



India Newsletter

By Dolores Stykel—July 2008



BETTY LOU WOOD NELSON – April 1, 2008 – While visiting our son, Philip, and his family in Bangalore this year from Jan 1 to Feb 21, we took 5 days for a trip to Guntur. The 15 hour train trip was very reminiscent of the long ago trips coming from and going to Kodai. Watching the Indian rural scenery fly by, I had the feeling a lot of it hasn't changed much in 70 years. We were met at 5 a.m. by Dr. Lalitha, a niece of Dr. Subbamma who is caring for her aunt so lovingly and taking on her many ministries.

Subbamma had a heart attack followed by a stroke the end of last year so she is paralyzed on one side and bedridden. Thankfully she can easily turn herself from side to side. She eats well with the help of Dr. Lalitha. She recognized us and called us by our names but refused to talk to us though she would carry on a limited conversation in Telugu with her brother, who also stays in the same house, and her niece (his daughter).

Dr. Lalitha became a Christian because of Subbamma and she truly shows the love of God through her life. She works full time in an AIDS/HIV clinic but has also taken over Subbamma's ministries. She arranged for a group of the blind, who meet weekly at her house, to come for singing and sharing. The next day she took us to a small one-room building, that Subbamma had built, into which at least 30 children and 30 widows had crowded for singing and sharing. The overflow gathered outside. These groups also meet weekly and she gives each one a banana and a bun.

On Ash Wednesday we worshipped in St. Matthews where I was baptized 77 years ago. What a thrill to see the whole church, including the aisles, packed with enthusiastic worshipers (at least 1000). It was amazing to learn that for 40 evenings during the Lenten season these same people would return for worship. Wow! The church in America sent missionaries to take the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ to a people who could now teach us a lot!

There's an interesting story to add to our Guntur experience. When we got married, our dad, Ted Wood, taught Johnny 5 Telugu phrases, one of which was "Do you know Telugu?" He enthusiastically uses that phrase on every Indian we see, and we get into a lot of interesting conversations because of it. Last year at a Farmer's Market in Des Moines, Johnny found an Indian ophthalmologist and his doctor wife who not only spoke Telugu, but were from Guntur! At their invitation, we looked them up while in Guntur and had a wonderful meal and visit in their home, which just happens to be around the block from Dr. Lalitha's home. They spend half a year in Des Moines with their children. Small world!

We were quite impressed with the growth in Guntur and the good roads and cleanliness there. Bangalore could take a lesson.

Incidentally, our two granddaughters in Bangalore (3½ and 2) are speaking English, German and Japanese from their mother, and Kanada. You have to be a linguist to converse with them!!

JEAN REBLE

Jean Reble died April 25, 2008 at Lisaard House, from cancer. She was the wife of Pastor Eric; mother of Brenda (deceased in 2007), Peter (Terri), Jane (Jane) and Carol (John); grandmother of Rhea, Travis and Jeremy; sister of Harold (Minn) and Doris. Predeceased by

INDIA NEWSLETTER—JULY 2008

her mother, Louise Niergath (Schaefer); four sisters, Lucille, Irene, Verna and Beatrice. Jean became the “Frog Lady” and delighted in countless smiles of the children and adults for whom she made jumping origami frogs. She championed the cause of epilepsy awareness, refugee support, fair trade coffee, acceptance of gays and lesbians, and righting the wrongs of global and local inequity. She loved playing music and singing in the choir, cooking and experimenting with new recipes, and her garden. Most of all she loved people and they loved her because she showed them that they mattered and that they belonged.

A private family committal took place at St. Peter’s Lutheran Cemetery. A memorial service was held Tuesday, April 29, from St. Peter’s Lutheran Church. Donations may be made to St. Peter’s Lutheran Church, Global Hunger and Development or Lisaard House.

The following letter was written by **Eric to Jean**, Monday night, April 23, 2008 after he had spent the day at her side at Lisaard House, knowing that God would soon call Jean home, it was read at the memorial service by his niece, Morine:

“Dear Jean, When we were married in St. James Lutheran Church, St. Jacobs in June 1951, I knew someone precious had come into my daily life. But it has taken all these 57 years to discover and know what a priceless treasure you were and are, and how difficult it is to let you go.

