

Life's Memorial Tower -- A Dedication to Chiropractic's Defenders

Editorial Staff

An artist's rendering of the commemorative bell tower that will soon be built on the Life College campus in honor of chiropractors who were jailed for practicing in the pre-licensure days.

To honor the thousands of chiropractic pioneers who were jailed for practicing their profession in the turbulent period of chiropractic pre-licensure, Life College will build a commemorative bell tower on the campus in Marietta, Georgia.

Life president and founder, Dr. Sid Williams, named Dr. Herbert Reaver, a personal friend who was arrested for "practicing medicine" without a license, as one of the people who inspired the bell tower. Dr. Reaver was quoted as saying, "I endured jail for the principle," and the tower will memorialize him by featuring a replica of Dr. Reaver's hands in the adjusting position.

The 46-foot-tall tower, quarried from Stone Mountain, Georgia granite, will display plaques which bear the names of those DCs who went to jail for chiropractic. The plaques will be mounted on the inner walls of the tower's open base design. To be certain that the list of honorees is complete, Life will be conducting research into chiropractic's pre-licensure era, using the extensive archives of Palmer College as a primary source of information. As a result of a special grant in 1990, Palmer has the historical records of the Universal Chiropractic Association, the Chiropractic Health Bureau, and the International Chiropractors Association, all processed and cataloged.

Arrests of chiropractors began in 1904 with warrants issued across the country for "unlawfully treating persons as a physician." In 1906 D.D. Palmer himself was tried and convicted for practicing without a medical license in Davenport, Iowa. He gave a passionate speech defending his right to practice chiropractic: "I am not guilty, medicine is guilty ... for not getting these sick people well. As long as I have these two hands and there are sick people to get well, I will use them."

Chiropractors continued to get arrested well into the 1950s. It wasn't until Louisiana licensed chiropractic in 1974 that DCs were protected by licensure in every state.

If you are interested in making a donation to the commemorative tower, or would like to nominate a chiropractor from the pre-licensure era for inclusion, please send your information or check to:

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