

Marks Sylvania Founding

Rockett Christian Church Holds Centennial Service

Pioneer days of the Disciples of Christ in Texas were recalled for many present-day descendants of the early ministers and members of the congregation of churches in Ellis County when the Rockett Christian Church held centennial services on May 24.

The service marked the founding of the Church of Christ of Sylvania, located between the present towns of Rockett and Ferris. Rev. Colby D. Hall, dean emeritus of Brite College of the Bible, TCU, delivered the Centennial sermon, and Miss Ida Nelle Pangburn, also of Fort Worth, great granddaughter of Rev. Henry Pangburn, who was minister of the Sylvania Church in the 1870's was an honor guest, as were other descendants of pioneer families of the church. Rev. Harvey M. Redford, pastor of the Rockett Christian Church, and Rev. William Jones, pastor of the Central Christian Church of Dallas, a former pastor of the Rockett Church, and Rev. Gus Ramage of Waxahachie, another former pastor, took part in the services, held both morning and afternoon. The choir of the Waxahachie Christian Church, directed the singing and provided special music.

The Rockett Christian Church is the outgrowth of two previous churches, the Church of Christ of Sylvania, and a union church at Liberty, the present site of Rockett. Rev. William Rawlins began the Sylvania church in 1853, preaching in a clapboard school house. Five years later a union church was built at Liberty, chiefly by Presbyterians, according to the records, but also was used by Christian and Methodist congregations.

In 1897 the present Rockett Christian Church was built, largely due to the efforts of Mrs. Nancy Clopton, who now lives at Longview.

Mrs. Clopton drove all over the neighborhood in a buggy, soliciting funds, and with donations of 50 cents upwards from the pioneers, whom Mrs. Clopton recalls were "liberal in spite of hard times," it was possible to build the church with no indebtedness. Immediately before the centennial celebration the community again raised funds for material for refurbishing the interior. As in pioneer days the work will be done with volunteer labor from the community.

Persons having photographs that depict early days in West Texas are asked to send them to the Pioneer Editor. Those suitable will be published and all will be returned to their owners.

rode horseback more than 25 miles to a place on the Trinity River, below Bristol, to find sufficient water for the service.

Lelia Smith influenced her parents and three brothers to become members of the church, and her father, "Uncle" Bob Smith, later organized and practically built the Palmer Christian Church.

Mrs. John Sidney Farrar, now living at 5922 Gaston, Dallas, is the only other surviving charter member of the Rockett church, which was organized several years before the present structure was built. She was baptized in Red Oak Creek in 1895. In those days, she recalls, cotton sold at five cents a pound. On Sundays she prepared the family's meals early in the morning, dressed her three children, and then drove with them to the church in time to teach a Bible class.

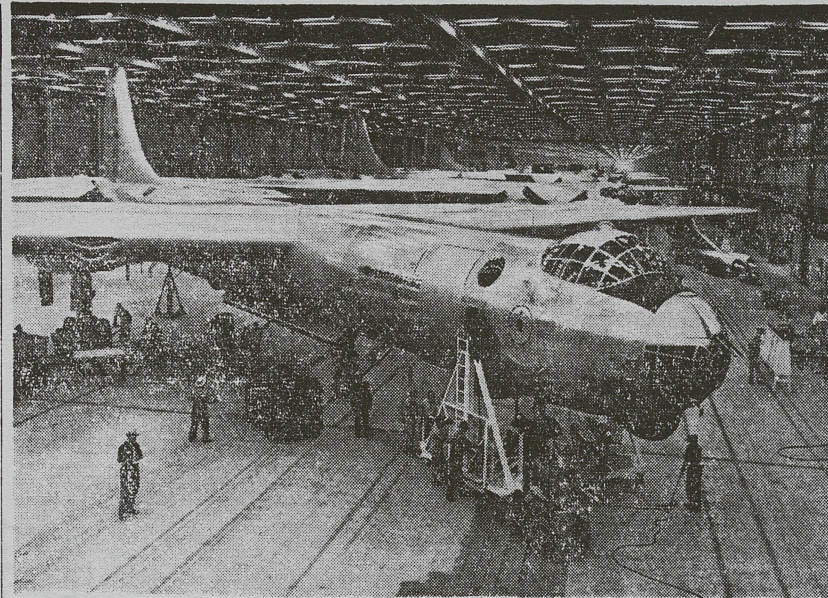
Some of the leading ministers of the Christian Church in Texas served the Sylvania-Liberty-Rockett Churches. Among them were Addison Clark, who with his brother, Randolph Clark, founded AddRan College, forerunner of TCU, and Chalmers McPherson, who also served the Waxahachie church for many years, and for more than a decade was a teacher of Bible in Brite College.

