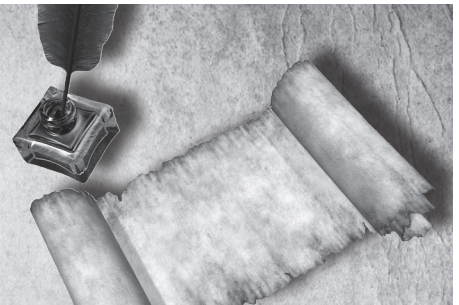


HISTORIAN'S DIGEST



Volume 55, Number 1

Winter, 2015

North Central Jurisdiction CAH to Host the 2015 GCAH Historical Convocation, "Diversity – It's Complicated," and the 2015 Annual Meeting of the HSUMC



Original Garrett Biblical Institute

The next meeting of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church and the North Central Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History will be Monday, July 20, through Thursday, July 23, 2015, at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

This will be a Convocation held as a joint meeting of the General Commission on Archives and History, the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church, and the North Central Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History, with local arrangements by the Northern Illinois Conference Commission on Archives and History.

The Convocation will begin with the annual meeting of the General Commission on Archives and History which will gather on Saturday, July 18, and hold meetings through Monday morning, July 20. The Commission's annual banquet with the granting of the Distinguished Service Award will be held on Sunday evening, July 19. The group will worship with the congregation of historic First United Methodist Church, Evanston, on Sunday morning.

The banquet, worship, and many of the meetings are open to persons from HSUMC and the Jurisdiction who would like to arrive early, though hotel accommodations are very limited on Saturday evening.

The Historical Society of The United Methodist Church, the North Central Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History, and the Northern Illinois Conference Commission on Archives and History,

along with other interested guests, will join the General Commission on Monday, July 20, 2015. In the tradition of the North Central Jurisdiction, Monday will be a travel day. The Board of HSUMC will meet at Garrett Monday afternoon beginning at 1:00 p.m. The opening session for both the HSUMC and the NCJCAH will be at 7:00 p.m. in the Chapel of the Unnamed Faithful at Garrett. There will be greetings from the area Bishop, the President of Garrett-ETS, a brief worship, and entertainment by a local dance troop.

Tuesday morning, after breakfast on your own, we will have the Presidential inaugural lecture by Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison, keynoting the theme of the Convocation, "Diversity—It's Complicated." The traditions of United Methodism have always been diverse, and have been ambiguous about that diversity. Our ways of doing history and preserving memory have often reflected both diversity and ambiguity.

There will be a business meeting following for the North Central Jurisdiction, with an invitation for members of the HSUMC to attend. Following lunch, we will have a lecture by Dr. M. Rene Johnson of the Michigan Conference, on the Native American Methodist preachers and ministry among the Ojibwa and Odawa people on both sides of the U. S./Canadian border in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Since Ojibwa preachers were members of the Rock River Conference (Methodist Episcopal predecessor of the Northern Illinois Conference), the subject presents a chronologically early study for the theme of the Convocation.

Following this lecture, there will be a second business meeting for NCJCAH, with HSUMC attending.

On Tuesday evening, we will have the HSUMC/NCJCAH Banquet in the dining hall of the historic First United Methodist Church of Evanston. The meal will be catered by Kronos, a Swedish restaurant from the Andersonville neighborhood of Chicago, to commemorate the Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian Methodist language conferences, as well as the tradition of language conferences, in our heritage. In

cont. page 3

Historical Society of the UMC

Priscilla Pope-Levison, President
poppep@spu.edu

Dan Swinson, Vice President,
Chair, Program Committee
djswinson@wowway.com

Barbara Essen, Secretary
grangevilleumc@mtida.net

Kerri Shoemaker, Treasurer
kerrishoe@zebra.net

Program Committee:
Chris Shoemaker
brothershoe@zebra.net

Philip Lawton
Plawton302@gmail.com

Daniel Flores
Dflores.phd@gmail.com

Joyce Plyler
joyce@charlotte.twcbc.com

Linda Schramm, GCAH Rep.
lars@greatlakes.net

GCAH General Secretary
Alfred T. Day
atday@gcah.org

Marge Benham, Membership Sec.
9750 W. 66th Place,
Arvada, CO 80004
mbenham@comcast.net

Patricia J. Thompson, Editor
P. O. Box 538
Morrisville VT 05661
802-888-2185
pajt8817@aol.com

Please send address changes to Marge Benham. Editorial correspondence should be directed to Pat Thompson. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is April 1, 2015.

Historian's Digest is published quarterly by the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church.

