Wagoner Undecided About Future With Baptist ‘Committee of 17’

Dr. W. R. Wagoner, who was elected general superintendent last night of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, said here today he has made no decision about resigning as chairman of the denomination's "Committee of 17."

The committee was appointed last fall at the Baptist State Convention to investigate any activities which might be hindering the spiritual life at seven Baptist colleges in the state. The committee almost immediately became a controversial issue within the denomination, being labeled in some quarters as "a witch hunt."

Dr. Wagoner, who spent the night here with his wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Otis E. Tucker, 2208 Elizabeth Ave., said this morning that resignations from the committee must be submitted to the General Board of the convention.

It will meet at Wake Forest College next Monday at 2 p.m.

Sources within the denomination said Dr. Wagoner is under pressure from people connected with the children's homes to resign from the committee and also is under pressure from other committee members to remain with it.

Report Scheduled

The committee's work will continue until next November, when it is scheduled to make a report to the Baptist State Convention in Durham.

Meanwhile, Dr. Wagoner made plans to resign from the pastorate of First Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro, where he has been since 1954. He said he would resign at a conference of the church, to be held at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday.

He will end his work in North Wilkesboro about the middle of June. The resignation of W. C. Reed as superintendent of the Baptist homes is effective June 30.

Dr. Wagoner, his wife and two children will live in a residence on the campus of the Mills Home, Thomasville. Other homes to be under his general supervision are the Kennedy Home at Kinston and the Odum Home at Pembroke, an orphanage for Indians. The Baptists also care for a number of children in foster homes. About 750 children are involved.

Elected at Meeting

Dr. Wagoner was elected at a meeting of trustees held at Mills Home. He said, "I recognize it as a tremendous challenge and corresponding opportunity and look forward to the work with a great deal of anticipation."

The trustees also created a new position—that of associate editor—on the weekly newspaper published by the homes, "Charity and Children." Mrs. Marian Grant, wife of Editor Marse Grant, was named to the job. She has been contributing articles and pictures to the publication for several years. Her election will serve the purpose of putting her on the payroll for her work.

Grant was re-elected editor. Other re-elections were as follows:

- C. A. Kearns, superintendent at Mills Home; W. A. Smith, superintendent at Kennedy Home; and R. E. Muth, treasurer.

Trustees gave a surprise birthday party last night for one of their members, J. E. Brynhill of Lenoir. Brynhill is a major benefactor of the orphanages.
Baptists To Hear
Orphanage Chief

Dr. W. R. Wagoner, general superintendent of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Thomasville, will be guest minister Sunday at First Baptist Church at the 11 o'clock morning worship service. The Baptist State Convention operates four children's homes in North Carolina: the original and main home in Thomasville, the Kennedy Home in Kinston, and Odum Home in Pembroke, and the Greer Home in Chapel Hill.

This service organization of homes for children was established in 1885. Dr. Wagoner was elected general superintendent July 1, 1958, and has seen much growth in the physical plants as well as expanding services during his service.

He is presently serving as president of Southern Baptist Child Care Executives, and is past president of North Carolina Child Care Association. He has served as pastor of churches in Kentucky and North Carolina, his last pastorate being First Baptist Church, North Wilkesboro, before assuming his present position.

Dr. Wagoner is recognized as an authority in the field of child care, and is called upon to serve in many capacities as adviser, lecturer, speaker and preacher. He earned the doctor of theology degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., in the field of Christian ethics and sociology. He is also a graduate of Wake Forest and Mars Hills colleges.

He is a native of Forsyth County (Lewisville). In addition to his academic degrees, Dr. Wagoner has done graduate studies in his field at the University of Louisville, Duke University and University of North Carolina. He married Elizabeth Tucker of Winston-Salem, and they have three children.

Robert Gatlin of Raeford, who is one of the trustees of the North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes and a very close associate of Dr. Wagoner, will preside at the morning service.

"A cordial invitation is extended to our friends and neighbors to hear this outstanding speaker," said the Rev. John Glenn, pastor, who will be away on summer vacation.
Dr. W. R. Wagoner, a native of Lewisville and now president of the Southern Baptist Child Care Executives, will deliver both the morning and evening services at Waynesville First Baptist Church June 11.

The guest minister is a graduate of Mars Hill College and received his A. B., B. D., Th. M., degrees from Wake Forest College.

He also holds a Th. D. degree from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, and has done graduate research work at the University of Louisville, and Duke University.

He also holds a doctorate degree in the field of Christian Ethics and Sociology.

He has served many rural pastorates in North Carolina and Kentucky and many larger churches in Winston-Salem, Chapel Hill and North Wilkesboro.

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Guest speaker at the First Baptist Church on Sunday for both worship services will be Dr. W. R. Wagoner, president of the Southern Baptist Child Care Executives.

A native of Lewisville, he is a graduate of Mars Hill College; received his A. B., B. D., and Th.M. degrees from Wake Forest College and his Th.D from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. He has done graduate research at the University of Louisville, Duke University, and University of North Carolina. Dr. Wagoner received his Doctorate in the field of Christian Ethics and Sociology. Dr. Wagoner has served as pastor of several churches including rural and village churches in N. C. and Kentucky.

DR. W. R. WAGONER
The ninth annual area conference of the Baptist Children’s Homes of N. C. will be held Thursday evening, September 5, at the First Baptist church in Waynesville.

Many of the volunteer workers who have been involved in the founders and builders campaign to raise funds for the Western Home for Children are being invited to be present and to bring progress reports on their work.

Many challenging and thrilling experiences are coming to light as people give and pledge support for the home. We are encouraged with the interest of many friends in this endeavor and have cause to believe in its ultimate success.

W. R. Wagoner is president of the Baptist Children’s Homes of N. C., Inc. with headquarters in Thomasville.

Rutherford county volunteer workers for the builders campaign for the proposed Western Home for Children are invited to attend and are urged to make their reservations.
Mars Hill Honors Baptist Homes Leader

MARS HILL — Dr. W. R. Wagoner, president of the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina, Inc., at Thomasville, has been selected as Mars Hill College’s alumnus of the year.

