

Sarah Child



All in the Family

Digging Up Past Makes It Vivid

We have received a postcard from my niece Mary postmarked Paphos, an ancient city located in the southwest region of Cyprus. With other students from Boston College, she is spending six weeks there on an archaeological dig, excavating a site under the direction of experts and aided by natives of the country.

Coincidentally, I have been rereading the Acts of the Apostles and the names of the towns and cities in St. Luke's account of the spread of the church rise up now with riveting familiarity. On the map in my Bible I find Cyprus in the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea and arcing around it in what looks like a stone's throw (on the map at least) are Jerusalem, Samaria, Damascus, Syria, Tarsus, etc.

Earlier, a phone call from my sister Thom had alerted us that Mary is having a memorable time, that her room is on the Mediterranean and it is the first thing she sees each morning when she wakes. Waves of envy engulf me as I imagine the brilliant sunshine dancing on the waves, sun bleached buildings in the background.

Thom says that Mary has made some significant discoveries on this, her first dig, which seems astonishing since we have always

thought it took years to find a shard of pottery, a fragment of bone.

Mary's postcard confirms her luck. She, herself, has uncovered most of the pieces of a 2 1/2-foot amphora which she writes "they have let me restore!" She underlines the "me." Quickly, I go to the dictionary to reaffirm that an amphora is a two-handled storage jar used by the Greeks and Romans for oil and wine.

She has also discovered a coin dating back to the Crusades and some bones believed to be those of an animal.

The front of the postcard bears a picture of a floor mosaic from a Paphos villa dating from the third century A.D. and which she says will be the subject of her thesis.

She concludes: "The people are warm — so is the sun."

On the day the postcard arrives I am but two pages away from Chapter 13 which details St. Paul's first missionary journey, accompanied by Barnabas.

With new appreciation and proprietary interest I read Chapter 13 and think how very little it takes to make Scripture come alive: "So they, sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went to Seleucia and from there sailed to Cyprus . . . They went, passing through the whole island as far as Paphos . . ."

St. Mary's, Rexville, Recovering from Fire

Rexville — Weekend Masses at St. Mary's Parish will continue to be celebrated in the fire hall while the work progresses toward building a church to replace the one which burned June 9.

Father Thomas Burr, pastor, noted that he expects it will be a couple months before they will be ready to hire an architect. The up-

Health Seminar Offered Teens

"Total You," a health lifestyle seminar for adolescents, is offered by the American Red Cross in four two-hour sessions beginning Tuesday, July 14. It will meet on four consecutive Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon at the Red Cross, 50 Prince St.

Lifestyle relations to health, beauty, stress, weight control and exercise will be discussed, open to anyone 14 to 18. More information and registration is available at Red Cross Nursing and Health Services, 275-9800.

coming decisions, he said, will be made in consultation with the parish council and diocesan officials.

Father Burr reported that the remains of the building were burned by the local fire department on June 20, leaving only the foundation of the 104-year-old structure.

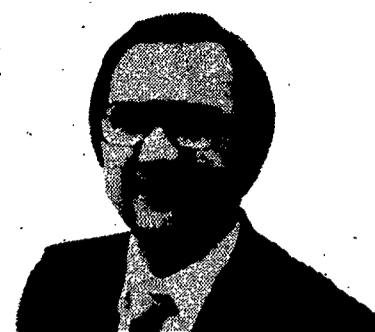
Parishioners are adjusting, he said, and the tragedy seems to have brought what already was a close-knit parish even closer together. Attendance at Masses has been good, he said.

Father Burr also explained that the church was fully insured, and expressed his hope that the settlement will provide sufficient funds for the parish to build a church to suit its needs.

Plans are continuing for the parish's smorgasbord scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 2, the parish's major annual fund-raising event.

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"Celebrating the Fourth!"

On July 8th, 1776, just a few days after its signing on July 4th, the adoption of the Declaration of Independence was celebrated by the people of Philadelphia. A contemporary account by a local citizen said that "the first audience of the Declaration was neither very numerous nor composed of the most respectable class of citizens."

Today, we commemorate the Fourth of July with a great deal of enthusiasm. It may be that, over the years, we have finally appreciated the meaning of the freedom that was gained at that time.