In those early years of marriage, I realize that quite self-centredly, I tended to take you for granted and assumed that you would fit easily into the role of a pastor’s wife, and assist me in my ministry. Well, you were a wonderful wife, married to a pastor, but amazingly, you carved out your own ministry. It’s almost impossible to number all the causes you undertook in your passionate concern for others: You helped found the Waterloo-Wellington Epilepsy Assoc.; you started the Clothing Depot at St. Peter’s; you were a tireless promoter of Fair Trade Coffee. These are just a few.

You didn’t get involved because you were a pastor’s wife or someone who needed to be in control. You saw a need, rolled up your sleeves and went to work, doing whatever you saw that needed doing: scrubbing the floor of a young single parent with a new baby, driving newly arrived refugees for shopping; setting up tables, etc to fundraise for the Epilepsy Assoc., making sure every child and woman at Mary’s Place received a quilt, and being my pianist at countless nursing home services.

You did all of this simply (or not so simply) because you loved and cared for people. You couldn’t help reaching out, with that warm smile and spirit of generosity. It was so much your nature to make everyone feel at home and wanted. And in this spirit, you became the Frog Lady; the lady who origami-folded a small square of paper into a leaping frog that delighted everyone. You made them in doctor’s offices, grocery stores, at funerals, on planes, at the Cancer Centre, everywhere you saw a child. And the frogs became a message for you: F. R. O. G. Fully Rely on God: Which you have done all your life.

Your simple faith and trust put mine to shame. I haven’t even mentioned the 100 or so albums that you painstakingly put together over the years, just so that family and friends and fellow church members would never be forgotten. How did you do all that, and at the same time be such a caring, guiding mother for our wonderful children, Brenda, Peter, Jane and Carol who have followed your compassionate example?

But none of us is perfect. Friends and lovers though we were, Jean, we also had our arguments and differences. Please forgive me for the many times I failed to understand you. I tended to keep thoughts and feelings to myself and I would make the mistake of trying to give complicated answers to your rhetorical questions when all you wanted was to be re-assured. You needed that!

On our wedding day, your friend Shirley Riest, sang a solo which included the words, “whither thou goest, I will go”, from the book of Ruth and that you did. Although I am sure you sometimes bit your tongue, wondering if this truly was God’s will for us: something I always grandly assumed.

Thanks for taking on all those risks and challenges with me, whether it was in a country parish in Ontario, or the mission field in India.

Your were always such an inspiration for our grandchildren, Rhea, Travis and Jeremy. You would have liked if they were close enough to visit every day.

Jean, when I married you, you were a very pretty girl. Over the years you became even more beautiful. It wasn't only a physical beauty-It was the beauty of the determined, vibrant, loving person you were inside, shining through. It was your letting God's grace be very much a part of your life.

Thank you for the lively, abundant, joyful life that we shared together: trips around the world and walks through the neighbourhood, summer days in Denbigh with the Eichners and winter holidays cross-country skiing; going to Pop Concerts, having friends in; making every parish experience a family experience; making people from every culture and background an enriching part of our lives; the many games of Scrabble and Blackout Bridge at the dining room table, I could go on and on. And all of this was enlivened by your sense of fun and ready wit. And all of life faced with courage and grace.

I love you very much, Jean. But I pray God to help me let you go. Not too long ago, you said to a friend, "I wish I were a butterfly and I could take my wings and fly away." God in Christ has given you those wings. When I left today I whispered in your ear all the names of those waiting for you with open arms. Hug them for me. And wait for me there. Love, Eric"

RUTH E. SIGMON

Ruth Elizabeth Sigmon was born in Savannah, GA on Jan. 3, 1923. When she was 8 her family moved to NC. It was here that she spent much of her early life. She received her B. A. from Lenoir Rhyne College.

In 1945, she left for India, where she worked in Evangelism and Women's Work; as Christian Education Director of AELC; Nagarjunasagar Community center; in-charge of School and Hostel and Ecumenical Team Ministries. Her most satisfying ministry was with street dwellers and slum residents. She was greatly loved by all whose lives she touched.

During her first furlough she earned her M.R.E. degree at Biblical Seminary. During another furlough she took several courses at New York University and Morgan State College, working toward a Ph. D.; however, she decided to return to India and never completed the degree work.