He will be honored at the annual alumni banquet here Saturday, May 15, along with the college’s alumna of the year, Miss Irene Willis, who has been a registered nurse in Mars Hill for over 40 years.

Wagoner is entering his 13th year as president of the Children’s Homes, a multifaceted service organization which includes group child care programs on five campuses, statewide foster home program, statewide social services to children and families, a maternity home in Asheville and church programs for preschool children.

Before being elected president in 1958, he spent 18 years as pastor of churches in the state and Kentucky. One of the pastorates he held was at the North Winston Baptist Church in Winston-Salem from 1951 to 1954.

A native of Lewisville, Wagoner was graduated from Mars Hill in 1939 and earned a bachelor’s degree at Wake Forest University and advanced degrees at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. His doctorate is in the field of Christian ethics and sociology.

Wagoner is active in various national, state and Southern Baptist associations concerned with child and family welfare.
The Rev. Dr. W. R. Wagoner, president of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina Inc., Thomasville, will be guest speaker at this morning's worship services of the First Baptist Church, Fifth Ave. and Market St.

Dr. Wagoner will speak at 9 and 11 a.m.

Dr. Wagoner is a native of Lewisville, a graduate of Wake Forest College and holds B.D., Th M and ThD degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Dr. Wagoner was pastor of churches in Kentucky and North Carolina. Prior to his election as president of the Baptist Children's Homes in July 1958, he was pastor of the First Baptist Church, North Wilkesboro.

Since coming to the Children's Homes he has also been president of the North Carolina Child Care Association and of the Southern Baptist Social Service Association. Just recently Dr. Wagoner was honored as "Alumnus of the Year" at Mars Hill College.

The public is invited to hear Dr. Wagoner speak.
New Sandy Creek
Homecoming Is Scheduled Sunday

Homecoming day will be observed at New Sandy Creek Baptist church Sunday with Dr. W. R. Wagoner of Thomasville, as guest speaker.

Dr. Wagoner is president of the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina, Inc. A native of Lewisville, in Forsythe Co., he is a graduate of Mars Hill College, Wake Forest University, and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. He has done graduate research at the University of Louisville, the University of North Carolina, and Duke University. He has pastored churches in Kentucky and North Carolina.

During the years 1954-58, just prior to assuming his present duties, he was pastor of the First Baptist church of North Wilkesboro. Dr. Wagoner was pastor of New Sandy Creek Church from 1940 to 1942. He is married to the former Elizabeth Thacker of Winston-Salem, and they have three children.

All members, former members, and friends of the church are invited to attend this special service. Lunch will be served on the grounds following the morning worship hour.

Reverend J. Marshall Neathery, pastor of New Sandy Creek, made the announcement.

Oct. 1, 1991
Henderson Dispatch
The 13th annual Area Conference of the Baptist Children’s Homes for Western North Carolina will be held Sept. 7 at the Waynesville First Baptist Church.

The program will begin with dinner at 6 p.m.

Speakers will include Dr. W. R. Wagoner, president, Baptist Children’s Homes; Allen Jarrett, director of Social Service, Asheville Regional Center; Thomas Roberts, caseworker, Asheville Regional Center; Clyde W. Morris, director, Maternity Home; W. Isaac Terrell, director of Development; and Hugh Starnes, superintendent of Broyhill Home.

Time will be allowed for those attending the conference to visit the Broyhill Home and inspect the progress being made in construction.
Dr. W. R. Wagoner, shown with the children he loves, celebrated his 15th Anniversary June 30, as president of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc. He takes time to show an hour glass in his office to a group of new children in care.

Baptist Leader Marks 15th Anniversary

On June 30 Dr. W. R. Wagoner, president of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc., marks his 15th year as president of the Southeast's largest child caring institution.

Dr. Wagoner came to the agency as general Superintendent in 1958 and his title was later changed to president. His administration has been characterized by strengthening existing programs and developing existing programs and developing services in areas of unmet need in the field of child care. He became president of the Baptist Children's Homes after nearly 20 years of active pastoral service.

Dr. Wagoner is a graduate of Lewisville (N.C.) High School, Mars Hill College and Wake Forest University. He received the B.D., Th. M., and Th.D. degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. His doctoral degree is in the field of Christian ethics and sociology.

Dr. Wagoner has done graduate research at the University of Louisville in Louisville, Ky., Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He is married to the former Elizabeth Tucker of Winston-Salem. They have three children, Otis, who is a graduate student at the University of Southern California; Anne, who lives in Beaufort, N. C.; and Bruce, who is a ninth grader. The Wagoneers make their home at 583 Willow Dr., Thomasville.

Dr. Wagoner, the youngest of nine children, was reared on a farm near Lewisville in Forsyth County. During college and seminary studies, he served as pastor of churches in North Carolina and graduation from the seminary, he served as pastor of the Mt. Carmel Baptist Church at Chapel Hill, North Winston Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, and the First Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro.

Recognized in child care circles across the country, Dr. Wagoner served as president of the North Carolina Child Care Association from 1963-1964; president of Southern Baptist Child Care Executives from 1966-1967; and was the first president of the Southern Baptist Social Service Association organized in 1969. He served on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Social Service Association from 1964-1968.

The Baptist leader has addressed Baptist state conventions throughout the nation and conducted numerous seminars for executives in interdenominational child care meetings. He was a representative to the White House Conference on Children and Youth and to the Baptist World Youth Congress, an international conference on youth held in Beruit, Lebanon in 1962. In 1971 Dr. Wagoner was named "Alumnus of the Year" by Mars Hill College.

During his 15 years as administrator, 13 cottages for children have been built on the various campuses across the state. Eight residences for staff have been constructed during his tenure and a recreation - gymnasiaum building and an infirmary have been built at Kennedy Home in Kinston. A general administration office building, a library, and a Child Development Center have been added at Mills Home in Thomasville, while numerous other buildings have been renovated.

