

Los Angeles Times

Wednesday, April 27, 1983

Scientists Fail to Obtain Hubbard's Files

By MYRNA OLIVER,
Times Staff Writer

A Los Angeles Superior Court judge Tuesday refused to release 21 boxes of personal letters and journals of reclusive Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard to church officials, despite a handwritten letter purportedly from Hubbard claiming them as his property.

The material is the subject of a lawsuit by the Scientologists against their former member and archivist, Gerald Armstrong, seeking permanent return of the documents. The church claims that Armstrong stole the material. He claims that Hubbard had permitted him to use it under a contract to produce a biography of Hubbard.

Church lawyers had asked Judge Leon Savitch to rescind an order issued last Sept. 24 by Judge John L. Cole placing the documents under the control of the county clerk, with access available only to attorneys in the litigation. The church claimed that Savitch should honor the purported letter from Hubbard delivered to Cole in February. It asked that the documents be returned to the church for safekeeping.

Scientology attorneys Barrett S. Litt and John G. Peterson also argued that Hubbard's wife, Mary Sue, an intervenor in the case,

Please see PAPERS, Page 3

PAPERS: Scientologists

Continued from First Page

verified that the documents belong to the Hubbards and requested that they be returned to the church.

But Savitch said the fairest course is to leave the documents in the clerk's hands until a full trial can determine who should have them. That could take four years because of court backlogs.

Church President Hetr Jentzsch said outside court that church lawyers will have to determine whether to appeal Savitch's ruling.

Jentzsch released copies of the letter last February in an effort to quell rumors that Hubbard, who has not been seen in public since 1980, is dead.

More Nevada Debate on Cult Bill
By Brendan Riley
Associated Press Writer

Carson City, Nev. (AP) - More pleas for controls on cults were aired Monday as the Senate Judiciary Committee reviewed a plan to allow for civil lawsuits against cults or any other groups which bilk people.

No immediate action was taken on SB343, being pushed by Sen. Bill Hernstadt who had to "deprogram" a daughter who had joined the Church of Scientology.

Scientology representatives were criticized by Sen. Thomas "Spike" Wilson, committee chairman, for failing to deliver promised documents outlining their various fees and charges.

"It affects the credibility of your organization," Wilson, D-Reno, told church spokeswoman Rita Thompson. Ms. Thompson said she had been advised by legal counsel not to deliver the information, which had been promised earlier by church president Heber Jentzsch.

Charles McClure, a Portland, Ore., lawyer and former CIA agent whose daughter Melissa, 22, is now in the Church of Scientology, urged the committee to pass some controls in order to regulate cult activities.

"The point I want to make is: My daughter isn't my daughter. My daughter's mind is snapped." He said, "My daughter is still in the Church of Scientology, and there is nothing I can do."

McClure said the church offers "therapy" courses, and should have some kind of regulation just as psychiatrists, psychologists or counselors have.

McClure said SB343 dealt with ways to recover money and damages from cults which bilk members, but that's "a very small part" of the problem. "These people are playing with the minds of our young men and women," he said.

Erica Heftmann of Pasadena, Calif., former Unification Church fund-raiser and author of "The Dark Side of the Moonies," said church members "descended like locusts" and "hit up everything that moved, every warm body" while raising money.

She added that the money was not spent for the purpose stated by the Church of Unification, which preaches what she described as "a complicated, dopey doctrine about saving the world" even if it means lying to people - the practice of "heavenly deception."

UCLA Law Professor Richard Delgado described SB343 as "very plainly constitutional." He said it would help to stop fraud, and really didn't say anything more than what's already in general Nevada fraud statutes.

Responding to committee questions on whether the law would apply even to traditional churches or even groups such as the Boy Scouts, Delgado added that anyone can sue anyone else now. Under the existing law or the proposal, a frivolous suit wouldn't have "a chance in the world," he added.

Lee Boothby, a Michigan attorney hired by Scientologists to testify, said SB343 still appeared to be on weak legal footing. But he said he had no problem with a proposed five-day "cooling off" period during which members of any organization could get back money paid for courses.

