

Chapter 7 OUR CO-WORKERS

during the 6 decades from 1949 ff

When Jesus sent His apostles and later 70 disciples on mission He sent them in pairs. He certainly realized the need for companionship and cooperation in missions. What would Paul have accomplished without Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Titus, Luke, Priscilla, Aquila and so many others? He often mentions fondly his fellow workers.

When Lois and I first went abroad we did have each other but did not realize how much we would need the support and encouragement of others. We learned in China in working with the members of the Morse family and their associates the value and importance of team work. Over the years in Thailand we came to greatly appreciate those whom the Lord sent to work with us or put us in contact with. I can not claim that what has been accomplished among the Mien through these decades as “my” converts. Rather they are “ours.” And by that word “ours” I am including hundreds or thousands of people. First of all are those who have upheld us and our ministry in prayer, then there are those who have served as forwarding agents, those who have given sacrificially to the cause, fellow missionaries, and so many others.

I am so thankful for the contributions of other missionaries both those of our own fellowship and those of other missions. Here I want to pay tribute to those from our own fellowship of Christian Churches with whom we were most closely associated. Many of these were concentrating their efforts toward the Thai proper or other ethnic groups but often went out of their way to assist us. Even their presence was a comfort and a blessing.

Paul wrote, “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.” 1 Cor. 12:12 NIV I am so grateful now for the team spirit we had, the many precious times of worship and prayer together and the joint cooperation in so many endeavors.

For those of us who lived for long periods together in Chiang Kham (Imogene, Dorothy Uhlig, Mel & June Byers) we especially became a family. Our kids learned to refer to them as “Uncle” and “Aunt” and to think of their kids as cousins. When Mel and June were on one furlough one of their daughters was frustrated when introduced to her uncles and aunts in America and cried, “But I want my real auntie, Aunt Dorothy.” By that she was referring to Dorothy Uhlig who had no biological relationship at all.

“No man is an island” is an expression used in songs and films based probably upon this poem written in 1624 by the English cleric John Donne.

<p>No man is an island, Entire of itself, Every man is a piece of the continent, A part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. As well as if a promontory were.</p>	<p>As well as if a manor of thy friend's Or of thine own were: Any man's death diminishes me, Because I am involved in mankind, And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee.</p>
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The thought of the poem is that we can't go it alone. God did not make us to be hermits. In fact God Himself explained that the reason he made Eve, the first woman, was “It is not good for man to be alone.”

Once I heard an estimate as to how many people it took to provide such a simple thing as the table that sits in our dining room. Some of those would be:

The designers of equipment and tools The mines and miners for the metals Those who made the roads into the forests The lumbermen who felled the trees Trucks and trains to haul the trees All involved in cutting the wood.	Those making paint, nails, glue The designers of the table The carpenters, painters, etc. All involved in marketing,shipping Etc., etc., etc.,etc.
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My own point in the above is that Lois and I could not claim ownership of the ministry to the Mien people or of the results there have been seen over the years. Our immediate co-workers in Chiang Kham area, other missionaries to the Mien and other people groups, Thai and tribal Christians and even non-Christians, prayer supporters/ropeholders/contributors, our own children, and many others have all been involved.

Since we and those with whom we were most closely associated were not supported nor supervised by a missionary society we were often called “Independent Missionaries.” The truth is that we were “Dependent Missionaries.” Being without the guidance and help that many had we were forced to depend all the more upon the Lord. He never failed to see us through “in every time of need.”

I could never begin to even mention all who have blessed and helped but in this section I want to give some brief tributes and my own expression of appreciation to a few of those.



With fellow missionaries in early 1960's – in Chiangmai

Back row from left: Steve Sterling; David Filbeck & son David; Mel Byers; Don Byers; Lillie, Harry Schaefer & son; Dorothy & Garland Bare, Lois & CW Callaway. Middle row: Deloris Filbeck, June Byers & Stephen, Roberta Byers & Jocelyn; 3 Schaefers; Dorothy Uhlig, Dorothy Sterling, Imogene Williams. Front Row: Schaefer son; Donny Byers; Mel Byers, Jr; Randy & Gordon Byers; Geoffrey Bare; Becky, Robin, Roseanne Byers; Sharon Sterling; Corinne Bare; Judy Sterling; Rinda Byers. All of our own children were away in school.

Lois, June, & Roberta had a daily vacation Bible school for the children during the conference