Message From the President

In this third president's message, I want to consider why we who love Methodist history spend so much time and energy working to keep alive the "Ministry of Memory" in the contemporary church. One reason is to provide perspective. History does that – provides perspective. As the sage in Ecclesiastes 1:9 reminds us, "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun." For instance, as a Methodist historian, I am all too well aware that the UMC has continually faced internal conflict between factions who disagree with each other on a range of issues, including theology, politics, economics, race, gender, worship style, and on and on. Let me illustrate with one historical example.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, differences over sanctification and worship styles divided mainline Methodism from the Wesleyan/Holiness movement, an extensive network of national, regional, and local holiness associations, periodicals, missions, schools, camps, conferences, prayer meetings, and camp meetings anchored in the umbrella organization of the National Camp Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness. Wesleyan/Holiness advocates focused on Phoebe Palmer's demonstrable, "shorter way" to sanctification as opposed to a gradual process of sanctified maturation. They also preferred a camp meeting worship style with a strong emotional component that rankled many mainline Methodists.

As discontent swelled and division deepened, Wesleyan/Holiness leaders struggled to keep their unwieldy movement within the established denomination, but to no avail. Between 1880 and 1905, some 100,000 "come-outers," as they were called, broke away to form new denominations. Alma White, for example, who had strong Methodist roots and whose husband was a Methodist minister, described Methodism as "an old painted hulk, with no power, no fire, and no steam—simply a towed-in vessel that will never plow the billows of the story deep again." She left Methodism to form the Pillar of Fire denomination and was one of the first women in the United States to be consecrated a bishop.

All of this sounds eerily familiar today: theological differences coupled with divergent worship styles are creating fissures in the UMC. There are now as then plenty of accusations and name calling from both sides but precious little serious engagement, dialogue, hard conversations, mutual worship, and confession. Schism is once again in the air and has already occurred among other mainline denominations, like the Episcopalians and Presbyterians.

While history can provide perspective, as I've suggested, I also contend that history can be a teacher. History teaches us that in order to avoid a repeat of the late nineteenth-century come-outers, the UMC must seize the present moment to learn from past mistakes and find a way to come together—and stay together—around the table. This is the moment to practice intentional hospitality within our connection among those who vehemently disagree with one another. Otherwise, I fear that we risk witnessing a devastating loss of twenty-first century come-outers.



Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison

— Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison

Winter Greetings from the GCAH General Secretary



*The Rev. Alfred T.
Day, III*

Greetings from the Archives and History Center at Drew University, land of the “Fizzard of 2015.” With apologies to our New England contingent, the all-time, all-world, storm of the millennium fizzled from Philly to NYC, leaving mere inches, not feet in its path.

The first year of my sojourn as General Secretary has been anything but a dud. I attended my first Council of Bishops meeting in November. GCAH staff assisted new Council President, Warner Brown, (San Francisco Area) with research for his inaugural and closing addresses. The information he requested: historical incidents and vignettes of times when the UMC and its antecedents disagreed but didn’t divide. In addition to what was put on paper, we thought of powerful symbols from our collection to drive the message home. I physically carried the Otterbein Chalice, a copy of the historic EUB logo (“We are brothers”) and a copy of John Wesley’s letter to William Wilberforce (1791), each, in its own way, tokens of a church seeking unity amidst strong differences, disagreements and divergence.

On November 29, I represented the “ministry of memory” at the 150th anniversary of the Sand Creek Massacre. Bishop Elaine Stanovsky and folk from the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference led services of repentance, with prayers and gestures for healing. The group joined tribal descendants on a pilgrimage to the actual massacre site being physically and spiritually present to the causes and consequences of this atrocity so tragically played-out in places like Ferguson, Missouri, Brooklyn, New York, and Cleveland,

Ohio. Colorado Public TV produced an excellent documentary on “the eight hours that changed the plains forever” and it is well worth a watch: www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDnPT1qYa64.

The new year started with a GCAH consultation with United Methodist Communications about the work of the General Commission moving from background to foreground, looking to the “promotion of the historical interests of the UMC” alongside the preservation work GCAH does so well. Commission leadership is exploring new content pieces about Methodist history and ethos to appear more prominently on denominational platforms.

The General Secretary’s circuit in early 2015 will include travel to Mozambique for a meeting of the Connectional Table and to Kenya to make a presentation to the African Association of United Methodist Theological Institutions (AAUMTI) entitled, *Preserving Our Story*. Then on to England to keep connection with the British Methodist Heritage Commission and then to Germany for the spring meeting of the Council of Bishops. Returning stateside, I look forward to making the rounds to various jurisdictional Commission gatherings before seeing you all at the Eighth Historical Convocation and the United Methodist Historical Society annual meeting in Evanston, Illinois come July.

