



# Gospel Music Out West

by Herb Henry

## Great Singer. Even Greater Person.

**T**he old Gospel song “Unclouded Day” was written by a circuit-riding preacher who was always watching the skies for approaching storm clouds. Traveling on horseback, he was subject to being drenched by the downpours of the midwestern storms.

Come to think of it, I am sure he didn't ride through our part of the country where it seems that months can go by without a cloud in the sky! That is one thing that sets us apart from the eastern parts of the country. I hope that our dear friends back east have not had to spend too much time in their storm cellars this summer.

A wonderful Gospel singer who always brings sunshine to our hearts is Lillie Knauls. She was born in those stormy regions, in the state of Arkansas. Her family moved to Seattle when she was in her teens. After graduating from high school, Lillie moved to California, settling in San Jose. It was there that she became a part of The Edwin Hawkins Singers, whose recording of “Oh, Happy Day” was a No. 1 hit in 1970.

I discovered Lillie's wonderful voice when I purchased her early recordings on the Paragon label. Her versions of “The Comforter Has Come” and “He Giveth More Grace” have long been among my



Herb Henry and Lillie Knauls

favorites. One other grand memory for me is from 1980 when Lillie was the featured soloist at my ordination service.

We are most grateful for Bill Gaither having her as a long-standing part of his Homecoming programs. I enjoyed visiting with her at the Fan Fest in April.

She will be in concert at my church this month, so I am greatly anticipating a blessed time.

Lillie resides in Southern California these days. We are most proud to claim her as part of the Gospel Music scene out west.

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