**Back: Mel, Garland, CW, Don
Mid: June, D Bare, Lois, Roberta
Front: Imogene, Dorothy Uhlig**



**With co-workers & children
about 1955 in Chiang Kham.**



**M. Byers family, Dorothy Uhlig,
Imogene, us. 1956-57**



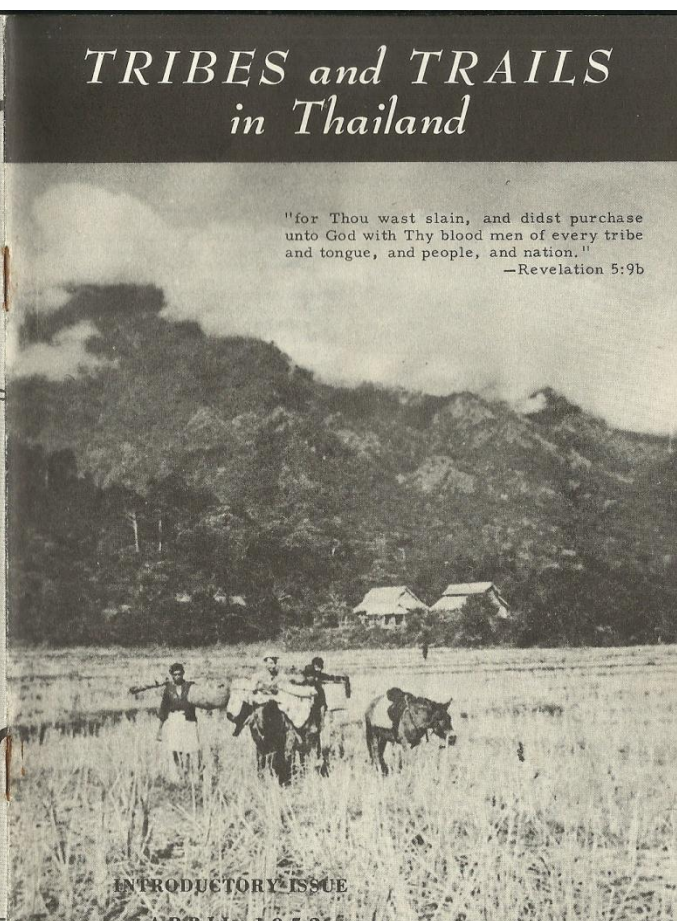
Dorothy & Imogene rode our horses 5 days over mountains to deliver Don & Roberta's baby- August 1958



Chinese shop-owner Winai & wife, Imogene, Dorothy, CW, Lois in Chiang Kham – 1994



**Back: Roseanne Byers & 2 daughters, Don, Mel, Imogene, Kathy Byers, Jerry Uhlig
Front: June, Erin, Roberta, Dorothy Uhlig, Kayla Stram
At Mel's home, Oregon 6/12/2004**



Front and back covers of the newsletter which we and all the missionaries pictured on the previous page published twice annually from April 1952 to Oct. 1964. This front picture was taken on the first exploratory trip Garland Bare and I took together to survey mountain tribes. My horses and our carriers are in the dry season rice field of a lowland tribal village in Nan Province. The village temple appears prominently at the base of the mountains. Those newsletters may be found at: <http://themiissionsnetwork.com/index.php/historical-missionary-ministry-information/219-history-of-missions-in-asia> Click on "Thailand" and then "Tribes and Trails – Thailand"

Imogene Williams

Imogene was born April 25, 1925 near Hodgenville, KY – the third of 8 children. In 1936 she gave herself to Jesus and 2 years later at a Christian Service Camp after a thrilling missionary message committed her life to missionary service. From High School she attended Cincinnati Bible Seminary and graduated in 1946 in the same class as Lois though they did not really become acquainted there. She learned from Dorothy Sterling of the need among the Lisu tribespeople and felt led of the Lord to prepare for that field. She began nurses training but stopped that in order to go to Lisuland with the Morse family. In Dec. 1948 she with Lora Banks set sail on a Norwegian freighter from Vancouver, B.C., Canada. They had to stay 6 weeks in Basel Mission Home in Hong Kong before they could fly to Kunming (as cargo) on a CNAC cargo plane that Eugene and Robert Morse had chartered. They arrived in Kunming, on February 18, 1949. In early 1952 she wrote, "Then 10 months later, China was closed to us and I sailed for Thailand with the C.W. Callaway family. For over two years now N. Thailand has been my home. Studying Thai, some Chinese and Yao, working among lepers, and making trips to the ...tribespeople has kept me occupied...I am especially burdened for the lepers and the Miao (Hmong) tribespeople. Your prayers are needed."

Imogene helped Dorothy in the clinic and assisted her at the birth of our Jeni in 1951 and David in 1953. She and Dorothy kept our children on occasions when Lois and I were both needing to be gone on a trip. They and Mel and June gathered supplies and our mail and arranged for carriers to take them to us at least once a month during the years we lived in the mountains.

Imogene moved to Pua, Nan in 1963 to become the housemother of 7 Hmong children in dorm there. She served as the house-mother in that hostel from 1963 for 28 years. In 1968 she adopted Tina whose father was N. Thai and mother was Lue. Tina got her name because she was so tiny and frail as a baby. Over the years Imogene cared for 5 other Thai babies until she found Hmong to adopt them. Since around 1990 Imogene has been living mainly in Lexington, Ky but has kept in close contact with her Hmong students and Pastor Banya and the Hmong church in Paklang, Pua. She has made numerous trips back to Thailand the last about Feb. 2008.



Imogene in 1940's



2003-05 in California
Dorothy U, CW, Imogene



First Hmong student to be baptized and to get a college degree



Imogene with Banya and his wife 2012

Dorothy Uhlig

Dorothy was born 11/19/1923. She graduated from Biola (Bible Institute of Los Angeles). She arrived in Thailand March 30, 1951 as the first new recruit to our small mission staff in Chiang Kham. She was a registered nurse and had taken special midwifery training. That was a special blessing to us because in June 1951 she, with Imogene's assistance, delivered our fourth child, Jeni. Two years later they delivered our youngest child, David. She delivered numerous other missionary and national babies over the years. Upon her arrival she and Imogene lived at the Sam Yaek house (house at "T" junction) and later opened clinic there. We moved south a few doors to a house where there is now a bank at the corner of the lane into CYDC.

She made many trips to Sope Waen village which was for leprosy patients. There she patiently and fearlessly treated the sores on feet, arms, legs of those afflicted. With such care and proper medications the disease itself has been practically eradicated there. She also taught Bible classes regularly there.

During the years our family lived in the Mien mountain village (1952-1960) she and Imogene often purchased and packed supplies and mail to send up to us by Thai carriers. Mel and June Byers often handled that chore also. Each of them at times visited us in our mountain home as well as ministering in other mountain and lowland villages.