Odum Home in Pembroke, the first Indian orphanage in the state, was turned over to the Baptist Children's Homes by former trustees and in 1960 a colonial complex which houses 24 children was dedicated there.

The state's oldest registered Holstein dairy herd was moved from Mills Home to a modern facility at Kennedy Home.

The agency opened Broyhill Home near Waynesville-Clyde in 1971 to serve children in western North Carolina. A Maternity Home began operation in 1970. Four additional area offices were opened in Asheville, Raleigh, Charlotte and Fayetteville to make social service more readily available to families in need.

An extensive training program for social workers, houseparents, and other child care workers, promoted through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has been utilized.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina requested the Homes to provide a Child Development Center to serve as a model for preschool child care and education. It was opened in 1965 and has been under the direction of Mrs. Wagoner since its inception. Children from the Thomasville area are served year-round in nursery school, kindergarten, and day care. In addition, the Center offers professional help to churches across the state interested in beginning any phase of preschool education.

In 1964 a vacation cottage was built on Bogue Banks near Morehead City. It affords children and staff recreational opportunities throughout the year. Wall Home in Wallburg provides an adventure program for boys who live with houseparents in a rural environment. Green Home near Chapel Hill was established in 1963 to provide intensive care for a limited number of children with special needs.

A development department was established by the agency in 1965 to stimulate grants, special gifts, deferred giving and estate planning from friends of the Homes.

During the past year the Baptist Children's Homes provided care and related services for more than 1,300 children and maintained a staff of 112 working with 2,000 parents and relatives.
Baptist Children's Homes President Marks 15th Anniversary With Agency

On June 30 Dr. W. R. Wagoner, president of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc., took time to show an hour glass in his office to a group of new children in care. He is a graduate of the University of Southern California, and holds a B. D., Th. M., and Th. D. degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. His doctoral degree is in the field of child care. His years of active pastoral service were at various churches in North Carolina and Kentucky.

Recognized in child care circles across the country, Dr. Wagoner served as president of the North Carolina Child Care Association from 1963-1964; president of Southern Baptist Child Care Executives from 1964-1967; and was the first president of the Southern Baptist Children's Homes Association organized in 1969. He served on the Board of Directors of the North Carolina Social Service Association from 1958-1961.

The Baptist leader has addressed Baptist state conventions throughout the nation and conducted numerous seminars for executives in inter-denominational child care meetings. He was a representative to the White House Conference on Children, the Baptist World Youth Congress, an international conference on youth and family life in Lebanon in 1962. In 1971 Dr. Wagoner was named "Alumnus of the Year" by Mars Hill College.

During his 15 years as president of the Baptist Children's Homes after nearly 20 years of active pastoral service, he has supervised the addition of eight residences for staff, a general administration office building, a library, and a Child Development Center to serve as a model for pre-school child care and education. It was opened in 1965 and has been under the direction of Mrs. Wagoner since its inception.

The Baptist State Convention of North Carolina requested the homes to provide a Child Development Center to serve as a model for pre-school child care and education. It was opened in 1965 and has been under the direction of Mrs. Wagoner since its inception. The Baptist Children's Homes have served more than 1,300 children and staff and maintained a close working relationship with 2,000 parents and relatives.

A development department was established by the agency in 1965 to stimulate grants, special gifts, deferred giving and estate planning from friends of the homes.

During the past year the Baptist Children's Homes provided care and related services for more than 1,300 children and maintained a close working relationship with 2,000 parents and relatives.

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Special Program Sunday
Night At Fork Baptist

Dr. W. R. Wagoner, President of the Baptist Children Homes of North Carolina, will be present at the Fork Baptist Church on Sunday evening. At 7:20 p.m., Dr. Wagoner will present the movie, "The Mountain Within." This is a professional movie narrated by Andy Griffith on the work of the North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes.

The public is invited to attend this special program on Sunday evening, November 16th.

Dr. Wagoner joined the Baptist Children's Homes of N. C., Inc. in 1958, coming to the agency after nearly 20 years of active pastoral service.

Dr. Wagoner directs the Baptist Children's Homes' multi-service ministry to dependent and neglected children and their families. The agency has campuses situated in seven locations across the state.

Dr. Wagoner is a graduate of Lewisville High School and Wake Forest University. He received B. D., Th. M., and Ph. D. degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky and has done graduate research at the University of Louisville, Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

He attended Mars Hill College and was named outstanding "Alumnus of the Year" in 1971. He is past president of the North Carolina Child Care Association, the Southern Baptist Social Services Association, and Southern Baptist Child Care Executives.
Mrs. Wagoner has been directly involved in North Carolina Baptists' interest in care for preschool age children since 1964 when she and Dr. Wagoner worked with BCH Trustees in planning for, organizing and executing a program of ministry to preschoolers and their families through the Child Development Center in Thomasville. The Center continues to operate as a demonstration program to NC churches seeking better ways to meet the needs of families through a weekday program especially for young children.

In 1975, Mrs. Wagoner's duties were explained to include not only the supervision of the Child Development Center, but to serve as a consultant in child development and family education that has an ultimate goal of seeking ways of dealing with family needs before they become critical. This preventive practice is viewed as a work in conjunction with local Baptist Churches.
Wagoners Honored By Baptist Homes

Thomasville--Dr. and Mrs. W. R. Wagoner were honored with a surprise dinner June 30 by members of the Mills Home Baptist Church, the church serving residents of the Thomasville campus of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

The occasion marked President and Mrs. Wagoner's 20th anniversary with the agency, the Southeast's largest child caring institution.

Since 1956, Dr. Wagoner's presidency has been acclaimed as progressive child care second to none. That progressive spirit still prevails as he plans for the years ahead.

Closely associated with trustees and staff from across North Carolina is Thomasville--Dr. and Mrs. W. R. Wagoner were honored with a surprise dinner June 30 by members of the Mills Home Baptist Church, the church serving residents of the Thomasville campus of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

The occasion marked President and Mrs. Wagoner's 20th anniversary with the agency, the Southeast's largest child caring institution.

