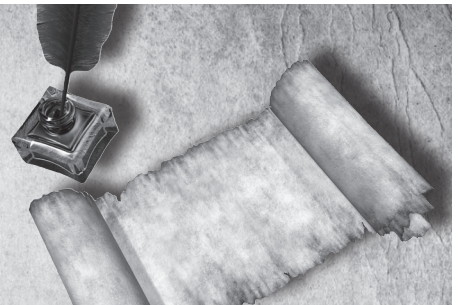


HISTORIAN'S DIGEST



Volume 54, Number 3

Summer 2014

New HSUMC President Elected at 2014 Annual Meeting

It was with “sadness and a sense of loss, but [with thankfulness] for his willingness to help in other areas as he can,” that the first action of the HSUMC Board at its 2014 meeting was to accept the resignation of our newly elected president, Dr. Russell E. Richey. Dr. Richey had sent a letter of resignation to the Board members early in the spring explaining that he had been led to take this action due to a combination of health issues which had arisen since his election in September, along with his realization that in retirement he no longer has the connections and resources available to him which he felt were necessary to provide the level of leadership which the Society currently needs.

The Society By-laws call for the Board to fill such positions which occur and to hold an election at the next Society meeting. To that end, after a great deal of discussion, the Board recommended Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison, who is Professor of Theology and Assistant Director of Women’s Studies, Seattle Pacific University and Affiliate Faculty, Gender, Women & Sexuality Studies, University of Washington. Those of you who attended the 2010 annual meeting in Seattle will remember Priscilla’s excellent presentation, “African American Women Evangelists and Interracial Cooperation in the Progressive Era (1870-1920)” in which she focused on two women – the more well-known Amanda Berry Smith and the lesser known Emma Ray. Dr. Pope-Levison was elected as our new president at our HSUMC annual meeting on Thursday morning, June 25. More about other actions taken at the annual meeting appears on pages 7 and 8.

The meeting was officially opened on Tuesday afternoon with a warm welcome from Joyce Plyler, the President of the South Carolina Conference Historical Society and William Kinney, Chairperson of the SCCAH. Joyce talked about the theme of the Conference being “Education” She noted that early Methodists often had



Joyce Plyler

a reputation for being uneducated but pointed out that while they may not have had as much formal education as did Episcopalians, Congregationalists, or Presbyterians, many were very well read. She gave a long list of books which Francis Asbury recorded in his Journal that he had read while he was in South Carolina. She also went on to say that it is the past which unites us. We may differ in regards to policy and polity in the current church, but we are united in our memory and respect for Francis Asbury.

An excellent keynote address was then given by the Rev. Dr. A.V. Huff, Jr., President of the SEJ Historical Society of the UMC, entitled, “South Carolina Methodism and Education in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries.” This was basically a detailed overview of the development of Methodist educational institutions in South Carolina, some of which were later described in greater detail by subsequent speakers.

(cont. page 3)

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the 2015 HSUMC Annual Meeting from July 20-23, at Evanston, IL, at the Garrett Evangelical Theological School.



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the United Methodist Church

A Message from our President

In this first message, I thought I would take the opportunity to introduce myself to you, members of the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church and readers of *Historians Digest*. I have been active in the United Methodist Church in a variety of capacities, as a youth leader, pastor, historian, teacher, retreat speaker, Bible study leader, and general commission board member. Ever since I can remember, the Methodist church has been my home. I was a leader in my local Methodist church's youth group in Cincinnati, Ohio, and volunteered each summer with the group for a week at the Appalachian Service Project. My call to ministry occurred at DePauw University, a United Methodist liberal arts university. I attended Duke Divinity School, a United Methodist seminary. I worked as a seminary intern in United Methodist churches in Indiana and North Carolina. I pastored in the West Ohio conference for several years before heading to the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, to earn my Ph.D. in Practical Theology. I continue, even in my current appointment beyond the local church as Professor of Theology at Seattle Pacific University, to teach Sunday School, preach, and play the piano in local United Methodist churches. This year, my spouse, Jack Levison, and I wrote the 2014 UMW spiritual growth study, *How Is It With Your Soul?*, which has also been translated into Spanish and Korean. <http://www.umwmissionresources.org/t/categories/educational-resources/spiritual-growth/how-is-it-with-your-soul>.

My particular historical interest lies in recovering and interpreting the significance and contribution of American women evangelists in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, most of whom had some connection to Methodism. Although hundreds of American women left home, often as prodigal daughters, wives, and mothers to join this great company of evangelists, theirs is a forgotten history. They are notably absent from the history of American evangelism which conventionally moves through successive generations of male evangelists from Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) to Charles Finney (1792-1875) to Dwight Moody (1837-1899) to Billy Sunday (1862-1935), to Billy Graham (1918 -). Nearly twenty years ago, as I consulted available material for an introductory lecture on the history of American evangelism, I was inundated by information on these men. With my simple question—Were there any women evangelists in America?—the first stirrings toward this area of research began.