When the refugee camp near Chiang Kham first opened about 1976 the most common ills were malaria and/or pink eye. No doctor had yet arrived at the camp so Dorothy had her clinic staff prepare medicine in small packets for those and other ailments. On Saturdays when

her clinic in town was normally closed she and we would go to the camp to distribute the medicine as seemed necessary. Time constraints did not allow for lengthy consultations but hundreds were treated as best as possible each week.

Her Chiang Kham "Christian Clinic" became widely known as a place of healing where costs were very minimal. Although she was not an MD she was lovingly and respectfully called "Khun Mor Do-ro-thi" (honorable doctor). Many came to the Lord through that ministry.

She was constantly involved in the evangelistic work. Each Sunday she would be in a Hmong, Mien, or Thai church to witness and serve wherever needed. She was much involved in the CYDC dorm for tribal students, the House of Refugee for at risk girls, the Home of Blessing for Hmong students, the area annual Christian conference, and other ministries local and national in Thailand. She was very well disciplined in all her activities and so humbly and faithfully served wherever she saw a need.

She took in and cared for 7 foster children: 3 boys (Chao, Dhang, Tao) and 1 girl (Bla) when their Hmong parents died, 2 northern Thai boys (Yut & Kwan) whose parents had died, and one N. Thai girl – Orathai. After a long illness she died on 6/24/2013. Thai, Hmong, Lu, and Mien Christians all wanted to have her buried in their church cemeteries. But it was learned that she had requested her burial to be at Sope Waen village where she had ministered so faithfully to those with leprosy. Huge crowds attended the nightly and final memorial services. Her foster children, CYDC house parents and students were all heavily involved.

For a memorial PowerPoint of her life & much more please visit: <http://dorothy.uhlig.muchloved.com/>



Dorothy 1951



Dorothy in 2012 - 89th birthday



Dorothy Mae Uhlig



**Dorothy with some of the Chiang Kham
Youth Development Center
girl students in 2013**

Garland & Dorothy Bare

Garland was born Jan. 7, 1930 in Batang on the Tibetan border in West China. In a letter 2/13/13 which I wrote to G & D Bare I said, *“Soon after I got your book about your Tibetan Childhood, Garland, I read it and I really enjoyed the book. Your book certainly brought back many happy memories to me. I believe God used your isolation, solitude, and physical frailties as a child to “make all things work together for good” in your life. I remember the time you said you had read through the dictionary 3 times and never could figure out the moral of the story. If you ever do find the moral please let me know!*

On November 29, 1951 Garland and Dorothy Bare arrived in Bangkok. They lived with us there until we made our first move to the Mien mountain village in 1952. In Dec. 1951 or early in 1952 Garland and I made exploratory/evangelistic trips through the border mountains north of Chiang Kham to Chiang Khong and south to Pua in Nan Province. After our first 7 months in that bamboo shack in Tzanfuville we lived with Bares until leaving for our first furlough in 1953. Garland and his uncle Edgar Nichols on a mountain trip met Nai Jan Tha, a N.Thai Shaman, whom they & Mel Byers later converted & disciple and who became a clinic helper.

Garland had a great sense of humor. Once he and I were on an evangelistic trip among Mien and Hmong in Nan Province. He called to mind the town named “Epson Downs” in England and said he was naming that trail “Upson Downs.” One mountain he had to climb frequently to reach one Hmong area he named “Unnecessary mountain” - because he never could not figure why it needed to be there! In March 1954 they moved to Pua, Nan and began work among the Hmong peoples. They started a hostel there for Hmong youth and in 1963 turned it over to Imogene Williams. Geoffrey Bare was born in 1955, Corinne in 1956, and Grace Eileen later. He was proficient in Thai and joined the team revising the Thai Bible. In 1964 en route to U.S. for pre-med course they stopped in Israel for a month or more to study the flora and fauna of Bible lands. He later wrote a book on that subject with his suggestions for the Thai words for animals and plants. It proved to be a valuable help in the Bible revision.

His father, Dr. Norton Bare, was a missionary doctor on the Tibetan border. Having seen the health needs of the Thai and tribal peoples he followed his father and also became a doctor. In early 1964, while preparing to return to U.S. for his pre-med course in Wheaton, IL. it seemed that kidney stones would upset his plans. He was in hospital on a stretcher en route to have surgery when he passed the stones – so surgery was canceled! That fall they returned to Thailand and Garland entered Chiang Mai Medical Center. He had no trouble when classes were taught in Thai but when the lecturer spoke in English his load was heavier since he had to explain lessons later to some of his fellow medical students. In March 1968 he graduated from medical course and King Phumiphon Adunyadet conferred the medical degrees to him and his fellow students. Lois and I, at his request, served as ‘in loco parentis.’ Later he served for a month at Tom Dooley hospital in Houei Sai, Laos. Then in 1969 he interned in Omaha, Nebraska. During 1970 he was in charge of C&MA Maranatha Clinic in Khon Khaen, N.E. Thailand. Then from 1971 to 74 he was in charge of the hospital in Pua Nan. But in 1974 because of Grace Eileen’s serious medical problems including the need for scoliosis treatment as well as special educational needs they returned to the U.S. long term. Their responsibilities 24/7 had also proved to be overwhelming for both Garland and Dorothy. He received a number of prestigious honors from the Thai government for his medical services. One was the Order of the White Elephant which was the highest honor given to a non-Thai citizen.

MY STORIES OF THAILAND

See “Introduction” for full list of chapters

Upon returning to U.S. Garland served for many years in medical practice, preaching, and ministry to medical students in Nebraska. During their missionary service they experienced many instances of the Lord’s providential care for their family and miraculous cures of patients. Those cases are related in his book **“Where are the Miracles?”** which is listed along with other resources at the end of this chapter.