Boothby also questioned part of the bill saying charitable contributions must be used for a "substantially similar" purpose as that stated when the contribution is solicited.

If the money is spent for some other reason, a judge could impose a trust on the organization's assets. Boothby said that could cause constitutional problems for many traditional churches.

But Wilson said the measure was really aimed at "commercial activity" whether it occurred under the guise of a religion or something else.

AP-LA 05-02-83 1211 PDT

Legality of new religion fraud bill challenged

United Press International

A new bill, designed to control fraud by religious organizations, was criticized Monday by an attorney for the Church of Scientology who said it still may be unconstitutional.

Lee Boothby, the lawyer for the church, told the Senate Judiciary Committee some sections of SB343 may conflict with doctrines of the Catholic and Mormon churches, putting it in possible conflict with the First Amendment.

SB343 is a replacement for an earlier bill which singled out religious cults which could be sued for triple damages if they did not deliver what they promised in their instructional courses. That bill was said to be unconstitutional because of its effort to regulate churches.

The new bill does not mention religion but carries many of the same penalties for an organization failing to live up to an agreement.

The bill was sponsored by Sen. William Hensoldt, D-Las Vegas, whose daughter joined the Church of Scientology in Portland, Ore., paying in advance for many courses and also loaning money to associates in the church. She eventually got back most of the \$50,000 she shelled out.

The new bill permits a member to sue for damages if the organization promises psychological benefits and then has no licensed psychologist or psychiatrist to provide them.

Erica Heffman, a former member of the Unification Church, told the committee that as a "Moonie" she was indoctrinated to use "heavenly deception" to swindle people out of money. She said solicitation teams lied to people to get them to contribute.

They would tell the public the money was going for a drug abuse treatment program when none existed. The lying was referred to as "heavenly deception." She said church officials justified it because people controlled by Satan were giving their money to the church.

Religious fraud bill revamped

CARSON CITY (UPI) — A new bill, designed to control fraud by religious organizations, was criticized Monday by an attorney for the Church of Scientology who said it still may be unconstitutional.

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Religious cult fraud bill killed in state Senate

By JIM COLEMAN
SUN Legislative Bureau
CARSON CITY — The Senate killed the last remnant of a bill aimed at curbing fraud by cults Thursday, but Sen. Bill Hernstadt took some parting shots at two of the so-called new religions, comparing Rev. Sun Yung Moon to Al Capone and criticizing the Church of Scientology.

Hernstadt introduced and strongly backed the "cult bills," in response to his daughter's bad experience last year with the Church of Scientology.

Hernstadt, D-Las Vegas, introduced SB108, the bill to give dissident cult members a means to get their money back and sue such organizations for damages.

A successor to that bill, SB343, was designed to address organizations in general. Although it passed the Senate, the Assembly Judiciary Committee killed it.

Thursday's 8-13 Senate vote killed an attempt by the Senate Judiciary Committee to attach a piece of SB343 to AB124,

an otherwise unrelated bill to provide for prosecution of participants in organized crime. The bill has been strongly backed by Metro Police.

The committee's rider was a modified section of SB343 that would let the state seize the assets of an organization that collected money with intent to defraud, and distribute the money to the causes for which it was collected.

As Hernstadt told the Senate, if an organization collected donations to feed starving children and used the money instead to buy guns, the state could move in to ensure the money be spent to feed starving children.

Sen. Jim Bilbray, D-Las Vegas, opposed the amendment. He said it could be applied to the Catholic Church if money collected for a specific purpose were transferred to another pressing charitable need. He added that AB124 would probably die if burdened with the amendment.

Sen. Jim Gibson, D-Henderson, opposed it on the grounds of "possible

mischief" that could arise from it.

Sen. Bill Raggio, R-Reno, called AB124 a "good bill" that shouldn't be "held hostage" because the Senate Judiciary Committee was upset that the Assembly Judiciary Committee killed SB343.