A history of the Sylvania Church written by George Douglas reports large attendance on revival meetings, with as many as 1,200 present on several occasions.

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Officers of the present Rockett Church at the time of organization were: John Sullivan, Charlie Graves and Tom Graves, elders.

Listed in the church records were John Woodin, Larkin Douglas, Marion Rockett, W. A. Clopton, Will Watson, Mrs. Mollie Prude, Houston Jolley, Mack Rutherford, Mrs. Nancy Clopton, Sidney Farrar, Frank Farrar and Jim Farrar.



ONLY ONE LINE HERE—In contrast with the B-24 double assembly line at the Fort Worth Convair plant on Page 11 is this single line of B-36s. Due to the wing span of the B-36 they have to be turned sideways in order to get them out the 200-foot door.

Undergrads Aim at Cairo-Capetown Record

LONDON, May 30 (NANA). Two 23-year-old Cambridge undergraduates, Pat Whitworth and Julian Havilland, dreamed for three years of breaking the Cairo-Capetown car record.

Then came a shock. They learned that every June the rains made the long road between Atbara, in the Sudan, to Nairobi impassable. They heard of travelers who perished trying to make the desert crossing.

They decided to pioneer a new route to the west through the Abyssinian hills.

They stripped their 2 1/4-liter car of all chrome and upholstery and fitted it with special tires, springs, mosquito-proof window screens and extra lights.

They designed extra fuel tanks, a stretcher bed above the co-driver's seat and a sand anchor.

They will leave by air for France on June 4. Their only sea trip will be from Venice to Alexandria. From then on they will rely on their wits and the car.

If they succeed they will be the first to make the trip during the rainy season.

If anything goes wrong, they will keep in touch with civilization over their two-way radio.

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Water Shortage Cuts Madras Power Use

MADRAS, India, May 30 (AP).—The seventh drouth year in Madras State in succession has resulted in an acute power shortage. Electricity is rationed to 75 per cent of previous consumption, even in private houses. A heavy tax is levied for consumption over the rationed quantity.

Street lights are fewer. Movies have been curtailed. Industrial plants have begun to close down or resort to private generation of electricity. Even then they are unable to operate all though the month. Textile yarn production is considerably affected.

Many of the stars have names of Arabic origin.

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Raise More, Eat Less Is Chinese Red Plea

HONG KONG, May 30 (AP).—The Chinese Communist regime has called upon its farmers to produce more grain and its consumers to eat less. This was to enable China to build up a grain stockpile necessary to its five-year industrialization plan, according to the party newspaper, the Peiping People's Daily.

Peiping also told the farmers not to divert any more acreage from grain to cotton.

Government cotton prices have been cut and grain prices boosted. The Reds have subsidized cotton during the last three years and not anticipate some trouble in reversing the trend.

Several bales of papers, once the property of Aaron Burr, were ground up for pulp in a paper mill half a century ago.

African elephants are said to carry sleeping sickness.

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Mrs. Clopton's stories handed down from early days include that of the conversion of 13-year-old Lelia Smith, whose family home was the site of the present Smith Cemetery. When Lelia was ready for baptism the area had been stricken with a drouth, and the candidate for baptism

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As the area developed, and more settlers arrived, the Sylvania, Liberty and Rockett churches made substantial contributions to the organization and growth of Christian churches in Waxahachie, Red Oak and Ferris. Descendants of the pioneer families of the area now are found in

and fitted it with special tires, springs, mosquito-proof window screens and extra lights.

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many Texas communities, in places of leadership in church and civic affairs, speakers at the centennial services reminded the audience, as the history was recounted.

30th Anniversary.

