

Review: Who Could Have Dreamed

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By Clifford Dean Hobbs (Wasteland)

From the Piney Woods of East Texas to Liberia in West Africa, Clifford Hobbs shares his story in *Who Could Have Dreamed*. Born on a Cass County farm in 1933, Clifford and his sister grew up without indoor plumbing. Long school bus rides filled their days. During their high school years, their dad worked in Linden where the family enjoyed “city” plumbing. Job transfers meant Clifford spent half his senior year in Lufkin and half in White Oak. The White Oak principal drove him to College Station insisting the senior test for a scholarship. Although his Linden ag teacher told him he couldn’t make it at Texas A&M, Clifford graduated as the Outstanding Senior in Agricultural Education.

A stint in the Air Force followed. While in pilot training, a classmate  invited the Texan to church. At Trinity Baptist in Moultrie, Ga., Clifford found Christ and a wife. Florida State graduate and teacher Betty Nichols had grown up in church. Their first child Donna arrived at Bryan Air Force Base Hospital, and the family became active at First Baptist Church in College Station. As a civilian, Clifford earned his master’s degree and Ph.D. in plant pathology. Jobs with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Eli Lilly, developing a garden center and the birth of two sons followed.

Donna felt God’s tug to missions at age 7. The family often prayed for missionary doctors Wana Ann and Giles Fort. Donna later married Gregg

Fort, and the two were appointed to Zimbabwe. Betty and Clifford heard agricultural missionary Clark Scanlan speak in the 1960s. Betty had been called at age 12 but hadn't told Clifford. From 1986 to 1990, the couple served in agriculture missions in Liberia.

Hobbs fills the pages with stories of God using every life experience in Liberia. Later at First Baptist Church in Round Rock, the couple remained missions-focused. Although Betty died in 2006, her desire to build a boarding school for orphans, poor children and those disowned for following Christ became reality. The Baptist deacon took a final trip to Liberia for the 2010 dedication of the Betty Memorial Institute.

Who Could Have Dreamed indeed?

Kathy Robinson Hillman, former president

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Waco