

Florida Baptist Historical Society Biography Collection

This link provides the specific resource information which documents and undergirds the biographical resource information on a specific Florida Baptist pastors, church staff or significant laity leaders.

The link you have chosen connects to the specific individual's resource files that provide the basis for information which the Historical Society has used to develop the respective biographical profile. The sources attached may include copies of articles gleaned from back issues of the *Florida Baptist Witness* and other news publications. Other resources include books, historical journal articles and church histories that are cited as documentation for the biography.

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Stevens, Howard Barney (1851-1938) was born in Dayton, Ohio the son of Ansel E. and Harriet Newell Barney Osgood Stevens. He was the founding pastor of First Baptist Church, Citra, 1876. Stevens had three wives; Lillis Minerva "Lillie" Allen Stevens (1855-1888) (m. 1876) they had four children; Laura A. Giffin Stevens (1852-1894) (m. 1890) they had one daughter and Esther Stirling Stevens (1867-1955) (m. 1900) they had twin sons.

Citra

First Baptist Church Citra Located in Florida, Marion County, Town of Citra close to Ocala and Gainesville

First Baptist Church Citra

18280 North Highway 301 Citra, Florida 32113

(352) 595-7300

"A church led by God's unfailing love."



Everyone is welcome

Weather you live in our area or are just visiting Please come and worship with us.

Tis said that "every institution" is but the lengthened shadow of a man" (or woman). For the Citra First Baptist Church that man was Mr. H.B. (Howard Barney) Stevens. In December of 1876, Mr. Stevens brought his bride to a two-room cabin on a four-acre site. At that time Florida was sparsely settled and Baptist were "few and far between."

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*Location

In 1880 Baptist friends of Mr. Stevens in the North contributed financially and soon a meeting house with an adjacent parsonage was provided. The original church building consisted of one room with three windows on each side, and seated about 100 people. By 1893 the membership had outgrown the original building so a new house of worship was erected which forms the main part of the present edifice on U.S. 301 in Citra. The new house of worship contained a baptistery, an unheard of innovation as that time.

This building was planned and constructed under the leadership of Mr. Stevens and was dedicated debt-free at the cost of about \$3,000. The architecture of the church is a nostalgic reminder of a by-gone era of the Old South. After many years, Sunday School classrooms were added. Then in 1956 the dining and fellowship hall was built.

PALLBEARERS ARE NAMED IN RITES FOR H. B. STEVENS

From The News-Journal Bureau

DELAND, Oct. 15—DeLand today mourned the death of one of its leading citizens and pioneer settlers, H. B. Stevens, 87, who died at his home on West New York avenue last night. Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Esther Stevens, a son, E. B. Stevens, and Mrs. Mary Hunter, DeLand; a son, Robert Stevens, Savannah, Ga., and a daughter, Mrs. Edward Davis, Berea, Ky.

Stevens was a resident of DeLand for the last 40 years, employed as general manager of the Stetson Estates since the turn of the century. He had been a trustee of John B. Stetson university for the last 50 years. Funeral will be at 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon in the First Baptist church here.

Active pallbearers: Hubert S. Talton, Robert H. Wingfield, B. E. Ezell, A. P. MacFie, R. S. Gray and Dean Charles Smith. Honorary: Dr. W. S. Allen, Dr. H. C. Garwood, E. H. Talton, T. C. Brooks, Hayward Russell, Dr. W. S. Gordis, D. C. Hull, Dr. W. H. Sharp, Rev. L. B. Gill, Samuel Day, H. L. Gibbs, Rev. J. W. Salton, E. L. Hon and F. R. Osbourn.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/100405911/lillis_minerva-stevens

Lillis Minerva "Lillie" Allen Stevens

Birth 17 Mar 1855 Myanmar

Death 7 Oct 1888 (aged 33) Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio, USA

Burial Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio, USA

Her parents were missionaries to Burma, where she was born in Tavoy, Burma (Myanmar).

obit index:

died October 7, wife of H. B. Stevens, of Citra, Florida, at home of parents

Dayton Daily Journal

v. XXVI, iss. 64 : pg. 1, col. 5

Inscription

WIFE OF H. B. STEVENS

Gravesite Details

"Lillius Stevens" in cemetery's database, "Lillis" on headstone

Family Members

Parents Rev Thomas Allen 1824–1898

Spouse

Howard Barney Stevens 1851–1938 (m. 1876)

Children

James Allen Stevens 1877–1918

Merle H. Stevens 1879–1886

Robert Howard Stevens 1885–1978

Infant Stevens 1888–1888

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/20837297/laura_a-stevens

Laura A Giffin Stevens

Birth 1852 Ohio, USA

Death 24 Nov 1894 (aged 41–42)

Burial Citra Cemetery Citra, Marion County, Florida, USA

Inscription

Wife of HB Stevens

Family Members

Parents

Elizabeth Betzey Jones Giffin 1812–1891

Spouse

Howard Barney Stevens 1851–1938 (m. 1890)

Children

Mary Stevens Hunter 1893–1981

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/82097307/mary_esther-stevens

Mary Esther Stirling Stevens

Birth 1867 Smyth County, Virginia, USA

Death 1955 (aged 87–88) Volusia County, Florida, USA

Burial Oakdale Cemetery DeLand, Volusia County, Florida, USA

Family Members

Spouse

Howard Barney Stevens

1851–1938 (m. 1900)

Children

Frank & George twins Stevens

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/82097305/howard_barney-stevens

Howard Barney Stevens

Birth 22 Jan 1851 Dayton, Montgomery County, Ohio, USA

Death 14 Oct 1938 (aged 87) DeLand, Volusia County, Florida, USA

Burial Oakdale Cemetery DeLand, Volusia County, Florida, USA

Family Members

Parents Ansel E. Stevens 1812–1888

Harriet Newell Barney Osgood Stevens 1818–1903

Spouses

Lillis Minerva "Lillie" Allen Stevens 1855–1888 (m. 1876)

Laura A Giffin Stevens 1852–1894 (m. 1890)

Mary Esther Stirling Stevens 1867–1955 (m. 1900)

Children

James Allen Stevens 1877–1918

Merle H. Stevens 1879–1886

Robert Howard Stevens 1885–1978

Infant Stevens 1888–1888

Mary Stevens Hunter 1893–1981

Frank & George twins Stevens