

Betty (Campbell) Whitehurst

9/1/16

### Notes From Non-Recorded Phone Interview

- From West Texas
- Macmurry in Abilene TX
- Grew up in Methodist Church
- Applied for Training after 2 years of college
- Baguanos – Near Holguin around 3000 people
  - Larger Parrish with a large number of rural churches and a few city churches
  - Taught in a Methodist school in Baguanos – with Ms. Chapman
  - All of the missionaries were women
  - Cologios de la Amistad – Methodist Elementry School
    - Most of the students lived in the villiage, but some came from surrounding village
    - Taught English as a second language
    - Coed – Coached the baseball team
      - They would the play catholic schools
    - “Meant to provide a superior education to the public schools in town”
    - There was no Middle School within 25 miles and they had to go to Holguin
    - They had to pay a tuition, but scholarships were available.
    - To acquaint people with Jesus.
    - Parents sent the kids there cause it was a better education.
- Accepted as a three-year missionary
- Arrived in Cuba in December of 1956 at 22.
  - Knew that Castro had landed and basically been defeated from Costa Rican language school
  - Knew about the revolutions – talked about rumors of Castro attack on NYE by 1956.
  - Had a short wave in the house. Would have loud music on in the front of the house and a short wave radio in the back listening to Radio Rebelde
  - We were ministering to people to both sides
    - Went out to rebel camps and gave services. Had they been caught there would have been consequences. Had a safe conduct pass from the rebel camp in the area as well.
    - Also had soldiers come services. They got a safe conduct pass to go to rural churches from the barracks.
  - “The reason we favored the rebels was Batista was an extremely extremely vicious dictator.”
    - There were incidents with soldiers within community. A story of 4 young men being killed from the village

- At one point she gave funeral services for some of the folks who had been killed
    - Was able to visit the barracks of the soldiers and talk to the captives. She was able to see the tortured. When there was time some would take off their shirts and show the scars.
    - They were rebelling because of the cruelty of the Batista government
  - Fear
    - Was asked by district superintendent to go to mountains because Methodist Pastor there had had to flee for his life. Having an American and a woman seemed safer. “Soldiers came and took her to their barracks and said ‘we know that former pastor was in favor of the rebels so you are forbidden from leaving the town.’ So basically I was under house arrest...I never left the city” They took the pastor’s jeep. The people from the country churches would come into town to have that service.
    - “Didn’t really feel apart of the movement, though we approved of it.”
- After the revolution the Methodist Community got together and sent a document to the State Dept. to lament the actions taken by the USG.
- After revolution during 1<sup>st</sup> year Raul came in a jeep with an aid or driver to show the farms of people they were going to expropriate from.
- Left in Jan 1960 – because three-year term had ended and fully intended to go back.
  - Never really got disillusioned with what was going on, they were doing wonderful things.
  - Always felt a part of the community – never felt left out.
  - Have been back a number of times and always felt a part of the community.
- Spent some time in Santiago and would go to Havana more often for annual meeting.
  - All the 3 missionaries and the 3 Cuban pastors went
  - We usually went on a train to Havana
- Americans around you?
  - Nearest was Preston – were in Preston for Church things, but didn’t have interactions with Americans
  - They lived in a segregated community with only Americans and we were working with Cubans so we didn’t interact with them.
- Women v. men?
- “When I told my dad god is calling me to be a missionary in Cuba dad responded, well god isn’t calling me to be a father of a missionary.”
- Cut off the last months of the revolution.
  - This was extremely hard for my family.
- Still contacting friends from Cuba. 6 times during the special period...
- Anger at U.S. corporations?
  - We knew that they were losing their business, but because we hadn’t met them it was not a real personal thing.
- Roadtrip Raúl Castro
  - He was a driver – knew he was a celebrity

- News sources
  - We listened to the govt. broadcast as well as Radio Rebelde
  - I was receiving Time Magazine (A Three Months Left)
    - Remember that's not what happening, given news from Batista government
- Censorship
  - Didn't really feel like we could write freely
  - Didn't want to scare parents
- We were a group within a group we felt united within the Church.
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