



DESMOND AND IRENE BITTINGER  
2639 "B" St.

The Bittingers are probably the most widely traveled people to come to Hillcrest.

Irene Frantz was born in Eastern Pennsylvania and graduated from Elizabethtown College where she earned her way by making and selling various craft items, graduating in 1926. Eglon, West Virginia was Desmond's birthplace. His education began in a one-room mountain schoolhouse. A mutual interest in mission work brought him and Irene together in Elizabethtown College. After their graduation, they were married in 1927 and in 1930 went to Africa to do mission work for the Church of the Brethren.

Prior to going to Africa, their first son was born; two other children were born in Africa and the youngest daughter was born in Kansas. Three of their grandchildren were born in Africa.

In 1938 they returned to America and after two years of graduate study, Desmond was offered a teaching position at McPherson College, Kansas. In 1944 he was asked to edit the Gospel Messenger for the Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Illinois.

McPherson invited him to return to be President of the College beginning in 1950. While living in McPherson, Irene was chosen to be Kansas Mother of the Year in 1956. In addition to teaching at the College, she was also President of the National Women's Work of the Church of the Brethren.

In 1965 Chapman College in Orange California asked Desmond to assist in setting up World Campus Afloat. With approximately 500 students aboard, the Bittingers were involved with 12,000 students in their twelve voyages around the world during their thirteen years with the program.

After semi-retiring in San Diego in 1976, they continued to sponsor tours for adults; the last trip being to China shortly before moving to Hillcrest in October 1985.

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Desmond enjoys reading and writing about cultures and religions and does stitchery. In addition to Irene's interest in crafts, She collects bells and cups. Together the family does mountain climbing.

A long-time acquaintance with Hillcrest led them to choose this place for retirement.

This information from  
personal profile (book)  
at Hillcrest Homes,  
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