

# From One Neighbor (Auburn) to Another (Corning)

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Corning — The house doesn't look bad from the outside. But when you open the door you realize the June flood had hit the Elwell dwelling in Corning.

At work helping their neighbor 80 miles away make a house a home again are "Operation Rebuild" volunteers under the auspices of St. Mary's church of Auburn and the supervision of Alex Hanley.

The rebuilding required re-wiring the house, new walls, and a new furnace which has already been installed. The water level in the home had reached 4½ feet on the ground floor.

The Elwell household consists of Mrs. Elwell, the widow of a railroad worker, her son, and grandson who is disabled. A daughter recovering from a recent illness also is temporarily residing in the furnished trailer provided through HUD (Housing and Urban Development) which sits next to the dwelling.

Mrs. Elwell was evacuated from her home by the Red Cross just as water reached the driveway next door. She was housed in a Red Cross shelter for a week,

then stayed with relatives in the country.

The 21-year-old grandson recalled, "I just wanted to cry when I saw the house. I couldn't believe it. I just waited for someone to wake me up. When the house dried, it was even worse. You couldn't breathe."

"How can I ever get it cleaned up so I can move back in?" was Mrs. Elwell's first thought. "I just didn't know, but I knew I would make it even if I only had a stove, bed and refrigerator."

And move back she did when it proved too difficult commuting each day to her water-soaked home to begin the cleanup. She moved back into her house with a bed and mattress given her and a table and chairs.

Her family and volunteers from Auburn in "Operation Cleanup" were the first to lend a hand shoveling out the mud and the scrubbing operation.

All she could save were a few end tables.

Among the most-irreplaceable items lost were an album of 50 years with pictures of her husband and children, diplomas,



Alec Hanley led the workers.



Fran Backus, volunteer worker.

and the linens which belonged to her mother.

A Small Business Administration loan is to be used within the year to purchase the materials for rebuilding, some clothes and can be used towards furniture replacement.

The shock is still there, but it is the resilient attitude which strikes you.

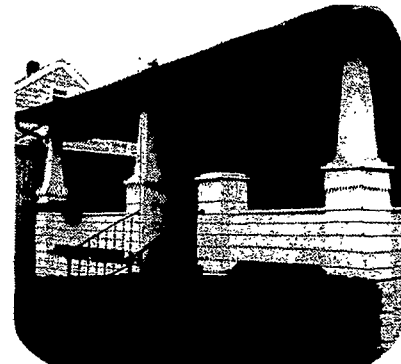
"Everyone is in the same predicament," commented Mrs. Elwell. "As bad off as I am, I think I'm lucky."

"I've lost everything, but you have to go on with the help of God," she explained. "And what an encouragement to know there are people like those coming from Auburn to help a perfect stranger."

A highway engineer painting molding in the basement signed up for any odd jobs that would help out the effort. A resident of Auburn in a home located two blocks from the Owasco dam which threatened to flood Auburn, he had been involved in "Operation Cleanup" as well as "Operation Rebuild."

"It could have been me," Francis Backus reflected. "If it were me, I would like to think somebody might be willing to help me out."

The carpenters hammering and fitting wall paneling into place in the living room and bedroom under the direction of crew leader Hanley looked embarrassed when asked why they had given up a precious Saturday to help a stranger.



The Elwell home.

The poignant answer, direct and simple, but worth a million words was "We just wanted to help."

## Word from Shangri-la

Following is a letter to Courier-Journal readers from our men in Bolivia, Fathers Edward Golden, Peter Deckman, Daniel Tormey and Paul Freemesser, and Deacon Tim McCluskey.

Dear Friends,

Spring has arrived in La Paz and school will be ending next

## Deaths

### Sr. Silveria

Mass of the Resurrection for Sister Silveria Manning, of the Sisters of St. Joseph, was offered at the Motherhouse on Oct. 4.

Father John P. O'Beirne, a cousin of Sister Silveria, celebrated the Mass, with Father Joseph Reinhart.

Sister Silveria died Oct. 1, after a long illness. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from Pittsburgh in 1923, taught in Holy Rosary School for one year, in St. Ambrose School 1926-29, and in the elementary school of St. Agnes Institute on East Main Street for several years. She was director of the library in the teacher training department of the order 1934-44, when illness forced her retirement.

Surviving are two sisters, Sister Gervase of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Pittsburgh, and Mrs. Leo Gaffney of Cincinnati.