More than two decades and two books later, I am still at it, discovering more and more women evangelists. In my first book on women evangelists, *Turn the Pulpit Loose: Two Centuries of American Women Evangelists* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), I feature the lives and writings of eighteen women evangelists, sixteen of whom had a link to Methodism. My second book, *Building the Old Time Religion: Women Evangelists in the Progressive Era* (NYU Press, 2014), analyzes the institution building of two dozen women evangelists—again, many Methodists included—that resulted in the founding of churches and denominations, evangelistic organizations, rescue homes, rescue missions, and religious training schools. I invite you to browse my website on women evangelists to learn more about these amazing women: <http://myhome.spu.edu/popep/>.

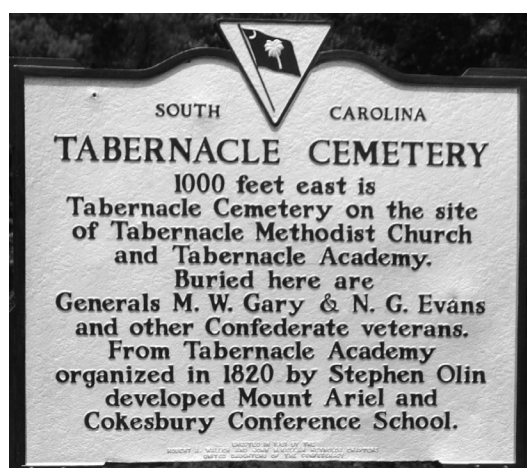


Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison

South Carolina Methodism and Education in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries

Methodism found its way into South Carolina soon after the Revolution and some of its early leaders were James Foster, a local preacher associated with Robert Strawbridge (from Maryland), and Peter Ragsdale, who returned to the area and brought back his brother-in-law, Mark Moore, another local preacher, and started a school as early as 1785. By 1791 Bishop Francis Asbury was urging every church to erect a school nearby "to give the key of knowledge in a general way, to your children, and those of the poor in the vicinity of your small towns and villages."

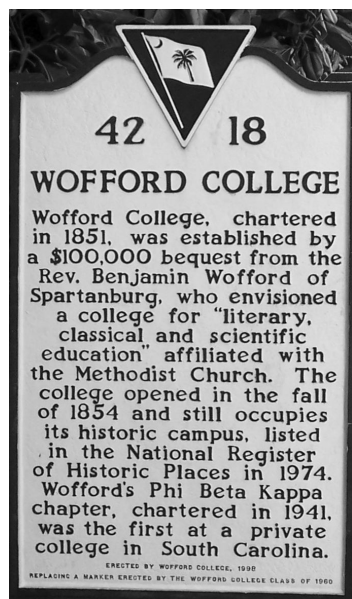
The first formal institution was Mount Bethel Academy in Newberry District, opened by Bishop Asbury on March 21, 1795, under the leadership of Mark Moore. Until Mount Bethel passed out of conference control in 1820, it became known as one of the finest schools in the up country. The earliest graduates of South Carolina College (now University) were prepared at Mount Bethel.



Another community of Methodists had been established in Abbeville District (now Greenwood County) by George and Anna Connor. In 1820 this community established Tabernacle Academy and secured the services of Stephen Olin, a native of Vermont and a recent honor graduate of Middlebury College. While he was at Tabernacle, Olin converted to Methodism and joined the South Carolina Conference three years later. (see page 6 for more details on this community and the schools which were established out of this community.) Olin taught at the University of Georgia before becoming the first president of Randolph-Macon College in Virginia in 1834 and later the fifth President of Wesleyan University in Middletown, CT.



Dr. Stephen Olin



The South Carolina Conference continued to support Randolph-Macon College until 1850 when Benjamin Wofford of Spartanburg, a former member of the conference and a wealthy businessman, died and left a bequest to the conference of \$100,000 for "a college for literary, classical and scientific education to be located in my native District Spartanburg, and to be under the control and management of the Methodist Episcopal Church of my native state, South Carolina." It was one of the largest gifts to higher education in the United States up to that time (in 2013 dollars \$3,080,000). William May Wightman, a graduate of Randolph-Macon College, was elected first president.

In the 1830's the desire for higher education for Methodist women in the South led to the establishment of Greensboro Female College in North Carolina and Wesleyan Female College in Georgia. It was not until the 1850's, however, that colleges for women were actually established in South Carolina – one in Spartanburg and one in Colombia. \$20,000 was raised for a college in Marion but it never actually opened. The Spartanburg Female College opened in August, 1855, with fifty-eight students but passed out of conference control in 1867 and closed in 1870. The one which actually prospered was the Colombia Female College which opened on October 5, 1859, with 132 students.