Judiciary Chairman Thomas "Spike" Wilson, D-Reno, defended the amendment, saying it strikes at "intent to defraud" by groups that hide "under the cloak of religion."

He said his committee "was outraged" by testimony it heard in its "cult bill" hearings, by ex-cult members and persons who lost touch with their children who joined a cult.

Hernstadt said "legitimate organizations" need not fear the amendment. "Reverend Moon is a convicted criminal. He was convicted of tax evasion, the same as Al Capone."

After the Senate voted down the amendment, Hernstadt stood, asked that his remarks be put into the legislative record

Los Angeles Times

Los Angeles Times

Saturday, May 21, 1983

Hubbard Still Alive, Judge Rules

By RUSSELL CHANDLER,
Times Religion Writer

A seven-page "legal declaration" purportedly written by L. Ron Hubbard, the reclusive founder of the Church of Scientology, apparently convinced a Riverside judge Friday that the science fiction-writing religionist is alive, contrary to assertions by Hubbard's son that he is dead or mentally incompetent.

But Superior Court Judge David Hennigan was asked to also consider "new evidence" filed in the court Friday by the son which alleges that Hubbard's signature was forged on documents transferring his Scientology trademark rights to the church.

Please see HUBBARD, Page 8

Los Angeles Times

HUBBARD: Judge Accepts Scientologist's Document

Continued from First Page

The attorney representing Ron DeWolf, 48, Hubbard's estranged son who has asked the Riverside court to appoint him trustee of his father's multimillion-dollar estate, said the alleged forgery of Hubbard's name "establishes again significant questions . . . as to whether or not Mr. Hubbard's assets are indeed being misappropriated and converted and whether a trustee should be appointed." Hennigan did not comment on that matter.

Hennigan said that until Friday he had been leaning toward a judgment in favor of DeWolf and of appointment of a trustee. The judge said, however, that the declaration, apparently signed and fingerprinted by Hubbard and authenticated by handwriting and fingerprint experts, had convinced him that Hubbard is not a missing person.

The separate papers filed by Cheong alleged that Hubbard's signature had been forged on documents conveying Hubbard's trade and service marks to Religious Technology Center, a corporation formed by top Scientologists.

In DeWolf's original probate petition, he alleged that some of these same Scientologists were systematically looting his father's estate.

But in the Hubbard declaration filed Thursday, Hubbard said his affairs are being handled properly by financial advisers and that he is in good health.

"I am not a missing person," the Hubbard declaration said. "I am in seclusion of my own choosing. My privacy is important to me, and I do not wish it or my affairs invaded in the manner permitted by this action."

...in the dispute.

Judge says he believes church founder is alive

ASSOCIATED PRESS

RIVERSIDE, Calif. — A Superior Court judge said Friday he is "convinced" that Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard is alive, despite claims he is dead or mentally incompetent.

Judge David Hennigan said he was not sure the author was alive until he read a seven-page legal declaration from Hubbard saying he keeps his whereabouts a secret because his life has been threatened.

"I am not a missing person," Hubbard said in the declaration. "I am in seclusion of my own choosing."

My privacy is important to me, and I do not wish it or my affairs invaded."

The document, signed and fingerprinted by Hubbard and authenticated by handwriting and fingerprint experts, was filed Thursday with the court. The judge is considering a civil lawsuit by Hubbard's estranged son who says his father is either dead or mentally incompetent.

The judge said he had been leaning toward a judgment in favor of the son, Ronald DeWolf, and appointment of a trustee to manage Hubbard's affairs.

Hennigan gave DeWolf's attorney three weeks to try to disprove the authenticity of the document. At that time, Hennigan plans a final ruling in the case.

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Los Angeles Times

Tuesday, June 14, 1983

Judge Throws Out Lawsuit Over Scientology Dispute

By RUSSELL CHANDLER, *Times Religion Writer*

A Riverside Superior Court judge Monday threw out a suit by L. Ron Hubbard's estranged son that claimed that his father, the controversial founder of the Church of Scientology, is either dead or incompetent.

