

Howard Hertz  
Memorial Service - May 16, 1995  
San Dimas Community Church

Howard was born on August 30, 1931 in the town of Malvern, Iowa. Malvern is important in this story for that is where the Hertz family dynasty began. Howard's Grandfather was Karl Hertz (with a "K") who was a giant of a man and who was the Drayman in Malvern. The Drayman was the man who hauled the freight from the depot to the farm or the business or home or industry to which it was consigned. The drayman had a large wagon and even larger horses and also had to have the strength of character to face a cold icy winter morning in Iowa and be sure the freight was delivered to its proper destination. One story goes that Howard's grandfather was at the freight depot once when another man asked him, "How would you get this barrel of salt off this wagon onto the freight platform?" Big Karl Hertz wrapped his arms around the barrel and lifted it onto the platform. He then wrapped his arms around it again and lifted it back onto the wagon and said, "That's how I would do it." End of story.

Big Karl Hertz had four large sons and two daughters. Later three of those sons and both of the daughters would wind-up in the San Dimas/La Verne area. Howard's father was also named Karl (with a "K") but in San Dimas and the valley he was known as Cully. He and his wife Edith, when they were married, moved into the home of Edith's Grandmother on a farm outside of Malvern so Edith could care for her. When Howard was a small boy his Great-Grandmother used to read to him and he loved his books, especially one called Inky. Because of her loving attention Howard learned to read before he started school and because of his favorite book he became fondly known as Inky and that "nickname" followed him west when his parents brought him and his brother to San Dimas in 1940.

Let me digress here for a moment. Howard, like his father, was given a "nickname" early in life and throughout his life had a series of different ones. I believe it says something special about a person if others think enough of them to give them special personal appellations.

Their home was on San Dimas Avenue just at the crest of the hill north of Fifth Street. His father worked at the Ford Agency and had a wide reputation for his skill in working with cars. One of young Howard's delights was an old Model T Ford which Cully kept in the barn out in back of the house. He would proudly ride with his father as Cully took the much admired Model T down town where Cully would have coffee with his friends at Rody's Reataurant. Howard was always a devoted Son. Everyone remembers his daily visits to his mother which continued even after she was confined to Casa Bonita.

I became acquainted with Cully and Edith when I became Pastor of the San Dimas Community Church with which they were affiliated. Also members of that church were Howard's Uncle Oscar and his Aunt Minnie Nelson. His Uncle Paul Hertz lived in Claremont and I got to know him when I was Pastor of the Claremont Presbyterian Church and I was fortunate enough to count him as a friend. Howard's Aunt Edna Hertz also lived in Claremont and was a School Principal in Upland. The Hertz Clan gathered often for very happy and joy filled parties. They just seemed to carry laughter and joy and happiness with them, a trait which also characterized the family of Howard and Barbara Hertz.

Howard received his Elementary and High School education in San Dimas. In High School he had the nickname "Largo", which meant large. He then attended Mt. San Antonio Community College and there was befriended by Mr. Helmer Lodge the coach of Track and Field. Howard distinguished himself in the shot put and with Mr. Lodge's encouragement accepted an athletic scholarship to Stanford University. It was there that he received the nickname "Whale".

Upon his graduation from Stanford, he married his High School Sweetheart, Barbara Haines, thus bringing together two strong "joy filled" families with deep roots in the San Dimas /LaVerne area. They were married in 1953 but then Howard began his service in the Army which took him to El Paso, Texas. In 1955, after Howard's tour of duty in the Army was completed, both Howard and Barbara launched into their careers in education.

Howard taught fourth and fifth grades at the Eckstrand School and then the Shull School in San Dimas and then on to the seventh and Eighth grades at the La Verne Heights School where he became Vice Principal. Howard then went into the Azusa School District where he was to spend 21 years until his retirement in 1987. He served as Vice Principal at Slausan Jr. High then Principal at Lee School on Gladstone Street. then back to Slausan Junior High School as the Principal.

Howard was a very dedicated teacher and administrator. He loved the profession of education and particularly he loved the children and young people. He created many "nicknames" for the children which helped show his special interest in them. One he called Gooney because he walked like a gooney bird. Another he called Turtle because he was so slow and another he called Bubbling Betsy, which is self descriptive. But the children also had a "nickname" for him. The small children used to call him Hertsie, which I think shows the kind of special relationship he had with them.

Inez Gutierrez, who worked with him, will have more to say about this aspect of Howard's life.

But even more important in Howard's life was his role as Husband and Father. He was devoted to his family and had a special loving relationship with Barbara. They were not only Husband and Wife but they were also "best friends". His children also came first in his life and they report that he was never too busy to give time to them. They said that they never called his office that he did not take their call and give quality time to them and their concerns. He loved his Grandchildren and spent time with them passing on what he called the "Swedeish Tradition", perhaps not to Ryan who was just born on April 13th. I'm sure he passed on many stories haveing their origins in Malvern. There was great wisdom and much common sense in these stories and traditions.

But you can't tell the story of Howard without some mention of his interest in wood working and his marvelous collection of antique tools and other collectibles. His back yard and out-buildings stored a treasure of memorabilia which displays his profound interest in his own rootage and the craftsmanship of past generations which he has helped to preserve.

Howard was a man of faith and grew up in the San Dimas Community Church. His Pastor, David Harder, will speak of that and bring to all of us the encouragement and strength which is the legacy of faith.

In spite of his illness and the tough fight he had over the past couple of years, Howard's death came as a shock. He was much too young, much too strong, had much too much more to give. I had picked him up one day recently and took him up to Michael J's to have coffee and chat about old times with old friends. He was able to walk to the car and into the restaurant with only the help of his cane. We were so pleased and he was so proud of what his hard work had accomplished. Therefore, it was even more crushing that such a short time later the ravages of disease took its toll, even over his strong body. The night before his death I stood by his bed and we talked, then he asked me to pray and he took my hand in his left hand and at the close of the prayer he squeezed my hand and the old strength was still there. We cannot help but cry but in our crying we also cannot help but give our profound thanks to God for the gift to all of us of Howard Hertz. His strength, his enjoyment of life, his unselfconscious wisdom, his love and his service to others, his devotion to his family and his appreciation for his community and his many friends. We shall miss him but we thank God for him and we can indeed with the ears of faith hear the echos of the greeting, "Well done good and faithful servant."

Kenneth B. McCandless