

**BACKGROUND** Agnes was born in Fargo, North Dakota in 1883. The first year she went to school in Canton, South Dakota and then her family moved to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. They lived there for five years before they moved to Decorah, Iowa. The family lived there for 10 years before her father moved to Tacoma in 1907. He was a pastor and when he moved to Tacoma, he was a pastor for the I-Street Lutheran Church. She worked for an orphan home, in Wittenberg, WI for 5 years. Her family was living in Decorah, IA when she graduated from high school and her father graduated from Luther College in Iowa. She went to normal school there and she taught there for some years.

**ORPHANAGE** Her sister worked as a teacher in the orphan home and because she was getting married, she wanted Agnes to come and take over her job. She was approximately 21 years old. The management of the orphan home did not want her to teach they wanted her to take care of 30 boys instead. All the boys were under 16. She spent five years there.

**FAMILY** She moved to the West Coast in 1912. Her father was still a minister in the Tacoma area at that time. Her father's name was John O. Hougen and her mother's maiden name was Thrine Johnsen. Agnes had two sisters and one brother. Agnes' mother died and her father remarried two years later to Anna Stocksted. He had six children with his new wife. Two of the first three and one of the second six are still alive. Agnes was around seven when her mother died.

**PARKLAND** She visited the area in 1912. Agnes did not know what she wanted to do so she came here because her parents were here. She was planning to go home, but she had only been here for a day, when she talked to a wife of one of her friends, Jack (Last name might be Postmey). He wanted to see the academy, so she joined them for the trip. Professor Hong met them there, and offered her a job at the Academy. He wanted her to take charge of the girls at PLA. Agnes had a job right away so she never returned to Wisconsin.

**TRAVEL TO PARKLAND** Agnes went through Canada on the train to Parkland. The trip took about five days and she went all by herself. Agnes brought all her belongings, because she did not have much. She arrived in Parkland in April and started working at PLA in the fall and she lived on campus. She also traveled between Tacoma and Parkland, on a streetcar. This trip took 20-30 minutes.

**FIRST JOB AT PLA** Agnes was in charge of the girls and was also the bookkeeper for the church paper, the Lutheran Herald. Agnes got this job because she had worked for Decorah Posten for a year while she was living in Decorah. The editor for Decorah Posten was Amundsen at that time. While at PLA, she worked for the church paper, the Lutheran Herald. The Lutheran Herald was written in Norwegian still in 1912.

**THE NORWEGIAN LANGUAGE** She never learned Norwegian in school or at home. Agnes' mother could not speak Norwegian so her father sent her mother to Luther College for three years so she could learn the language. Her mother could read the language but she never spoke Norwegian. Agnes never spoke Norwegian with her father. Her father spent all his life wanting the Lutheran churches to have English services. He had much opposition to his view. They had a convention in Tacoma thirty years after her father was gone. She was invited to a banquet and they were surprised that she was invited. They explained to her that the church finally had done what her father wanted them to do. One thing is for sure; the Norwegian people were always stubborn.

PLA Pacific Lutheran Academy used English in 1912. All classes were conducted in English. The school had classes in Norwegian, but all classes were taught in English. Some of the religion classes were taught in Norwegian and she remembers one time when the professor wanted her to give the answer to a bible passage in Norwegian during one of those classes. She tried as best, as she could, because she did not know the answer. The whole class laughed of her because she knew some of the words, but could not pronounce them.

EDUCATION She attended St. Olafs College and she got some of her teacher training at Southern Minnesota Middle School. Agnes did not graduate from college; however, she completed three years of college. She got her education before she started working for the orphan home. Agnes feels that she got a lot of experience at the Orphan Home. She learned a lot that they never taught her at school.

WOMEN AT PLA She did not have any big problems with the women at PLA and there were under 100 women at PLA at that time. Everything happened in Old Main and she had her own room on campus on second floor. It was a big comfortable room and she ate the meals together with the students. Agnes enjoyed the years at PLA. She had the title of Preceptress while she was responsible for the women. The person responsible for the men had the title Dean of Men.

LIFE ON CAMPUS They had grace at the tables and chapel every day at 10 am. Twice a week they also had chapel later in the day. Agnes did not experience many problems. She remembers one case, but she will not make that public. Professor Hong was president at PLC at that time.

HUSBAND Agnes met her husband at PLU. He was a physics professor and had come there in 1913. Her husband was born in Oppdal, Norway and was 19 years old when he immigrated to America alone. He attended PLC and later UW. He then returned to PLU with a master's degree. Her husband had written thesis for doctorate degree but PLC did not allow him to attend class during the summer. To be able to get the doctorate degree, he had to attend classes one summer, so he never got the doctorate degree.