After serving in India for 42 years, Ruth retired in 1987, but continued her ministry in the US. She served as Missionary in Residence in the New York Metropolitan area, and then served in Indiana, Colorado, Massachusetts and Georgia. Her work in these areas included Laubach Adult Education, Guardian ad Litem, Urban Servant Corps, Heifer Project, Koinonia Community and Missionaries of Charity, who worked with AIDS patients.

In 1992 she took care of her brother, Carl, who was suffering from a brain tumor. After his death she returned for a short period to serve as volunteer chaplain at CMC, Vellore.

Ruth came to Penney Retirement Community in 1996 hoping to have "lots of time for reading and writing." Unfortunately soon after her arrival she was diagnosed with macular degeneration and was unable to do much of what she had planned, however she diverted her time and energy to other spheres. She spent a lot of time with residents of the Dementia Unit, painted for Personal Energy Transport Project, worked as a Hospice Volunteer, participated in the Peace Forum and Social Concerns group, was very active in the Clown Ministry, mentored and was involved with many other people in various walks of life.

Recently when asked for her memories of India, she replied. "Getting to know the people of India, adjusting to their culture, moonlight swimming in the Bay of Bengal, village hospitality, sharing work

with missionary children, sharing the road with bullock carts, holidays in Kodaikanal, Kotagiri and Kashmir. Seeing the headlights of a car reflected in the eyes of a tiger, and the sound of a coming cyclone.”

Ruth was last seen about 11 AM on June 4 rushing toward Barrows Hall, where she collapsed. She had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. She completed her earthly journey that same night.

Gifts in Ruth's memory may be given to: PUSHPA (a program improving lives of villagers in Guntur Dt) 1823 Gramsie Road, Arden Hills, MN 55112 or Penney Retirement Community (designated for Hagen Care Center renovations) PO Box 555, Penney Farms FL 32079.

MARINELLE PEERY writes – I am so sad but also so very grateful that we had time together at the reunion. I shall miss Ruthie very much and cherish the memories I have of her. I would guess that I have known and loved her longer than anyone else at the reunion for I learned to know her before I got to India from Bill's letters during the 16 months they were in India before I arrived. I chose her for one of my bridesmaids, sight unseen! We became very close friends from the day I arrived, (She, Miss Nickel and Aunt Minnie brought breakfast to us on the train on our way from Bombay to Guntur) and have continued to be. She has visited me here at Twin Lakes three or four times and I was hoping for more visits. I have often referred to her as the “Mother Teresa” of the Lutheran mission. She was one of a kind and I love her.

SAM SCHMITTNER wrote: “IN MEMORY OF RUTH SIGMON”

1. She taught them how to live:

When we lived in Narasaraopet, Ruth Sigmon was appointed to serve there for the last few years, until we left in 1965. Ruthie became a part of our family. Our children loved her and kept asking us to “have Aunt Ruthie for supper.” She had a great way with children and they were always delighted by her visit.

After we moved to the Church President's bungalow, Ruthie was assigned to Guntur, lived in Groenning and worked with Bible women and social workers in the slums of Guntur. She found her greatest satisfaction and joy working with street dwellers who had bamboo and plastic lean-to huts resting on the six foot Heyer Hall compound wall. She came to know each one of her neighbors and invited the street people to come to her home and had long meetings with them on the veranda. She motivated them to want to have their own homes. She also picked out their leaders: men and women, who, though poor, had strong ideas and courage and were willing to speak out and work in unity for a plan of self improvement.

After several years with LWF aid promised to the Street Dweller Rehab program, Ruthie led the leaders to the collector's office and obtained a site on Lam Farm road with space for 25 homes. They went with her to the bank to get loans to help build homes and secure mini loans to start a small business, buy a cycle rickshaw or whatever would be helpful to make a living.

I shall never forget the wonderful joyful service of dedication. They asked Ruthie for permission to select the name of the Colony and she consented. When I prayed and read out the name, “Auntie Ruth Sigmon Colony”, she was distressed and tried to talk them out of it. They replied, “You have taught us to talk and negotiate with bankers and Collectors and people high in authority, and to make our own decisions. Now, this is our decision.”

