

3. Retirement. Jackson, Mississippi 1964 -- 1988



James H. and Myra Hume Jones shortly after retirement

Shortly after retiring James and Myra Hume Jones moved to their home state, Mississippi, in the capitol city Jackson in order to be close to their son Alfred Hume, his wife Celia, their daughter, Myra W. Jones and son Fred. Their home on West Mountain Avenue in Jacksonville, Alabama was sold to close friends of the family, John B. Nisbet, Jr. and his wife Dorothy Jane Warren Nisbet. They purchased a house in Jackson where they remained for the remainder of their lives.. The departure from Alabama was not easy since they left many long-time friends and their direct connection with Jacksonville State Teachers College and the International House Program.



Jackson, Mississippi c. 1967. Front: Myra, Kathy holding Beth, Robb, Martha (sitting), Kevin. Standing: Myra, Anne, James H. Jones



Jackson, MS June 5, 1973, 50th anniversary. Front: Kevin, Beth, Myra, Robb. Second row: Fred, Kathy holding a pet, Celia, Anne. Third row: Bill, Martha, James, Jr., Alfred. Back row: James H. and Myra Hume Jones, the anniversary couple.

Some memories of their life together were given in a brief speech by James H. Jones to members of his extended family at a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the wedding of James and Myra Hume Jones that took place in Oxford, Mississippi on June 5, 1923. The Reverend Lee Grisso, Pastor of Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Shreveport, Louisiana gave the blessing. This was followed by the luncheon and then James H. Jones rose to speak.

Remarks by James H. Jones at 50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration.

“ On behalf of Myra and myself, I would like to express to you our deep appreciation for honoring us with your presence here on this occasion, especially important to us, which has brought us to the fiftieth milestone down the rather long path of life. May I say that, if my voice may seem to be unsteady and my knees to be trembling, it will be due to the deep emotions within me, for which I ask your understanding.

“That calls to mind June 5, 1923, when my beloved brother, Means, accompanied me to the alter to hear Dr. Heddelston, the minister, pose the usual question in those days, and the Bride-to-be's reply, 'I do.' But please believe me when I tell you that the promise, 'I do,' was of short duration. As you know much

has been said and written about 'Women's Lib.' As for myself, I became acquainted with 'Women's Lip' as far back as 1921.

"In those days at Ole Miss students walked. Students' ownership of automobiles on the Campus was unheard of. As there was hardly any kind of entertainment for students, the churches of Oxford, in the beginning of the year, had open house and served refreshments. Therefore we usually made the rounds of all the churches. And so, it was at The First Presbyterian Church that I met Miss Myra Hume, and became acquainted for the first time with 'Women's Lip.' If my memory serves me correctly, I requested Miss Hume's permission to accompany her home, by foot of course. On learning that Means Johnston was my brother and had been a student at Ole Miss, she later asked her father if he remembered Means. Dr. Hume, according to Myra, replied in that slow and matter-of-fact manner that was so characteristic of him: 'Yes, I knew Means.' And then he spelled his name: 'M E A N S, plural.' He was, of course, teasing his daughter, Myra.

"The Humes had acquired the care of rearing their first grandchild, Harry Bryan, Jr. Miss Hume, who spent that year at home to be with her parents in that undertaking, used to take Harry, Jr., then about three years old, out to the Campus in his wagon. For what purpose, I had never fully understood, nor dared to ask. In any case I almost always met her, and enjoyed a visit with her. However that little rascal wasn't long in becoming the bane of my existence. Incidentally, Harry Jr. should be here for this occasion, especially since he was the ring bearer for our wedding. Fortunately, his young daughter, Mrs. Mary Hume Bryan Ikerd and her two young sons, William and Bryan, and little daughter, Mary Carolyn, are here and I should like to ask Mrs. Ikerd to please stand. (Applause)