Judge David Hennigan said he had been "convinced" by a declaration Hubbard had filed three weeks ago that the reclusive science-fiction writer was alive.

The declaration was signed and fingerprinted by Hubbard and apparently authenticated by handwriting and fingerprint experts. Hubbard, 71, had written in the document that he was "not a missing person. I am in seclusion of my own choosing. My privacy is impor-

tant to me and I do not wish it or my affairs invaded."

Ron DeWolf, who has been estranged from his father for more than 20 years, filed a probate petition in the Riverside court Nov. 10. The petition alleged that Hubbard was either dead or mentally incompetent and that self-dealing church representatives were systematically looting money, gems and securities from his father's estate.

DeWolf asked the court to name him trustee of the estate, estimated to be worth at least \$100 million.

"I think the media has heard the cry of 'DeWolf long enough,'" Heber Jentsch, president of the Church of Scientology International, said in a telephone interview.

Judge bars couple from dropping part of Scientology suit

By Maya Bell

June 21, 1983

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

DAYTONA BEACH — The former mayor of Clearwater and his wife cannot drop just a part of a lawsuit they filed against the Church of Scientology, a Volusia County circuit judge ruled Monday.

Citing case law, Judge Robert Durden said Gabriel Cazares and his wife Margaret must drop all or none of the three-count suit filed in circuit court against the controversial church.

Arguing against partial dismissal of the suit, church lawyers accused the Cazares' attorneys of trying to drop the suit in circuit court so they can pursue a similar suit in U.S. district court in Tampa.

Church attorney Dan Warren charged that the Cazareses want to move the case back to the Clearwater area because they believe that judges and juries there might be more sympathetic.

The Cazareses sued the church, several of its lawyers and the founder of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard, in Pinellas County in 1980. The case was transferred to Volusia because of extensive publicity in the Clearwater area.

The suit accused them of malicious prosecution, abuse of power and invasion of privacy. It was filed in response to an unsuccessful suit the church filed against Cazares in federal court.

The federal suit, which claimed that Cazares violated the church's rights by opposing its move to Clearwater from California while he was mayor, was dismissed as "frivolous . . . and groundless."

The Cazareses' countersuit accuses the church of suing him to embarrass and harass him and of abusing the legal system in the process. It also accuses the church of infiltrating and sabotaging his unsuccessful 1976 campaign for a congressional seat.

After the suit was transferred to Volusia, Durden dismissed the charges of malicious prosecution and abuse of process, which stemmed from the federal suit filed by the church. Durden said he dismissed the charges because the dismissal of the federal suit was being appealed.

The Cazareses then appealed Durden's ruling to the 5th District Court of Appeal. After the dismissal of the church's federal court suit was upheld on appeal, the Cazareses then filed a similar three-count complaint in federal court.

In May, attorneys for the Cazareses announced that they were voluntarily dismissing the remaining charge of invasion of privacy pending against the church in circuit court.

But, citing case law, Warren successfully argued Monday that the third count cannot be dropped unless the appeal to the 5th District Court is dropped.

The third count accuses the church of instructing its legal adviser, Merrell Vannier, to solicit Cazares and his wife as clients and inform on them to the Scientologists.

Vannier's wife, Francine, also is accused of acting as a church agent when she volunteered to work for Cazares' congressional campaign.

The Cazareses' lawyer, C. Allen Watts of DeLand, said: "I don't know how you can be made to proceed with a lawsuit you don't want to proceed with."

The Preble County News

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BACK -1060

Controversial Author-Stunt Flyer Landed in Gratis 52 Years Ago

As recorded in "The Preble County News," on September 17, 1931, L. Ron "Flash" Hubbard and his friend Phillip W. "Flys" Browning roared down out of the sky just east of Gratis, their stunt plane "The Sparrow" low on fuel. Raymond Boomershine offered to buy gas for their little ship in exchange for a ride. "Flys" took him up, and before very long a crowd gathered around "Flash" clamoring for rides. The two young men spent the rest of the day giving rides from George Swisher's field to 36 daring souls from Preble County. Night fell and Mr. and Mrs. Luther Kiracofe boarded the boys for the night. The next day Hubbard and Browning roared on to St. Louis, headed for more adventures.