HUSBAND'S WORK LIFE He taught mainly physics and math. However, he also worked for ten years at the library and taught Norwegian. She noticed that he suddenly got an accent again when he started to teach Norwegian. She always spoke English with him.

TRIP TO NORWAY He went once back to Norway. He wanted her to go to but she stayed home because of the cost. He took one of their daughters, Anita, with him, because she had saved some money. She felt that it was more interesting for his parents to see their granddaughter than her. They visited Norway after the war, around 1947.

HUSBAND Agnes' husband was born on May 6. He was around thirty when they got married in 1914.

MARRIAGE Her father performed the wedding ceremony which took place at her parent's home in downtown Tacoma. The wedding was held in August. It was a small ceremony, with only the family present. She did not want to travel so they went to Vashon Island for a couple of weeks.

**HOUSE** The newlyweds moved into a house for two years. The Larsen family owned the house but Grandma Larsen wanted her relatives to move into their house, so they moved into another house.

**LARSEN FAMILY** Torbjørn Larsen was very interested in the college, and gave a lot of money to the college. This house was on 121 St. Agnes and her husband bought a bigger house, where Stuen Hall is built today. She donated the property to the school when she moved from the area.

**PLA CLOSED** Agnes and her husband also lived in the basement of Harstad for a while. They thought they were going to close the college, and that the government was going to buy the property. That did not happen, so they moved back on campus. The school was closed down for a couple of years because PLU had about \$30,000 in debt. The school was not owned by the synod, some sort of corporation owned it. The case ended when the United Lutheran Church paid the debt. She was most concerned about where she could live during that time.

**HUSBAND'S OTHER WORK** Her husband worked for the customs service together with Ludvig Larsen when the school was closed. Ludvig Larsen was treasurer for the College for some years. They worked in Seattle for a couple of years. Agnes remained in Parkland. Ole and Agnes were ready ready to move to Seattle, when customs suddenly transferred him to Tacoma. He worked 2-3 years for the customs and when the college reopened someone called him to see if he were interested in returning to PLU. He was willing to return because they promised him the same salary at PLU as he had gotten at customs.

**AGNES' WORK AFTER MARRIAGE** She did not have any formal responsibilities at PLA after she got married, but she still helped with the newspaper. She taught a couple of classes the first two years. The topics were spelling and civil government (Civics). The Lutheran Herald had their publishing house downtown Tacoma, so she worked downtown.

**FAMILY** Agnes has four children, two boys, and two girls. Their names are John, Mark, Elizabeth, and Anita. John lives in Seattle, Mark in Gig Harbor, Elizabeth in Auburn and Anita in Port Townsend. Agnes thinks that it is nice to have them around. Her husband worked for ten years as a librarian after he returned to PLU. He died in 1953, the year he was going to retire from PLC.

**FACULTY ACTIVITIES** The faculty had gatherings once or twice a year. They have picnics some time, or they just take a boat and travel around in the area. They had other gatherings as well, and met friends quite often. The faculty lived close together, and they knew each other well, especially because of the size of the school.

**SALARY** The school had problems with paying salary to the faculty at some times, however, her husband never complained. They would get different amounts of money. Sometimes they received 5 dollars, sometimes 10, or 15; it all depended on the economy of the school.

**GARDEN** They had a big yard so her husband decided to plant a garden. Xavier and Dahl also had gardens, and helped her husband to plant his. They had strawberries, potatoes, peas and carrots, and many other different vegetables. They also had raspberries, blackberries, apples, plums, cherries, and all kinds of fruit. The fruit trees were there when they moved there and the garden was the major source of food. Her grandfather gave them \$1,200

to help them get started with the garden. She also got some more money from him so she decided to get some chickens, even though her husband did not want them. She made \$100 the first year, so she was allowed to keep the chickens after that. Dahl's Grocery Store took care of many people during the years the school had problems. They were able to subsidize the groceries somehow.

**CHURCH** They went to Harstad's church in the beginning and went there for several years. Then they joined Trinity Lutheran Church because people wanted them to.

**PARKLAND** At one time Clover Creek had lots of water and used to overflow. Someone wanted to make the lake, and they managed to destroy the creek because of that, which was bad, since the area around the creek was very nice. She also has a picture of Hudson Bay station, which was torn down after the war. This was the oldest building in the area. When Tingelstad was here, they wanted to tear down Old Main but he did not want to do it. Therefore, he prevented it by having architects over to look at the house. They promised Tingelstad that Old Main would be usable for another 100 years.

**ORPHAN HOME** It was called Wittenberg Orphan Home, owned by the Lutheran Church. The home was located in Wittenberg, a small town in Northern Wisconsin. Had some contact with a couple of boys from the home after she moved to Parkland. Two of the boys joined the Army and were stationed at Ft. Lewis. Another, a Syrian, had gone to college, and got a very good job. The boys wrote to her so she wrote back.