### Rosalie Cook

Mass of the Resurrection was said on Oct. 2 at St. Louis Church, Pittsford, for Mrs. Rosalie Cook, who died Sept. 28, at her home in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Mrs. Cook was formerly a resident of Larchwood Drive in Pittsford. She is survived by her husband, Ray, former Rochester restaurateur, a daughter, Mrs. Jack Fleming, three brothers, Frank, Millo, and Harold Lodato, and four grandchildren.

month for all the children. Summer here is December, January and February. For us that means lots of rain and mud and because it will be cloudy a good part of the time, lots of cold temperatures.

Everything goes well here in the parish of St. Joseph the Worker. The most exciting happening was our trip to the colony that Fr. Deckman founded. It is an unbelievable Shangri-la in a virgin wilderness. The trip takes two days over roads that wind around the sides of mountains that you think will never end.

We took two mules in with us that were bought on the border of Peru. There were seven of us — three colonists, Don Julio (carpenter from San Jose Obiero), Mary Knoll Brother Bernie Butkewicz and Fathers Deckman and Freemesser. It took us seven hours to walk in to the campsite from the end of the road. We followed a cattle trail that runs a good hundred miles to the next town. It was uphill most of the way.

The next morning some of the men went out and shot two wild turkeys and a monkey. That would be our meat for the next 2 days. By the way, monkey meat isn't that bad.

The site is set near two streams, one used for drinking, the other for washing. The house has a

thatched roof with bamboo walls. A little distance away is a beautiful pool beneath a 20' waterfall. They are growing rice, corn, cocoa, tobacco, cucumbers, watermelons, yucca (like a potato), and many other vegetables. Eventually they will raise crops that can be sold at market but that will have to wait until a road is built. It was a little like Tarzan in the jungles. We feel sure that a flourishing community will blossom in that area. At present there are about 10 interested families and that should be enough to secure the land until the road is completed.

The universities will reopen Nov. 2 after being closed since the revolution of August 1971. So this month has given us a ray of hope that with continued colonization and education the people of Bolivia will be able to take their rightful place in the family of nations. They thank you sincerely for your part in this struggle.

### CARD PARTY

West Elmira — The Altar and Rosary Society of Our Lady of Lourdes Church here will hold its annual card party at 8 tonight in the church hall. The highlight will be a Smorgasbord of Desserts. Other events including a Gift Table also will be conducted.

## THE HOLY LAND & ROME

Jan. 12 to 21 \$754<sup>00</sup> per person

A Pilgrimage Tour to the Land of the Bible — to the very sources of Christianity at Bethlehem and Jerusalem in Judea, in Nazareth and on the hills of Galilee — 6 days in Israel plus the 3 days in Rome. All inclusive from Rochester.

Under the spiritual leadership of Rev. William Amann.

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## \$3 Million for Flood Relief

The U.S. Small Business Administration said today that its Elmira and Corning offices have disaster loan checks totaling about \$3 million waiting to be picked up.

"These are checks made out to flood victims who either can't be located or who don't want to accept the loans at this time," said George McKean, branch manager for the disaster headquarters.

"Many of the people who moved after the flood left no forwarding addresses, and many changed their telephone numbers. In all cases, an attempt has been made to reach these people both by mail and by telephone."

However, he said many flood victims have apparently decided

not to accept their loans until their own plans are more definite.

"They should spend the portion of the loan that allows for the replacement of personal property since they will need that no matter where they plan on living," he explained. "Then if for any reason they decide not to spend the rest of the money, they can return it to the SBA."

All persons who suffered damage of any kind in the June 23 flood, should visit an SBA office and apply for a loan, McKean said, adding that once the loan has been approved, the closing will be arranged as soon as possible.

The deadline for applying for an SBA loan is Oct. 31.

## The Christian Institute of Man series

1972-1973 Program: Symbol, Myth and Ritual

Opening session October 21

Our Lady of Lourdes Hall, 1100 West Church St., Elmira

9:30-4:00 (box lunches available)

Program led by Fr. Thomas Berry, c.p. History of Religions Dept., Fordham Univ. Founder of Center for Spiritual Research

Registration Workshop Fee \$1.50

For further information contact: Bob Hain, 734-6562, Sam Navatta, 734-7792, Bro. Francis McGuire, 734-1688.