

Historian's Notebook

by George Blanchard

Originally I intended to write about several other major mergers in the city over the years, but I am still missing a couple of dates to make that article complete.

Instead here is a story which appeared in a recent issue of The AARP Magazine - "Mayday in the Antarctic" by Shirley Streshinsky. It is timely for it happened exactly one year ago on Thanksgiving night when the MS Explorer carrying 91 passengers along with 9 guides and a crew of 54 struck an iceberg and sank.

This 19 day cruise was tracing the 1914-16 expedition of Sir Ernest Shackleton which was considered one of the world's greatest survival stories. Shackleton's ship became locked in ice 250 miles from land. They survived 19 months of blizzards and temperatures which reached 33 degrees below zero. Pressures of the ice crushed the ship and they (Shackleton and his crew of 28) remained on the ice for four months. Finally they were able to launch whaleboats, landing on Elephant Island.

He knew they could not survive another winter so, with a crew of five, went for help - rowing 800 miles through heavy seas and high winds to South Georgia Island, then marching across the ice for 36 hours to a whaling station. With the help of a Chilean Naval vessel, the 23 men were eventually rescued from Elephant Island.

There isn't enough space to tell the story of last year's travel adventure other than to say that after five hours in lifeboats, they were rescued by two ships that were about 80 miles away.

For the complete exciting story, see the October-November issue of The AARP Magazine.

Why am I telling you these stories? Because they reminded me of two others that involved Central Church members.

One was an article that appeared in the Historian's Notebook about five years ago about Walter C. Porter who was on the ill fated maiden voyage of the Titanic. He had just completed a successful business trip through Europe. His letters arrived in Worcester on the day after the sinking. His family knew he was on the ship and could only pray that he would be saved -- he wasn't.

His daughter, Helen I. Porter, was later married to Carl B. Fitton. They were long time church members.

The second was an item from my mother's diary dated June 1912. - "Roger to Labrador - Grenfell Mission until Labor Day."

This was a reference to her brother, Roger Brooks, who had just completed his sophomore year at Clark. Whether he joined Grenfell as a mission project or just for adventure, I do not know. Roger was the father of Emerson Brooks.

How I wish I could hear his story first hand.

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As a follow up to last months cellar clean out -- it was very successful. Believe it or not we removed 10,970 lbs.!! Five and a half tons, enough to fill an 18 wheel dump truck three times. WOW.

Thanks to the 12 volunteers who spent about four hours of hard work on that Saturday morning, but especially to Heidi's husband Elias who donated the use of his truck.

Thanks Elias, we couldn't have accomplished it without you.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Sue Matusen	1
Kirsi Bombredi	
Harriet Thayer	2
Vivian Schotte	4
Heidi Ebers	10
Carol Ericson	
Tamar Apkarian	11
Mud Rocheleau Demers	12
Jaris Wicklund	13
Heather Prunier	15
Beatrice Manoogian	
Micheil Murray	
Jim Sanford	23
Ben Stewart	24
Candace Young	26
Brook Gaspari	31



You are Invited to
 An Interfaith Thanksgiving Service
 Sponsored by Elm Park Ministries
 Sunday, Nov. 23, 2008 5:00 p.m.
 The First Baptist Church
 111 Park Ave. Worcester. MA

Combined choir will rehearse
 at 3:00 p.m.

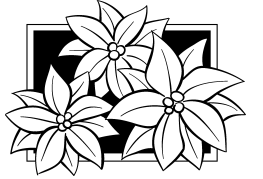
Christian, Jewish and Muslim friends
 will join together in common gratitude
 to God.

Please bring a non-perishable food item

POINSETTIA SUNDAY

DECEMBER 21

Each year Poinsettias adorn the Sanctuary during the Advent Season and this year Poinsettia Sunday



will be December 21. Following worship, the plants will be distributed to ill and less mobile members of our congregation.