In the meantime, please reflect on this quote from John Fea’s *Why Study History*: “Historians bear witness to the past and are called to report what they have seen. Such witness bearing inspires you to action – to dive into the sources of the past, engage in the necessary detective work and imaginatively tell stories that will remind our generation what it has meant to be human. A noble task indeed.”

cont. from page 1

addition to information about the current ministry of First Church, the Banquet will feature the awarding of the Saddlebag and Ministry of Memory Awards. While the Saddlebag selection is still in process, the Ministry of Memory Award will be given to Dr. John Baughman of the Indiana Conference.

Wednesday, July 22, will be the Tour day. We hope to begin at the Frances Willard home and museum in Evanston, and then proceed by bus to sites in Chicago. Most will be drive by, but we will have stops for lunch and a tour at the First United Methodist Church of Chicago (the Chicago Temple) and dinner at St. Mark United Methodist Church.

To conclude the day, we will have a lecture or presentation on the Lexington Conference/Central Jurisdiction in relation to the theme of the convocation. We are also exploring a stop at the proposed National Park Service site in the Pullman neighborhood. Once called “the world’s most perfect town,” Pullman

was a planned industrial community for workers at the Pullman Palace Car Company. Community and nation were torn by the Pullman strike in 1894. The town includes the United Methodist Greenstone Church. Originally built as a Unitarian Church with an ecumenical charter, Greenstone became Presbyterian, then, in 1907, Methodist Episcopal. The Methodist Episcopal presence predates the occupation of the building. Indeed, the pastor of the First M. E. Church of Pullman, William H. Carwardine, published an early account of the Pullman strike.

On Thursday morning, July 23, we will have either a panel presentation on the past and present diversity of the Church, or a lecture. This will be followed by the business meeting of the Historical Society. Reversing the process, the NCJCAH will be invited to meet with the Historical Society. The Convocation will adjourn with lunch.

Preliminary Registration and Travel Information for HSUMC Annual Meeting

The preferred accommodations for both the General Commission and the Historical Society/Jurisdiction Commission will be at the **Hilton Garden Inn**, 1818 Maple Avenue, Evanston, Illinois. The Hilton is in downtown Evanston, less than half a mile from Garrett (there will be a shuttle service), and convenient to the shopping and dining of a major metropolitan area. The cost will be somewhat higher than is traditional, particularly for the Jurisdiction, but the facilities are first rate, with king sized or two double beds, private bathroom, and individual temperature controls. The cost is \$149 per night plus tax, single or double occupancy (having a roommate will save you 50%). There is a \$10.00 surcharge for additional persons per room.

Those attending may make their own reservations by calling the hotel directly at 1-847-475-6400, toll free at 1-877-STAY-HGI, or online at www.evanston.hgi.com. Request the HSUMC ANNUAL MEETING block. A group booking code will be provided for those registering on line. **The deadline for hotel reservations is Friday, June 19, 2015.** However, the latest date to adjust the number of rooms without charge to HSUMC is May 22, 2015. The earlier you reserve, the better. If you need to reserve between May 22 and June 19, please let me know at the number or e-mail below, so that we do not release your room.

For those who are driving, there is a parking garage contiguous to the hotel, with parking for guests. For those who are flying, O'Hare International Airport is the most convenient destination. Transportation from O'Hare will be provided by the host conference

both for arrival and departure. Include requests for transportation on the registration form for the Convocation.

If you have special dietary, accessibility, or other needs, if you need suggestions for other accommodations, or if you have any other questions or concerns, please contact Dan Swinson directly: Daniel Swinson, Vice President, HSUMC, and coordinator of local arrangements for the Northern Illinois Conference, e-mail: djswinson@wowway.com or t.methodist@sbcglobal.net; cell phone: 847-772-6915.

The registration form for the annual meeting will be available in the May issue of *Historian's Digest*, or on the website of the HSUMC, www.historicalsocietyunitedmethodistchurch.org, as soon as the information is available.

In addition, there will be an **"add-on" opportunity to visit the newly developed Helenor Davisson sites** (see the Fall 2014 issue of *Historian's Digest*) on Friday, July 24. Anyone who is interested is invited to join Richard Stowe (or another guide) at the Trinity United Methodist Church, 107 E. Angelica St. Rensselaer, IN, at 11:00 AM Central time. The tour will proceed to Helenor's grave site and the two sites which were used by the Methodist Protestants for worship (the former MP church and the Rosebud schoolhouse). Lunch will be "on your own" in Rensselaer, followed in the afternoon by a visit to the Alter stone house and John Alter grave near Remington. For further information, or to register your interest in this tour, please contact Richard Stowe at rastowe@mstar.net.



