

# HISTORIAN'S DIGEST

Volume 48, Number 1

February 2008

## HSUMC to meet in South Dakota with George McGovern as keynote speaker

by Boyd Blumer

The 2008 Joint Convocation of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church and the North Central Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History will be hosted by the Dakotas Conference on July 7-10, 2008 on the campus of Dakota Wesleyan University, Mitchell, S.D.

Scheduled activities include opening worship with Bishop Deborah Lieder Kiesey, presentations of research papers, and business sessions for both organizations.

Tours are always included in the annual gathering. This year's tours will feature the George and Eleanor McGovern Library, which is Dakota Wesleyan University's new academic and legacy library. It includes space for the Dakotas Conference archives. Senator McGovern, one of the featured speakers at Convocation, and the 1972 Democratic candidate for President of the United States, is a United Methodist, a Dakota Wesleyan alumnus and a former history professor.

Other tours will include the Dakota Discovery Museum which features the works of Oscar Howe, Harvey Dunn, Charles Hargens, and Gutzon Borglum, best known

as the sculptor of South Dakota's own Mount Rushmore. We will also visit the studio and office of Leland Case, an editor of *Together Magazine*.

To give a unique western flavor to the Convocation, James McLaird, Dakota Wesleyan history professor, will give a presentation on "Calamity Jane and the Methodists." Tour stops will include the Hansen

Wheel and Wagon Shop, where stagecoaches were built for Wells Fargo Banks, and we will enjoy a buffalo steak dinner and an old-time Gospel sing by the East of Westerville group.

A registration form is enclosed. For more information, contact Boyd A. Blumer at 601 Mitchell Blvd, Mitchell SD 57301, by phone at 605-995-1961, or by email at [boblumer@dwu.edu](mailto:boblumer@dwu.edu).

### *Ministry of Memory Award nominations sought*

by Bob Williams

The HSUMC instituted the "Ministry of Memory" award to recognize and encourage excellence in archival and historical work in the local church, annual conference, jurisdictional conference or central conference. All annual, jurisdictional, and central conferences are invited to nominate candidates for consideration to receive the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual award in 2009.

The first award was presented to Lonise Robinson of Asbury UMC in Washington, D.C. in 2007. Richard Seiber of Fircrest UMC, University Place, Washington, will receive the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual award at the HSUMC meeting in South Dakota in July 2008. If you nominated someone last year, there is no need to nominate that person again unless you want to update that information; the nominations are kept on file.

This award is intended to complement the Distinguished Service Award given by the General Commission to recognize national or international leadership.

Any person, clergy or laity, who has demonstrated superior work in one or more areas of archival or historical work within or beyond the local church is eligible. You may consider such activities

*continued on page 4*

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The Historian's Digest is published quarterly by the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church. Please send address changes to Phil Lawton at Philip.Lawton@dol.net. Editorial correspondence should be directed to Jane Donovan. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is April 1, 2008.

## **Letter from the President**

*Dear Members and Friends of the HSUMC,*

At our 2007 annual meeting in Chevy Chase, Md., the HSUMC Board voted to hire Katie Kline, one of Jane Donovan's students at West Virginia University, to work with Dale Patterson in redesigning the HSUMC website. I am delighted to report that Katie created a wonderful design for us. In the last edition of *Historian's Digest*, I reported that we were seeking a new webmaster to manage our new website, replacing Phil Lawton, who has become our new membership secretary. I am very pleased to announce that the Board has approved Dan Smith as our new webmaster.

Dan is from Raleigh NC and teaches technology at Dillard Drive Elementary School, where he designed and maintains the website for the school. Dan is also the music director for the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Raleigh and he designed a website for them as well. Dan has strong United Methodist roots. He writes, "My father, Rev. Daniel P. Smith, Sr., is a retired United Methodist minister in the Pacific Northwest Conference. My grandfather, Rev. J.B. Smith, retired after more than 50 years as a Methodist minister in the North Georgia and South Georgia Conferences. I am researching church histories and service connected with my great-great-grandfather, Rev. W. F. Roberts (1831-1907), who served nearly 30 years as an itinerant Methodist minister in the Florida and South Georgia Conferences." Please join me in warmly welcoming Dan as our new webmaster.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Katie Kline for her wonderful design and congratulate her on her recent accomplishments. Katie graduated from WVU in December and has a great job as a communications specialist with the Association for Psychological Science in Washington, D.C.

By the time you receive this newsletter, the new site should be up and running. You can access it at the same web address: [www.historicalocietyunitdmethodistchurch.org](http://www.historicalocietyunitdmethodistchurch.org).

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information on our upcoming 2008 annual meeting in Mitchell, South Dakota. The program promises to be most interesting and we hope that many of you will join us there in July. Next year will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization of the HSUMC, in 1989, and our annual meeting will be held at Lake Junaluska, N.C. where the Society began. The Society was organized with more than 1,000 charter members, but over the past two decades, our membership has dropped to fewer than 300, despite the efforts of many faithful Board members. Membership recruitment is the responsibility of all of us, however, not just the Board members, and it is my goal that we grow our membership to at least 500 by the time of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary annual meeting in July 2009.

