

At Age 85, Mrs. Jessie Anderson Remembers Earlier Christmases

By Audrey C. Lodato
Post Staff Writer

At "approximately" 85, Mrs. Jessie Anderson may be slow of foot and hard of hearing, but her heart's still in the right place.

A member of Second Calvary Baptist Church since shortly after moving to Charlotte in 1939, Mrs. Anderson was very active in church life until becoming homebound about three years ago. She taught Sunday School for 20 years, was a member of the choir and deaconess board, ushered, and served in the missionary department and on the kitchen committee.

"I just loved church," the smiling Mrs. Anderson recalls. "I was brought up in the church."

Bringing up, for Mrs. Anderson, occurred in Georgia, where she married Ed Anderson. Widowed since 1933, she decided to move with her seven children to Charlotte six years later because her people were here.

When asked about her early Christmases, Mrs. Anderson remembers her first Christmas as a tiny girl. "Santa Claus came to me. He didn't come as much as he does now, but he always came to me," she says. On Christmas Day, her family would go to church in the morning. Her favorite gifts were a special doll and a wagon.

In more recent years, and until she was unable to get out, Mrs. Anderson spent Christmas visiting her grown children's families.

"I've always enjoyed Christmas," the octogenarian smiles. "I enjoy exchanging gifts and just celebrating Jesus' birthday."

This Christmas, family will come to her. Daughter Deborah Williams will prepare a dinner of turkey, ham, pies, and other good things to eat.



Mrs. Jessie Anderson
...Heart's still in right place

Mrs. Anderson has 13 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. Most of the family still live in Charlotte. She occasionally gives the young ones advice on how to act and being good, she says.

There's quite a big difference, she admits, between the way the world is now and the "olden days." Now, she believes, things are better than they used to be.

Mrs. Anderson states that she always made New Year's resolutions. "I always wanted a little better life the next year than the year before," she explains.

If she could change anything in her life, she concludes, it would be to be able to walk again and to "do the things I used to do." Her final wish this Christmas season? "Just to keep on living."

UNC-G Theatre Play Selected For ACTF Regional Competition

Special To The Post

Greensboro - The Theatre of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC-G) has been invited to present its production of "Mournin'," an original play by drama graduate student Carolyn Cole, at the Southern regional American College Theatre Festival at Catawba College in Salisbury on February 11-15.

In addition to UNC-G, five other institutions in the region have been selected to perform at the festival. The schools are N.C. Central University, University of Alabama, University of Louisville, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Troy State University. "Mournin'" will be presented on February 14.

"We are extremely proud and honored to have 'Mournin'' selected for ACTF. It is a tribute not only to Carolyn, but to all the faculty, staff and students—both from UNC-G and N.C. A&T State University—who worked on the show," said Tom Behm, director of UNC-G Theatre. "We hope that many theatregoers from this area will want to go to Salisbury for our performance on Valentine's Day."

Ms. Cole, a former resident of Goldsboro now living in Greensboro, has rewritten parts of the play following suggestions by ACTF adjudicators and playwright Joseph Walker ("The River Niger"), who critiqued the production.

Two students in the production also were nominated for Irene Ryan Acting Awards: They are Robin L. Monteith of Charlotte, who played Eula, and Tony L. Patterson of St. Albans, N.Y., who played Cleophas.



Carolyn Cole
...Rewrote parts of play

Playwright Roland Reed, a drama professor at UNC-Charlotte, said of UNC-G Theatre's production of "Mournin'": "I look on the experience with 'Mournin'' as among the most exciting ACTF adventures I've had in my five years of traveling to new plays." Reed was one of the festival's adjudicators who selected "Mournin'" for the regional event.

The play has been endorsed for entry in three ACTF playwriting competitions:

-The National Student Playwriting Award, which is for the best original play written by a drama student in the United States during the year.

-The Lorraine Hansberry Award, which recognizes the best new play written by a drama student on the black experience.

-The Janet Chambers Award, which recognizes the best new play by a drama student addressing the experiences of women.

Presented November 13-17 in Aycock Auditorium at UNC-G, "Mournin'" was directed originally by Karma Ibsen-Riley, a UNC-G assistant professor of drama. An original play by Ibsen-Riley is being considered for production in Chicago. She has requested that Dr. Heyman Middleton, a UNC-G Excellence Foundation Professor of drama, take over the director's duties for the ACTF presentation.

Middleton has worked with Ms. Cole on the "Mournin'" script since she first read it during the summer of 1984 in Middleton's playwrighting course. "Three weeks of rehearsal will be necessary as we have a completely revised first act and many changes throughout the play to incorporate," said Middleton.

Following the regional festival, six productions from across the country will be selected for presentation March 31 - April 13, 1986, at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. The only UNC-G Theatre production to advance all the way to the national event was "The Oresteia," directed by Middleton in 1974.

Two other UNC-G Theatre productions, "The Homecoming" (1978) and "Enrico IV" (1977), were selected for presentation at regional ACTF events.

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