In June 2015 Corinne wrote saying, “Dad’s body does not absorb nutrients and he has a twisted esophagus, which makes eating difficult, and severe osteoporosis. He is down to 102 lbs and not up to a lot of activity (very unusual for him). Mom is partially blind due to glaucoma, though it seems to be arrested, and has a slow-growing cancer in her salivary gland. Later she wrote that both her mother and father had been pronounced cancer free.” Praise God for that! On 2/5/17 she wrote, “Dad’s health is pretty bad right now. His lungs are flooding often ... February 22 is his next appointment I think and he was fearful of not making it that long. I had some bottled oxygen sent to him from Amazon and he says that helps immensely. It makes his heart race, but he is able to slow it by massaging his throat. He did gain some weight and is up to 86 lbs. Needless to say I’m quite concerned and sorry I cannot be closer to help more, but I’m thankful many closer neighbors are stepping up to help.”



Garland, Dorothy 1951
at Bible House, Bangkok



Garland & Dorothy
Corinne & Geoffrey
Around 1960



Front: Garland & Dorothy Jean
Back: Corinne, Grace Eileen, Geoffrey 2013



Back Row: David Filbeck, Corinne, Grace Eileen, Geoffrey
 Front Row: Carmen Filbeck, Garland & Dorothy Bare; Deloris and Cathy Filbeck
 In 2013

Margaret Alldridge

She had prepared to work with Dorothy Sterling and the Morse family on the Tibetan border and spent several months in Burma in 1952 seeking a visa. Failing to get a visa as had we in 1948 she flew to Bangkok toward the end of 1952 and joined us. But in 1953 she married Alistair Macdonald and they then served with Missionary Aviation Fellowship in Africa.

Mel & June Byers

Melvert Wendell Byers was born in Oregon on August 19, 1924. June Anna Marie Warden Byers was born in Santa Barbara, CA on March 7, 1926.

He graduated from Benson School for boys (high school) and from Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Oregon. He then attended Anderson College (now University) in Indiana for a year. Late in the 1940's he went as a missionary to Kunming, West China. There he studied Chinese and began ministry. But China was closing with the communist takeover. In 1949 he left China with Laverne Morse on a six-month trip by caravan into Tibet. From there they went down the Salween valley and over the rugged mountains and jungles into Burma. Finally they met up there with Laverne's family who were then ministering to the Rawang mountain tribal group. After his return from that harrowing trip to America he earned a Certificate in Missionary Medicine from Biola in L.A., CA. There he met June and they were married on June 5, 1952.

Mel & June arrived in Chiang Kham in 1952. They rented and lived in the house which years later became the Christian Clinic owned and run by Dorothy Uhlig. They along with Imogene Williams and Dorothy Uhlig sent our mail and groceries to us during the years we lived in the then isolated mountain village we called Tzanfuville. Mel served mainly among Northern Thai and Lue people. He was a good Bible student and a popular down to earth preacher. He related well to the peoples among whom he served and worked alongside of them at times of rice harvest and in other ways. He wrote good articles for Christian papers. In our local missionary Bible study and prayer sessions he always shared meaningful and challenging messages when it was his turn to lead. I recall that it was Mel who taught us the song

MY STORIES OF THAILAND

*I'm so glad I'm a part of the Family of God,
I've been washed in the fountain,
cleansed by His blood!
Joint heirs with Jesus as we travel this sod,
For I'm part of the family, The Family of God.*

See "Introduction" for full list of chapters
*You will notice we say "brother and sister"
'round here, It's because we're a family and
these are so near;
When one has a heartache, we all share the tears,
And rejoice in each victory in this family so dear.*

Mel helped to develop that family spirit among us missionaries and our kids there in Thailand. Our own kids learned to look upon the other missionaries in that area as "uncles and aunts" and the other kids as "cousins." When Mel and June were in the States on a furlough their children were being introduced for the first time to Mel and June's siblings as "uncle" and "aunt." One of their youngest daughters started crying and wailed, "But I want to see **my 'real aunt' – Aunt Dorothy.**"

Mel & June's oldest daughter, Rinda, wrote me this, "Dad worked closely in partnership with 'Aunt Dorothy' (Uhlig) in the establishment and growth of the Christian leprosy village near Chiang Kham, not only in teaching, preaching, song services, and Christmas plays, but in actual hands-on nursing care of the lepers....She and Dad amputated the gangrenous leg of one of the older lepers in the village....and the amputation was successful; they saved the man's life..." Rinda said that Mel "established the very first youth camps in Chiang Kham....I think this was perhaps truly.. his most long-lasting, most enduring contribution to the missions work..."

In 1959 Mel and June came with their children to spend a brief vacation in the bamboo & thatch shack which Lelan, Mark, and Thai workers had built at what they called "Hidden Valley." I baptized our 3 youngest (Joyce, Jeni, & David) in the pool there. And Mel baptized Rinda. Eventually Mel and June had 10 children – 5 boys and 5 girls. As you can imagine June had her hands full with as many children as she had fingers! She managed well though by giving the children – even the smallest – jobs to do. One day she had told little Rene to tidy up her room and to do another small task or two. Rene straightened up, put her hands on her hips, and declared, "**Well!! I just can't do everything!!**" I wonder where she might have heard that ?

They built a simple building in front of their house for a combination schoolhouse and guesthouse. June taught their children there. Our daughter Jeni helped with that teaching briefly when she was home from her own school. Mel was a good student of astronomy and built a sizeable telescope in their front yard. It served as a good aid in teaching their children astronomy and also opening Gospel witness to neighbors. Many years later he preached at one of our earliest youth camps in U.S. about the wonders of God's great universe.