At the same time Methodists in South Carolina were extremely successful in reaching enslaved and free blacks in the state, as well. As early as 1787 black Methodists in Charleston outnumbered whites, and by 1839 there were more black Methodists in the South Carolina Conference than whites – a situation that remained until the Civil War. However, the early anti-slavery views of the Methodists made them highly suspect among the white population and Methodism was sometimes ridiculed as "the black church." Early educational efforts among African Americans were generally restricted to Sunday Schools. Bishop Asbury, however, urged white Methodists "to teach their slaves to read (this is greatly wanting: they would then understand preaching much

better).” Despite state laws restricting the assembling and teaching of African Americans, Methodist efforts continued. In 1829 William Capers persuaded the South Carolina Conference to establish the mission to the plantation slaves and he became the superintendent of the new work.



Rev. Alonzo Webster

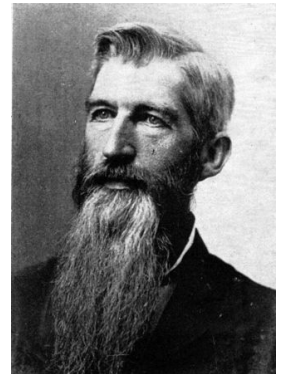
After the Civil War Bishop Osman C. Baker appointed T. Willard Lewis, a native of Massachusetts, and Alonzo Webster, from Vermont, to work in the Port Royal area where they not only established black churches and circuits but also founded a theological training school, the Baker Theological Institute, which opened its doors in Charleston, to educate ministers. When Lee and William Claflin, a father (shoe and boot manufacturer) and son (banker and governor) from Massachusetts gave the funds to create a college for black Methodists, the money was used to purchase the former campus of the Orangeburg Female College. By 1869 the former college building had been repaired and Claflin University was opened to 170 students. The Rev. Alonzo Webster was elected as Claflin’s first president and Baker Theological Institute became the theological department of the new school.

The African Methodist Episcopal Church opened Payne Institute (named for Bishop Daniel Payne) in Cokesbury in 1870. Ten years later it moved to Columbia and received a charter as Allen University (renamed for Bishop Richard Allen). (See page 6 for a picture of the marker honoring the Institute). The MEC,S assisted former black members in organizing the Colored (later the Christian) MEC and in 1882 the two denominations jointly established Paine College in Augusta, GA, just across the Savannah River from South Carolina.

The years after the Civil War proved difficult ones for the whites of the South Carolina Conference to support their colleges. As Wofford Historian David Duncan Wallace paraphrased it, “for fifteen years the history of the college was the short and simple annals of the poor.” However, Dr. James J. Carlise, Wofford’s president for 27 years following 1875 was able to improve the situation. “He saw and made his pupils see, the glory in our common life, the awfulness of sin, the sacredness of human relations.”

Following the Civil War the dream of Samuel Lander to create a new curriculum for the higher education of women also became a reality. Lander had served previously as president of Davenport College (for women) in Lenoir, NC, and for a short time as co-president of Spartanburg Female College.

Finally, after the Civil War a major economic change occurred in South Carolina with the emergence of the cotton textile industry. By 1900 there were 115 mills in the state and by 1920 there were 184. One of the major educational institutions that was developed in response to this industry was the Textile Industrial Institute. This school and its subsequent development will be discussed in more detail below with the presentation of Dr. Katherine Cann.



Rev. Samuel Lander

Following Dr. Huff’s presentation the group broke for separate meetings of the SEJHS and HSUMC. A summary of the business of the HUSMC board and membership meetings can be found on pages 7 and 8.

After the business meetings Dr. R. Phillip Stone, Archivist for Wofford College and the South Carolina Conference, led the group on a walking tour of the beautiful Wofford College Campus, giving us the history of the buildings and the development of the campus.

In the evening Dr. Katherine Cann, Professor of History at Spartanburg Methodist College, told the story of the “History of Textile Industrial Institute, Spartanburg Junior College, and Spartanburg Methodist College” based on her book, *Common Ties*. The history began with a young senior at Wofford College named David English Camak, who had been inspired when he listened to Wofford President, Henry Nelson Snyder talk about the conditions in which the cotton mill workers lived. Most children of mill workers did not go to school and most of the mill workers had never attended school, either. Camak was felt a strong call to do something to correct that and decided to start a program where mill workers could share a job with another individual and go to school at the same time – studying for a week and then working for a week.



