

Guy Foster

by Doug Kent

This wonderful story begins November 4th, 1925 in Beckley, West Virginia. This first born son of loving parents is about to embark on what will become an adventure of a life time. As fate would have it, his father passed away leaving their mother to raise a 5 year old son and a three year old daughter at the beginning of the great depression. With insurance money and some help from friends they moved to Johnson City, Tennessee where their mother bought a thirteen room "tourist home" and for \$1.00 per single and \$1.50 per double room began to support her family. Things were tough and tight during the depression, but life moved forward. Grammar school and high school were normal and without incident, with our Mr. November participating in ROTC and tennis, and working daily at the "tourist home". It was during high school that he made a decision to become a Presbyterian Minister and upon graduation, Mr. November began his training at Tusculum College in Greeneville, Tennessee. While at Tusculum Mr. November had the opportunity to study in New Jersey and had many opportunities to visit Manhattan. A love affair with that city began and still exists today.

It took only three years to complete his undergraduate work at Tusculum College, majoring in English and Philosophy. In 1943 Mr. November attended Union Seminary in his beloved Manhattan. After three years of study at this inter-denominational seminary he decided on the Anglican Church and attended the General Theological Seminary in the Chelsea section of Manhattan for the next year. After his education, he returned to Tennessee where he was ordained a Deacon and in 1950 was ordained a priest in the Anglican Church.

At this juncture his adventure takes a curious turn. Remember the times, it is the 1950's, it was almost a stated requirement that all Anglican priests be married. Being the newly ordained Mr. November took the step and married Anna from Johnson City. Having been with men before his marriage, Mr. November knew that society demanded this union, and it would not have been his choice.

Shortly after his marriage he was asked to teach Church History at the Saint Andrews Theological Seminary in Quezon City, Philippines. He taught there for the next 14 years. During this time, Mr. November was able to secure his Masters and PhD degrees on various sabbaticals. In 1966 he left the Philippines and began teaching Church History at Nashotah House Seminary near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Two honorary doctorates followed and in 1973 he was invited back to General Theological Seminary in his beloved Manhattan as Dean. He accepted and spent 5 years in Administration, then resigned his post, but remained at the General teaching Church history.

Two very important things happened in 1978. Mr. November decided to come out of the closet. It caused quite a stir at the General, but to his closest friends it was not a big surprise and in this same year he divorced Anna. His four children were nearly grown and he was free of the social burden of marriage.

From 1978 to 1984, Mr. November described this period as the "happiest days of his life". He could be what he was supposed to be and lived a very active, exciting life.

Darkness befell in 1985. The "AIDS" epidemic hit and Mr. November saw many of his closest friends perish over the next four years. He felt powerless over this disease and nothing he did could stem the death of his closest friends. His relationship with his maker was shaken to the core as he watched his friends perish. This crisis led to his retirement in 1989.

Now retired and somehow avoiding AIDS, Mr. November moved to Fort Lauderdale where he met his partner Jim. They moved to Atlanta, then Raleigh and then back to Fort Lauderdale. In 2007 after 14 years together, they acquired separate living quarters, but remain great friends. Mr. November was President of the Atlanta and Raleigh Prime Timers; he still enjoys traveling and keeps busy with his many hobbies. He loves to sew, embroider, swim, enjoys classical music and cooking for friends. He is fit and trim, very soft spoken and a pure joy to talk with.

