

WALT & GLENDA BRIDGES by Sheryl Houser and Ardith Griffing

Walt and Glenda Bridges moved to Little Meadows, PA in 1954 and knew the importance of finding a Bible based church for their family. They found a warm congregation that met their needs at the little white church on the corner in South Apalachin, NY, pastored by Rev. Hay.

The Bridges family spent much time singing in their home along with playing piano. Walt had a dynamic tenor voice and while attending Baptist Bible Seminary sang in a traveling quartet along with doing solo work. Glenda played for worship services while growing up in Newark Valley and also accompanied many vocalists and ensembles. So the gift of music, both appreciating and performing, was passed on to their daughters, Sheryl and Ardith.



It wasn't long before Walt was directing the choir at SABC with Glenda accompanying. The small choir loft was soon overflowing and chairs continued to be added which almost covered the entire platform.

Walt also led the Jr. Church program that was upstairs across from the nursery. His object lessons, which he spent hours studying and perfecting, would captivate young eyes and demonstrate Christ's love and the importance of having Jesus as personal Savior. Many young people were saved during these children's services. Singing was a very memorable time in that overflowing room and the children had to watch Walt carefully while singing those favorite choruses because one never knew what he had up his sleeve!! Many times, the adults in the church service could hear these young voices singing at the top of their lungs.

Moving over to the brand new church with a formal choir loft was such a blessing for everyone. Now the choir members could actually see Walt directing better along with Harriet Storozow (organist) and Glenda (pianist). Along with singing every Sunday, the choir practiced diligently every year for an Easter cantata and the sanctuary was standing room only when performed. This was a wonderful outreach for the choir to sing of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection as a witness for others to know Him as Lord and Savior.

Sunday afternoons, the Bridges' household was usually filled with young people to practice for solos, ensembles, and musical training for Sunday night services. Glenda prepared many, many platters of sloppy Joes, Jell-O salads, and brownies or cookies for these gatherings. These sessions also prepared us for the "singspirations" that the church hosted where local churches gathered together and worshipped and lifted their voices praising the Lord. Each church would contribute some special music and SABC was always represented well.

Glenda was instrumental during the initial stages of implementing Pioneer Girls. She truly enjoyed mentoring many of the young girls to help them with their spiritual growth along with earning their badges. She also helped with the woman's missionary group.

For Walt and Glenda's 50th wedding anniversary held in the beautifully decorated SABC gym, an outpouring of love from this church family was shared through all the years of service and the planting of seeds for Christ's love through music and Christian relationships.

Editor's note: Glenda also helped in establishing the Women's Ministry along with Vivian Novak, Marie Andreasen, Nancy Crane, and Eleanor Holden.