After dedication prayers and hymns of joy were over, everyone was laughing and celebrating. The children began to dance to the music, Ruthie joined them in dancing. The whole day of activities and joyful sounds had been seen and heard by their rich neighbor who had been upset that the street dwellers had moved into his neighborhood.

Suddenly a car roared through the front gate. Everyone was shocked and all activity stopped.

INDIA NEWSLETTER—JULY 2008

The driver opened the trunk of the car and announced, "My master, your neighbor, has sent ripe delicious mangoes for all who are present here. Begin with the children!" Yes, the master had changed his mind and wanted to be part of the joyful ministry. I never saw Ruth so happy.

2. She taught them how to smile:

One day, we were driving down a rather narrow canal bank road with Ruthie and two of her Bible Women. Ruth suddenly said, "Please stop the car. Look at that man coming toward us." We could see that he had a heavy frown as though all the burden of the world was on his shoulders. Ruth called out, "Aya, Navundi." That is all she said, but she said it like a call of an angel with strength and joy in her voice. He looked at her burst into a smile and said, "Vandanalu" as he held his hands to give her namaskaram. She smiled back, said, "Namaskaram.", and we proceeded on our way. Kanthamma said, "Oh, Amma, you make everyone happy when they are with you.!"

3. She taught them how to read:

When Ruthie would visit a village, she always had books in her car and in her bag. Children would surround her as soon as she got out of the car. Ruthie would hold up a simple Telugu book and ask, "How many of you can read?" Often very few could. Many of the older women also could not read and wanted to learn. She would encourage them to get lessons in reading. For older ones there were good literacy books with simple Telugu and pictures illustrating letters. She urged parents to share in childcare and encourage the children to go to school. She was Miss Literacy. Most of the Bible women took the course in teaching adults to read and spent time doing so. Through her efforts thousands learned to read.

4. She taught many dedicated people how to minister to the slum and street dwellers:

She founded Praja Seva Samtha. (Instruction for service to common people). Through this, health and education was available for street dwellers' children. More than a hundred children could be seated on Groenning Bungalow's large verandah. There were 4 or 5 teachers involved in this ministry to kindergarten and grade school children. Younger children cared for in the nursery, would be bathed and given simple nutritious meals during the day, which enabled parents to receive care and education. This ministry has been going on for 28 or more years. Medical teams came from Kugler Hospital and the school of nursing. Social workers helped with cottage industries, sewing, basket making, etc.

5. She taught them that they are precious children of God by opening her home and heart to them:

Ruth & I arrived back from American and came to Guntur on the early morning train on November 19, 1977 and were staying with Ruthie. That night a powerful cyclone swept across the Bay of Bengal. It began to be furious by 8 p.m.. We heard people on the porch. Ruthie saw all of her street dwellers from a wide area. Most of them were already wet. She invited all of them into the large house. Downstairs there were two very large bedrooms and two small ones. She took them to the large rooms, put the beds sideways against the wall, brought out all the carpets, rugs and blankets and everyone jammed together wall to wall. More than 150 street dwellers slept soundly through the storm that killed 30,000 on the coast of Andhra, 700 people in Guntur.

The street dwellers were so thankful and told Ruthie she had saved their lives and cared for them like a mother. In the morning each received a meal of hot porridge and a glass of hot tea.

Immediately the men departed to scrounge for bamboos, palm leaves and any kind of timber, roofing or plastic and were back on the streets in shelters they had made in two days.

6. She taught them how to love God and to spread His love.

By showing them God's love and the truth they learned that all she did for them was an expression of Christ's love and teaching in Mt. 25-34-40. Her life was shared with them and became a great blessing that was a clear example of living the Gospel in love.

7. She taught them to pray to the living God.

The daily work of Praja Seva Samstha and Ruthie's daily work began with the reading of God's Word, a hymn and a prayer. In every time of need and for every cause, pray was the beginning, the foundation, and the fuel and energy of her ministry to show the love of Christ.

We thank God for Ruthie Sigmon who taught us how to serve joyfully, how to care, how to pour ourselves out for the poor and needy who represent Christ coming to us to share His love. I thank God that I am one of Ruthie's co-workers, followers, sishulu (disciples) and loving friends.

TRIBUTE TO AUNT RUTH SIGMON

Tim Lomperis - June 16, 2008

There are three things about Aunt Ruthie that will always come to mind whenever I think of her: her movement, her voice, and her laugh.