**STUDY CLUB** Mrs. Webb thought they should have a study club, so Mrs. Webb started one, and got several of the faculty women and women from the area to join. They were about 25 women in this club and the club is still active. Mrs. Webb was not associated with the college. The club met once a month. Sometimes they were assigned material to read and one of the members gave a program about the reading. Occasionally they also had guest speakers. Usually someone read a book and then taught on the content. Now the club has speakers on every meeting. Agnes does not remember if the faculty wives had an official club, or if the wives of the pastors had their own club.

**CLOSEST FRIENDS** Their closest friends were the Hauge's, the Xavier's, the Ramstad's, the Pflueger's, the Edward's, and the Ringstad's.

**AFTER HER HUSBAND DIED** Agnes sold her home to PLU and then moved to an apartment in Parkland, where she lived for seven years. Then she moved to her sister Esther Davies, and lived with her until Esther died. Then she moved to the place where she currently lives. She was invited to the opening of Stuen Hall.

**GRANDCHILDREN** Agnes has 15 grandchildren. John has three children, Elizabeth has four children, Mark has four children, and Anita has four children. She also has a famous nephew, who is well known for his work. John Hanson, Laura's son, was the best surgeon in Chicago. He is retired, but still helps in difficult cases.

**NORWAY** Her husband had one brother, with two children. Marie, his niece, kept in touch with them. Agnes did not know his family personally. Her husband also has one nephew in Canada.

**PLA HIGH SCHOOL** The high school operated alongside the academy and her husband also taught at the high school, because the high school and the college had the same faculty. The school was one big unit and the classes were held in the same place. The high school was a good one. Her husband also taught some short courses to the Norwegian immigrants that fished. He had one semester with them during winter, when they did not work on the boat. The high school she graduated from was wonderful, and she feels that kids want to learn more before, today they feel they have to. Most young women did not train for any specific occupation, they went to college to get their degree, but Agnes believes that some of them wanted to be teacher.

**HOSPITALITY** When people came from different churches in the Midwest to visit the college, they stayed at Agnes' house. In the first years, the college sent all visitors to their house. They had a big house, and once she had thirteen strangers in the house. Dr. Bill Rieke also lived four years in the house, because he rented a room there when he went to college. Agnes had between 8-10 students living in her house at the same time. During the years she lived there, she provided housing for total of thirty-three boys. It was only boys, because her husband wanted it that way. She believes that there was more work with women. The students ate at the college, so she did not have to cook for them. The students lived in Agnes' house due to lack of dormitory space on campus.

Agnes Christina Theodora Hougen Stuen. Born in Fargo, North Dakota on November 26, 1883.

**PARENTS** Johan Hougen and Thrine Johnson. Her mother died when Agnes was seven years old. Father was a minister at a Lutheran church in Fargo.

**BROTHERS AND SISTERS** Clara married Al Severeid. Laura married Dr. Hanson. John became a lawyer.

**HALF BROTHER AND SISTERS** Father remarried and had a boy and two girls.

**GRANDPARENTS** Maternal grandmother died when Agnes' mother was 17. Agnes remembers her maternal grandfather. He had a big farm in Iowa.

He'd get on his horse and ride around the farm to see what the men were doing. He had a vineyard. Agnes remembers eating lots of grapes.

He made the communion wine for the church.

**FAMILY NAME** Name 'Hougen' has not been changed. Agnes' brother went to Norway and found that their family spelled it Hougen in Norway too. Doesn't know where her family originally came from in Norway. Her grandmother's father was a sea captain. Took his wife out to sea. They drowned. Agnes' grandmother and uncle, John Wilson were orphaned. John was sent to a family in England. Grandmother was sent to a family in Norway. Both ended up in the U.S. and were reunited. Agnes doesn't know what country her great grandparents came from.

**CHILDHOOD** Agnes lived in Fargo, North Dakota until she was nine years old. Nothing but prairie. Remembers sitting in the yard looking at the horizon. Thought it was the end of the world. No trees around. She would go to her grandfather's. He'd planted a bunch of trees and had a table under the trees. When they went back to Fargo, Agnes would take a chair and sit underneath their sunflower tree.

**SCHOOL** Didn't go to school in Fargo. Moved to Canton. Started school in the second grade. Her father had a congregation there. Her mother had died by this time. Stayed there for five years. They moved to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Father remarried while living in Canton, North Dakota.

Stepmother was the only mother they really knew. Real mother died when Agnes was seven. Mother had been sick for two years. Had been down south. Died from tuberculosis. Children had a nurse so they wouldn't get the disease from their mother.

Moved to Decorah, Iowa. Graduated from high school there. Attended St. Olaf College. Father moved to Tacoma in 1907. Agnes didn't come to Tacoma until 1912.