Helenor Davisson grave site



The Rosebud Schoolhouse

First President of the HSUMC Receives GCAH Distinguished Service Award

The General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist presented its 2014 Distinguished Service Award to Dr. Robert W. Sledge.

The Commission gathered with friends and colleagues of Dr. Sledge to present an award given annually to person(s), group, institution, or church(es) who have made significant contributions to the “ministry of memory” of The United Methodist Church. The award was presented at a banquet in Mead Hall on the Drew University campus.

Distinguished Professor of History, Emeritus, at McMurray University, Abilene, Texas, Sledge was the first president of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church and was a member of the Commission on Archives and History in the 1980s. He is a leading authority on the Methodist Episcopal Church South. His publications include: *Hands on the Ark: The Struggle for Change in the Methodist Episcopal Church 1914-1939* and *Five Dollars and Myself: The History of Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*, published in 2005. He is a frequent contributor to Methodist History, the Commission’s quarterly scholarly journal.

Sledge joins an eminent group of United Methodist scholars including: Frederick E. Maser (1991), Homer Calkin (1992), Frank Baker (1993), Frederick Norwood (1994), Edwin Schell (1995), Paul Milhouse (1996), Rosemary Skinner Keller (1997), Ole E. Borgen (1998), Richard P. Heitzenrater (1999), Thomas A. Langford (posthumously, 2000), Russell E. Richey (2001), Joe Hale (2002), Jean Miller Schmidt (2003), Justo L. Gonzalez (2004), Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. (2005), Patricia J. Thompson (2006), Karl Heinz Voigt and ST Kimbrough, Jr. (2007), K. James Stein (2008), Bishop Forrest Stith (2009), Helmut Nausner (2010), Kenneth E. Rowe (2011), the congregations of Historic St. George’s UM Church and Mother Bethel AME Church, Philadelphia, Pa., for their efforts to heal the wounds of the 1787-1792 racially charged schism (2012) and J. Gordon Melton (2013).

Dr. Sledge attended the festivities with his wife Marjorie. He was presented by former Commission colleague Jean Traster and newly elected General Secretary, Rev. Alfred T. Day, III. He presented a paper entitled: “It All Depends Where You’re Coming From,” a reminder to historians that as much there is an attempt to do their work without bias, the places people come from, whether socially, geographically or theologically, influence their interpretations.



Marge Sledge, Rob Sledge, Jean Traster

From Your Editor:

Old Newspapers a Good Source for Local Church History

Are you a local church historian for a church which seems to have very few historical records which have survived? If so, you might want to research your area newspapers to see what kind of information can be found about the church. In 2012, my home church, the Puffer UMC in Morrisville, Vermont, celebrated its 200th anniversary. Unfortunately, very few early church documents have survived and there were a lot of gaps in our history.

A few years ago I subscribed to an online genealogy source called *Genealogybank*, which consists primarily of digitized newspapers. Just for fun I located the Vermont papers and began to type in “Morristown” and “Morrisville,” and I discovered that two newspapers outside of Morrisville – one in Montpelier, about 35 miles away and one in St. Albans, about 50 miles away,

both carried news columns for the town of Morrisville for many years prior to and after the turn of the twentieth century which, along with similar columns in the town newspapers, turned out to be an amazing source of history for the church.

More recently, I have discovered a free source of old newspapers which have been digitized, called *Chronicling America*, which carries copies of many newspapers from 1836-1922. The down side of this website is that some states have not yet found the funds to digitize their papers, so all states are not included. However, local libraries and the state historical libraries often have hard copies or microfilm copies of the newspapers available, as well, all of which are well worth researching.

JUST A REMINDERSaddlebag Selection Nominations Due

Now that 2014 is over, we want to remind publishers of the Saddlebag Selection award of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church. This designation is given by the HSUMC each year for the best book on United Methodist history, biography, theology, or polity. A principal criterion is that the work be both scholarly and accessible to the general reader. The award consists of two plaques, one presented to the author(s) and the other to the publisher. The HSUMC undertakes to publicize the award in the church press and encourages the membership to purchase the selection.

You may download the nomination forms from the internet from:

GCAH; *then*, related links – Historical Society of the United Methodist Church; *then* saddlebag selection

Send entries by no later than March 15 to:

Robert W. Sledge, Ph.D.
Historian-in-Residence, McWhiney History Education Group
Box 218, McMurry Station
Abilene, Texas 79697
rsledge@mcm.edu
325-793-4699

For a list of previous Selections, see the Fall 2014 issue of *Historian's Digest*, p. 7.

Historian's Digest
c/o WV Annual Conference of UMC
P. O. Box 2313
Charleston WV 25328

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Clarksburg WV
26301
Permit #87