"Before going into the next incident, I would like to explain that the bedroom of Dr. and Mrs. Hume was on the first, or bottom, floor. The stairway came down from upstairs within only a few inches from the door leading into the living room. Dr. Hume had a room upstairs where he always went to prepare for the night. And although it may seem funny to you, men as well as women wore nightgowns for the night in those days. Well, one evening I had an engagement with Miss Hume. At about ten o'clock or a little thereafter, I got up to leave. Unaware of course that Dr. Hume was wishing to come down stairs to retire for the night, either Miss Hume or I opened the door slightly for me to leave, and then would close it. This was repeated several times. And so, after a while the younger daughter, Mary Hume, went running upstairs and, seeing her father going down and then back up in his night attire said: 'Papa, what on earth are you doing.' Dr. Hume replied, as the story came to me, 'Well I am waiting to see if that young man csn make up his mind as to what he is going to do.'

"With all the trials and tribulations that go to help make up life, we both agree that Life has been good to us. We have enjoyed almost every minute of it. We have of course had our disagreements and have even ranted at one another. And as you can observe, she has in fits of anger pulled hair even until there no longer remains much more to pull.

"We both keep quite active, Myra in the work of the Trinity Presbyterian Church, more particularly with the Women of the Church. She is also active in the work of an International Friends organization here in Jackson. Last fall, I believe it was Governor Waller of Mississippi entertained this organization for dinner in the new Holiday Inn on the corner of North State Street and Woodrow Wilson Avenue, extending invitations to all people in Mississippi who were from other countries. There were some fifty countries represented. Being the husband of Myra, a member of the International Friends organization, I too was an invited guest. Two or three times a week Myra gives of her time helping some young Japanese ladies in Jackson improve their English. There are a few who do not speak English at all.

Although Myra neither speaks nor understands spoken Japanese, she does her best to help them. In any case Myra finds all of these several activities rewarding and they help her keep young.

“As for myself, though retired after twenty-nine years from what is now Jacksonville State University in North-East Alabama, I have continued to teach. The first year after retiring prematurely, I taught a night class at the University of Mississippi Center on the Millsaps College Campus. The following year, a full load, all French classes at Belhaven College. For the past six years I have taught in the mornings third and fourth year French at Saint Joseph School, a private institution and perhaps the finest preparatory school of Jackson, as their graduates are accepted in the leading colleges and universities of the country. Some of my other duties are to mow the one hundred by two hundred foot lawn, to mop the floors of our home, to make all of the purchases in the grocery stores, etc. Therefore, as you can see, we both keep busy and are in reasonably good health despite the fact that Myra must use a walker to get about.

“ We are looking forward with much pleasure to our proposed six-week trip to Europe beginning July 5. We are planning a reunion of our former International House Program students living in Belgium, North-West France and West Germany at a luncheon on July 7. In Paris on July 15 we are looking forward to a similar reunion and are expecting students to come from as far away as Madrid, Spain, Southern France, Switzerland, Austria, England, etc.

“If you will bear with me, I should like to conclude by quoting from a distinguished minister of the Methodist Faith. He is the late Dr. Clovis Chappell, who was at one time Minister of the Galloway Methodist Church here in Jackson whom Harrison Curtis, my brother-in-law, may have heard preach. Dr. Chappell, graduate of the famous old Webb School in Bell Buckle, Tennessee back in 1902, returned in 1970 to address the Webb boys in helping to celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of the school. With the comic timing of Jack Benny and the tireless words of Saint Paul, Dr. Clovis Gilham Chappell demonstrated in his speech that the so-called ‘Generation Gap’ could well be nothing more than a small creek filled with running laughter. He was more amiably defiant than apologetic about his age. ‘I am delighted to be old.’ Dr. Chappell said. ‘I love to be old. I don’t want to be young. I fished that stream and caught ‘em.’ Pausing, Dr. Chappell then said ‘And I might not catch them next time.’

