vow by setting our watches when we were apart for some reason.



Prayer Tower

When the girls were born we included them in our pattern. It was hard to do when they were teenagers because of homework and school activities. But we made it work. A few verses of scripture and prayer all around opened the way for any family differences or school glitches to be aired out. It worked great. Often the girls brought out their guitars and sang. When the girls left home for college, Janey and I continued until she went to be with the Lord.

In addition to our vow we coined a motto for our marriage, "A Trio of Love." The Trio consisted of the two of us plus the Lord. When there were decisions to be made we always gave Him the deciding vote. Although it was not always easy to do, it helped us over a lot of bumps in the road and avoided many potholes.

*"A Trio of Love" was the motto we made,
A team for the future we faced unafraid.
For 66 years we've been tested and tried,
Through good times and bad times,
we crested the tide.
With Jesus our partner our life has been blessed,
And now we are ready for Heavenly rest.*