

# REMEMBERING BROTHER HOYT



WILLIAM HOYT NELSON  
(Jan. 18, 1930 – Sept. 25, 2011)

Displaying a warm smile, Hoyt Nelson seemed to always have one of those welcoming faces for everyone he came in contact with. For those who knew him; this man was a mirror image of the Fruits of the Spirit as described in Galatians 5:22-23. A person of joy, gentleness, goodness and kind words who lived his faith everyday; Mr. Nelson encouraged others to do the same. His patience and temperance were evident whether serving as a gospel minister, missionary, newspaper editor, author, camp director or any of the many other interests he pursued. Hoyt Nelson was a true Christian servant resolved to make a difference in the world and because of his faith in God, and service to others, many lives have been changed for good.

In the late sixties, a great partnership was born as Mr. Nelson and the College Avenue Church of Christ in Enterprise, Alabama began laying the groundwork for Camp Wiregrass. It started as an idea in several minds which grew into a dream and finally because of the hearts, voices, and determined physical labor of those pioneers, a once forgotten strip of land became a wonderful dream come true for thousands of young people. To date, the camp has hosted over 27,000 young people offering them a wholesome camp experience, a chance to make new friends, and the opportunity to learn about God's word. Mr. Nelson recorded the beginning and early days of Camp Wiregrass in his book, God Smiled and Wiregrass Was. For more information on Mr. Nelson's book please refer to the history page on this website.

On Sunday, September 25, 2011, Hoyt Nelson passed from this life at the age of 81. Preceded in death by His wife, Gueldine Nelson, Mr. Nelson's survivors include a son, Ken and wife Bertha of Moulton, Alabama; a daughter, Monya Deen Claborn and husband Mitch of Athens, Alabama; four grandchildren, Heath Claborn and wife Mary, Heather Claborn, Ross Nelson and wife Ashley, and Rachel Nelson; and three great-grandchildren, McKinley Stack, Mary Catherine Stack, and Cade Glasgow. In addition to these, Hoyt Nelson leaves behind many friends, acquaintances, and lives touched.

Camp Wiregrass was privileged to have received many donations in Mr. Nelson's memory and blessed to have known this good man. We acknowledge his influence and hold him dear in memory.