“I wouldn’t be old and ignorant as most of you are for any single thing in the world. Why should I go back and be stupid all over again?” Dr. Chappell spoke on (the subject) ‘Making the No-count Count.’ He defined his subject matter in terms of ‘Taking something that is no-count, and putting your touch on it making it something of higher value. That’s the poetry of living. That’s what life is for,’ he said. Dr. Chappell was the author of thirty-six books and had served as Pastor of Methodist Churches throughout the country. During the course of his lecture at Webb School in 1970 he recalled an anecdote concerning the school’s founder, Mr. William R. Webb, affectionately known to his boys as ‘Sawney’ Webb, who visited the Methodist Minister when he was Pastor of Mount Vernon Place Church. During the course of the sermon, Dr. Chappell said, Sawney apparently overcome at seeing his ‘old boy’ in the pulpit, ‘put that fine old cultivated face down in his hands and sobbed like a baby.’ A lady behind him asked ‘Don’t you think it’s time for you to surrender to the Lord?’ Sawney replied that he had been a Christian all his life. The woman smiled appreciatively, then asked, ‘How do like our minister?’ With tears in his eyes Sawney replied ‘I raised him.’ “

The banquet celebrating the 50th anniversary was attended by fifty-one people coming from many states: New Mexico, Colorado, Louisiana, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee and Mississippi (Greenwood and Jackson). A group photo of the group is shown below.



Celebration of 50th Wedding Anniversary June 5, 1973. Those who participated in the wedding ceremony are stated with cap letters.

Front row on floor: Richard Grisso, David Grisso, William Ikerd, Bryan Ikerd, Beth Hadley Jones, Myra Jones, Kathleen Hume Jones, Anne Campbell Jones, Kevin Daniel Jones, Fred Jones, Robert Branham Jones.

Second row seated: James Harding Jones, Jr., Mrs. R. D. (Zoe) Hall, Celia McClurkin Jones, Mary Hume Bryan Ikerd holding her daughter Mary Carolyn, Harrison Curtis, Mrs. Ethel Curtis, MYRA HUME JONES (bride), JAMES HARDING JONES (groom), Mrs. Means (Annie) Johnston, Mrs. Lizzie Harding, Williard E. Harding (Willard's father, Dr. Harding, was the family physician of James H. Jones' parents who gave their young son his middle name.)

Third row standing: Alfred Hume Jones, RITCHEY HUME (groomsman), Mrs. Ritchey (Evelyn Holt) Hume, Floyd M. Kelton, Martha Hadley Jones, MRS. ANNIE HUGHES JOHNSTON EMMONS (flower girl), Mrs. Lucille Bean Hoover, Nell Permenter (later to become Mrs. Arthur Smith), Means Johnston, Jr., William E. Johnston, Mrs. Sarah Warren Alvarez, Mrs. Florence Warren Garrou, Mrs. Helene Johnston, James E. Emmons,

Fourth row standing on chairs: David Hume, William Branham Jones, MRS. MARY RITCHEY HUME KELTON (maid of honor), Martha Grisso, Rev. Lee Grisso, Mary Hume Kelton Grisso, Leland Hume, Jr., Mrs. Leland (Laurin Welch) Hume, WILLIAM HUME (played the wedding march), Mary Helen Hume, Mrs. Patricia Hume Horne, Philip Garrou, Frank W. Johnston, DAVE W. JONES (groomsman).



Celebration of 55th wedding anniversary in 1978; an extended family gathering in Jackson, Mississippi.



James H. and Myra Hume Jones celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary in 1978.



James H. and Myra Hume Jones at about the time of their 60th wedding anniversary in 1983.

My mother, Myra Hume Jones, died in Jackson on December 16, 1986 following a year of illness caused by heart failure. Dad, James Harding Jones, lived on in their home for a little more than one year, his last breath coming while sleeping quietly in his family room chair, January 11, 1988. The memorial services for them were held at Trinity Presbyterian Church. Their bodies were laid to rest at the Lakewood Park Memorial in Jackson. My brother Alfred was living in the home of my parents during these last few years, giving them constant, loving care. For this faithful service I will be forever grateful.