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Local missionary back from Korea Hillsborough native still feeling 'nostalgic'

By LISA REINERS
The Chapel Hill Herald

RALEIGH — J.G. Goodwin said probably the only two people that could have made him want to leave his native Hillsborough for a place like Korea were God and his wife.

J.G. and June Goodwin are two of about 130 Baptist missionaries working in South Korea. They moved to Seoul in 1956, only a few years after they entered the ministry. Goodwin said his wife had always wanted to travel, but Goodwin never thought much about leaving the Hillsborough area.

Goodwin, 62, decided to be a minister while studying at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1945. After graduating and serving as pastor at a small church in western North Carolina, Goodwin and his wife boarded a boat to Korea three years after the Korean War had ended in hopes of spreading Christianity to the troubled nation.

"I wanted to go to the neediest place on earth where there was the most opportunity for me to help people," he said.

Many things have changed in Korea since he first arrived. Goodwin said during his four-month furlough in Raleigh. Christian churches first set up schools and hospitals in Korea in the 1880s, but when Goodwin arrived, there were still no paved roads outside of Seoul, he said.



J.G. Goodwin Jr.

bers."

Goodwin said it took a while for Christianity to catch on in Korea.

"The church is kind of an intruder. It's definitely not part of the Korean culture that is said to be 50 centuries old," he said. Even though Christianity has become popular in Korea, most Koreans still follow shamanism, the belief that inanimate things have spirits, in addition to other religions, Goodwin said. Even Christian Koreans hold these beliefs, he said.

Shamanism is only one difference Korean Christians have with American Christians, according to Goodwin.

"Koreans are Christians within the confines of their culture," he said. "The beliefs are the same."

Now, Korea has high-rise buildings and schools and a growing economy, largely because of American aid to the region along with churches' contributions. An apartment bought by the Baptist church in Korea for \$48,000 could now sell for \$700,000, he said.

Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries have worked in Korea since the 1880s, Goodwin said, but not until 1950 did Baptist missionaries travel to Korea.

"Some people say there are more Presbyterians than there are people in Korea. I haven't quite figured that one out yet," Goodwin said.

Their duties as missionaries ranged from purely religious to purely humanitarian, Goodwin said. He and his wife helped start 15 Baptist churches in Korea completely operated by native Koreans.

Goodwin said about 20 percent of the Korean population considers itself Christian. The dominant religion is Buddhism, he said, but many Koreans are not active in Buddhism.

"The largest Presbyterian and Methodist churches in the world are in Korea," Goodwin said, "And the largest church of any denomination in the world is an Assembly of God church in Seoul with over 600,000 mem-

Goodwin said one of the major differences in Korean and American Baptist churches is the role women play in both church and society. Although there are fewer than 10 Baptist churches in North Carolina where women serve on the board of deacons, in Korea there are more deaconesses than deacons, Goodwin said.

"It flies in the face of the Korean and American tradition that women do not have the same status as men because they do not have the financial status," he said.

Most Korean men give their paychecks to their wives to manage, Goodwin said. He and his wife spent much time counseling American soldiers and Korean women explaining that cultural difference, he said.

However, he said his wife lets his pay stay in his pocket.

"She wouldn't dare take my money," he joked.

Goodwin never once regretted moving to Korea, he said, although every time he returns to Hillsborough he gets "really nostalgic." His two sons, Jim and John, grew up in Korea and attended a school for foreign children there. Goodwin and his wife plan to retire in a few years, but Korea will be hard to leave behind, he said.



HILLSBORO, N.C.

NOVEMBER 5, 1963

REV. JIMMY MORRIS
BAPTIST BLDG.
301 HILLSBORO ST.
RALEIGH, N.C.

DEAR MR. MORRIS:-

MY PASTOR HANDED ME A LETTER WHICH MR. G. LELAND ROYSTER HAD WRITTEN HIM ASKING FOR A PHOTO AND A LITTLE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SON, J.G. GOODWIN, JR. WHO IS NOW A MISSIONARY IN KOREA.

J.G. IS THE SON OF MR. AND MRS. J.G. GOODWIN, SR. OF HILLSBORO. HE WAS BORN OCTOBER 26TH 1928. HE IS A 1950 GRADUATE OF WAKE FOREST COLLEGE, AND EARNED HIS B.D. IN 1953 FROM SOUTHWESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN FORT WORTH, TEXAS. HE MARRIES MISS JUNE BATSON OF GREENVILLE, S.C. ON JUNE 1ST. 1952 AND THEY HAVE TWO SONS, JOHNNY WHO IS 6 YRS OLD AND JIMMY WHO IS 9 YEARS OLD. J.G. HELD THE PASTORATE AT CLYDE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FROM 1953 UNTIL 1956, AT WHICH TIME HE AND JUNE WERE APPOINTED MISSIONARIES TO KOREA. THEY NOW LIVE IN KWANGJU, KOREA WHERE J.G. IS ENGAGED IN EVANGELISTIC WORK.

I TRUST THAT THIS IS THE INFORMATION WHICH YOU DESIRE.

SINCERELY YOURS,

Mrs J.G. Goodwin Sr.
MRS. J.G. GOODWIN, SR.

GOODWIN, JAMES GARLAND, JR.

b. Fairmont, N. C., Oct. 26, 1928. ed. Wake Forest College, B.A., 1950; SWBTS. B.D., 1953 Univ. of N. C., M.A., 1967. Pastor First Church, Clyde, N. C. 1953-56. Appointed 1956; language student, Taejon, KOREA, 1956-58; gen. evang., and hosp. admin., Pusan, 1958-62, gen. evang., Kwangju, 1962-67; gen. evang., and dir., mass communication, Seoul, 1967-1973; mission admin, Seoul, 1974---. m. June Batson.

GOODWIN, JUNE EUGENIA BATSON (Mrs. James G., Jr.)

b. Travelers Rest, S. C., June 23, 1928. ed. Bob Jones Univ., B.A., 1950; SWBTS, M.R.E., 1952. Typist, SWBTS, Fort Worth, Tex., 1950-52. Appointed 1956; language student, Taejon, KOREA, 1956-58; church and home evang., Pusan, 1958-62; Kwangju, 1962-67; Seoul, 1967--. m. J. G. Goodwin, Jr., May 18, 1952. Children: James Garland III, 1954; John Houston, 1957.

(also a photograph)

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