



the monitor

NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST URANTIA[®] SOCIETY OF LOS ANGELES



"... But long before reaching Havona, these ascendant children of time have learned to feast upon uncertainty, to fatten upon disappointment, to enthuse over apparent defeat, to invigorate in the presence of difficulties, to exhibit indomitable courage in the face of immensity, and to exercise unconquerable faith when confronted with the challenge of the inexplicable. Long since, the battle cry of these pilgrims became: "In liason with God, nothing — absolutely nothing — is impossible."

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Julia Fenderson

A JUBILANT 80th BIRTHDAY TO OUR JULIA!

On January 27, 1905 (80 years ago this month) **Julia Squires** was born in Ashley, Illinois, near East St. Louis. Her parents, in their mid-twenties, were both college graduates. Before Julia's birth, her father left his position as a university mathematics instructor and joined the Bureau of Indian Affairs under the auspices of the Department of the Interior.

Mr. Squires' primary responsibility was his administrative duties for the Bureau. In addition he was required to interview the Indians who had been involved in George Armstrong Custer's infamous "Last Battle" fought in 1876 and to write reports on his findings. In subsequent years his research extended to many different Indian tribes throughout the West. Julia continues to update his research, having returned to Crow Agency, Montana to interview grandsons of some of the Indians her father interviewed seven decades ago.

Julia's growing years were spent in a succession of fort houses in Montana, North Dakota and Idaho, most typically enclosed in white wooden fences and each house having 5 or 6 open fireplaces, even in the bedrooms. She laughs today when asked what it was like to "live with the Indians". The Indians lived in their wigwams at a distance from the fort. It was in these locations that she grew to love the mountains, the hills, trees and birds and looked forward to hunting and fishing trips with her father.

Julia went to school in each place where the family lived. Reading was an especially pleasurable past-time and English and Social Studies were her favorite subjects. Julia and her younger brother, Richard, were left in the care of their mother when her father died after a long illness. She was graduated from high school at sixteen and received a General Arts Degree from the State School of Science in Wahpeton, North Dakota at eighteen in 1923, after which she obtained her first job, teaching fifth grade and music.

That year Julia married Merlin Early. Their son Tom was born in 1927, followed by Marty in 1929. Mr. Early became seriously ill with tuberculosis and their doctor advised Julia to move to a dryer climate with the boys, lest they succumb to the disease. Tom was only two and Marty was still an infant. Julia applied for teaching jobs throughout the Southwest, and received one offer — to teach third grade and music in Doña Ana, New Mexico, a town of 200 people. She was paid \$90.00 per month and was given the use of a teacherage in which to live with her small sons.

Julia sheepishly admits to going to bed the first night in Doña Ana with a butcher knife under her pillow. However, the townspeople came that night to serenade their new "maestra" with guitars and the knife was joyfully returned to the kitchen drawer. *"They were some of the best friends I've ever had. They would bring me fresh vegetables and when the boys were ill they'd drive me to the doctor in Las Cruces."*

Never one to let any grass poke up between her toes, Julia had ten promotions in the ten years she lived in New Mexico. She became principal of the grade school, got her B.S. degree and taught courses at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, where she also ran the Laboratory School.

In 1939 Julia left New Mexico and moved to Chicago to be reunited with her husband. However, the marriage didn't work out and she encountered the troublesome problem of being unable to find a teaching job in Chicago because she was married. One Sunday morning she attended services at a Methodist Church and heard Dr. William S. Sadler's name mentioned not only as a world-famous psychiatrist but as a counselor who had successfully guided a number of people. *"I was quite shy but I was also very poor and in despair, so even though it was Sunday, I went out to the church parking lot and called Dr. Sadler from a pay phone."*

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Dr. Sadler agreed to see Julia the following day. He helped her find a job and gave her some books to read, including *The Mind At Mischief*, but did not mention anything to her about the *URANTIA* papers.

Julia read every word and when she went back to see Dr. Sadler (on the third floor of 533 Diversey Parkway) she questioned him about the case he referred to in the Appendix to *The Mind At Mischief*. Dr. Sadler was evasive but Julia was so persistent that, finally in near exasperation, he said "*Julia, sit down and I'll tell you the whole story.*" He told her about the *URANTIA* papers and she didn't sleep that night.

"I was skeptical. I'd been brought up in a scholarly home. I'd been raised in the Methodist Church and had always had utter faith but I'd also been taught not to believe that there was only one way to think." She remembered the old Sioux Indian saying: "*Don't judge anyone until you've walked ten miles in his moccasins.*"

This was nearly sixteen years before *The URANTIA Book* was published. Julia became an avid student of the papers and a member of the Forum, the group of 100 or so people who met at 533 to read and discuss. "*The more I examined them the more I came to believe.*"

The calibre of people who read with her also furthered her belief in the *URANTIA* papers. She describes Dr. Sadler as "*one of the brainiest men I ever met.*" There was also Sir Hubert Wilkins, an English authority on Arctic exploration. Julia frequently read with him in between the Sunday meetings and she asked him why he believed. "*It is their utter consistency from beginning to end,*" he said. "*No human being could have written these papers with so much consistency of detail . . . there would have been a crack someplace.*" Marian Rowley was appointed Julia's "*friendly helper*" — someone new readers could talk to about questions. To this day Marian, a close friend whom Julia considers an excellent scholar of *The URANTIA Book*, is the person Julia calls with questions.