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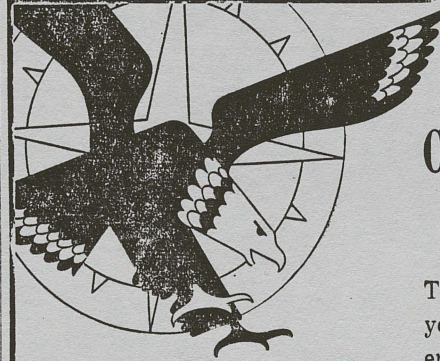
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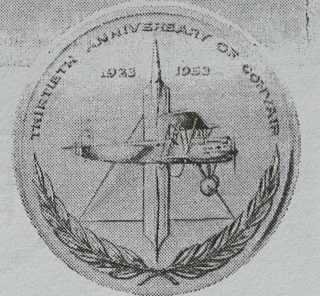
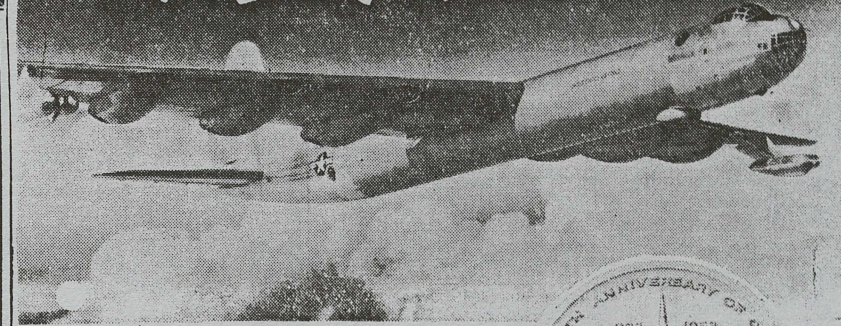
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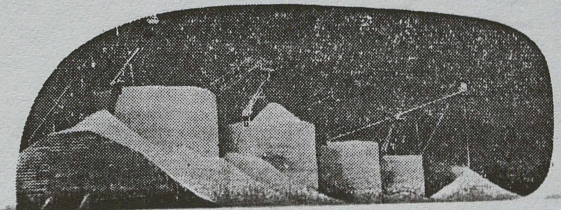
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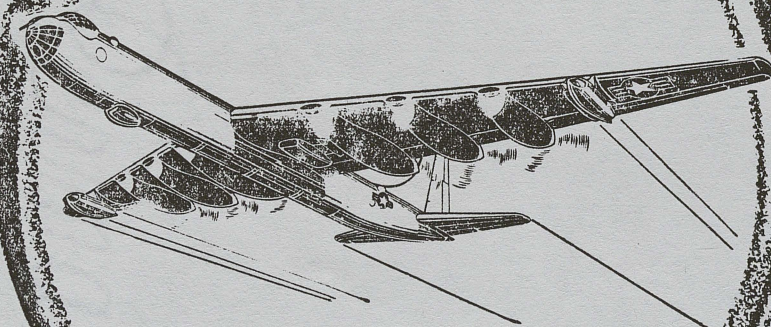
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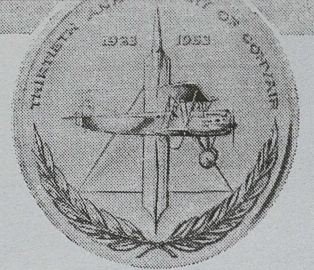
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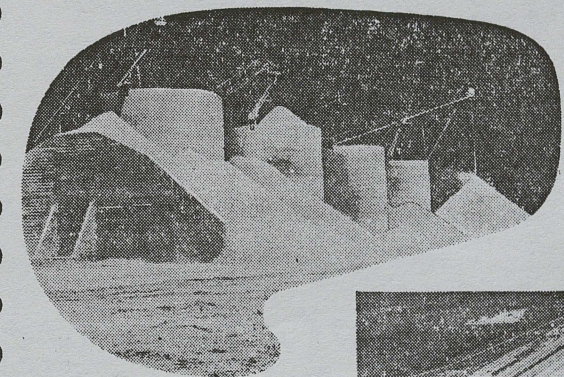
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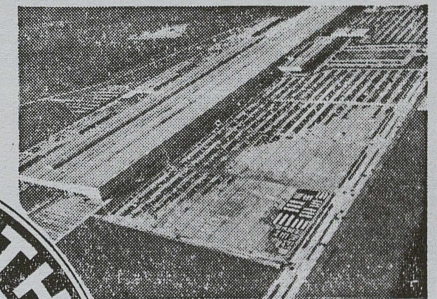
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