It must have been in the 1960s that Mel, Don, and I made a trip over the mountains for a number of days from Chiang Kham to Pua and back. One day after dark we were still walking on the narrow trail when suddenly Mel screamed out. He had been bitten by a snake. Don and I worked through much of the night using our little snake-bite kits to suck out the poison and to help him as we could. With daybreak we made it down to a lowland village and rented an oxcart to carry Mel on for much of that day to Chiang Kham. The Thai told us that it must have been a short but poisonous snake that bit him and Mel later told us it was the most painful experience he had had. His leg was much swollen and painful for several weeks at least.

Early in 1969 the entire downtown market area in Chiang Kham went up in flames. Our Mark and Mel carried water to put out flames at the brewery for if it had caught fire the explosions would have caused even more destruction than there was. They also risked their lives by saving some goods from the store of our Chinese merchant friend Wi-Nai across the street from the brewery.

Because they had a large family and there was a very real threat of a communist invasion into North Thailand then they returned to U.S. in 1969. Mel then ministered in several small churches in Oregon until 2009 when he retired in order to care full time for June who was in ailing health. June went to be with the Lord on April 14, 2011. He continued to minister in churches and mentor others but suffered with mild arthritis and chronic atrial fibrillation. Rinda added, "After June's death, Dad was lovingly cared for, as his care needs increased, by his oldest grand daughter, Daphne, Becky Ann's oldest child, a professional caretaker, who took time from her own busy life to help her "grandpa" without charging for her services. Daphne was WONDERFUL in helping Dad in his last years. The family cannot thank and appreciate her enough!"

Mel passed peacefully into the Lord's presence after a short hospital stay on Nov. 16. 2016. His obituary says he "enjoyed painting, writing, astronomy, motorcycles and anything that would get him to into the 'Great Outdoors.' He loved the stillness of the wilderness, the power of the Ocean, and the challenge of the next mountain to hike. He had an unwavering dedication and love for God, his wife, family and any person that passed his way. He touched many lives, unknowingly, in the course of his own long life." He wrote:

"Quietly and reverently I took one more peek through my telescope. There in all its beauty, nestled softly against the black velvet of space was "Andromeda" silently and boldly giving evidence to the majesty of God" July 2001

"The reward of this earthly sojourn, no matter how restless and troubled it may be, leads to a joyful end." March, 2002

Mel is survived by his 10 children, Rinda, Rebecca, Melvert Jr., Robin, Rosanne, Steven, Nathan, Renee, Winston, and Jonathan and by over 60 Grandchildren and Great grandchildren.

In late 1950's and 1960's whenever we were in Chiang Kham our own kids had great times with Mel & June's kids.

Rinda wrote, "We children...invented a special game of tag...We used to play it endlessly in the long twilights and late afternoons; we called it 'Tiger.' ... it was enormous fun....Tiger had lots of places to hide; you never knew exactly where Tiger would be lurking or when Tiger would come out, roaring and snarling, claws ready to 'tag' somebody! Then all tired out, we would often sit around a small fire, fire flies flickering in the long dark nights, with the stars bright overhead, and listen to Dad tell stories from the Bible. We especially enjoyed his stories about Elijah! After all, at that time, real tigers lived in the mountain jungles not so very far from us. We also played Thai versions of tag...and of blind man's bluff, and drop the handkerchief and jacks as well as endless soccer and badminton games and bike races...I remember Lelan taking both Jeni and I together on bike rides through that huge bamboo grove between our homes...I remember camping out in tents and makeshift houses we would build, playing going to market, and more storytelling, this time from Jeni!"

Here you can read Mel's & June's obituaries:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/statesmanjournal/obituary-print.aspx?n=melvert-byers&pid=182656823>

<http://www.macyandson.com/obituary/June-Anna-Marie-Byers/Sheridan-OR/920553>

Rinda opened a web site Feb. 2017 in memory of her parents- <https://sites.google.com/site/meljunebyers/home>
It has many pictures and notes about their family and also links to us and others of their co-workers.

MY STORIES OF THAILAND



Mel & June in early 1950s



Mel & June at 50th wedding anniversary



Mel, June about 1952



Imogene with Mel & June's children early 1960's

See "Introduction" for full list of chapters



All ten of the children in Portland, OR 1969



Mel, 4 daughters, 2 sons providing music for Thai at Christmas 1960's



**Back: Nathan,Roseanne,Steve,Rinda,Jon -1988
Front: Mel Jr.,Renee,Robin,Becky,Winslow**



**Mel & June 50th wedding anniversary 2002
with all 10 children – photo credit Doug Windle**

Don & Roberta Byers

Donald Herbert Byers was born Oct. 9, 1926 in Portland, Oregon. Roberta Jean Traxler Byers was born Aug. 31, 1929 in Sacramento, California. They met at Northwest Christian College in Eugene, OR where both were students and were married on 9/3/1948. He received a master's degree from Oregon State University.

They arrived in Thailand in 1954 and lived in Ban Gorm, Chiang Kham to study Thai. In 1956 they moved to Nan Province to work with The Khamu tribe. They sometimes rode up the Nan river in a passenger boat to Tha Wang Pha and then on in their own smaller boat up a branch river to their home there. I recall one trip that we traveled over the mountains to visit them there and the Bares and Imogene in Pua. Don and Roberta's house was up on strong post stilts – and it was a good thing because I saw a few big scorpions there (biggest I ever saw in Thailand). When Roberta was nearing time for birth of Jocelyn, their third child, Dorothy and Imogene borrowed our horses and travelled five days over the mountains to deliver her.

After returning to America in 1964, Don earned a Master's degree from Oregon State University. He pastored and preached in a small church in Oregon for a few years while also teaching in a high school and earning his Master's. His niece Rinda added, "He was a very intelligent, gifted man. His sermons were always shorter than Mel's but just as interesting and persuasive. Both he and Roberta had excellent singing voices."

