

Know Your Neighbor

Abraham Simons

Most Back Mountain area residents know Abraham Simons as that "small, dark haired man" who sold used auto parts and "anything else you might need". But that is far from the true Abraham Simons.

A small man in stature - yes and he was a used parts dealer but other than that, "Abie" as he is known to friends and neighbors in the area is a generous and interesting person.

A resident of the Back Mountain for more than 40 years, Abe Simons is married to the former Dorothy Bevan of Freeland. Abe was born in Housedill, and came to this area with his parents when a small boy. He was enrolled in the Beaumont Elementary school but soon became a "dropout" when members of the school administration finally realized that Abe could not stay in school.

Abe has never been a man to join organizations or clubs but lived his entire life believing that he is here to do something for someone when it is necessary.

That is why Abie, during World War II, joined the U.S. Navy. At 31 years of age, the father of six children, he was assigned to the U.S.S. Edison

under Capt. Hepburn A. Pearce. Abie Simon was, without a doubt, one of the best-liked seamen ever to cross the Edison's gangway with his seabag on his shoulder and the desire to please a grouchy boswain, which in itself was an almost impossible assignment. Many reasons were responsible for his popularity aboard ship, not the least of which was his almost inherent love of work - an attribute that received early recognition because in the entire history of the ship he was the first man who put work above all else.

Within a week of his arrival, Abie was forced to seek assistance with his correspondence because he could neither read nor write - which was indeed, no reflection on his intelligence or his ambition to get ahead. It has never satisfactorily been explained how he came to be in the Navy in the first place with such a handicap, but in it he was, and furthermore, he went on to make Seaman I. C. This is a remarkable accomplishment due to the fact that in order to become a seaman first class, a candidate must take a written examination, and in Abie's case it was impossible. But Abie's desire to attain his goal was so

great that with some doing, navy regulations were waived and arrangements were made for Abie to take an oral examination.

"I can't write it," Abie told his superiors, "but if you'll ask me the questions I can talk that exam." So they asked the questions, and Abie answered them.

The rest is history. He made Seaman I. C. and became so much a part of the U. S. S. Edison, that he and Mrs. Simon named their seventh and last child "John Edison Simon" in honor of the vessel on which he was serving.

However, this last son of Abie's was the cause of Abie being discharged from the Navy. It is a rare occurrence that a man receives a discharge during the middle of hostilities but this was the case with Abie. Lt. S. Crow, top executive, came around in the midst of action to tell him that despite the fact that he was one of the Navy's best seamen, he was a luxury, the service could no longer afford. It was a hardship on the government to keep Abie in the service any longer; with his many allotments, he drew more pay than Capt. Pearce.

So it was that Abraham Simons' service with the U. S.



(J. KOZEMCHAK SR.) Abraham Simons

Navy came to an end and he came back to his home in the Back Mountain to open his "used parts" business and raise seven children - seven children of whom today he can be proud.

Unlike himself, he has made certain that they all received an education and he and Mrs. Simon can look upon them with pride. Abie has been forced to retire due to a serious illness several years ago that has left him permanently disabled. In fact, against all odds he is still able to make his weekly trips to the Veterans Administration Hospital.

Today his world is that of his children and his wife - seven children who are Mrs. William Watkins, Edwardsville; Abraham Jr., RD 3, Dallas; Mrs. Walter Watkins, Edwardsville; Mrs. David Perrego, Swyersville; James,

Pioneer Avenue, Shavertown; Dorothy Phillips, at home; and John Edison Simon, RD 1, Dallas.

He is the proud grandfather of 15 children and just as he was "Pop" to the boys on the Edison, so will he always be "pop" or "Grandpop" at home.

Registrations Open At Penn State

Charles Meck, assistant director of the continuing education programs at the Wilkes-Barre Campus of Pennsylvania State University, has announced that students are still being accepted in the one year programs offered in architectural and industrial drafting.

These two full-time one year job-oriented programs of study are planned to meet the needs of

local industry. Theory is combined with practical application in the classroom so that the student receives specific training and instruction for jobs which come within the scope of the program.

Either program can be completed in three terms of 10 weeks each, with classes totaling approximately 25 hours weekly. The classes will begin with orientation Sept. 20, and

conclude June 16, 1972. Graduates in both curricula are prepared to accept positions as architectural detailers, architectural draftsmen, and planning technicians.

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Wyoming Valley West High School: Sept. 15—7 p.m.

Tunkhannock Area evening course registration:
Tunkhannock Middle School: Sept. 16—7 p.m.

For Information on Day or Evening Course Registration

Call or Write
The Wilkes Barre Campus
The Pennsylvania State University

The Wilkes-Barre Campus
P.O. Box 1830
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18708
Telephone No. (717) 675-2171



Abraham Simons and his wife, Helen Bevan Simons, with their seven children prior to his discharge from the Navy. Mr. Simons became a member of the U.S. military service and attained the rank of Seaman I.C. during World War II, without being able to read or write.

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