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Biography - Abercrombie

Local History

# The route reverend

Rev. Abercrombie retiring  
after 32 years in dual roles

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Of the Herald-Republic

**SELAH** — Pastoring a church isn't a big-money job, and neither is delivering papers on a Yakima Herald-Republic motor route.

But the two vocations have made a comfortable living for the Rev. Hervy Abercrombie and his family of Fremont Avenue and North Wenas Road, Selah, for almost 32 years. Abercrombie, who will be 70 on Oct. 4, will retire by Sept. 1 from both jobs, which he says have complimented each other in more ways than one.

A minister needs quiet to think out his sermons. And what is more peaceful than delivering papers alone in the country between 3-6 a.m.

"No trouble staying awake when it's below zero and I'm driving with my windows down to put Heralds in boxes," Abercrombie said.

He's had to chain up and shovel snow lots of times since March 1952, when he took over a rural Selah-Wenas Valley route. He says he knocked over a few mailbox posts and scat-



REV. HERVY ABERCROMBIE  
... will take time to travel

ched fenders, but never had a serious accident.

Hervy and Laura Abercrombie moved to Selah in 1951 when he became pastor of the Selah Church of Christ. He later taught in Central Washington Bible College in the church building.

"Our son, Charles had a bicycle delivery route. Ward

Prescott, district manager, and Murray Clark, circulation manager, were starting an afternoon Yakima Daily Republic motor route and I took it for the summer as a sideline.

"It's been a good supplement to our income and hasn't interfered with our church work," Abercrombie said.

The route became a morning Herald-Republic route when Yakima Dailies stopped afternoon publishing several years ago. "I started with 113 customers. Now the 27-mile route runs over 400 daily papers and a bundle of Sundays only," he said.

Abercrombie said he started delivering with a 1937 Dodge sedan he bought from a farmer, used a Volkswagen until he "froze out" a few times, and switched to a Ford Pinto. "VW's don't put out much heat with their windows down."

"I've used 12-15 cars since we started. The secret: I'm a backyard mechanic. I buy 'em and fix 'em up. We ran six years on a 1969 Dodge that cost \$200," Hervy said. "I've seen route carriers buy new cars

and wear them out before they're paid for."

Hervy and Laura have five children — Betty, the oldest, and Charles, John, Jim and Joe. "They've all had kids' Herald-Republic routes at one time or other. All — including Laura — have helped with the motor route in recent years."

Abercrombie used to collect for papers door-to-door, but in recent years leaves a bill with the paper. People either leave a check in the tube or mail it.

"I've lost little money by theft, although sometimes people move out leaving a month's bill. It's been the best part-time job we could have picked up," he stated.

Hervy and Laura, married since 1936, have sold their home and bought a travel trailer. "We're taking a sentimental journey to all the places where we've pastored or held missionary services."

Abercrombie said the trip will touch Elgin, Ore., Kansas, Nebraska and as far east as Cincinnati and West Virginia. "We'll spend a week or two in each place and expect to be gone a year," he said.