It is no secret that JBU was a strong supporter of the American armed forces during World War II. Publications and building projects were cancelled to save funding and resources for the war effort. Nearly all eligible males enlisted in the military, dropping male enrollment to 11 students during the peak of the war. Numerous faculty and staff members took breaks from campus involvement to volunteer their services on the frontlines. As the Allies celebrated V-E Day in May of 1945, JBU dedicated its Cathedral project to its “boys” that had fallen in battle - nearly fifty of JBU’s several hundred emissaries.

Thus, it should come as no surprise that JBU continued to support veterans as they wandered home from foreign lands, especially thanks to coincident legislation. In June 1944, the federal government passed what became known as the “GI Bill,” granting returned servicemen free tuition. GIs were only responsible for their living expenses.

The GI Bill had an enormous impact on nearly all collegiate institutions nationwide. Some schools trebled in size within two school years. JBU found its male enrollments on the rise again, but more significantly, it now had to deal with a demographic it had never seen before: married students. As GIs returned and wedded their sweethearts, increasing numbers of incoming students needed accommodations for spouses. In addition, almost all GIs brought cars to campus, creating the first parking crunch in JBU history.

At first, JBU had virtually no resources to fix the housing problem. Former business manager Marion Snider remembers going door-to-door throughout Siloam Springs, asking residents to board couples for a year. However, it was obvious that more needed to be done.

In 1946, the Federal Public Housing Authority provided a solution. Across the state line in Pryor, Oklahoma, several blocks of houses went up for sale. The residences had been reserved for the employees of a federal munitions plant during the war. Once the war ended, much of the housing became surplus to the town’s needs. Accordingly, whole communities of houses were sold off for relocation to other towns. The houses cost between $1,000-$1,450 each, depending on the number of bedrooms available.

JBU used this opportunity (continued on back page)

Left: In this aerial photo from the late 1940s, JBU’s row of imported housing is just visible on Holly street. One family lived in each of the 6 houses, while 8-10 couples lived in the longer buildings at the top of the picture.
Insights

From the works of John Brown, Sr. At the birth of Christ, the angel chorus sang first over the Judean hills, and sang the first Christmas carol for lonely shepherds. There was nothing unusual in the fact that the angels’ song was sung first to these lonely men. Nor was there anything strange or unusual in the announcement of the angels, [...] “Ye shall find the babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” God’s method of approach to men has [always] been the reverse of the attempts which men make to garb and cloak Christianity in mystery and spectacular displays.

Jesus Christ was the only person who ever walked the earth who could choose the town where He was born. And He chose the obscure and all but unknown town of Bethlehem. Jesus was the only person the world has ever known who was privileged to choose His own mother. And He chose an unknown maiden yonder in the Judean hills, Mary. Jesus was the only person who was privileged to choose the building for His birthplace. And He chose a stable. He chose to leave heaven’s courts and the wonders and glories of the heavenly word to be born of woman, to be tempted as humanity is tempted, that He might enter into the reality and tragedy of human life. And at last, that spotless, stainless One actually entered into the tragedy and the curse and became sin for us, that He might pay the price of man’s transgressions and provide a way for a fallen [humanity to return] to the fellowship of the sons of God.

He passed great cities to choose as the city of his birth Little Bethlehem. The sign of the angel was a babe wrapped in clothes and lying in the manger. Friends, is not the coming of Christ perfectly in harmony with God’s manifestations to men of all ages?

Excerpt from Babe in Swaddling Clothes

E CH O E S   O F   T H E   P A S T

Excerpt from the 19 December 1941 issue of the Threefold Advocate

The University administration and the annual staff deemed it advisable to suspend publication of the 1942 Pioneer [yearbook] for the coming year.

This step was taken due to the present international situation and since yearbooks are luxuries, it was decided only a duty to help national defense by cutting down on the consumption of materials such as paper, brass, and copper used in publishing an annual.

The annual staff, composed of Bob Wilson, editor; Eddie Schultz, business manager; Margaret Carlson, art editor; and Barbara Wilson and Bliley Jo Robinson, copy editors; has thus far made more progress on plans than any year previously, and chose an entirely new and unique idea as a theme. The book will probably be published next year with the same staff.

(continued from front)

to order 20 houses for shipment to Siloam Springs. Relocation, contracted with an Oklahoma City company, only cost $500 per house. Some of these were placed on campus, while others were sold to staff, faculty, and local veterans for placement on private lands surrounding campus. Many houses ended up on Dogwood Street. For married-student housing, six of the residences were moved onto Holly Street, as well as two four-plex buildings located near the modern West Twin Springs apartments. These temporarily fixed the housing crunch, until further funding in the 1960s allowed for the construction of the Broadhurst duplex “village.”

At graduation each year, members of the JBU community sing about their alma mater’s location “on the city’s western border.” The GI housing project helped to spread the residential areas of Siloam westwards from historic downtown, changing the city’s geography forever. If the campus is no longer the westernmost point in Siloam, JBU has only itself to blame.

Most of the houses visible in this 1965 aerial photo were moved to Siloam by JBU’s GI housing program.