Excellence in service to children and their families backed by a determination to provide good, long-lasting facilities with which to render this Christ-centered service are keynotes of the administrator's philosophy.

Presently, the agency affects more than 3,700 lives annually in a significant way. Care and related services were provided for 1,424 children in 1977. Of those, 1,023 received continuing services.

A close working relationship was kept with 2,257 adults while working with these children. More than 200 other adults received consultation through Child Development and Family Education services offered by the agency.

Mrs. Wagoner, Specialist in Child Development and Family Education for the agency, has joined her husband in providing progressive accomplishments during their years of leadership of the Baptist Children's Homes.

New construction has been one of their key areas of concentration. Sixteen cottages for children have replaced older buildings or have been added to the program of care. Ten staff residences have been added and recreation facilities have been built at Kennedy Home in Kinston, Broyhill Home in Waynesville and Odum Home in Pembroke.

Construction has also included the entire Broyhill Home campus, built since 1971, to serve the Mills Home campus and a general administration building for the agency and demonstration Child Development Center in Thomasville.

There have been numerous programs added during the Wagoners' reign. Odum Home became a part of the agency during Wagoner's first year. Its present building was occupied in 1960, and today a cottage for children is under construction near a recently completed recreation building. Two other cottages are planned there.

A Maternity Home for unwed mothers was opened in Asheville in 1970. Emergency youth care centers have been added in Charlotte, Burlington, Henderson and Forest City. Regional social work offices have been opened to make the agency's services more accessible to people in need.

Family Resource Centers now being developed are a major part of this thrust under her direction.

The team spirit exemplified by the Wagoners can perhaps best be illustrated by recall of Dr. Wagoner's hospitalization and subsequent open-heart surgery in December 1977.

The continuation of programs and services with little interruption suggests the careful planning they implemented before hospitalization. During his stay in the hospital and subsequent convalescence, Mrs. Wagoner was by his side with periodic trips to the office to fill in some gaps and to keep staff posted on his progress.

Now that the convalescing period is over, both have resumed their everyday roles of leadership in their continuing efforts to give direction to the state's leading child caring agency.
Twenty-Fifth Year
Head of Baptist Children's Homes to Retire in July

Special to The Sentinel

THOMASVILLE — The Rev. Dr. W. R. Wagoner, 63, president of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina since 1958, plans to retire July 1, or whenever a successor is named.

In announcing Wagoner's decision, Dr. William (Mace) Brown, chairman of the homes' trustees, said Wagoner will have completed 25 years as president on July 1.

"Dr. Wagoner's administration is symbolic of our concern for creative, distinctive child care services," Brown said. "He and Mrs. Wagoner have brought a new perspective and a new dimension to the institution's already distinguished past. Our heritage has been made richer by their courageous and visionary leadership."

Until a successor is named, Brown said, the administration of the statewide network of homes will continue under Wagoner's leadership.

The Wagoners, natives of Forsyth County, said they look forward "to a more relaxed lifestyle... Both of us are in excellent health, we have a wide range of personal interests which we plan to pursue and we will have a continuing interest in serving North Carolina Baptists through preaching, teaching and counsel."

Wagoner added, "I'm way behind on my fishing! I also would like to dig in the earth (he has a special interest in developing roses), we have travel interests and I hope to do some study and writing."

Mrs. Wagoner is interested in historical sites (such as Old Salem), the dulcimer, weaving, basketry, skills she plans to develop further through workshops, travel and practice.

In his letter of resignation, Wagoner said that in the past quarter of a century "there have been numerous and significant socio-economic changes. These have had dramatic effects upon the needs of children and families."

Brown said Mrs. Wagoner has been a "close helpmate in Dr. Wagoner's administration. Even though she has continually expressed that her first responsibility was to be a supportive companion to her husband, she has served to add excellence to innovative programs of child care and family services."

A specialist in child development, Mrs. Wagoner has had a significant role in the institution's development of a demonstration preschool ministry and has helped hundreds of churches set up their own programs. More recently she has served as director of family services for the homes and supervised the delivery of all services of the homes across the state.

The Wagoner administration, Brown said, has been characterized nationally and internationally as progressive, innovative and expansive. As an example, he added, the child care concept was expanded to include ministry to the whole family of children served and the introduction of the family model in cottage living.

Brown said the Odum Home at Pembroke was added to the original home here in 1958; Broyhill Home near Waynesville was opened in 1971; McNeill Home at Indian Beach in 1964; Craig Home at Ridgecrest in 1978; the maternity home for unwed mothers in Asheville in 1970.

Other services include therapeutic camping, begun in 1973 and expanded at Cameron Home in Moore County in 1980; emergency care homes operated by child-care institutions, beginning in 1973 and now expanded to nine such homes; and the opening of a demonstration preschool center here in 1965.

In 1980, a family resource center was opened here to concentrate on family education, counseling and other services.

Wagoner is a native of Lewisville and his wife is from Winston-Salem. They have three children. He is a graduate of Mars Hill and Wake Forest colleges and she is a graduate of Meredith College. Both graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, where he earned his doctorate in Christian ethics and sociology. He did graduate research at the University of Louisville, Duke University and the University of North Carolina.

She holds a master's degree in child development and family relations from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She earned her doctorate from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at Wake Forest and has done further study in early childhood education and development.

The Wagoners first served churches in Kentucky and North Carolina, including North Winston Baptist Church in Winston-Salem (now Northwest Baptist Church) and First Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro, before coming to the Children's Home here in 1958.
By MYRA THOMPSON
TIMES Staff Writer

About 500 friends and associates of Dr. W.R. and Elizabeth Wagoner turned out Sunday afternoon at Mills Home to recognize the 25 years of service given by the couple to Baptist Children's Homes.

Wagoner, president of the Baptist Children's Homes since 1958, and his wife, Elizabeth, director of family services, will retire July 1.

