



The NEW BERN MIRROR

PUBLISHED WEEKLY
OF THE HEART OF
NORTH
Mr. & Mrs. A. N. Murphy
2000 Arendall St.
Morehead City, N. C.

VOLUME 2

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1959

NUMBER...

Jim Harris is well on his way toward 80, but the elderly New Bern Negro is still getting up before 5 o'clock on Sunday morning to usher in the most unusual religious service that our town has.

While thousands are slumbering deeply in the region of the Neuse and Trent, he shuffles into Star of Zion Missionary Baptist church, reaches for the bell rope, and peals out the glad tidings of another Sabbath.

Jim has been tugging at that rope for more than 40 years, and in response to the bell's clarion call, pews at the church are well filled by 5:30. Although Jim and his wife, Dollie, are both members of Star of Zion, the service is non-denominational and separate and apart from regular morning services later in the day.

If the pastor sees fit to attend, he does so as one of the many worshippers. No sermon is preached. "Everybody is welcome," says Jim, "no matter what church they belong to, or even if they don't belong to a church. We just sing and testify."

For two and a half hours, Miller street is saturated with melody. You'll find no vested choir or instrumental music at the sunrise service. Only the natural harmony that God has so richly blessed the Negro race with, speaking from the heart in rousing, rhythmic spirituals.

Contributions tinkle in the collection plate as liberally as rain falling on a roof top. All the money so derived is used to help the ill and needy, and Jim and Dollie make sure that it is dispersed wisely and well.

Jim is acquainted with just about everybody uptown, and downtown among the whites he is well-known too as the long-time sexton at Centenary Methodist church. Outsiders who have attended dinners in Centenary's social rooms particularly remember Jim's proficiency in keeping guests supplied with coffee.

Weaving in and out among the tables, with a large silver pitcher, he has made even the most enthusiastic imbibers of java finally concede that they can hold no more.

For transportation to and from his home, at the other end of town, Harris uses a bicycle. Heaven only knows how many miles he has pedaled in all these years, but it ought to add up to a pretty far piece.

Maybe the stillness of the air has a lot to do with it, but the Star of Zion bell leaves little to be desired when it comes to volume. Early risers in every section of town have heard it, but few of them knew from whence the pealing came.

It can be said with certainty that Jim has been present at more church services than anyone else in town. In addition to his worshipping at Star of Zion, he has bent an ear to innumerable services at Centenary.

Although not actually present in the Centenary sanctuary, his vantage point in a room a few feet from the pulpit and choir has enabled him to hear sermons and hymns as distinctly as the worshippers seated in pews down front.

No other church in town has tried to follow Jim's church in holding regular sunrise services. Perhaps most Protestants are late sleepers by nature. In fact, New Bern's Catholics—faithful though many of them are in attending early mass—face a real challenge in Jim and his flock.

Jim would be the first to give much of the credit for the sunrise service to his wife. Like her husband,

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MOM'S PRIDE AND JOY—On Mother's Day or any other day, every New Bern mamma knows in her heart that the trials and tribulations that confront her are worthwhile. To understand why, look at these happy imps who keep things jumping at Christ Church kindergarten.

Left to right, bottom row, are Billy Bevill, Kathy Askew, Hal Dill, Billy Dill, Blackie Fox, Jeff Johnson, David Crawford, Donnie Dunn, Ricky Manker, Harvey Gaskins, Nancy Barker. Seated—Rosa Lee Barwick, Margaret Beaman, Marda Walters, Bay Noneman, Billy Bell, Debbie

Cordes, Diane Houghton.

Middle row, Mary Ann Barden, Jeannine Langston, Ann Disoway, Ann Edwards, Isabel Scott, Joe Carter, Robbie Thomas, Randy Erdman, Melinda Barefoot, Connie McGee, Betsy Ward, Cindy Smith, Kathryn Houghton, Elizabeth Watts.

Top row, Paul Stephens, Janet Hammon, Morris Vatz, Anna Mason, Ann Reesman, Jeff Jernigan, Gladys Wylie, Earl Del Mastro, Bill Taylor, Walt Fuller, Juliet Moore. —Photo by John R. Baxter.

New Bern's Victor Fulcher Is Winning Fame as Entertainer

Victor Fulcher, serving with the Air Force in Japan, is the latest New Bernian to achieve distinction in the entertainment world.

Still thumping out tunes on the piano by ear, as he did when he made his debut in the Yuletide Revue at the age of 8, the 22-year-old redhead has won highest honors in the Tops In Blue Contest for military talent.

He breezed through the preliminaries against outstanding competition, and then walked off with a handsome trophy, a watch and a travelling clock in the finals. The local boy was, from all reports, sensational.

Now, Uncle Sam has offered him an opportunity to tour the whole Far East for three months in a series of personal appearances. On the agenda are Okinawa, Iwo Jima, the Philippines, Hawaii, Hong Kong, Korea and way points.

Young Fulcher may pass up the tour. He comes out of service in October, and hence must figure for the future. "I have a job at an NCO club, playing five nights a week," he says, "and it means about \$220 extra a month. I can really use it when I get back to the States."

Victor has education on his mind. He quit school in the tenth grade and regrets it deeply. What's more, he intends to do something about it, while setting his sights

on a career as a professional entertainer in civilian life.

"I start to school on May 11," he informed us, "to try to get my

high school diploma. If I pass my test I'll go to Washington, D. C., for a year's residence. I hope to have my diploma granted there."



VICTORY FOR VICTOR

Victor was a typical boy of six when he begged for a piano. His folks finally bought one, and were all set to send him to a music teacher for instruction.

They were astounded when he sat down at the ivories, with no instruction at all, and played his favorite hymn—"From Jerusalem to Jericho"—without missing a note. From that moment on, he could play anything he ever heard, and it presented a problem.

At St. Paul's Catholic school, his music teacher—Sister Trinita—made every effort to show him how to read notes. She would play a composition, and he would take his seat at the piano, look at the notes and play the composition too.

It dawned on her that he might not be reading the notes at all. To convince herself, she put one piece of music on the piano and played another composition instead. When Victor duplicated her playing, she knew her suspicion was well founded.

Convinced that formal teaching for the little redhead was a waste of money, she told his mother as much. From that day on, Victor played his own way to his heart's content.

While at New Bern High school he was a member of a dance band until he joined the Air Force. He got his boot training at Lackland

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