Then for 15 years he and Roberta served SE Asian refugees, especially of the Khumu peoples, in Central California. They established the first Khumu Christian Church in Stockton, CA. Don taught and led the San Jose Christian College extension program, in which Lois and I also taught. Two Khumu and several Mien obtained their bachelor degrees through that program. Don suffered from Parkinson's & Alzheimer's diseases and also severe osteoporosis for several years before his death on Sept. 10, 2009. Roberta courageously fought breast cancer for over 10 years but died of it on April 17, 2014. Her obituary pays tribute to her in these words:

"Roberta was a woman committed to faith and family. She had a love of music, and enjoyed playing the piano, trombone and marimba. All her life she loved flowers and could name them all. She found great joy planting and maintaining her many gardens. She was encouraging, gentle and kind, and everyone who met her considered her a friend. She had a gift for making everyone feel comfortable and welcome. During the past 15 years, Roberta struggled through three bouts of cancer. But in the midst of pain and suffering, she maintained a spirit of courage, faith and love. She was a strong and beautiful woman. Roberta is survived by her six children, Don Jr. of Eugene, Randy of Chiang Kham, Thailand, Gordy of Park City, Utah, Jocelyn Stram of Creswell, Ardella Fry of Lexington Park, Md., and Theresa Lynch of Rancho Cordova, Calif.; 16 grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. We will all miss her beautiful smile, her love and her tenderness."

Around 2012 when Joyce and I were driving to Scappoose, Oregon we stopped to visit Roberta Byers. Mel Byers drove 2 hours to join us for a delicious Thai meal and recollections from happy times together in Thailand. Nice to have Imogene Williams call to talk with us while all of us were there.

Here are the obituaries for Don and for Roberta:

<http://www.tributes.com/obituary/show/Donald-H.-Byers-86862537>

http://www.gazettetimes.com/news/local/obituaries/roberta-jean-byers/article_82c26b42-caa8-11e3-bc23-0019bb2963f4.html



Don & Roberta in 1950s
Engagement photo



Don & Roberta



Don, Roberta, children-1960s
Boarding train in Lampang



Don/Roberta on left back in 1959
Sisters "Min" & Elnora center
Mel & June on right back
Parents Virgil & Maude Byers front



Roberta, CW, Mel around 2012
at Roberta's home in
Creswell, OR

Dr. David L. & Deloris Filbeck

The following is from their family web site <http://www.cmothailand.net/history.html>

“David Filbeck was a student at Ozark Christian College in Joplin Missouri when he heard a missionary from Thailand (Garland Bare) tell about the Lua tribal people living in the jungles of northern Thailand. David decided right then that he would be the one to go. **David and Deloris Filbeck** came to Thailand in 1960 to work with a minority hill tribe people never before reached with the Gospel. The Lua people lived in the mountain jungles of northern Thailand along the border with Laos. David's journey to preach the Gospel to these people required many steps. He had to learn Central Thai, then Northern Thai and finally the Lua language. But this last language required more work as there was no written language. The Filbecks spent 10 years living with the Lua, learning their language, culture and sharing the Gospel Message. There were a few converts, but many died from disease and others were persuaded to return to spirit worship. Then, to add to that, war came to the mountains.

“It is estimated that there are over 60,000 Lua tribal people in Thailand. Over the past 50 years there have been many baptisms resulting in 7 churches being established. More than 40 young people of the Lua tribe have been trained through Lanna Theological Center. Many are serving in churches as ministers and teachers. Several are serving in Christian organizations. Two graduates have been elected as headmen of their villages. In 1962 David began linguistic work in the Lua language in anticipation of translating the Scriptures into the Mal dialect. During this time David earned the MA and PhD degrees in Linguistics at Indiana University. In 1994 David completed the translation of the New Testament into the Mal dialect of the Lua language. For many years, outside of one other group, David and Deloris were the only missionaries to this tribe. Deloris, who was a nurse, assisted at the hospital in Pua, Nan Province where Dr. Garland Bare was chief of staff during the time they were in Pua during the 1970's.

“By 1974, The Communists had infiltrated into northern Thailand. War was raging in the mountains. The Lua were completely cut off. In addition, the Filbeck's children were getting ready for high school which required sending them out of the country. The Filbecks were seeking God's direction, when David received an invitation to teach at Puget Sound College of the Bible in Seattle Washington. The decision was made. The Filbecks returned to the U.S. During that time, David taught at several Christian Colleges and helped to start Pioneer Bible Translators. It was a profitable time, but God was not finished with the Filbeck's calling to Thailand..... **there was more to come....**

“In 1982, God called David & Deloris back to Thailand. This time they settled in Chiang Mai as their youngest daughter was still in school. Their three older children decided to follow and spend some time in the land of their childhood. That year was a special year, not just for the family, but for each of the Filbeck's children. David A, Ken, and Carmen, all heard their own personal call into missions. David immediately began making trips to the province where the Lua lived. Over the next 15 years, he would complete the translation of the **New Testament in the Mal dialect** and establish **7 churches** among the Lua. As the Lua began to respond to the Gospel, David realized that there was a need to train leaders for this young Church. So, a year after returning to Thailand, the Filbecks founded the **Center for Biblical Studies**.

“CBS served to teach and equip young tribal Christians from the various hill tribes of northern Thailand. Many of them were from remote villages without secondary education. So, in addition to studying the Bible, they attended night school to complete their high school diploma. Over the years, CBS has trained dozens of young people who have returned to their villages and became strong Christian leaders. However, in 2003, realizing that life was changing in Southeast Asia, the Filbecks made another crucial decision. In 2003, CBS merged with another school to form **Lanna Theological Center**. Today, LTC is a growing 4 year Leadership Training program with students from 10 different linguistic groups and two countries. Today, there are LTC alumni working in church leadership, church planting, and various kinds of NGO organizations.”