The Wagoners greeted friends and supporters of the child care institution during a barbecue picnic luncheon on the campus 1-2 p.m. The picnic was followed by a two-hour recognition program in Mills Home Baptist Church.

"Few people anywhere commit their lives to anything for a quarter century. But these people have served and led in an exemplary manner and charted new courses in this Christian child-care institution," said Dr. William H. "Mace" Brown, chairman of the Baptist Children's Home (BCH) board of trustees.

Highlight of the recognition service was presentation of a professional slide show put together by Richard Thorne, a public relations consultant in Greensboro. Called "The Wagoner Years," color and black and white slides provided the backdrop for taped commentary which traced the couple's accomplishments during their careers here from 1958 to the present.

The Wagoners will continue to live in Thomasville for now, they said. "I will continue to write, and teach a little," said W.R. Wagoner during the picnic, "and we will do a little traveling," he added.

Elizabeth Wagoner said she planned to put to good use the past three years of handweaving instruction she has completed.

During the recognition ceremony, BCH trustees, alumni and officials of the Baptist State Convention heaped praise on the Wagoners, calling them "giants in their field," who extended the child care concept to include family rehabilitation and problem prevention.

"As I think of the discord and ugliness of life, I am thankful for the Wagoners who have brought harmony, beauty and love to those passing through their care," Brown said.

Carroll C. Wall Jr., former trustees' chairman from Lexington, (More on Page 8B)
Wagoners honored

(From Page 1B)
presented Wagoner with a book containing numerous letters of congratulation from across the state. He also handed him keys and title to the 12th children’s homes. Oldsmobile Wagoner has driven during his 25 years as president.

A check from BCH friends, supporters, employees, staff, residents, alumni and from fellow ministers across the state was also presented in addition to “The Bob Timberlake Collection,” a book which was a gift from the Lexington artist.

“This is a real honor,” Wall laughingly told Wagoner as the book was presented, because Timberlake is not a Baptist.” Dr. Olin T. Binkley, a trustee and president emeritus of the Southeast Baptist Seminary, said he had been profoundly impressed by the Wagoners’ concern and Christian ministry for children and their families who had been hurt by harsh circumstances.

“They turned agony into bliss, grief into happiness, scowls into smiles and hate into love,” said Binkley, all the while they organized a statewide network to make resources readily available to those who needed them most.

Other tributes were presented by Hubert Philpott of Lexington and Dr. Raymond Stone, both past trustees’ chairmen; BCH legal counsel Winfield Blackwell; Dr. Cecil Ray of the Baptist State Convention and Mills Home Alumni Association President Elizabeth Smathers Johnson.

In response to the laudatory comments, Elizabeth Wagoner said she wished to first thank the BCH

children. “You are what it is all about.” speaking of the youngsters’ journey from a feeling of worthlessness when they initially arrive at the home to a feeling of self-esteem in the eyes of God” when they leave. Walter Raleigh Wagoner recounted how it took “three overtures” from BCH to convince the couple to leave other jobs to come here.

“We took four months to decide after the third time we were asked,” adding that the first five years on board were spent studying the campus to decide what had come before and what was needed.

In 1964 he presented a long-range plan to Trustees, most of which has been accomplished. This has included the construction of 43 buildings across the state; the desegregation of the homes’ residents; an additional 18 trustees for a total of 36 statewide; the creation of the Broyhill Home in Haywood County and the Maternity Care Home in Asheville; creation of emergency care centers and a network of foster homes in the state.

The institution has grown from a $600,000 annual budget to one of $7.2 million.

“I am pleased to report that our children are responding well and that this institution is in sound financial position,” concluded Wagoner.
W.R. Wagoner, Baptist Minister, Dies at Age 71

JOURNAL STAFF REPORT

The Rev. Dr. W.R. Wagoner, the former president of the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina, died yesterday afternoon at Forsyth Memorial Hospital. He was 71.

Wagoner was the president of the family service agency for 25 years before he retired in 1983. After retiring, he was named a visiting professor in sociology at Campbell University and taught a course in child care.

Under Wagoner’s leadership, the Baptist Homes became a multiservice agency that provided foster-care and emergency care homes throughout the state. It also provided other services such as maternity homes, therapeutic camping, day care, social work and education-counseling.

Wagoner, a native of Lewisville, also served as a pastor for churches in Winston-Salem, Chapel Hill, North Wilkesboro and Kentucky. He was a member of Emorywood Baptist Church in High Point and had lived in Clemmons since 1984.
WAGONER
CLEMMONS — Dr. Walter R. Wagoner, 71, 6585 Rollingwood Dr., died Tuesday afternoon at Forsyth Hospital. Dr. Wagoner was born in Forsyth County to Walter R. and Frances Houser Wagoner Sr. His early life was lived in Forsyth County. He was a 1937 graduate of Mars Hill College, a 1941 graduate of Wake Forest College and had earned his doctorate degree from the Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. and held an honorary doctorate from Wake Forest University. He had pastored churches in Kentucky, Chapel Hill, Winston-Salem and North Wilkesboro. From 1952 to 1983, he was president of the Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina. Dr. Wagoner was a member of Emorywood Baptist Church, High Point and was currently serving as the Minister of Visitation at the church. He had made his home in Clemmons since 1984. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Tucker Wagoner, of the home; one daughter, Miss Janet Anne Wagoner, Youngs Island, S.C.; two sons, Otis Tucker Wagoner, Quarteira, Portugal and Robert Bruce Wagoner, Los Angeles, Ca.; two sisters, Mrs. Myrtle Abernathy, Granite Falls, N.C. and Mrs. Ruth Payne, Rural Hall; one brother, George B. Wagoner Sr., Winston-Salem. Graveside services will be Saturday morning at Westlawn Cemetery, Clemmons. A memorial service will follow at 12 p.m. Saturday at Vogler’s Clemmons Chapel by Dr. Harold C. Warlick. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Emorywood Baptist Church Endowment Fund or the charity of the donor’s choice. The family will be receiving friends, at the home, Thursday or Friday evening.
Dr. W.R. Wagoner, Former Pastor, Dies Tuesday

Dr. Walter R. Wagoner, 71, of Clemmons, died Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 8, at Forsyth Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Wagoner was born in Forsyth County to Walter R. and Frances Houser Wagoner Sr. He was a 1937 graduate of Mars Hill College, a 1941 graduate of Wake Forest College, and he received his doctorate degree from Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He also had an honorary doctorate from Wake Forest University. He was pastor of churches in Kentucky, Chapel Hill, Winston-Salem and North Wilkesboro. From 1952 to 1983, he was president of the Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina.