Whenever I think of Aunt Ruthie, she will always be moving—in a whoosh! Though she had a very determined set of legs, she seemed to be moving too fast for them to ever touch the ground.

There was really no gait, she just glided over the ground like a Maglev train. And the movement was always with a firm purpose. She was always going somewhere; and, to stay up with her, you just had to get on board. Never mind that you didn't know where you were going, Aunt Ruthie would get you there, if you just held on.

For those of us from the Midwest (where no one had an accent), Aunt Ruthie was one of those Southerners who talked a little funny. It was always arresting to hear that Southern way of talking. For someone always in such a hurry, her leisured drawl made me trip. Because the words and thoughts that accompanied her rapid physical sashays through space took a little while to emerge, you were always a little off balance with Aunt Ruthie. What was especially remarkable is that the Telegu of all the Americans in India that merged into a somewhat common stream of the Italian accent necessary to speak this language didn't work for Aunt Ruthie. She was singular in that her Telegu still came out with a Southern accent. It always made everyone stop.

Then there was her laugh. The two big laughs in the Mission were those of Aunt Christie and Aunt Ruthie. Christie's would come first and often, and was a large, piercing whoop. Ruthie's would last longer and was a trill of a brook that would just keep going. Eventually, everyone would get sucked in, and it was a delicious feeling to the feet—and the soul. She had strong views and bold projects, but she brought everyone into the brook with her compelling laugh. No one minded the journey with Aunt Ruthie, however difficult the project.

Beyond these three, for someone who mainly knew her as boy, there was also all those freckles and the striking red hair. She was a presence in this earthly life—a great person to be around: an inspiration for children looking for examples of grown-ups who knew how to live for Christ, with a large touch of flair. I am sure she is enriching the mansions of Heaven even as we here, who are still behind, sorely miss our dear Aunt Ruthie.

REUNION OF THE LUTHERAN MISSION IN ANDHRA – LUTHERIDGE CONFERENCE CENTER MAY 18-21, 2008

All those who attended the Lutheran Mission in Andhra Reunion were warmed and satisfied with being together once again as our mission family. There was much joy and laughter, hugs and conversation, as each of us reconnected with our loved ones from our India days. The reunion was held in the mountains of North Carolina at Lutheridge Camp and Conference Center (elevation 2,300) but reminiscent of Kodaikanal. Rhododendron and azaleas were in bloom. Most of the 56 overnighters stayed in a 2-story dorm-like lodge with most rooms sharing a bath. The building had a large gathering room where a lot of time was spent catching up with each other, looking at displays, family albums, enlarged Mission Council pictures posted on the walls, drinking tea and coffee (and yes, wine) and eating Indian snacks. Most meals were in the Lutheridge dining room a short walk

INDIA NEWSLETTER—JULY 2008

away. Several took advantage of the walking trails at Lutheridge and of hiking opportunities to scenic attractions close by. Two of the hiking destinations were Chimney Rock overlooking Lake Lure, reminiscent of Pillar Rocks at Kodai, and the top of Mt. Pisgah, by means of a trail from the Blue Ridge Parkway.

A 58-page reunion notebook had been compiled by Virginia Peery Herlong, which included contact information, biographies and current pictures of missionary family members who had lived in India, most of whom were at the reunion. This had been mailed out in April so that everyone could get caught up with each other ahead of time.

On Sunday afternoon, May 18, 2008 Elmer Burrall, our MC, officially welcomed the group as they came from as far away as Indonesia, Canada and New Mexico. There were 17 original missionaries (10 now in their 80s), and the rest were the kids of missionaries, spouses and friends. Kodai School was represented by the classes of 1944 through 1981.

Sunday evening after supper we had a vesper service in the Lutheridge Mission Hall led by Ted Swanson. Ted's sermon discussed the origins of our mission. All of us knew about Father Heyer, but it was a revelation to hear of the origins of Lutheran missions in the Pietist Movement in Germany as spread to India through the Danish Colony in Tranquebar. We learned new and vivid details of Father Heyer's illustrious career that spawned both the creation of the Lutheran Mission in Guntur and in further missionary work in the American frontier. The sermon was a tour de force, and if you would like to read it, contact Ted Swanson for a copy. Following the service, a hymn sing was led by Elmer Burrall and accompanied by Janice Nabert Peery.