Today, L. Ron Hubbard is a New York Times best selling author; his latest book *Battlefield Earth*, has appeared on seven other national best seller lists. But it was his barnstorming adventures that were to initiate his professional writing career.

One of the first journals to regularly publish Hubbard's articles was the "The Sportsman Pilot." Also a glider pilot of some renown, Hubbard provided them with aviation articles and photographs. In a feature story in "The Pilot" H. Latane Lewis II wrote of the man behind the popular articles:

"Whenever two or three pilots are gathered together around the nation's Capital, whether it be a Congressional hearing or just in back of some hangar, you'll probably hear the name of Ron Hubbard mentioned, accompanied by such adjectives as 'crazy,' 'wild,' 'dizzy.' For the flaming haired pilot hit the city like a tornado a few years ago and made the women scream and strong men weep by his serial antics. He just dared the ground to come up and hit him.

(continued on next page)



L. RON "FLASH" HUBBARD, THEN ...



... AND NOW

Here And There

(Ed. Note: The following article appeared in the Preble County News on September 17, 1931 under the headline "Here And There".)

Phillip W. "Flys" Browning and A. L. Ron "Flash" Hubbard dare-devil speed pilot and parachute artist, were forced down east of Gratis about ten o'clock Sunday morning, through lack of fuel. Raymond Boomershine offered to buy gas for the flyers in exchange for a ride in the famous little ship. When "Flys" had circled the town and landed back on George Swisher's field he found "Flash" surrounded by a crowd, clamoring for a ride.

The team hastily held a consultation, and decided that since their business in St. Louis would not require them until Monday afternoon, they might as well spend the day barnstorming for their own amusement. Although they intended to leave Gratis later in the day, the prospective passengers were so numerous that darkness finally stopped activities at the improvised flying field.

The flyers spent the night in Gratis as the guests of Mr. and Mrs. M.L. Kiracofe and left for St. Louis Monday afternoon.

Stunt Flier

THE PREBLE COUNTY NEWS JULY 21, 1983

(continued from previous page)

"In the beginning, Ron (also known as 'Flash') hailed from out west, but only stayed long enough to be born. Since then he has been a dweller of the world at large, and there are few nooks and corners of the earth that he hasn't poked into. Before he fell from grace and became an aviator, he was, at various times, top sergeant in the Marines, radio crooner, newspaper reporter, gold miner in the West Indies and a movie director-explorer, having led a motion picture expedition into the south seas aboard an ancient windjammer.

"Then he turned to glider flying. Ron could do more stunts in a sailplane than most pilots can in a pursuit job. Once he took a glider up at a Chicago airport which was surrounded by a concrete road. It was a hot day and waves of heat were rising off the road as if it had been a stove. Ron sat up on that current of air and stayed there. Round and round the airport he went like a merry-go-round, until everybody got dizzy from watching him. Finally, he got tired of chasing his tail and came down, after establishing something of a record for sustained flight over the same field."

By 1938, with stories and articles pouring out at an unprecedented rate, Ron Hubbard ranked with the the top of his profession. He joined forces with one of the greatest editors of any genre, John W. Campbell, Jr., and they helped launch what came to be called "The Golden Age of Science Fiction." For the next decade, save the war years of 1941-1945, Hubbard dominated the field along with such names as Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov, Ray Bradbury, A.E. Van Vogt, Theodore Sturgeon and others.

When it seemed as if Hubbard had given up non-fiction for good, he returned to non-fiction with Dianetics, the Modern Science of Mental Health. The book rose to the top of the best-seller lists and stayed there for months. Hubbard's concept of people helping each other improve their mental health swept the country.

"Dianetics" directly countered the psychiatric ("electroshock") establishment, which launched an all-out, if ineffective, smear campaign. If anything, that campaign helped his popularity as an author. His fiction written before launching "Dianetics" was republished consistently. Although his non-fiction writings since 1950 sold in the millions of copies, his fans longed for more fiction. It wasn't until 1982 that he delivered.

