

pensions profile:

From Copperhill to Pulaski,

The Trotters served Holston well

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▲ **Mary Trotter at her home in Knoxville:**
"I'm very grateful for the pension. It has meant a lot."

were delighted to have two people who were so obviously glad to be there." They stayed at Copperhill for six years.

As pastor at Asbury in Chattanooga during the early 1950s, Frank led a Maryville District youth revival that people remembered for years to come. The Rev. John Trundle, Rev. Eddie Fox and Rev. Ray Robinson were participating

high school youth who would later enter the ministry.

"The Maryville revival really swept the county," Trotter said. "Frank was best known for his evangelism ministries. He was asked to do a couple of revivals a year."

The Trotters also served First Pulaski in the Wytheville District, Mafair in Kingsport, Central in Knoxville, Keith Memorial in Athens, and two years in England.

In the meantime, Mary graduated *cum laude* with a bachelor's degree from Tennessee Wesleyan College in 1977, completing the education she began at Centenary Junior College in New Jersey and Radford University in Virginia. Her major was history and philosophy.

Frank retired in 1978, serving as minister of visitation at Fountain City UMC. But soon Mary "realized he was failing mentally." In 1981, the Rev. Frank Trotter was admitted to a nursing home with Alzheimer's disease.

Sixteen years after Frank's death, Mary stays busy by visiting shut-ins, as many as five each week. She recently logged in 1,000 hours as a volunteer at St. Mary's Hospital, leading patients from admissions to exam rooms.

The grandmother of six also likes to read books: "Right now I'm getting ready to read this series that everybody's talking about. What is it? Harry Potter?"

The Legacy of Commitment pensions campaign is important to Trotter – so important that she recently

donated a \$400 tax refund to the effort. "I'm very grateful for the pension that I receive," she said. "That, added to Social Security, makes it feel like I'm not drowning in debt. That means a lot when you're in your 80s." ■

► *The Holston Conference is currently raising \$7.8 million to fund a liability for pre-1982 pensions. Contact The Legacy of Commitment campaign office, P.O. Box 32939, Knoxville, TN 37930-2939, phone (865) 690-4080.*

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. –The Rev. Frank Trotter has been gone since 1985, but his wife Mary Trotter is still going strong at age 83. Living in a condominium about three blocks from one of her four children, she depends on her Holston Conference pension.

“I realize that for some pastors in small churches, it's hard to save for the future,” said Trotter, who attends Fountain City UMC. “We've always had enough to get along.”

She met her husband-to-be in 1938 when he was asked to speak at a youth rally at her church. The former Mary Frauendian Roby (*frauendian* means “little girlfriend” in German) was the daughter of a pastor in the New Jersey Conference. A native of Sevier County, Tenn., Frank was a minister in the Holston Conference, attending Drew Theological Seminary.

The couple married in 1940 and relocated to Holston. One of their first churches was First Copperhill UMC, just across the Georgia line in the Chattanooga District. The appointment was at the furthestmost end of the conference and fumes from a large copper company killed much of the vegetation. “But we loved it there,” Trotter said. “It was a lovely church. And the members

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▲ **Special Guest:** Former pro player Tom Beasley (far right) signs autographs with the Rev. Ken Pierce (far left) at his side.

Clintwood church reaches out through 'appreciation banquets'



CLINTWOOD, Va. – Let's say you're a high-school football player. If a church sent you an invitation for a free dinner and the chance to meet a former Pittsburgh Steelers player, would you go?

Clintwood UMC in the Big Stone Gap District hopes so. In fact, when the congregation invited athletes, cheerleaders and coaches from three Dickenson County high schools to dine with defensive tackle Tom Beasley and hear his testimony, 95 showed up for the event. Since then, several other community groups have accepted invitations for Clintwood banquets, including health-care workers, government officials, the rescue squad and fire department.

It's all part of the congregation's plan to – not just give lip service to – but *really* open up to the community. According to Clintwood Pastor Rev. Ken Pierce, the idea for the banquets came to him after he prayed for a way to put Igniting Ministry into action. Igniting Ministry is the denomination's four-year evangelism campaign that got a boost in September 2001 with Open House Month.

“My prayer was, ‘What can we do to show our community that we're an open church?’” said Pierce. He presented the concept for “appreciation banquets” to the church evangelism committee, and the congregation went to work.

Clintwood started by delivering fruit and vegetable trays to teachers in each of the nine Dickenson County schools during pre-school workdays, with notes thanking the teachers for their service.

Then, the congregation began providing dinners for other groups in its fellowship hall. Speakers were selected according to the group. For example, Kingsport orthopedic surgeon Dr. Patrick Riggins gave his testimony to health-care workers from area nursing homes and hospitals.

The banquets are a lot of work for a church with 110 in average worship attendance, but members line up to volunteer for food preparation, Pierce said. They also come up with fun ideas for decorating, like grapevine wreaths with stethoscopes and bandages for the rescue squad banquet, and toy fire trucks on the tables for the fire department. Thank-you notes and photos from the events cover the church's bulletin boards.

While worship attendance has recently increased to about 130 per Sunday, the primary goal is not to promote membership, Pierce said. “I'm not sure where this will end. We just want to be a servant to the people.”

“I just commend Clintwood for seeing an opportunity to share the good news and for carrying it out,” said the Rev. Dennie Humphreys, Big Stone Gap District superintendent. “It's been an exciting time for the congregation. I'm excited for them.” ■