Today, all **four children** are involved in some aspect of Christian Mission to the Orient.

David A & Sharon Filbeck have served with CMO since 1985. They moved to Thailand in 1987 David A serves as Vice President of CMO. David & Sharon are teaching at Lanna Theological Center. David is overseeing the construction of a new campus. He is also writing Bible commentaries in the Thai Language. You may contact them at: dsfilbeck@yahoo.com

Carmen Filbeck M.A. In 2004, God answered her prayers to return to Thailand. Carmen currently serves as the Director of **Lanna Theological Center**. You can contact her at: cLfilbeck@gmail.com

Dr. Ken Filbeck's dream was to return to the mission field as a medical doctor. In 2008, he launched **Community of Blessing**. COB leads teams from the US and Australia to conduct mobile medical clinics in rural remote villages.

David and Deloris officially retired in March 2013. And due to David's advancing Parkinson's disease they returned to U.S. and lived for a few years in and near Joplin, Missouri. But in early 2017 getting homesick for Thailand their children helped them to move back. Carmen wrote on 2/2/17 “Dad's parkinson is troublesome for him.... it is advanced, so he does struggle with stiff muscles and gets very tired. His voice and speech as not strong, so he is not able to really teach or preach. His hands shake and his eyes get tired, so writing is not easy

MY STORIES OF THAILAND

any more. But, they are both so very glad to be back in an environment that they know and love.

Today, Dad was able to visit with some students from across the river and they all seemed to enjoy it very much. We took them to Pua last month and they had some good reunions with folks. Special times. " You can contact them at: ddfилbeck@gmail.com

See "Introduction" for full list of chapters



Deloris & David with
Carmen & David A in 1960's



Dr. David A. and Sharon Filbeck



1982 Return to Thailand
David L. & Deloris Filbeck in 1963
With Carmen and David A.



Carmen Filbeck



Dr. David L.& Deloris



Dr. Ken Filbeck



2012-13 Students & Faculty of Lanna Theological Center



Back Row (2&3) Cathy, David Filbeck (6&7) Wanda Jennings & Deloris Filbeck in 2011
Front Row: Don Rulison & Dorothy Uhlig in wheelchairs At Dorothy's 88th birthday party.

Although the following missionaries were also in our team they served in other areas where we were not able to get so closely acquainted with them. Thus I did not get to know them as intimately as those previously mentioned.

Dorothy Sterling

Dorothy Sterling arrived in Thailand in 1958. She had previously served among the Lisu people on the China/Tibet border and in Burma with the Morse families. After having to evacuate from there she served for a time in Alaska. She worked with the Lua tribe in Nan for awhile and then worked in Chiang Mai.

Her heart went out to orphans and she adopted 4 over the years. David and Judy were both Lisu. Sharon and Steve were Thai. Sharon was at the orphanage in Bangkok sponsored by Bangkok Christian Hospital. She was healthy but had had meningitis and people were afraid to adopt her thinking that it might be lingering. The orphanage was closing down and there were only three babies left. Steve, however, been left on someone's doorstep and he was taken to Suan Dok hospital in Chiang Mai

She had bad asthma for many years and died in Nov. 1972 from an asthmatic attack.

Harry & Lillie Schaefer

Harry & Lillie Schaeffer upon having to leave India worked among Indians in Bangkok from 1960-63.

Virgilio & Esther De los Santos

Virgilio and Esther de los Santos arrived in Thailand from the Philippines in 1970. I met them in Bangkok and helped with their initial introduction to Thailand. They have worked mainly among Thai in Nan & Chiang Mai. Her letter of Jan. 2015 states that they are currently overseeing 6 churches, a children's home, and a day care center as well as training leaders.

J. Russell and Gertrude Morse family and associates

Russell & Gertrude Morse were our senior missionaries when we were in China so I have written of them in Chapter 5. They worked mainly among the Lisu in China. After being forced from China they served Lisu, Rawang, and others in extreme northern Burma. But after having to leave Burma they came to Thailand where their vast work among many peoples has been centered in Chiang Mai. We have had good fellowship with them there on many occasions but have not had such close association as when in China. As mentioned earlier Lois and I had originally hoped to work among the Rawang in Burma.

We never were able to reach that area but I did officiate at the marriage in Chiang Mai of Joni Morse to Nangsar who is Rawang. Here is an article they published online on 7/28/15. It is titled "WE HAVE THIS TREASURE - Finding Our Place In God's Story."

"The Rawang people became Christians through a mass people movement to Christ in the 1940s. Like many of the other people groups who lived in the area where India, Burma and China meet, the Rawang were animists, practicing an elaborate system of appeasing evil spirits. Yet, deeply embedded within their folklore, was a belief in the existence of a supreme being who created all things. The Rawang not only had a creation story, they had a story about a universal flood that once inundated the world. They also had a story that told of how the Creator had once given them his Word. As the story goes, the Rawang received God's instructions written on pieces of leather. Upon arriving back home after their meeting with God, the Rawang delegation, tired from their long journey, left their heavy baskets on the porch. They decided they would share God's words with their people in the morning. When they awoke the next morning, they were horrified to discover that the dogs had eaten up the leather documents during the night! According to the Rawang, that was how they lost all that God had given them. Between 1943-1945, the Morse family, who had been serving as missionaries in China since 1921, helped the U.S. Army Air Force organize a search and rescue effort to locate crash sites and rescue surviving crewmen. My father Robert, who crisscrossed much of this rugged terrain which came to be known as the "Hump" by the brave WWII pilots, regularly shared the gospel in all the villages he visited. One of the people groups he shared with were the Rawang. He was amazed at how God's Word resonated with much of their worldview. Suddenly, not only were their own stories being confirmed, but they were hearing an expanded account of God, and His desire to relate with them. Like the Bereans of old (Acts 17:11), the Rawang received God's message with great eagerness, and wanted to examine the Scriptures to see if what they were hearing was really true. If it was true, then they wanted to have their "lost books" restored, so that they could in turn share God's Word with others. It was this receptivity of the Rawang which motivated my father to devote his life to translating the Bible into their language. So what is your story? How does it intersect with God's story? If the two stories have any point of contact -- then that is your space. That is where you enter into the picture! God not only has a place in His story for every people group, He also has a place in His story for every person. He has a place for you -- can you locate yourself in God's story?"

