

▶ retired doctor restores a legacy

James R. Brunk, M.D., restored ailing bodies for more than 40 years. Now retired, he is helping to restore a landmark in Brethren and Mennonite life, the Burkholder-Myers house at CrossRoads.

A son of the late Harry A. Brunk, professor of history at Eastern Mennonite University, and Lena Burkholder Brunk, Jim learned early in life to value the past, including the biblical story, which his mother often read before bedtime. "Our parents encouraged us to love our enemies, and one of my favorite Bible verses was, 'Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God.'"

Born May 25, 1926, in Harrisonburg, Va., Jim is the oldest of four children. When the U.S. entered World War II in 1941, he was a senior in high school but not yet 16 years old. Although he worked on a farm for eight months, he was drafted.

Three months after turning 18 he was on his way to Denison, Iowa, as a Conscientious Objector for a Civilian Public Service assignment in soil conservation. When his CPS foreman returned from a Smokejumpers unit and shared his experiences, "It got my attention, because I had a great interest in flying."

He was sent to California to fight forest fires, and while there, the Forest Service accepted him as a Smokejumper. He trained in Missoula, Montana, and then helped fight fires and rescue injured firefighters. During this time he was using E. Stanley Jones' devotional book, *Abundant Living*, and following a daily Bible-reading program.

The Smokejumpers unit was closed in December 1945, and when Jim came home for Christmas, he found his mother severely ill with chronic myelocytic leukemia. He was then transferred to Powelville, Md., and cleared a swamp in the middle of winter.

After a few weeks he was given a job in a government office, and after five months was transferred into the Merchant Marines to help ship horses to Poland. Upon return to the States, he and a Smokerjumper friend decided to register at Eastern Mennonite College (now EMU), having received temporary discharges from CPS.

CHRONICLES

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE VALLEY BRETHREN-MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTER

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Dr. James Brunk strips paint at the Burkholder-Myers House

EMU was just beginning its premedical program, and two weeks after registration Jim discovered he was in the premedical program, "because I was interested in those subjects." He soon met Thelma Ketterman, who would share his life from then on. Jim's mother died in March 1948, and he and Thelma were married that July.

Jim continued his premedical training, trusting a favorite verse: "In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:6). He was the first one ever to be accepted into medical school with a degree from EMC.

He attended the University of Virginia School of Medicine in Charlottesville, Va. After a rotating internship there, he was drafted as a Deferred Registrant and served at Blue Ridge Sanatorium as part of the I-W program for CO's. "I worked there for seven years instead of the two required by the Draft Board."

He and Thelma had four children by now. They and two other Mennonite families requested the Virginia Mennonite Conference to start a church in Charlottesville, and so the Charlottesville Mennonite Church was born.

Jim returned to UVA in 1962 to complete the requirements for certification in Internal Medicine. He then served a year in Student Health Services at UVA before going into private practice with the Doctors Wine in Harrisonburg in 1965, serving there until retirement in 1995. During these years, he also served as a Clinical Assistant Professor of

Internal Medicine at UVA until he became 65 years old.

After retirement, Jim became active in Mennonite Disaster Service, specializing in carpentering, painting, and restoring homes damaged by floods, hurricanes and fires. These skills are now being well used at the CrossRoads Center (see James 4:17).

In addition to their four children, the Brunks have 11 grandchildren and two step-grandchildren. They are members of Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The days are flying by since I started as CrossRoads' first full-time director on June 1. I can hardly catch my breath! It is amazing to me how so many volunteers give so many hours to this ministry, whether it's working on the grounds, helping to restore the Burkholder-Myers House, serving on committees or whatever. The volunteers make this place tick.



Special appreciation goes to the previous directors Al Keim and Doris Showalter. They continue as super-volunteers. Al, who happened to be my college history professor over 30 years ago, does everything from clearing brush and pushing dirt for the new driveway to chairing the Site & Facilities Committee. Doris, who is my dear mentor as I get started, continues to work on special events and fundraising.

Some day all of the volunteers will be able to look back with satisfaction on the ways in which they helped with the creation of a heritage center that will inform and inspire generations to come.

Steve Shenk

Steve Shenk, Executive Director

upcoming activities!

saturday, september 4

CrossRoads is holding a workday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. to clean fencerows, work on floors, and clear brush. Bring your own lunch; drink will be provided. Also bring brush trimmers, wire cutters, bow saws, chains saws, axes, flooring chisels, hammers, shovels, rakes and gloves.

saturday, october 16

Harvest Day takes shape at the CrossRoads site. Making sorghum molasses will be part of the day's activities. Invite family, friends, and neighbors as guests to this first Harvest Day event, a celebration of God's faithfulness. The day will begin at 11 a.m and will include food, artifacts, music, storytelling and fellowship.

membership campaign underway

(continued from front page)

promotes help for ongoing tasks at the Center and makes a challenge gift each year. Witness Congregations are invited to schedule picnics and other special programs on the CrossRoads campus.

To begin your personal/family or congregational membership, complete the coupon below. Indicate if you would like a complimentary copy of the video/DVD, a Legacy of Faith and Life.

Yes, I/we want to be a member of the CrossRoads Vision..

Seeker \$25 Believer \$100 Follower \$250 Disciple \$1000

My first-year membership gift is enclosed. Please send my video DVD

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Please mail your gift to CrossRoads, P. O. Box 1563, Harrisonburg, VA 22803

Legacy video released

A 14-minute video entitled *A Legacy of Faith and Life* has just been completed for use at the CrossRoads Center. Both video and DVD formats are available.

This piece highlights the Brethren and Mennonite legacy in the Valley. Visitors to the CrossRoads site will view the video as an introduction to the Brethren and Mennonite story, but it can also be used in family, small group or classroom settings.

David Sollenberger and Larry Glick served as videographers and producers, working with a task force comprised of Norman Kraus, Becky Hunter and Norwood Shank.

A complimentary copy of the video (or DVD) is available to anyone who participates in one of the new membership plans.