Monday morning, Elisabeth Wittman from the ELCA Archives gave a presentation on preserving our documents and artifacts.

The highlight of the reunion was Monday evening, which featured a catered Andhra curry dinner in a nearby Lutheran church, bringing the total attendees to 67, including a 22-year-old granddaughter of Tom Weddington. The chef, Devi Raju, had been recruited by Virginia Herlong from Columbia, South Carolina, where she owns the Touch of India Restaurant. Just prior to the dinner, we had a group picture made of and for everyone. After the dinner, Mike Peery gave a power-point presentation of all the reminiscent pictures, which had been sent to him ahead of time. Then he gifted each family with a CD of his presentation.

Tuesday morning featured a scenic drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway, culminating with lunch at the Pisgah Inn (elevation 5,000) which has long vistas of the mountains (reminiscent of, though not quite as dramatic as, views from Coaker's Walk at Kodai). The weather was beautiful - clear and cool with a light breeze.

Tuesday evening was a "fun" night organized by Lisa Lindell Hoh and David Lueders. Mary Lindell gave two dramatic readings/poems: one about how she got to India and her first weeks there; the other describing some of the linguistic challenges of English-speaking visitors to their home. Lisa Hoh had put together some games involving competitions to identify all the states and territories in India, and another one to identify photos of Indian fruits, tourist locations, buildings, etc. David led one hilarious activity when he asked eight volunteer ladies to allow two men each to dress them in saris, with a prize to the team selected by the audience. The evening ended with a skit performed by Sam and Peter Schmitthenner depicting the meeting in heaven of C.P. Brown and Dr. John Aberly, the former a Telugu scholar who compiled the first English-Telugu dictionary; and the latter, an early giant of the Andhra Lutheran church.

Wednesday morning brought the reunion to a close. We returned to our homes, but not before the group voted to have another reunion again in two years – same place, same time! A group photo website has been set up for reunion attendees to upload their own photos and also be able to see all the other uploaded albums. This site is available to anyone who wants to see the pictures

through a “share” feature. (Due to privacy constraints, the web address of the group photo site changes every time someone else adds more pictures, so you need to use the original Andhra Reunion yahoo address http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Andhra_Reunion).
Virginia Herlong & Mary Lowry

ELISABETH WITTMAN, ELCA Chief Archivist for Collection Development and Outreach –

Thank You, Andhra Reunion Gathering! As one who has been able to work with the historical records of the ELCA India mission work, it was wonderful to meet all of you, “in-the-flesh,” and not just on paper and in photographs. More of your names are getting more familiar to me and I hope everyone who served in ELCA mission fields in India and elsewhere, know that you have friends at the ELCA Archives. As I said to those of you gathered at Lutheridge, while we have an interest in personal papers, photos, etc., of missionaries, we do understand that these are your precious family mementos and your family may still wish to keep things for many years to come. We’ll be there when you will be ready for us.

At the same time, I would encourage any of you who have questions, need a photographic image or whatever else we have in the archives to know that we want you to have full access to what is already in the archives, particularly since you have already made plans for another reunion. Our web page has a lot of information (both old and new versions) – go to: <http://www.elca.org/> and at the bottom of the pages, there is a gray box, with a place to click over to “Archives.” Feel free to also contact us by e-mail or phone: archives@elca.org or 1-800-638-3522, ext. 2818. If you would like to contact me directly, same phone and: Elisabeth.Wittman@elca.org. Joel Thoreson is our Reference Archivist and webmaster and you can contact him via the archives e-mail and toll-free number.

In time, we are hoping that you might be able to help us identify some of the photos we have in the archives. We hope to use our web page for that, but at this point in time, that has not been worked out. In the meantime, thanks again for your warm welcome and hospitality at Lutheridge.

A Final Farewell for Paul and Peg Durkee Dave and Mary Lindell

When Arthur Paul told us about plans for the interment of Paul and Peg Durkee in a family plot in Muskegon, MI. [Arthur told us he and his dad had visited Muskegon some years before and purchased a plot very near where Peg’s father and mother had been buried], we began to make plans to attend if at all possible. The gathering was scheduled for the afternoon of Saturday, July 5th.