At a Sunday Forum meeting during the winter of the early 1940's Dr. Sadler asked that "*all those who feel committed to the papers and really want to work with them, come up next Wednesday night.*" That Wednesday night was cold and snowy. Exactly seventy members arrived and signed their names in numerical order. Julia was number seventeen. The purpose of the meeting was to sign up for special training and courses of study to better prepare members for the future of the *URANTIA* movement. However, Julia feels it is necessary to be cautious about becoming too organized. Basically, "*The URANTIA Book is between the reader and God; it's an individual thing.*"

Julia eventually obtained a good position teaching junior high English at Highwood Park on the North Shore of Chicago. In 1945, she moved to Los Angeles to be near her ailing mother, securing a first grade teaching job in Culver City. By now her sons were in high school. In time she became Co-ordinator of Education for Culver City School District, responsible for eight schools.

When she left Chicago, Julia asked Dr. Sadler how she could exist in California without anyone to take to about the papers! She was given the names of other people who had studied the papers in Chicago and had since moved to Southern California. A group of ten readers, Julia among them, formed a study group in the Los Angeles area. As the papers were ten years away from publication, they studied "*Evolution of the Soul,*" from a lecture Dr. Sadler had given "straight from the papers" and also began an in-depth study of the world's religions. This group met faithfully once a month for ten years and became the nucleus of the *First*

URANTIA Society of Los Angeles, chartered in 1956 and installed in 1957. Julia cherishes the deep love and friendship among the members of that first group, "unique ties I just don't have with anybody else."

Julia married William Fenderson, a journalist, in 1948. She had first known Bill in junior high school in Idaho, then, amazingly, met him again in Los Angeles in 1947. They were married on the radio program "Bride and Groom." Dr. Sadler and the Chicago group listened to the ceremony on the radio, as did a group of readers in New York. Some old friends the couple had lost contact with in Idaho heard the wedding on their kitchen radio by accident, and excitedly drove to Carmel to surprise the newlyweds on their honeymoon!

The *URANTIA Book* was finally published in 1955 and by the time the first box of books reached Los Angeles at Christmas time, Julia was "so excited she was shaking." She could finally tell Bill about the papers, something she couldn't do until the book was published, and he loved it for the beauty of the writing.

Julia made frequent trips to Chicago after her move to California in 1945 and in the late 1950's she was appointed one of the early field representatives of *URANTIA Brotherhood*, along with Dr. Meredith Sprunger and Berkeley Elliott. She holds the position for life. She also spent many years as a member of the Brotherhood Council and has held numerous offices in the *First URANTIA Society of Los Angeles*. She is now President Emeritus of FUSLA, and a very active member of the International Fellowship Committee.

Julia's professional career is distinguished. She has taught courses from first grade through graduate levels, been an educational administrator and has numerous publications to her credit, including an operetta "Big Navajo Medicine" based on Navajo melodies, a delightful tape presentation on birds and birdsong for young people, graduated reading programs, and most recently on-going research on the Gabrielino Indians published in 1984.

Her work in the *URANTIA movement* has been both extensive and tireless. Those who know her are staggered by the sheer volume of hours she's spent working and counseling on the phone, entertaining in her home, speaking at meetings and conferences and travelling around the United States and abroad. She has travelled to nearly every country that has study groups and has the reputation of having visited more study groups than any other living person. "It's simply because I've travelled and I'm so old," she explains. "It won't be a distinction I'll hold long . . . the young people will catch up." Julia is committed to the furthering of study groups and hopes that the *URANTIA movement*, for awhile at least, concentrates itself in that form.

In April of 1980 Julia began a project which is very close to her heart — she instituted the first known series of classes on marriage and family specifically for students of *The URANTIA Book*. The first class "graduated" in March, 1981 and her book containing the materials for these classes is scheduled for publication this year.

Of all her life-long endeavors, it is Julia's family that means the most to her. She is the mother of two fine sons, (Tom is a physician and family specialist; Marty is president of Career Aids, a company that specializes in educational materials, computers and computer software.) She has two granddaughters and six grandsons and in 1984 she became a great grandmother.

We honor Julia Fenderson on the celebration of eighty years on this planet and return to her the love and peace she has so willingly extended to those around her. For many of us she is sunshine spilling over the mountain tops, bringing welcome warmth to the hills and valleys of our lives — enabling the hummingbird to find the reddest and sweetest flower.

—Ellen Montgomery 4