



STAFF MEMBERS Wayne Smith, Judy MacDonald and Ruth Hargreaves show good riding

style as they head off for the round-up chapel service at the Peoples Church Ranch.

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Round-up chapel services draw crowds to Church Ranch

Every Sunday morning from September to June some 100 people put on their favorite pair of jeans or coveralls and riding boots—then head for chapel services near Rockwood.

At most churches in the area, these individuals would be looked upon with some degree of repugnance for entering a house of God in such casual attire.

But at the Peoples Church Ranch—located one mile south of 15 Sideroad on Fifth Line—what a person wears to worship the Lord is not important.

All that matters is that they have taken the trouble to make their way into the country so early in the morning—and that they are anxious to learn more about the gospel and spread the word of God to non-believers.

"Round-up"
Though chapel services don't get underway until about 11 a.m. Ranch director Bruce Chapman, his wife Chris and their four children are up and about by 4:30 a.m. to begin preparations for the day.

Some of the staff members (who attend high school or college during the week) spend Saturday night at the Ranch and are up helping the Chapmans by 6 a.m.

The other staff members arrive at the Ranch between 7 and 8 a.m. to do whatever they can to help the Chapmans before the congregation starts to show up for the Sunday "round-up."

The "Round-up For God", as it is called, begins about 9:30 a.m.

Like informality
At this time, many of the people choose to park their cars a mile north of the Ranch and either hop a horse-drawn sleigh or hay wagon or mount one of the waiting horses as a method of transportation down the rugged road to the Ranch.

Others have been promised to Mr. Chapman for use in the round-up during the coming months.

Many of the horses have been given to the Ranch by friends or neighbors who wanted to be sure an aging mare had a good home—or by members of the congregation who felt a desire to contribute something to the round-up.

Others have donated such items as bales of hay which can be put to use at the Ranch during the course of the year.

"We never take up collections," Mr. Chapman explained. "People give as they wish."

Sunday school
Upon arrival at the 200-acre Ranch with rustic wooden cabins dotting its rolling hills, members of the congregation break into small groups according to age and riding ability.

The younger children receive Sunday school instruction inside the log building known as the "Chuck House" while the teenagers and adults enjoy a period of fellowship horseback riding along the trails of the Ranch.

A fire roars on the hearth, warming the youngsters gathered in a semi-circle on the bare beamed floor to sing songs and hear Bible stories.

Two staff members—Paul Hubert and John Hewitt—give riding safety lessons to other newcomers inside the "Chuck House."

Cocoa and cookies
After about an hour, everyone is re-united on benches around the crackling fireplace as hot cocoa, coffee and a variety of home-baked cookies are served by Mrs. Chapman and some of the other women.

western round-up chapel services, aided by his 19-year-old son Dave and staff member Dale Redford.

The men wear blue jeans as they read passages from the Bible and interpret them for the congregation.

A group of 10 young musicians accompany the churchgoers to such tunes as "Oh! What a Beautiful Morning," "The Round-Up For God Is On" and "The Lord Is My Shepherd."

An overhead projector is always used during services where lyrics to songs are made visible for the congregation to follow and important points to remember from the day's sermon are jotted down.

Draws parallels
Another special feature of chapel services at the Peoples Church Ranch is that Mr. Chapman strives to explain complicated Biblical passages in everyday terminology—and gives examples of how the stories told by the Apostles apply to daily life.

The prayer meeting is indeed a live service just as it is intended to be.

Participation is encouraged
on the part of children as well as adults, and it appears the people appreciate the opportunity to take an active role in the Sunday worship.

This is evidenced by the fact that between 100 and 130 individuals turn out for services at the Ranch on a regular basis today compared to just 50 when the chapel services began three years ago.

"Spiritual home"
According to Mr. Chapman, the Ranch is the "spiritual home" of many of those who attend the Sunday services.

"A lot of the people who come here made their first-time decisions to receive Christ while attending camp here during the summer months or during round-ups in the past," he explained.

Mr. Chapman said 105 campers made first-time decisions to accept Christ as their personal Savior during their 1975 summer season at the Ranch. And 37 others openly admitted they had drifted far from God but came back to Him during that time.