Finding that he had time on his hands, and "in celebration of his fifty years of writing," he published *Battlefield Earth*: 430,000 words, 800 pages. The reviews are in, and (not surprisingly) they're terrific. *Publisher's Weekly*: "... a superlative storyteller with a total mastery of plot and pacing... if you like Heinlein, you'll like Hubbard... This has everything: suspense, pathos, politics, war, humor, diplomacy and intergalactic finance..."

The first and second printings were gone practically before they hit the bookstore and the epic is now in its fifth printing. It's still on the best-seller lists today, six months later and climbing.

You don't have to read much of Hubbard to tell he likes flying. From his 1937 article, the "Test Pilot":

"She whipped down that runway and into the air before I could blink. The earth went by in a blurred stream. The factory flashed under the wings and was gone... Within a space of seconds I was up to five thousand feet... I was riding on the tail of a bullet. Tricky and restless and fast, she blasted through the sky at three hundred miles and hour, making a slipstream as hard a a bring wall." From 1982, *Battlefield Earth*:

He felt awe. Was this how it was to be an eagle? Is that how the world looked from the sky?

The panorama of the mountains to the west began to open in relief. And in a few moments he realized they were now higher than Highpeak, seen whitely in the cold clear air.

For fifteen minutes he was enthralled. They were at height

of about four miles. He had never realized there was so much world! Or that one could feel so thrilled.

... The main thing, he instinctively knew, was not to get too close to that ground!"

With this latest in his long string of successes it doesn't look like there's much chance of Hubbard ever getting too close to the ground! Hubbard himself still seems to be blasting along at 300 miles an hour, with "a slipstream as hard as a brick wall."

Sounds a lot like "Flash" Hubbard, the boy who landed at George Swisher's field so long ago, and it's awfully good to have him back.

East Grinstead Courier

THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 1983

SCIENTOLOGISTS EXPEL 12 BUT ...

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that the Scientologists have kicked out 12 key members of their UK headquarters staff at Saint Hill Manor, East Grinstead, as part of a policy change, has received a mixed reception in the town.

East Grinstead's mayor Cr Ray Boulger said that if the Scientologists were genuinely trying to said that if the Scientologists were genuinely trying to purge themselves, then it was in everyone's interests to try to promote better relations.

But the Rev Roger Brown, vicar of St Swithun's parish church, East Grinstead, said the history of the sect showed that it just shifted ground when the public seemed not favourably disposed towards it.

"I don't think the image-changing will work," he said.

'I DON'T THINK IT WILL WORK' SAYS VICAR

The "excommunications", for misconduct, followed an internal investigation prompted by the conviction and imprisonment of senior Scientologists in the United States.

Several other staff in the Guardian's office at East Grinstead have been moved to other positions. The expulsion of the 12 was recommended by Mrs Edith Buchele, the movement's new external affairs director in Britain, after she uncovered what she describes as "a complete mess".

Charges against the 12 included misuse of funds to launch a series of libel actions, particularly against British newspapers but also against Scotland Yard and the Department of Health and Social Security.

It was also alleged that one senior member of the Guardian's office staff had falsely claimed to be a barrister.

The Scientologists say the founder, Mr Ron Hubbard, at least 20 years ago, was to use legal means only as a last resort and to maintain friendly relations with the environment and public.

The Guardian's Office, which at least 20 years ago, was to use legal means only as a last resort and to maintain friendly relations with the environment and public.

The Guardian's Office, which at one point had a staff of about 40, was closed this year when the last expulsion happened. The international side of the Church of Scientology at East Grinstead had now been transferred to Los Angeles. The original "open policy" which had been taken out by the 12 has been restored, a sect spokesman claimed this week.

