

Louise Laymen Sumrall

Fervent and Fearless

The first time Louise Laymen heard the voice of her husband-to-be, Lester Sumrall, it was coming from a shortwave radio that was tuned to station HCJB, "The Voice of the Andes," in Quito, Ecuador. A young missionary, Louise was stationed in Argentina, and she thought this might be the same minister she'd heard about from acquaintances in her native Canada.

Friends had spoken highly of Sumrall, well-known as a missionary, revivalist and author, who had ministered in the area. She became curious and wondered if he would come to Argentina.

Louise was born in 1912 in the city of London, Ontario, to godly parents. While in Bible college she sensed the call of God to the mission field.

Every week during school various missionaries would come and speak at chapel services. At one meeting a speaker displayed a map of South America.

On the map was one of her favorite scriptures: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Rev. 3:8, KJV). It was written right over the country of Argentina.

Louise's aunt was already serving in that part of the world. Her influence, coupled with the placement of this verse on the map, was a confirmation to Louise that she was to go there.

Her first experiences as a missionary were rough, but they served to equip her for her future work in more than 110 nations.

Louise became well-known during those early years on the field. God began developing in her a heart of compassion to minister to the needs of the hurting world. God was also

preparing her mate, who had heard glowing reports about the adventurous young missionary woman from Canada.

Many months after hearing Lester Sumrall on the radio, Louise's desire to meet him became a reality at the wedding of two missionary colleagues in Buenos Aires, Argentina. During the next 14 months they courted by mail.

Louise and Lester were married on September 30, 1944. Their honeymoon was an amazing 50,000-mile missionary trip, during which they saw more than 2,000 people come to Christ.

Louise served as Lester's partner in marriage and ministry for nearly 50 years. They were the parents of three sons.

In 1994, Louise Sumrall died; Lester passed away two years later. Today their ministry, the Lester Sumrall Evangelistic Association (LeSEA), is a global outreach. The work they began continues as a tribute to their life together.