On Thursday we drove down to Goshen, IN, (612 miles) and stayed with some Mennonite friends we knew from India. Saturday we drove up to Muskegon, arriving in good time to locate the cemetery before looking for a quick bite of lunch. By the time we got back some of the folks had begun to gather and by 1:30 about thirty were on hand. Almost all were relatives with a few close friends from Beloit and the two of us, unofficially representing the India Mission family.

The artful boxes with the ashes were placed on the site and a bouquet of red and yellow roses placed by them, yellow for Peg and red for Paul. A brief committal service was conducted by a retired pastor from Cleveland, who has been a close friend of the family ever since Paul was a resident there, and they attended his church. We sang a hymn and Arthur and David Barick (Pam’s husband) spoke words of remembrance and tribute.

A dinner had been planned at a restaurant in Grand Haven a bit down the coast, but a number of us hung out at The Coffee House in Muskegon for a time to visit. The dinner was held in a crowded restaurant of some renown with windows overlooking the harbor entrance with boats of all sizes

INDIA NEWSLETTER—JULY 2008

passing in and out. We had to leave a bit early for the drive back to Goshen, where we spent Sunday before driving back to Minneapolis on Monday (610 miles.)

On Sunday afternoon our Goshen hostess made her first attempt at a mulligatawny soup dinner for ten with us as consultants and encouragers.

BERTHA LANGE supplies me with many newspaper articles from the Canadian newspaper concerning India, the following are a few excerpts:

When Kellogg launched breakfast cereal in India 14 years ago, it underestimated the stranglehold of traditional cooked breakfast. Cartons of cornflakes sat unsold on shop shelves. Those who ventured to buy cereal ate it with hot milk—and they were put off by the soggy consistency with none of the crackle and pop promised by the ads.

Recently they have introduced products such as basmati rice flakes and mango-flavoured cereal for sweet-toothed Indians.

Getting a foothold in India's processed foods market, estimated to be worth \$90B requires persistence and a willingness to adapt product to suit culinary and cultural preferences. Rising incomes, more working women, modern stores and greater culinary adaptation are helping food giants such as Pepsico, Nestle Unilever, McDonald's and Yum brands get a piece of the market.

Pepsi has had a big hit with ethnic salty snacks and also sells aam panna, or green mango nectar along with its colas.

Nestle pushed its Milkmaid condensed milk as being ideal for traditional Indian sweets. But it tasted more success with Maggi noodles, a bold step in a nation divided between eaters of rice and roti.

McDonald's McAloo Tikki (potato patty) Burger is a best seller.

A bandit-infested region of India (Madhya Pradesh's Shivpuri Dt) is trying to persuade men to undergo sterilization by offering to fast-track their gun license applications. The plan comes as India, which has a population of 1.1B is trying to encourage people to have smaller families to ease poverty. Vasectomy rates have soared since the policy was introduced.

In Mysore, Infosys Tech. Ltd. (US\$4.2B in revenue 91,187 employees) has built a jumbo education centre of 380 acres of land complete with classrooms, soccer and cricket fields, a multiplex theatre and a local transportation system to accommodate 10,000 people per day. It's a city by itself. The company has another large campus outside Bangalore. They were created to make it inspirational for people to work in the IT industry and to show that in India you can work in world-class communities. It's also to prove to the skeptical outside businessmen that although India has issues and problems we can build something like this.

But there's one thing the industrialists haven't totally overcome: government bureaucracy. This year, a state-of-the-art airport was built in Bangalore by a private consortium. It's ready for business, but there was one flaw in the plan—the state government forgot to build a road to it.

Between 1964 and 2001 35% of India's top engineers left India, today less than half that leave.

No-honking day in Mumbai an exercise in futility, drivers say. The city of 18M suffers from severe noise pollution with 1.5 M vehicles.

(Ed. note – Had a great visit with **Shirley Holmer** and sons Matthew and Nate this week)

NEXT NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER – DEADLINE FOR NEWS OCTOBER 15 - dstykel@yahoo.com

[Web Steward Note: If you know of any of our India Mission Family who would like to receive this newsletter by email, please have them sign up at: http://althouses.com/india_newsletter/indianews.htm. If you have any questions or problems with the web site newsletter, please let me know at: kodaistaff@althouses.com.]