

Albert M. Potter

I was born in Morrison, a small town in northwestern Illinois. My father had a lumber yard, was treasurer of the Presbyterian church, and mother directed the choir. Our family, I have two brothers, went every Sunday to Sunday School and church. I taught Sunday school classes my last two years in high school.

Following high school I went to Northwestern U., graduating from the School of Commerce with a BS in retailing in 1938. My biggest accomplishment in college was persuading a classmate, Portia Clarke, who came from an even smaller town in Iowa, to marry me as soon as I could make enough money to support a family.

In 1939 I moved to Clinton, Iowa and started my own water conditioning business. By fall of that year I was broke and way in debt but the business looked like it could make it, so we got married.

Early in 1943 I realized soon I would be drafted so I turned the business over to Portia and got another job. That way I would be able to help her but she could learn first hand.

I was drafted in June 1943, applied for and was accepted in the ground forces of the air corps, was sent to weather observer school at Chanute Field in Rantoul, Ill., and upon completing the course was assigned to the headquarters detachment of the 16th Weather Squadron but never once made a weather observation. After 10 months of foreign service in Edmonton, Canada, I came back to the states to attend OCS, graduating from Harvard U. as a statistical officer. Soon after that the war ended and I returned to a much better business than I left.

Besides running our business I also became active in the 1st Pres. Church, serving two terms as a deacon, two terms as an elder, and taught Sunday School 10 out of the next 30 years. I also served for several years as a discussion leader at the National Convention of Pres. Men held at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago.

At age 55 I sold my business, retired and worked with many civic activities. I had served as County Chairman of the American Red Cross in the late 40's and had put the Red Cross and Red Feather fund raising campaigns together into one United Fund Drive each year. I then worked on that campaign every year for the next 26 years, serving in every capacity from small firm coordinator to general chairman and was special gifts chairman three times. We made goal every year. I also worked on 4 capital fund campaigns to raise money to build additions to the YMCA, YWCA, and 2 hospitals, serving as special gifts chairman on 2 of them. All 4 went over goal. We moved to California and Leisure World in 1976.

My first Sunday here I was asked to usher at Geneva Pres. Church and since then have served on the session, 2 years as stated clerk, and on 2 Presbytery committees. I have also served on the 3rd Mutual Board of Directors and am now serving a 3 year term on the Golden Rain Board.

We have one daughter, married to a Lutheran minister, and 3 beautiful granddaughters. They live in Garland Texas, a Dallas suburb.