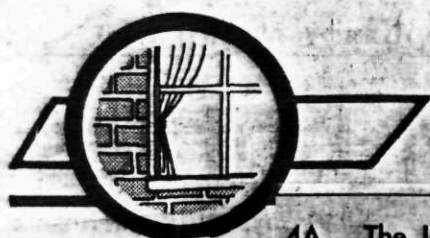


This document came from a binder of notable Elmhurst, IL citizens that was kept by librarians for many years. No further information is available about where the information came from. 2010

Canfield, Muriel



living

4A The Jackson Sun, Jackson, Tenn., Tuesday, May 31, 1983

'I didn't feel I had any communication with God at all,' but 'All at once the inexplicable happened. I couldn't see God or hear His voice, but I felt as if He had spoken to me'

Struggle

Woman's 11-year fight with alcohol culminates in inspirational writing

By **BILL ROBERTS**
Assistant features editor

Muriel Canfield looked on her life as one impressive failure after another.

By age 18 she was an alcoholic. In her senior year in college she married a man she didn't love because he represented security, and she was afraid of flunking out of school.

Life became a blur of booze, denial and disappointment until she discovered God, Jesus, acceptance and the ability to love the man she had married.

Mrs. Canfield, who moved to Jackson with her husband only three weeks ago, has chronicled those 20 rocky years of her life in a book entitled "I Wish I Could Say I Love You," published by Bethany House Publishers, a company specializing in Christian books.

The book is available at Jackson bookstores.

In her narrative style, which relies heavily on dialogue, she catalogues her 11-year fight with alcohol. "I saw what I was doing to myself, and I hated myself," Mrs. Canfield said. "That became an impetus to drink. I never seemed to be able to stop myself."

She connived, plotted, planned and excused her drinking — creating a tense,



Muriel Canfield

depressing home life.

Through it all, her husband Gene, a building contractor's supervisor for

Procter & Gamble, stayed with her. "He ignored many things to stay with me," Mrs. Canfield said.

Her downward spiral continued as she was diagnosed as a diabetic — a pronouncement she considered as strong as a death sentence. Still, the drinking continued.

She dabbled in the occult — a move she now reflects was an attempt to seek a god-like figure in her life. After one spirit-raising session she believed she was cured of diabetes, and to prove it ate a breakfast of orange juice and French toast with syrup.

Her blood sugar shot up. No cure.

Throughout her life, Mrs. Canfield had not considered religion important. "I didn't feel I had any communication with God at all," she said.

Then came the revelation. "All at once the inexplicable happened," she wrote. "I couldn't see God or hear His voice, but I felt as if He had spoken to me. . ."

Within a day she was convinced God had cured her diabetes, and in what she called an act of faith, she ate a heavily sugared snack to see if her blood sugar would rise dramatically.

"I wanted to know if I was healed," she said. "It was more of a wondering. It was one good way for me to find out if



Muriel Canfield's upward climb from alcoholism is told in her book "I Wish I Could Say I Love You."

I was healed. It really astounded me."

She believes she was healed and contends that subsequent medical examinations have shown no trace of diabetes.

She believes God took away her desire to drink, and even prevented her from swallowing liquor one evening as she nearly relapsed into alcoholism.

"I am thankful God touched me," she said. And in response she has become a self-styled evangelist. "I have a strong sales streak in me."

With alcohol and illness behind her, Mrs. Canfield said she embarked on a more rigorous journey, to find peace, acceptance and how to love.

Mrs. Canfield took her story to 12 publishers before Bethany House agreed to publish it. The company was so pleased with her writing, they have put her under contract to write another book — a romance, suspense story.

"I love writing," she said. "I feel more addicted to writing than I ever did to alcohol."

Six days each week she writes for several hours in the morning on a word processor, and is already thinking about other novels and stories she'd like to tell.

She looks on "I Wish I Could Say I Love You" as "the first book in my writing career."