

Sloans tour Biblical countries

by Walter & Eleanor Sloan

We were completely captivated by the six countries we visited in the Middle East.

Cairo, Egypt was our first stop. Here we saw one of the seven wonders of the world - the Pyramids - and viewed an evening presentation called "Sound and Light." The presentation was highlighted by special lighting, music, and dialogue. From this we learned much about the Pyramids, Sphinx, Egypt, and it ended with a tremendous tribute to the Nile River. The importance of the Nile River is obvious because only 5% of Egypt is green, while all around there is desert, desert, and more desert. We were excited about riding a camel and found it more enjoyable than the horse cart and horseback ride we were to take later in the tour.

Damascus, Syria was unbelievable with the oldest bazaar containing over 2,000 shops. The Ommayad Mosque is dedicated to John the Baptist, there are over 750 rugs on the floor and it is still in use today for Moslem services. After walking the Street called Straight, we reflected upon Saul and his conversion to Paul.

Jerash was the first ancient city we visited in Jordan. After viewing the Street of Columns, Amphitheatre and other ruins, we could see why it was one of the ten cities of the Decapolis.

The River Jabbock (where Jacob wrestled with the angel) was on our way to Ammon, the capital of Jordan (mentioned in the Bible as Philadelphia) and it dates back to 1200 B.C.

Standing on top of Mount Nebo produced a certain sadness knowing this was the spot where Moses stood viewing the Promised Land, but didn't live long enough to dwell there.

The mile horseback ride into Petra was an unforgettable experience. No wonder the horses had to be lead. Our heads were always looking up to the sandstone cliffs of varied and unusual colors and fantastic shapes that were 200 to 300 feet high. The gorge is so narrow that you can only see a few yards ahead so there is a new vista appearing each minute. Finally you emerge through the Siq and here we find the ruins of an Edomite city that was once occupied by 10,000 people.

It is difficult to describe the experience of having a dip in the Dead Sea. It contains 21 to 26% salt and is 1,300 feet below sea level and after taking a quick dip we were most anxious for a shower.

To view the ruins of the old Jewish fortress of Masada, we had to ride a cable car which offered us a panoramic view of the area. The next stop was Qumran, where the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, and soon we were on the road to Jerusalem. As we approached the Holy City we had a beautiful view of the Mount of Olives. Our tour of Jerusalem was for 3 days and all the Bible stories started to come alive.

Standing on the top of the Mount of Olives you can see the walled City, Dome of the Rock, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Kedron Valley, Mount Zion Garden of Getheseman, and the Golden Gate. We came to the Garden Tour early in the morning and were fortunate to have a Christian guide who enabled us to feel deeply about what transpired there 2,000 years ago. Walking the Via Delorosa (the 14 Stations of the Cross) in a grand procession that takes place each afternoon was a most humbling experience.

The shepherds are still tending their flocks in Shepherd's Field outside the city of Bethlehem, which was our next stop. A Church is built over the birthplace of Jesus, but as you look down upon the alleged site of the stable where Jesus was born, our thoughts turned to the traditional Christmas hymn "Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem".

The day was quite warm as we approached Samaria and we were delighted to see Jacob's Well and drink the crystal clear water. After a visit to Mount Tabor, we followed the Jordan River until we came to the Sea of Galilee. During the boat trip to Capernaum we had time to reflect about Jesus walking along the shores and the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000.

The town of Cana is quite small and the lovely painting inside the Church told the story of Jesus attending the wedding feast-his first miracle-turning the water into wine.

We proceeded to Nazareth and our thoughts turned to Mary and Joseph and their obedience to the message of God.

Traveling along the shores of the Mediterranean brought us to Caesarea, where Paul was imprisoned and finally set sail on his hazardous journey to Rome.

Athens, Greece is a beautiful city crowned by the Acropolis and Parthenon. It is a majestic city that dates back to 3,000 B.C. As we approached the ruins we were dwarfed by the high columns. They were built in many sections, no

mortar was used, and after thousands of years you still cannot slip a piece of paper between the sections. As we looked to the East, just a short distance away, there was Mars Hill (from which Paul preached).

Corinth is steeped in Bible History and we viewed the ruins of the Temple of Apollo. It was here that Paul worked as a tent-maker, established a Church to whom he later wrote the unforgettable 13th Chapter of First Corinthians.

At this point, we left the tour to spend four days with our beautiful adopted daughter, Fatos Akman. We visited her most interesting City of Istanbul, inhabited by four and one-half million people. The highlights of this trip were meeting her parents and eating a traditional Turkish dinner in their home, taking a City tour, eating lunch outside with a view of the Bosphorus, taking a boat ride to the Princess Islands and a horse-cart ride around the islands.