A number of other missionaries from Christian Churches and Churches of Christ have in more recent years served in Thailand but we have not had opportunity to meet them since we moved back to U.S. in 1985

In this chapter I have sought to emphasize the importance of unity, harmony, and cooperation among missionaries in an area. We had that with our co-workers. Even though those closest to our location worked primarily with other people groups, not with the Mien, they were a great spiritual encouragement and aided us in many practical ways. We in turn tried to assist them as possible.

SOME RESOURCES ABOUT US AND CO-WORKERS IN THAILAND

BOOKS

CALLAWAYS The book “Mother Teacher” by Joyce Bhang (now Brooks) was based on much that Lois had written about our experiences especially while we were living among Mien in the mountains during the 1950’s and our later work with Mien refugees from Laos. It can be purchased from <http://www.amazon.com/>

Garland & Dorothy Bare The fascinating story of his early life on the Tibetan border is told in “A Tibetan Childhood” by Dr. Garland Bare 2012. And “Where are the Miracles? experiences & testimony of a medical doctor on the mission field” 2015. Both were published by Lifechange Media www.lifechange-media.com Both are available from Dr. Garland Bare, 141 Friendship Circle, Joplin, MO 64801 or baregardor@yahoo.com

David & Deloris Filbeck David has written several good missions books. In his self-published book “CALLED ! To Preach Where Christ Was Not Known” he tells the wonderful story of their pioneer service among the Lua (Tin) of northern Thailand. “YES, GOD OF THE GENTILES, TOO – The Missionary Message of the Old Testament” published 1994 by the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL 60187.

Eugene Morse Exodus to a Hidden Valley, Memoirs from Burma, Reader’s Digest Press, E.P. Dutton Co., New York, 1974

In the book “Realism in Missions” by Al Hammond, Missionary to Japan there are articles by Lois and a number of our co-workers and friends. Lois also for a number of years wrote the devotional page for a periodical mission paper which Al edited.

LAND OF SMILES by W.A.R. Wood, British consul in Chiang Mai, Thailand for 20-30 years early in the 20th century. Printed at Krungdebarnagar Press, Bangkok 1932.

ON THE WEB

My own web site is www.motherteacher.org It is managed by my oldest son Lelan. On that site you can find some of Lois’ poems and other writings. My own memoirs and prayer letters are posted there as I write them. There is also a link to a few resources about the Mien.

Imogene Williams <http://broadwaychristian.com/ministries/missions/> This has a good video of her life. Scroll to bottom of the page to just above the pictures and click on Imogene Williams.

Dorothy Uhlig There are 3 links about Dorothy on www.motherteacher.org

Filbeck Family <http://www.cmothailand.net/lanna-theological-center.html>

Prayer letters from us and a number of our associates may be found at:
<http://themissionsnetwork.com/index.php/historical-missionary-ministry-information/219-history-of-missions-in-asia>

On that site some that relate to our own stories from Asia can be found by clicking on these:

Tribes and Trails – Thailand This is a series of papers we and our co-workers jointly published twice a year from 1952 to 1964. They include articles by us, Bares, Byers, Filbeck, J. Russell & Gertrude Morse, Imogene Williams, Dorothy Uhlig, Dorothy Sterling, Schaeffers.

III. OUR FORWARDING AGENTS

I cannot begin to express our gratitude to the many individuals and churches who lovingly supported us with funds and prayers over the years. Our forwarding agents worked tirelessly to handle many of the business affairs on our behalf. They received and deposited donations and reported to the contributors and to us and saw to the printing and distribution of our prayer letters. How could we ever have managed without them? Those who served in this capacity are:

1946 to 1957 –(11 years)	Laura Alice Records Callaway – (My mother – Canadian, TX)
1957 to 1972 - (15 years)	Genevieve Webb (Wife of Leslie Webb – Canadian, TX)
1972 to 2005 - (33 years)	Bennette Rhoades (wife of Otis Rhoades – Amarillo, TX)
2005 to the present	Steve Callaway (my nephew and husband of Lissa Callaway)

5108 McCarty, Amarillo, TX 79110



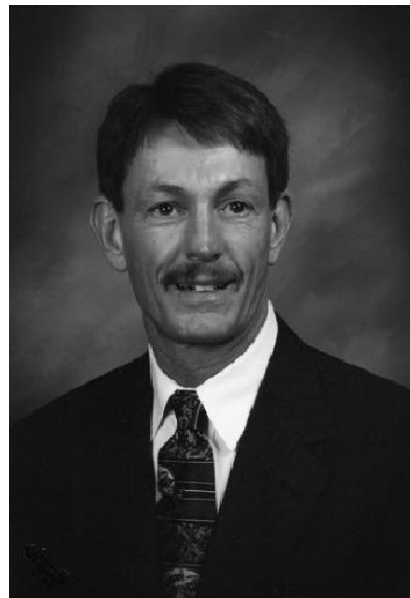
My parents in 1967



Genevieve Webb & CW



Bennette Rhoades



Steve Callaway, nephew