Dr. Wagoner was a member of Emorywood Baptist Church in High Point and was the minister of visitation at the church.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Tucker Wagoner, of the home; one daughter, Janet Anne Wagoner of Youngs Island, S.C.; two sons, Otis Tucker Wagoner of Quarteira, Portugal and Robert Bruce Wagoner of Los Angeles, Calif.; two sisters, Mrs. Myrtle Abernathy of Granite Falls and Mrs. Ruth Payne of Rural Hall; and one brother, George B. Wagoner Sr. of Winston-Salem.

Graveside services will be held Saturday morning at Westlawn Cemetery in Clemmons. A memorial service will follow at 12 noon Saturday at Vogler's Clemmons Chapel by Dr. Harold C. Warlick.

Memorials may be made to Emorywood Baptist Church Endowment Fund or to the charity of the donor's choice. The family will receive friends Thursday or Friday evening at the home at 6585 Rollingwood Drive, Clemmons.
W. R. Wagoner

Dr. W.R. Wagoner was one of the mid-twentieth century's outstanding child care executives. For twenty-five years he led North Carolina Baptists to expand the dimensions of care for needy children and troubled families.

During his tenure most of the old style dormitories were replaced with modern, family-style cottages. In western North Carolina Broyhill Home was established, while an entirely new (at least to North Carolina) therapeutic camping program was initiated. A maternity home and four emergency care homes were opened.

With the dedicated support of Elizabeth Tucker Wagoner, a model child development center was set up on the Mills Home campus.

Dr. Wagoner was honored with the presidency of the Southern Baptist Child Care Executives organization, and was strongly identified with the child care workshops of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Born in Forsyth County, he was a graduate of Mars Hill, Wake Forest, and earned his doctorate at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

Surviving are his wife, Elizabeth, and three children: Otis, Anne, and Bruce.

Roger Williams, Kinston
Chapter V
ADMINISTRATION OF DR. W. R. WAGONER, 1958-

Walter R. Wagoner was born on November 2, 1917, the youngest of the nine children of Walter Wagoner and Frances Hauser Wagoner. They lived on a farm near Lewisville, in Forsyth County. Young W. R., like all other farm boys of that time, helped on the farm and learned the value of hard work and consistent discipline. By precept and example his parents taught him the value of Christian virtues. His early education was in the public schools of Lewisville. After finishing high school, he entered Mars Hill College in the fall of 1936. At Mars Hill he made a good scholastic record. He took an active part in many extra-curricular activities which did much to prepare him for his future studies, his success as a pastor, and his success in his present field of service.

After graduating from Mars Hill, Mr. Wagoner entered Wake Forest College where he earned his A.B. degree. While at Wake Forest, he continued the extra-curricular activities that had been so prominent in his junior college work. None of the extras were allowed to interfere with his regular academic studies, however; his grades were considerably above average, and he was recommended for further study at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.

While a student at Wake Forest and for one year thereafter, Mr. Wagoner served as pastor of three rural churches. It was at Wake Forest that this young man came under the influence of Dr. Olin T. Binkley, then head of the Department of Religion. Two years after Mr. Wagoner transferred to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Dr. Binkley was called there as professor of Christian ethics and sociology. Soon thereafter Dr. Binkley became Dr. Wagoner's major professor and chief advisor while he earned his B.D., Th.M., and Th.D. degrees. It is safe to say that no one teacher played as great a part in helping Wagoner to prepare for his life's work as did Dr. Binkley during the years that he studied under him at the seminary. While he was at the Southern Seminary, he served as full-time pastor and at the same time made
an enviable record in all his studies. He financed his own schooling from the time he left high school until he won his doctorate at Louisville.

W. R. met Elizabeth Tucker at a gathering of young people held by the First Baptist Church of Winston-Salem. A real courtship began and never slackened, and on August 6, 1943, they were married. They have two fine boys, Otis and Bruce, and one lovely daughter, Anne.

After receiving his doctorate from the seminary, Dr. Wagoner was called as pastor of the North Winston Baptist Church where he served for several years with great distinction. Leaving North Winston, he went to North Wilkesboro where his work was outstanding. As a pastor, as a counselor, and as a citizen, he meant much to the community. He was at North Wilkesboro for four years and then God had other plans for his life, and he moved on to the Children's Homes to become general administrator, where he continues to serve with outstanding success.

Over the years I have tried to determine what caused his great interest in child care. Perhaps it was his contacts with the children while he was serving the Mount Carmel Church as pastor in the Yates Association. Each year the Mount Carmel Church invited a cottage of Mills Home children to spend the weekend with them. They were placed in homes all over the community. Then on Sunday morning they all met for Sunday School and worship. So far as I know this was Dr. Wagoner's first contact with the children of the Homes. Thereafter he visited the Home and became acquainted with the program.