Our Bible Land Tour was more than all the Bible stories coming alive-it was sharing our daily experiences with other Christians having reflections and devotions each evening and making new friends. We all carried with us a deep feeling of humility for the privilege of seeing so much and walking where Jesus walked.

Eleanor Sloan wins award

Mrs. Eleanor S. Sloan, wife of G. Walter Sloan, R.D. #1, Mount Joy, was honored June 21, 1976 by the Philadelphia Chapter of Electrical Women's Round Table.

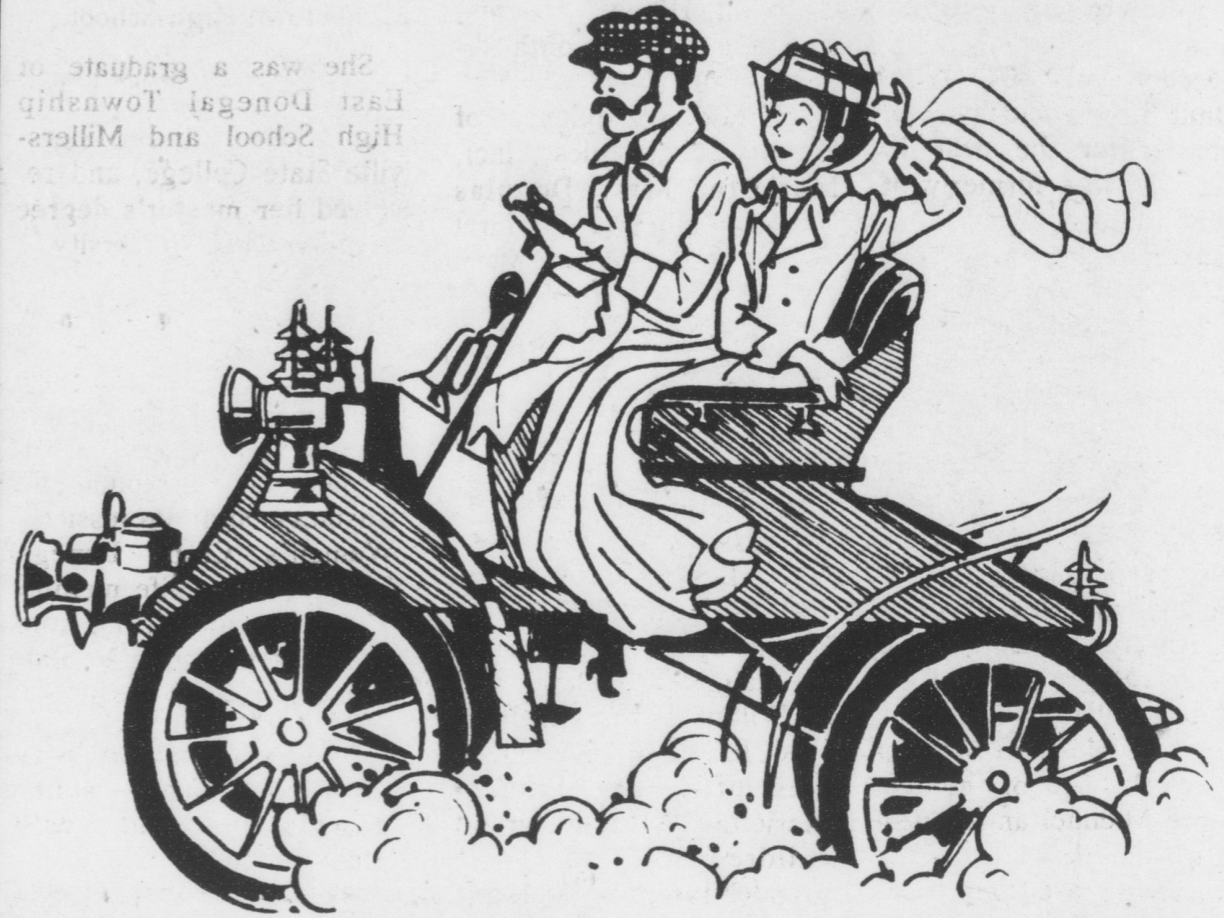
Mrs. Sloan was presented with the Chapter Service Award for her many years of service to the electrical industry, her dedication to the organization and for the volunteer work in her church and community.

The award was a lifetime membership in Electrical Women's Round Table and a gold disk with raised letters of the organization.

Mrs. Sloan was with the Philadelphia office of The Maytag Company for many years and superintendent of the Test Kitchen for Hershey Foods Corp., before moving to Lancaster County.

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