Poinsettias may be given
"To the Glory of God" and
In honor of living person[s]
In memory of someone who has died
In celebration of the season

If you are interested in donating a plant, please complete the form below and forward it, along with your payment, to the office by December 5 The cost of a plant is \$12.50

The GREEN ROOSTER CoffeeHouse



Doors open 7:30
All shows 8:00 p.m.

Nov 29	TELLEBRATION —The weekend storytellers all over the world celebrate the spoken word and ply their art.
Dec 6	HARVEY REID —with his unparalleled holiday show)
Dec 31 (8:15)	First Night Worcester —The Green Rooster hosts: Chuck & Mud and the Hole in the Dam Band
	<i>Thanks for dropping in! We always need volunteers.</i>

FIRST NIGHT NEWS

Volunteers are needed to help with United's hosting of First Night events on December 31st. There will be a table in the church parlor every Sunday with descriptions of the tasks that need to be done, along with a sign-up schedule. Be part of the fun-filled events at church on New Year's Eve! You can also call Coordinator Tim Camp at 508-798-6997 for more information.



THE ADVENT WREATH



The Advent wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as we anticipate Jesus' birth. The wreath's circular shape symbolizes eternity, or life without end. The candles remind us that Jesus is the Light of the World — he brought light and life to a dark world (see John 1:4-5). On each of the four Sundays of Advent, we light a new candle. As the light grows, so do our hope and joy.

2008 LIVING NATIVITY



December 13 & 14
1:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Overlook Farm/Heifer International

The 20-minute show is presented each hour in the barn (dress warmly).

First show 1 p.m., last show 5 p.m.

Also enjoy sleigh or hayrides,

Christmas carols,
cookies and hot beverages.

Admission is free but please bring a plate of cookies to share.

216 Wachusett St., Rutland, MA

overlook.farm@heifer.org

or 508-886-2221

Give a Gift



to Give

PAGEANT GIFTS

Pageant gifts will be received on Sunday December 21, during the worship service. Look for details on suggested

presents in future publications or call the church office.

SPECIAL ADVENT COFFEE HOUR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7



Bring your favorite Holiday Treat to share at Coffee Hour.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING



Join us for an afternoon of caroling! We will gather at the church on Sunday, December 21, at 4:00 p.m. before setting out to visit our less mobile members. A potluck dinner will follow at a place to be determined.

Please contact Heidi Ebers (508- 755-7882) if you are interested in hosting the potluck dinner.

SECOND SUNDAY HEALING SERVICE

In accord with one of our most ancient of Christian traditions, the Diaconate would like to offer Healing Services on a regular basis. Immediately following worship on the second Sunday of the month, the pastor and a Deacon will be available to anoint and offer a brief prayer for those of you who would like to receive this healing blessing. It is our desire as pastor and as Deacons to provide for your spiritual needs.

A World AIDS Day Service

will be held Monday, December 1

7:00 p.m. Large Parlor

THE FOOD CUPBOARD NEEDS: HOLIDAY DINNER ITEMS



Our Food Cupboard volunteers continued to be very busy in October with a 13% increase in total number of people served when compared to October 2007.

We pre bag our food and the number of bags given out is based on the size of the family. Our bags currently contain three varieties of fruit, three varieties of vegetables, pasta and pasta sauce, macaroni and cheese, rice, peanut butter and jelly, cereal, tuna fish and two meals in a can. In addition, clients currently have a choice of frozen ham, ground beef or a whole chicken. Because our allotment of milk is half that of other items, we are not always able to include milk in our bags. When available, we include fresh bread, vegetables and fruit. New clients also receive the brochure, *Mass Food and Nutrition Programs*, published by the Commonwealth of MA. Included in the brochure is information on WIC (Women, Infants and Children program), Nutrition Program for the Elderly, School Breakfast and Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and Food Bank contact numbers.

During November and December we are asking for Holiday Dinner Donations: stuffing mix, gravy, cranberry sauce and canned pie filling.