In May of 1958, at the regular Board of Trustees meeting, I notified the Trustees that I would retire on June 30. When the news went out that I was going to retire, applications came pouring in from all over the South, but God had his own man whom He had prepared for the leadership of this great program. That man did not submit an application, or indicate in any way that he would be interested, but the committee from the Board to select my successor read carefully all applications. In their opinion, none of them was suited to carry forward the work as they wished it to be done, so they turned to the pastor of the First Baptist Church of North Wilkesboro because they felt that God was directing them to this man. Beyond a doubt, God was working at both ends of the line, for Dr. Wagoner accepted. Not a day lagged between this author's administration and his. As I moved out, he moved in and the work has advanced beyond all expectations.
In addition to his busy schedule as president of the second largest child caring institution in the South, Dr. Wagoner has held many positions of honor and great importance. He has served as president of the North Carolina Child Care Association, president of the Child Care Executives of Southern Baptists, and first president of the Southern Baptist Social Service Association, which had its first meeting in Dallas, Texas, on September 28-29, 1969. Also he has been called upon to address several Baptist State Conventions throughout the nation, and to conduct a number of seminars for executives in inter-denominational child care meetings. He has attended at least one international conference on youth, and he never misses any conference of note on child care that is held in the United States. As a result he is now recognized by all child care authorities as one of the most capable men in his field of service. He has steadily grown and progressed in the knowledge of his work, and the program over which he presides has progressed along with him.

Dr. Wagoner’s administration has been characterized by strengthening of the facilities and programs already established at the Homes and by moving into other areas of unmet needs. The building program has gone forward in a great way. Since Dr. Wagoner’s administration began, five new staff buildings have been erected at Mills Home and three at Kennedy Home. Three of the existing buildings at Mills Home were renovated to make them suitable for families of children, both girls and boys. Then through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. William York of Greensboro, the first building on the Mills Home campus designed especially so that brothers and sisters could live together in family groupings was built. This was a new venture in cottage arrangement for this Home and for others in this general area. A total of twelve children are served in this building, and the smaller number will enable cottage parents to devote more personal time and attention to each child. The Bright-Brown Cottage, the Stokes Cottage, and the Craver Cottage have since been built as family-type cottages at Mills Home, and the Williams and Bryant Cottages at Kennedy Home. These six cottages have made it possible to maintain closer family ties. The Spainhour Music Building provides rooms for piano and choir practice and a home for the music family. The J. Leland and Margaret Sadler Library Building provides much needed and much used library facilities for the children in one of the loveliest buildings to be found anywhere. A modern dairy facility, second to none, has been erected at Kennedy Home. Recently, the W. H. Jones Infirmary has been built at Kennedy Home, and the contract has been
let for a new recreational building there. The office buildings both at Mills Home and Kennedy Home have been renovated and are now far more efficient than ever before. A new administration building for the general officers of the Baptist Children’s Homes is now under construction at Mills Home.

The buildings are only the beginning of the program that is being carried on at the Baptist Children’s Homes. The training program for social workers, houseparents, and other child-care workers, which is promoted through the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has been greatly strengthened. Dr. Keith-Lucas, Distinguished Alumni Professor of the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a foremost authority in church-related child care in the nation, had this to say about the work of the Baptist Children’s Homes:

“What impresses me at this time about the Baptist Children’s Homes is the ever-increasing amount of knowledge, wisdom and thoughtfulness every member of its staff brings to the problems of the redemption of each child and his family. Dedication and love have always been present, but more and more a new dimension is apparent—informed, thoughtful, well coordinated, and purposeful love and dedication on the part of every staff member, from administrator to social worker to houseparent to auxiliary staff.”

When I left the Homes we had two case work centers—one at Mills Home and one at Kennedy Home. Now we have five additional ones—in Asheville, in Charlotte, in Raleigh, in Fayetteville, and in Chapel Hill. These regional centers enable the case workers to keep in close touch with pastors and with the homes from which the children come. By this close contact many homes are saved and the children remain with their parents. Every year a larger percentage of children are returned to their homes through rehabilitation of family life and re-establishment of homes through case work services. The late Dr. I. G. Greer used to say that the only way to save society is to “Go up stream and work with the families from which the dependent children come.” These case work centers are the beginning of an effort to put this philosophy into practice, and the effort is bearing fruit.

The Odum Home at Pembroke became a part of the Baptist Children’s Homes under the previous administration, but their building has been built and their work carried forward under Dr. Wagoner’s direction. The new building, operating on the family concept, was dedicated in 1960. The entire program at Pembroke is promoted from this building. It began as an Indian orphanage, but
now about half the children are not Indian. There have been no race problems at all. Perhaps the Odum Home has done more to unify the Burnt Swamp Association than any agency of the Convention. Mr. and Mrs. Chesley Hammond came to the Odum Home on September 1, 1958. Mr. Hammond served as superintendent of the Home and Mrs. Hammond served as housemother for the girls. They did a very fine work here until Mr. Hammond resigned to re-enter the pastorate on January 31, 1969. Tommy Swett was made director of the Home on February 1, 1969. From the beginning his has been a part-time relationship. He also serves as counselor in the Robeson County public school system.

C. M. Wall left his farm between Thomasville and Winston-Salem to the Baptist Children's Homes during Dr. Greer's administration. In 1943 his sons built a dwelling on the farm, and for many years some of the farming operations of the Home were carried on here. Now the Wall Home has been established here and about twelve boys live here with their houseparents. This Home will later be enlarged. It is under the supervision of the superintendent of Mills Home.

In 1964 a large vacation cottage that will care for forty or fifty people was dedicated near Emerald Isle on Bogue Sound. It has made possible a new and wholesomely different experience for the child care family. Every child in all of our Homes now spends one week there each summer along with the houseparents. Possibilities for providing "extra help" for children through wholesome recreation and worship experiences in this setting are unlimited.

The Development Program of the North Carolina Baptist Children's Homes was begun in November of 1965, and the Reverend Roger Williams was the first director. Foundations, endowments, industries, business corporations, individuals, families, and groups of friends are being acquainted with the Children's Homes and its "Long Range Plan" for complete services. The development program hopes to stimulate grants, special gifts, deferred giving, and estate planning. The Reverend W. Isaac Terrell succeeded Roger Williams as director and has done a fine job.