Mr Mike Garside, public affairs officer for the movement, said the announcement had come at the end of a process which had been going on for about 2½ years. They had wanted to make sure the church and its external

● Turn to Page 39

Doubts over 'new image'



THE team that stays - Mrs Edith Buchele, the new external affairs director (centre) of the UK headquarters of the Scientology movement at Saint Hill Manor, East Grinstead, pictured with other staff at Saint Hill. On the left is Mr Mike Garside, the movement's public affairs officer, and Cathy Sproule, director of affairs. On the right is Mr Robert Springall, director of public affairs, and Barbara Bradley, public affairs assistant. In the background can be seen the "castle" complex used for counselling, administration and as a study centre

The Preble County News

Vol. 81 No. 23 Thursday, August 25, 1983 USPS441-760 FIFTEEN CENTS

Letters To The Editor:

Hubbard Recalls People In Preble County Landing

To the Editor:

I was touched to be still known in Preble County. And, not strange at all, well remember Preble County, but for different reasons than were given in your very nice article on me in your issue of July 21, 1983. You recounted that my fellow pilot Browning landed low on fuel in George Swisher's field. And it is very true that Raymond Boomershine offered to buy us gas if we would take him for a ride and that we were promptly surrounded by people clamoring for rides that we obliged. And that Mr. and Mrs. Kiracofe did take us as guests for the night.

But there is more to the story — the people of Preble County.

Here were a couple of shipwrecked aviators and the folks took them in, owned them and would not take no for an answer.

There was no crop in the field but one might expect its owner to object to a strange craft from the sky. But not George Swisher. He said, "Anything I can do for you, boys?"

Hubbard Day Proclaimed in Gratis

Mayor Russell Wilson of Gratis at the August 17 meeting of the Gratis Village Council proclaimed Sept. 13 each year as L. Ron Hubbard day and made Hubbard an honorary citizen of the village.

Marlyse Brock of Switzerland and Pam Schwartz, members of the Hubbard organization, attended on behalf of the author who has not appeared in public for several years. Hubbard is author of "Battlefield Earth," and has also written science fiction and Church of Scientology books.

The setting aside of L. Ron Hubbard Day came after reading of a plaque from Hubbard. The plaque thanked Gratis and Preble County for helping him after he was forced to land his airplane near Gratis during a barnstorming tour 52 years ago.

The proclamation was made official by a unanimous vote of council.

We said, "We're out of fuel."

And Raymond Boomershine said, "You wait right there," and tore off to the local gas station.

Meanwhile an awful lot of people were arriving. They wanted to know if we needed any help. And we said the plane had to be turned around and although they were all in their Sunday best, they grabbed at the tail and turned her around.

Then Raymond Boomershine came back with the gas and he helped us fill the tank. We tried to pay him and he said, "Nope," and my pal said, "We don't know how to thank you." And Raymond said, "Well if you put it that way, I always wanted to ride in one of them things. How about a short hop?"

That started it. Everyone and his kids got a ride.

There are people probably around today who as kids, had a ride in that airplane.

Finally, Mr. Kiracofe came up and pointed at the sun and said, "It's going to be dark too soon for you boys to fly on. Me and the missus would be pleased to have you stay with us tonight."

And that was my first encounter with Ohio cooking. Mrs. Kiracofe really could cook! We had a dinner I never forgot and breakfast would have fed a threshing crew! Delicious! But Mrs. Kiracofe seemed surprised I could not eat another dozen fried eggs with the next foot high stack of hotcakes.

Finally we got ourselves to the plane and George Swisher was shoving cows off it (they loved to lick the banana oil paint used on the plane fabric). And a whole crowd was on hand to bid us goodbye and they cleared cows out of the field and we took off for an air meet in St. Louis amid waves and cheers.

And about 500 feet up I looked back at the waving hands and the lovely countryside spread below and with real regret to leave.

And I said to my pal, "They ought to change that song from "Beautiful Ohio" to 'Beautiful Ohio People'."

And those days in Ohio have lived on in fond memory.

So hello again!

May all go well with you and the people of Preble County and God bless. With such kindly people, who would want to live anywhere else?

L. Ron Hubbard