Still others experiencing a variety of problems such as loneliness, frustration and

rebellion were prompted by the Holy Spirit to approach some trusted staff member for counsel, Mr. Chapman said.

"Even before the summer session was over, we were receiving letters of gratitude from parents," he related.

One father wrote, "There is so much pressure here in the city, it is difficult to direct young people. What God has done for my son this year at The Ranch, I know will influence his life and guide him in the years ahead."

A 10-year-old camper expressed much the same thought.

"Before I came to The Ranch I didn't really believe in God," the child wrote. "But after I read the Gospel and saw Christ in you (Mr. Chapman) and your staff members, it all added up. There's got to be a God!"

"Now I really do believe in God and am a Christian," the letter went on. "I'm going to need Him a lot to help me in my school work. I'm going to start reading my Bible more often so I won't slip away from God at all."



BOUND FOR CHURCH: This sleigh packed with hay and youngsters isn't headed for a barnyard. The children are being transported from the corner of Fifth Line and No. 15 Sideroad to the Peoples Church Ranch a mile down the road. There they ride horses, attend Sunday school classes and

participate in roundup chapel services together. A team of horses usually pulls the hay wagon down the road to the ranch, but when it's snowy or slippery a chain-tired tractor is used instead.

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SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS: Nancy Redford leads primary students in a sing-along by the fireplace during a Sunday School session inside



SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS: Nancy Redford leads primary students in a sing-along by the fireplace during a Sunday School session inside the "Chuck House". Holding up the lyrics for the children to follow are staff members Tim MacDonald and Brenda Ralph.

Bruce Chapman Director of Peoples Ranch heads up 'family ministry'

Bruce Chapman has been director of the Peoples Church Ranch since 1972 and considers it "a real privilege" to be involved in a ministry of this nature.

A third generation elder of the Peoples Church of Toronto (which is committed to reaching the unsaved for Christ and turning Christians from worldliness to spirituality) Mr. Chapman said it was "a very natural move" for him to take over the Ranch ministry when the original director left five years ago.

"My wife Chris and I have always been interested in helping people—particularly young people—and our job as directors of the Ranch provides us with an excellent opportunity to do this," he said.

Had own business
Prior to the opening of the Peoples Church Ranch in Rockwood in 1969, the Chapmans had been busy operating their own business and raised horses in the Nobleton-Schomberg area.

But, upon hearing of the newest outreach of the church's missionary work at the 200-acre Ranch, they decided to offer their service free of charge and on a part-time basis.

out at the Ranch whenever home from his studies.

Dave, age 19, graduated from Acton High School just over a year ago, and is involved in playing junior hockey in the area. His father says he "draws people to him like a magnet" and is a favorite counsellor of the children at the Ranch. Dave is also Program Director for the camping season and assists in the round-up services.

The Chapman's only daughter is 16-year-old Karen, a Grade 11 honor student at Acton High.

Athletic champ
For the past two years, she has been named the outstanding female athlete at the school. A certified swimmer, Karen is on the pool staff at the Ranch and is active in other camp projects there as well. She is also a qualified horsewoman and, according to her father, is one of the best counsellors at the Ranch.

Mr. Chapman said the round-up chapel services are still a relatively new concept and only came into being two and a half years ago.

That is, chapel services had always been held during the summer months so campers could attend Sunday worship while on vacation at the Ranch. Dave is also the summer ended, so did the chapel services.

However, out-of-town vacationers were not the only ones who attended the special summer prayer services.

Many of the Chapman's neighbors also enjoyed taking part in the lively services—and it was at their request, Mr. Chapman decided to continue them year-round.



BRUCE CHAPMAN is director of the Peoples Church Ranch in Rockwood which serves as a year-round campground and as a place for Western round-up chapel services on Sundays.

Feature

by Ann Hauprich-Nielsen



LINDA AND DON CUTHBERT of Campbellville enjoy a walk in the snow before round-up chapel services at the Peoples Church Ranch. Parents to seven children (aged five to 15), the Cuthberts appreciate the opportunity to have this quiet time together while their children learn Christian values at Sunday school class.