



## *Student Summer Missionary*

# WITNESSES STATEHOOD CELEBRATION

by Margie Barnett

It was an exciting day for me when the Pacific Northern Plane lifted her wings above the runway of the Tacoma-Seattle airport and I was bound for the far-northern country of Alaska.

I had read so much about this mystic land in *GA* ~~600~~ *Home Missions* magazine, and in other periodicals. How I had longed to see for myself this land, and the opportunity had come. I took advantage of it. The month was June, the year, 1958.

At first I felt almost ill. I wanted to turn back. But when I turned myself, the plane, the pilot, and other passengers over to God, I felt satisfied and glad that I was going to Alaska, and when I first glanced at the wonder and beauty of that land, I was glad that I had not turned back.

It was my privilege to visit for seven weeks in Anchorage, Alaska's largest city. Everywhere I looked there were modern buildings, paved streets, beautiful apartment buildings, automobiles, and people hurrying on the busy city streets.

In the distance was Cook Inlet, named for the famous navigator, Captain James Cook. On the busiest street of that city was the sign "All America City."

I spent seven weeks in this summer paradise. It was a surprise to me to witness the historic celebration of state-

hood. To see hundreds of people jubilant over statehood was exciting. Throngs of residents and visitors jammed the city park strip to witness the burning of a 50-ton statehood bonfire.

There are many Christian people in Alaska. The work of Southern Baptists is touching hearts of people all over the new state. Baptists there have a vision of the future and are ready to reach out and win the people for Christ.

One of the GA-RA camps was held by beautiful Baptist Lake not far from Palmer. It was thrilling to see a huge plane piloted by a fellow Baptist fly over the camp and drop a mission offering. Miss Irene Chambers from the Home Mission Board brought soul-stirring mission stories. She taught the words to a song that fitted Alaska:

"Oh, the sheer joy of it,  
Living with thee.  
God of the Universe  
Lord of a tree  
Maker of mountains  
Lover of me."

It has been predicted that a vast new frontier for expansion of America's population and wealth will be opened, and why not? The people are friendly, the opportunities are great and unlimited. God is in Alaska. Southern Baptists are there ready to welcome all who may journey to that land of a thousand wonders.