I will be writing to all of the conference and regional historical societies shortly, urging them to consider the possibility of offering their members joint memberships with the HSUMC. When you join through a conference/regional historical society, your annual membership dues are reduced by 10%. There are additional savings for joining for 2 years at a time, as well. It is not necessary for you to wait for my letter to consider this possibility. If you will be meeting in the next few weeks, please talk about this opportunity and help the Society reach its goal of 500 members by July 2009. If you would like a sample brochure from a society that has joint memberships already or if you would like additional brochures, please contact me at [pajt8817@aol.com](mailto:pajt8817@aol.com) or P.O. Box 538, Morrisville VT 05661. Thank you in advance for assisting us in reaching this goal.

*Peace,*

**Pat Thompson**

## *From the General Secretary:*

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I appreciate so much the work of the leadership of the Historical Society of The United Methodist Church and your interest in being a member. Conference historical societies were brought together for many years as the Association of Methodist Historical Societies and then in 1968 the General Commission on Archives and History was created. Beyond the mandated structures the voluntary organizations of those interested in our collective memory has been crucial to this work. What has motivated us to be involved in this?

### ***Board offers 2008 Budget for consideration***

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the HSUMC Board was unable to approve a 2008 budget at the annual meeting in July 2007. Since then, with the hard work of Chuck Yrigoyen and the aid of board members, we have been able to draft a budget for the year.

### **Historical Society of the United Methodist Church 2008 Budget**

**2007 Year-End Balance (as of Dec 17, 2007): \$7,086.73**

#### **Projected Income for 2008:**

Memberships. . . . .	8,000
Annual Meeting . . . . .	1,000
Miscellaneous gifts . . . . .	700
<b>Total: \$9,700</b>	

#### **Projected Expenses for 2008:**

Methodist History . . . . .	4,200
Historian's Digest . . . . .	1,500
Executive Com. travel. . . . .	2,500
Annual Meeting . . . . .	800
Postage . . . . .	300
Awards. . . . .	200
Miscellaneous . . . . .	200
<b>Total: \$9,700</b>	

I believe we each bring our own interest and enjoyment of history. For me, that interest was enhanced by my high school American history teacher. I only wish he knew about me serving in this position and the influence he had on me. Also, we work in this area because we recognize the importance that memory plays in shaping identity, forming vision, and inspiring us for mission. I try to live more faithfully when I think of John Wesley's emphasis on acts of piety and acts of mercy. Others in our church are also interested in history even if they are not members of the Society. I am glad we work together to keep the torch of historical inquiry burning bright.

I have been thinking about challenges that confront this work resulting from two recent trips. I attended a pre-General Conference briefing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and participated in an archives training event with Dale Patterson, Commission archivist, in the Philippines. How can we help

with the collection, preservation, and use of documents for United Methodists in countries other than the United States? How can we ensure that we have a rich collection on global Methodism in the Archives Center and have materials available in places closer to their formation? (Certainly, digitization and internet use is part of that answer.) How are we to be concerned about archival needs when for some there are great survival needs? I don't have the answers but I do have the questions.

Traveling throughout the connection is an exciting adventure. It is a great learning experience and I meet wonderful people. We have been called together in this "ministry of memory." Moses said to the Hebrews, "Remember the days of old, consider the years long past; ask your father, and he will inform you; your elders, and they will tell you." (Deuteronomy 32:7) We are reminded to live ever more faithfully.

– **Bob Williams**

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## Moments from our Past

*by Lyle Johnston*

### **Interesting Legislation from the MEC South General Conference:**

**1866:** Legislation was adopted allowing lay men to serve as delegates to annual and general conferences.

**1886:** The General Conference took a strong – even militant – stand against the sale and use of alcoholic beverages, although there was vigorous opposition to this action, a conservative southern reaction worried that the MEC South might emulate the way the northern church had always "dabbled in politics."

**1898:** General Conference refused to endorse the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU).

**1914:** General Conference refused laity rights to women.

**1922:** General Conference admitted its first women delegates.

**1930:** Approval was given for a judicial council, which still exists today under the same name in the United Methodist Church.

Source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism*, 1974.

*To be continued . . .*

## ***Ministry of Memory Award nominations sought***

*continued from page 1*

as collecting records, recording oral histories, leading archival/historical groups, teaching archival methods, creating videos, caring for and preserving records, writing history, or preparing exhibits.

The selection will be made by the Program Committee of the HSUMC at its meeting in July 2008 for presentation at the 2009 annual meeting. A nomination form is enclosed. Please return the completed form to Dr. Robert J. Williams, GCAH, P. O. Box 127, Madison NJ 07940 no later than May 1, 2008. Please help the Historical Society recognize the faithful service of one who helps the church remember the stories of those who have come before us.

## **United Methodist history and the internet**

*by Mary Bakeman*

Every day new resources on United Methodist history become available on the internet. Google is undertaking a vast project to scan books whose copyrights long ago expired and make them available, free of charge, to all who would do internet research. Included in those scans are several significant Methodist histories (Bangs, Wakeley, and others).

If you're interested in giving this a try, go to google.com, then to the 'more' option, where you can select 'books.' Before filling in the box, select the advanced search option to the right. That allows very specific information to be requested, including 'full view,' which allows the downloading of the entire book.

I did a search on "history Minnesota" in the general box, and "Methodist Methodism" in the words box. This resulted in more than 700 hits, which included Chauncey Hobart's *History of Methodism in Minnesota* (1883), plus books on the topic from general histories of Minnesota or Minnesota counties. Of course, you can also search personal names, too.

***Good luck and happy hunting!***

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**Historian's Digest**

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US Postage  
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Morgantown Printing  
& Binding