

SHINING LAMP

A Bahá'í who served humanity with radiance

Creadell Haley (1917–2000)



As she steered the plane above the open fields, Creadell Haley faced two big problems: she was lost, and she was running out of gas. It was 1946, and Creadell had drifted off course over the Midwestern U.S. on her first solo flight. But she didn't panic. She managed to land her plane safely in an oat field. She got help from a farmer and spent the night in town. The next morning, she found fuel and navigated her way home to Illinois, where she fulfilled her dream of earning her pilot's license.

An Early Takeoff

Creadell was born in 1917 in Oklahoma. Her parents divorced, and she and her brother, Nathaniel, were raised by their aunt and uncle in Illinois. From a young age, she was drawn to the wonder of flight. She found a library book called *How to Fly* and was determined to become a pilot.

She was the first woman in her area to enroll in flying lessons and became the instructor's best student. During World War II, she joined the newly created Women's Army Air Corps as a mechanic. After intense training, she served in England and France. When the war ended, she was finally able to get her pilot's license and take to the skies.

Creadell's adventures continued in California, where she attended the Los Angeles Conservatory of Music. She learned about the Bahá'í Faith and composed songs to express her beliefs. In a tune called "Love, Love, Love," she encouraged the oneness of humanity: "Love God's creatures / Be

they near or far / See each human / As a shining star." Her songs became popular among Bahá'ís around the world, and they're still sung today.

Navigating New Horizons

Creadell learned that Bahá'ís in Latin America needed help strengthening their communities. In 1959, she moved to Nicaragua and spent much of her time in remote areas that could only be reached by boat or on foot. But Creadell faced each new challenge with determination as she shared the Bahá'í teachings, and the Bahá'í community grew. Her service soared to new heights.

After five years, Creadell's health suffered, and she returned to Illinois. She stayed for several years. When she finally returned to Latin America, she said, "I was so happy I could hardly contain myself. There is no other way to describe it." Creadell then spent six years in Venezuela, a country she found "gloriously beautiful." She said it was "a melting pot of people and that too is very beautiful."

Poor health sent Creadell back to the U.S. in 1973, but her service continued. She moved to South Carolina, where she taught Spanish and piano. She gave presentations on her experiences in Latin America and told friends and neighbors about the Bahá'í Faith.

When Creadell passed away in 2000 at the age of 83, the Universal House of Justice "warmly remembered" her "services in Latin America" and offered "ardent prayers" for "the progress of her radiant soul throughout the divine realms."