Fireworks . . . family reunions . . . swimming . . . boating and camping -- a day we celebrate remembering what the price of freedom was -- and the sacrifices that have enabled us to continue its celebration.

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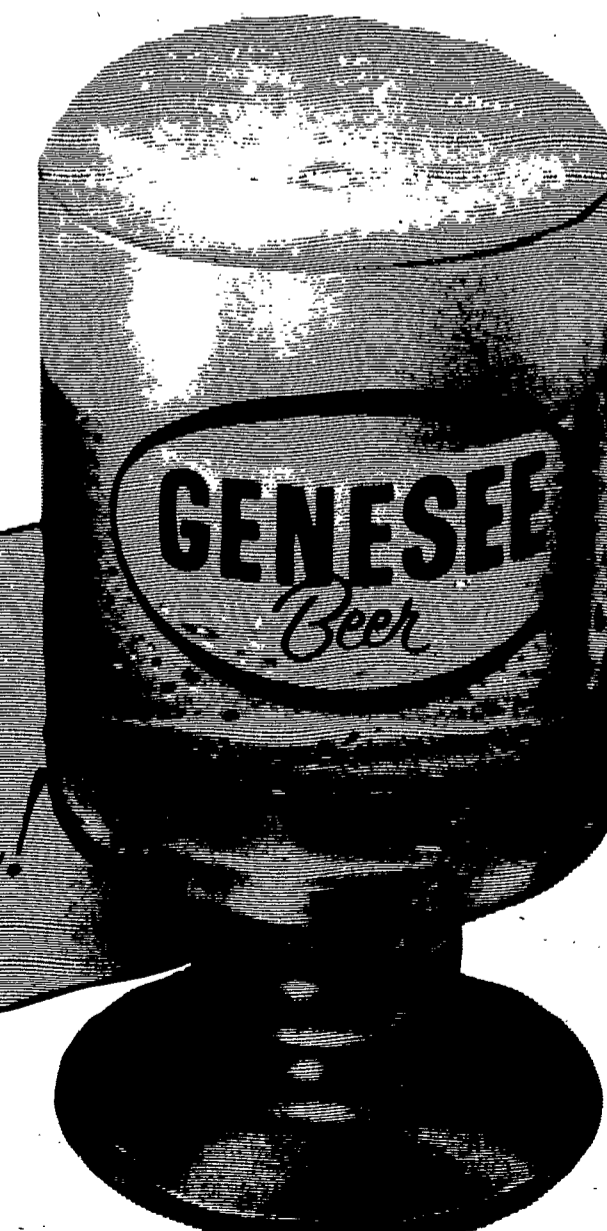
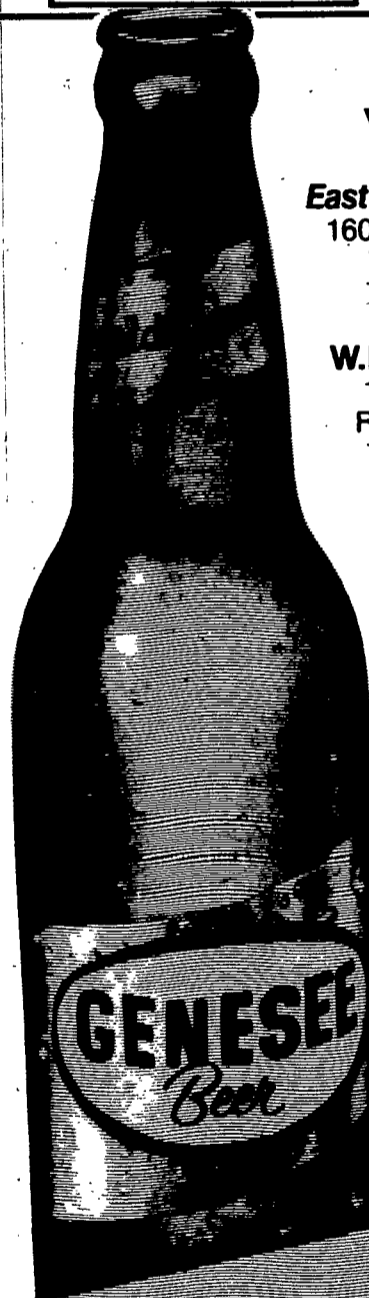


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