There has been more progress made in our child care program during the past ten years than in any similar period of its history. In the Chapter of Wills and Bequests you will find how each of the buildings has been financed. Suffice it to say here that not one penny sent to the Homes by the churches has been used in buildings unless so specified by the sender.
W. R. Wagoner first came to First Baptist Church in the summer of 1947, having been called as interim pastor after the departure of Dr. Browning and prior to the arrival of Dr. Wayland. In August of 1954, after Dr. Wayland left to join the faculty of Southeastern Seminary, Dr. Wagoner, now with his wife, Elizabeth, his daughter Anne, and his son Otis, arrived as full time pastor. He came to us from the North Winston Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. He was well-qualified to be our minister: he had graduated from Mars Hill College and from Wake Forest College, had worked toward a Masters degree at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and had received his Masters degree from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He was finishing work on his doctorate when he accepted our call.

Some will remember the simplicity of everyday life in the mid '50's. It was a time when our country basked in relative tranquility and prosperity. This stability was reflected in the life of our church. Change came so slowly as to be barely perceptible. America had yet to understand fully its entry into the nuclear age, with that technology's implications both for progress and for destruction. Dissemination of information through television was beginning to have an impact on everyday life, with increasing numbers of living-room windows flickering with gray light from suppertime until bedtime.

Religious life was changing as well. In 1954, the motto of the Southern Baptist Convention, "A Million More in '54," reflected its commitment to enlist more Sunday School members. A religious census taken in the Wilkesboros showed that of 1,379 eligible candidates, First Baptist Church had 823 enrolled in its Sunday School. Average attendance in 1954 was 424.

Another hot issue of the day centered on Sunday School classes. Problems arose on promotion day, when it was time for some
adults to move up to a “higher” class. Dr. Wagoner, characteristically, calmed and smoothed this touchy issue by focusing on individual responsibility. In his column in The First Baptist News he wrote, “No one is going to be told what to do or where to go. The decision is up to the individual. After your decision is made you will not be criticized for it.”

Dr. Wagoner’s response to Sunday School issues also involved positive steps to improve its overall quality and its relevance. A Sunday School Workshop was initiated to better prepare teachers. Every Sunday evening, under the direction of educator J. Floyd Woodward, the next week’s Sunday School lesson was elucidated for those who would teach it. Religious instruction improved perceptibly, up and down the line, beginning with the Cradle Roll, still active with the last of the crop of postwar “baby boomers.”

Though there were no significant changes in the Church’s physical plant during these years, farsighted leaders took steps which would allow later expansion. The purchase of the Moore property up the street from the Sanctuary was one of these significant steps during the Wagoner years. The acquisition offered the church additional expansion space for children’s and youth activities while guaranteeing needed building space “when the time came” for it.

Varied programs enriched religious life for the membership during the Wagoner years. First Baptist Church held family institutes each spring for parents, in an effort to establish better family relationships by an emphasis on Christian living. The Church sponsored several outside authorities in child rearing and family counseling to conduct these seminars.

The Church staff underwent several changes. In February, 1955, after six years of service, Miss Peggy Nichols resigned as Education Director. Two months later, Mr. A. B. (Andy) Cook, Jr., was called as Director of Religious Education. A graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Southeastern Seminary, he was a native of Norfolk, Virginia. Mr. Cook and his wife, Nan, arrived in April, 1955. During his time at First Baptist he was ordained into the ministry.

Despite the slow pace and basic conformity of the times, First Baptist Church under Dr. Wagoner experimented with change. In an effort to broaden its Christian Education program, the Church started a drama group, with Mrs. Nan (R.H.) McNeill as Director. Consistent with Dr. Wagoner’s emphasis on music in worship, organist Jay Anderson initiated both a Junior Choir for nine-to-twelve year-olds and a Vespers Choir for young people. During this time, also, First Baptist Church reached out to other churches within the county, even those of other denominations, with summertime union services, such as those with the neighboring Methodists and Presbyterians, and by sponsorship of educational programs open to all. Seminary Extension courses were offered regularly. Women’s associational activities were hosted by First Baptist, meetings and activities which involved members from many churches in other towns and municipalities.

In 1958, Dr. Wagoner resigned to become Superintendent of the Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina. His patient demeanor and his calm, reassuring sincerity especially qualified him for this position. Additionally, he had brought with him to First Baptist a special feeling of mission for such a ministry. While working on his doctorate, he had specialized in sociology and social work, in religion’s calling to deal with social needs, in strategies for families and children in crisis. First Baptist Church benefited from his administrative abilities and his judicious temperament during his pastorate: The Baptist Children’s Home still bears his mark. Dr. Wagoner served with distinction as Superintendent for twenty five years.

W. R. Wagoner died in 1988. Because of a scarcity of written records during his tenure, the writers of this history have profited from Mrs. Wagoner’s memories. She recalls at First Baptist Church “a distinct feeling of a rich heritage and the continuing vitality of the church as a living institution.” She remembers the feeling of fellowship and community which existed among church members at that time, citing the care and support freely and
generously given in crisis situations. She remembers that during their years here, First Baptist Church had a good heart and a kind spirit.

_from THE FIRST BAPTIST NEWS_

1954

Aug Several members furnish assistance and equipment to the Wagoners for the move from Winston-Salem: J. E. Caudill—Key City Furniture Co.; A. F. Kilby—Yadkin Valley Motor Co.; W. K. Sturdivant—Reins Sturdivant Funeral Home; Paul Greene—Piedmont Mountain Freight Lines; W. O. Absher—Wilkes Auto Supply; and Frank Bentley.

Sept J. E. Caudill and J. H. Whicker, Sr. are made life deacons.

Oct Mr. & Mrs. Lomax (Bud) Kilby have a baby girl, Betty Ann, born September 30th.

1955

Mar Polio is of great concern. The paper announces a vaccine available for First and Second graders.

Apr Mr. & Mrs. Claude Triplett join the church, Blanche by letter and Claude by baptism.

Aug Carl Swotford and Peggy Harris are married.

Sept At a Sunday evening workshop, Mr. Woodward identifies Grace Frank Mayberry as “Mrs. Mulberry.” J. H. Whicker, Jr., later relates this incident at the golf course. Henceforth, Lott Mayberry is known as “Mulberry” or “Mull.”