Worked in a children's home as a teacher. Her job was to look after the boys. Agnes got along just fine. She never told on them. When somebody did something wrong, they'd come and tell her. She wouldn't

Tell because the manager would use the strap on them. Agnes didn't think anybody deserved to get spanked. She had to look after 35 boys, ages 2 to 14. There are no longer orphan homes. Some boys had a father but no mother.

Before she came to the coast, she had a position offered to her at St. Olaf College. Agnes felt the job was too heavy for her.

Came to Tacoma in 1912. Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Preus came to visit. Preus was governor of Minnesota at the time. He wanted to see PLA.

His father had spent money on the grounds there. They met President Hong. He asked her what she had been doing. Hired her immediately as Dean of Women. This was in 1912.

**JOB DESCRIPTION** Had to look after the girls in the dorm. 50-70 girls. Agnes lived at the school and ate in the dining room. Girls couldn't


be out after 10pm. Taught English and spelling to foreign students for a while. Tells about one Italian boy who wanted to learn how to read.

Chapel was required at one time. Was optional when Agnes was there. Chapel was held six days a week. Nearly everyone went.

OLD MAIN Agnes lived on the second floor while she was single. After she got married, they lived in a three-room apartment in the basement.

Dr. Rieke lived with the Stuen's for four years while he went to PLU. Agnes enjoyed her job there.

MARRIAGE In 1914 she married Ole J. Stuen. He taught German, Physics, Norwegian, and worked in the library at PLU. He taught short courses for Alaska fishermen during the winter. Cheaper than living at a hotel. Taught these courses in the 1930s.

Ole built the first tennis court at PLU. Also set up a croquet course. The kids would play croquet between classes and lunch. The tennis 

Court was south of Old Main. The university was closed during WWI. Ole worked for the U.S. Customs Service.

They got married at Agnes' father's home. He married them. She had a plain white dress.

Ole was born in Oppdal, Norway. His parents had a farm. He came to the U.S. because he wanted an education. Came to Idaho first. He had \$200 when he came. He'd attended technical school in Norway. Had studied some English before he came.

He came to Tacoma and graduated from PLU. Then he went to the University of Washington.

Ole had worked in Alaska on the railroad. Went to Alaska once after they were married. The school closed down during WWI because there was no income. Worked as a guard at the Alaska Exposition in Seattle.

DAHL'S STORE Located on the main street in Parkland. It was next to Lehmann's Store (Parkland Mercantile Company) which was located in the old Kraabel and Erickson store. Lehmann's store was established in 1916.

STUEN HALL Agnes was there when it was dedicated. The Stuens gave six lots to the university. President Tingelstad said he'd dedicate the building built there to the Stuens. Their house was located on that lot. They tried to tear it down. It had good timber and heavy hardwood floors. In the end, they had to burn it. Agnes couldn't watch them burn it. It had at least ten big rooms. Stuen Hall was built where the house had been.

STUEN'S HOUSE Lumber in the house from Millpond in Spanaway. The lumber came from a barn that had been torn down. There were no knots in the boards.

CHURCH Agnes belongs to Trinity Lutheran Church in Parkland.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS Has belonged to weaving and sewing clubs. While working at PLU, she belonged to the women's club. Most of the women teachers belonged. Agnes taught for a year after she got married.

Ole died in 1953, shortly before his retirement.

CHILDREN All four of Agnes' children went to PLU. John Stuen, Elizabeth Stuen Willis, Marc Stuen, and Anita Potthoff.

GRANDCHILDREN WHO'VE GONE TO PLU All four of Elizabeth's children, two of John's children, and all four of Marc's children have graduated from PLU.

JOHN STUEN Stuen property given to PLU. The old house was where the north end of Stuen Hall now is. Ole Stuen loved to work in the yard. He missed not living at home when he was young. He had many different plants, apple trees, cherry trees, and *etc.* He had the first yard in Parkland.

/08 He built a rock wall which was 100 feet west of the main entrance of where Stuen Hall is now. There were two or three big Oak trees in the backyard. There was a big tree next door where they had a basketball hoop. Paul Larsen climbed it once and couldn't get down. His older sister, Pauline helped him. There were two big trees west of where the U.C. is. John knows only four people who have climbed it, Myron and Burt Kreidler, Pauline Larsen, and one of her friends. Burt Kreidler would climb the smokestack of Old Main and walk around the rim. Bert's mother, Lora, was the Dean of Women at PLU.

Chicken dinners at the Stuen's on Sundays. Mr. and Mrs. Xavier, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher, and the Ringstad's would come. The men would play golf on the prairie where the golf course now is. The kids would play games together.

Agnes has been involved with PLU since 1912. Her youngest grandchild, Margo is attending PLU (1980).