

Howard A Crowl (Bwana Crowl, Muchana)

August 13, 1926 – July 17, 2019



Howard A. Crowl was born on 08/13/1926 in the small town of Minerva, OH. His parents, Leland and Alice (Filliez) Crowl had no idea as they held their precious baby for the first time, the lives that he would touch, the hearts that would surrender to Christ and the impact his

life would have on those who were lost halfway around the world on the "dark continent."

His younger sister Marcia (Harry) Treacher was one of his biggest advocates and continued to be a joy in his life till she passed away in August of 2017.

In high school, Howard was active in the church youth group, loved music and played the piano and organ, He worked harvesting crops on a nearby farm with a team of horses. He loved Archery and later taught archery at the YMCA. He graduated from Minerva High School on May 25, 1944 and joined the military where he served his country and really enjoyed the mounted patrol.

On June 11, 1950, he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Ohio University. He was involved in campus ministry while there and was part of the group who helped June (Taylor) Crowl pack her bags and crates for her journey to her life of service as a missionary to the Congo.

Awhile later there was a need for someone to volunteer to travel to a mission station called "Bomili" deep in the Ituri Rain Forest in the Congo to help set up a printing press that could be used to print materials to use for the mission work as well as mission run school. Howard, knowing nothing about printing presses, volunteered to go and on his way bought a manual on "Printing Presses for Dummies" or the equivalent of. While there, he laid eyes on the love of his life, Winona June Taylor and after his work was

done, he asked her to marry him on the Kwa Kwa bridge. She agreed but only if he stayed in Africa. The letter he wrote to send back home was received by his parents with quite a surprise and had the town in an uproar as not only was Howard not returning home, he had also married a native African woman. Guess Howard forgot to mention that June was a missionary and was from Illinois. When asked about that proposal, Howard always gave the response, "Me Tarzan, you Jane!" The swinging on the vines part was tried later but didn't end so well as Howard and his rifle ended up in the river!

Howard was ordained as a minister at Minerva Christian Church on 3/23/1958. He later continued his education on leave and graduated with a Master of Arts from Fuller Theological Seminary. His thesis was a study of the culture of the Bashi tribe (The tribe he was serving in Zaire.)

Rebellions, revolutions, sickness, seeing missionaries come and go, loss of financial support, though often discouraging, never drove Howard off the narrow path. He remained steadfast the commitment he had made and his first response when anyone came to him with a problem was, "Did you pray about it first?"

Howard and June were blessed with 4 children; Christine Crowl (residing with June Crowl in Kenya), Dave Crowl (Dora) (Mayor of Belgium, IL), Charlene Tollefsrud (Todd) truck driver in Wisconsin, Aimee G. Crowl (director of Ahadi Boys in Kenya).

Added to that blessing were 6 grandchildren. Elisa Ramey (teacher in Honk Kong), Micah Ramey (Art Major living in Japan), Ryan Ramey (studies psychology in Japan), Stephanie A. Lambert (Phlebotomist in TX), Isaiah Crowl (preacher in Galva, IL), Josh Crowl (studying music education at Quincy University) and Cheyenne Crowl (middle school in Belgium, IL).

Howards favorite phrases were; 1) Did you pray about it? 2)"Nina penda Safari" which translates, I love

safari. After 17 hours stuck in one mudhole with nowhere to go... he would start chirping this phrase. 3) "Hakuna Ahadi" which means no promises. Because a promise is a debt owed. So, don't make a promise you cannot keep.

Howard loved studying and learning new things. He could take nothing and make something useful out of it. He was a skilled carpenter, mason, mechanic, plumber, well digger, and even oversaw the building of the Bomili Airstrip which was quite the undertaking as it was all jungle and the only equipment available to clear the land were axes, shovels and wheel barrels. After 2 years, the airstrip was open and ready to have much needed supplies for the mission station flown in and out.

The chapters in the Book of Howards life are many. They are full of times of joy, times of sorrow, stories of great adversity and great victories, stories of adventures and a culture in a place and time never seen by most eyes. But most importantly, is the story of a Great God who was always there, who never failed him, who kept his promises, who faced each storm of life with him. It a story of a little boy from Minerva OH, who gave his life to the Lord and allowed God to use Him as a servant, a vessel to reach the lost for Christ halfway around the world in the Congo. There is no doubt that Howard was dedicated to the African people and to the Gospel and the legacy he leaves behind is an example of commitment, dedication and love for the Lord and the blessings that come to his children and grandchildren because of his faithfulness.

The story began many years ago and the young, vibrant, man who stepped his boots into the African soil for the first time, stood the test of time and on July 17, 2019, Howard stood up out of that bed, his crouched shoulders straightened out, his blurred vision became clear. The sound of His savior was

gently calling and the ears that strained to hear, clearly heard that sweet voice and he began to run like a gazelle in African sun. He rose up like on the wings of eagles and oh what an embrace as Jesus held him close and whispered, "Well done! Good and faithful servant! Well Done!"

Two Memorial Services for Howard (one in Kenya and one Stateside)

Stateside: Saturday, August 3 at 10:00 at the Catlin Church of Christ, 715 W. Vermilion St., Catlin, IL. Please feel free to join the family as they say goodbye to their father. Officiating this service is longtime friend Ed Hegler of NY and grandson, Isaiah Crowl.

The family is asking to share pictures of Howard in Africa, doing ministry, or stories you would like to share, please send them to Charlene at Tollefsrudtodd@yahoo.com.

Nairobi, Kenya: Sunday, August 4, at 2:00 at the Kenya Church of Christ -Eastleigh. All are welcome! Good News Production will do a live stream for all those who are not able to attend. Then Howard's ashes will be carried by Mugisho to Congo to be buried at Kididobo.

Personal messages to June and Chris can be emailed to Aimee Crowl at aimeecorwl@gmail.com, this will be a big encouragement for both of them.

In lieu of flowers the family kindly ask that you make gift monetarily to June or Chris Crowl to aid in their continued 24-hour daily health and wellbeing care. Please make payable to them directly and mail to PO Box 181, Catlin, IL 61817.