Original building at Wofford

While he was the pastor of the Duncan Memorial Church in Spartan Mill Village, he enlisted the support of mill owner, Walter Montgomery, to purchase a building across the street from the church to house his enterprise. On September 5, 1911, the Textile Industrial Institute, known as TII, was opened as the first cooperative education program in the country. Although only one student attended on the first day of classes, Bishop John C. Kilgo eventually attempted to close the Institute by moving Camak. He was determined to make the enterprise a success, saying, "God cannot use a quitter." The Conference finally adopted TII as a mission school in 1912.

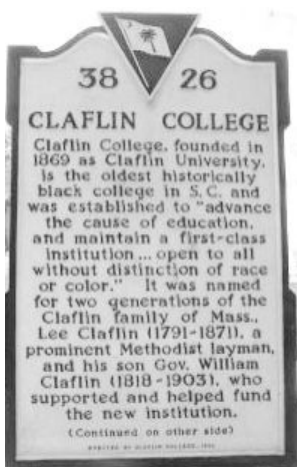


Camak continued to persist in building the school and in 1915 the first permanent building, Hammond Hall, was built in a new location near Powell Mill Road. After WWI, Camak determined that this was the time for the Institute to build a mill for its students which turned out to cost far more than expected to run both the education program and the mill. Camak was forced to resign as President, and it was not until recently that Camak's role in the school was formally acknowledged with a newly constructed auditorium bearing his name.



Rev. David Camak

Camak was succeeded by Rembert Burgess, who served as president for thirty-eight years and was able to overcome many of the previous problems. In 1927, the first two years of college-level work were added to the curriculum to provide graduates with an associate degree in liberal arts for transfer to senior level colleges. In 1940 the high school level courses were dropped from the curriculum and two years later the school became known as Spartanburg Junior College. Though continuing as a two-year college, its name was formally changed in 1974 to Spartanburg Methodist College.



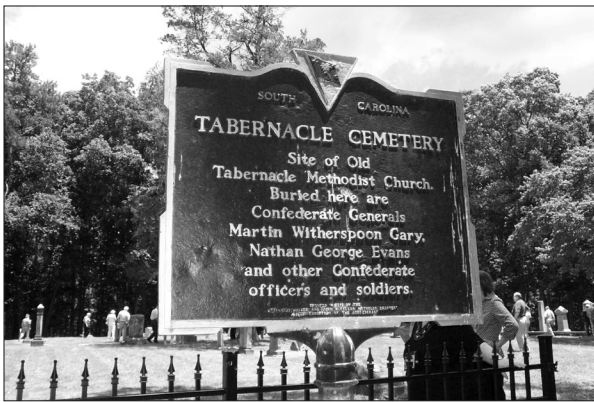
On Wednesday, following morning devotions Dr. David Mitchell presented, "The Making of a Modern Education, Methodists and Claflin University, "1869-1913," tracing the development of Claflin University through the attitudes of whites in both the north and south toward education for African Americans in the South. Mitchell began by noting that despite a positive evaluation in 1901 by the Freedman's Aid Society of the work which had been done to provide a "modern education" to African Americans in the South over the past 36 years, there were still many issues, and the situation for Blacks was, in fact, not as positive as the evaluation might indicate. There was suspicion that northerners were trying to impose their views of education on southern states and many felt that white northerners had an elevated view of the ability of African Americans to make good use of education.



One of the largest and most successful of the Freedman's Aid schools was the Claflin University school program, which initially focused on literacy but by 1879 had become a first-class preparation for entering upon the Normal school course.

In 1872, the South Carolina government merged its new land-grant college, South Carolina Agriculture and Mechanical Institute, with Claflin, offering an expanded curriculum of Normal school teacher training along with increased science and engineering. This reflected a national trend to move higher education away from its traditional focus on the Classics (Latin, Greek, etc.) to a greater focus on science and mathematics. Claflin became one of the first colleges in South Carolina to experiment with a liberal education. When founded in 1869, Claflin students could not take industrial courses, but after 1872, the University received \$7500 in state aid funding the science and agriculture curriculum that trained students in bookkeeping, surveying, and farming techniques. Those enrolled in the Normal school could choose either scientific or classical training in their third year. Over the years, however, there was an increasing emphasis on industrial education due, in part, to monies received from the Slater Fund to establish Black industrial education in the South.

After 1896, when the South Carolina General Assembly removed the Agricultural and Mechanical Institute from Methodist managed Claflin, the curriculum gradually changed from vocational training to liberal arts. For almost 50 years, however, Claflin offered African-Americans its vision of a modern education—part spiritual, part ideological, and part practical.



Tabernacle Cemetery

Following Dr. Mitchell's presentation, the group left for our tour to the site of the Tabernacle community and Cokesbury College. We visited the Tabernacle Cemetery where it is believed the first church and Academy were located and spent some time exploring the cemetery.

On the way to Cokesbury College, we drove by the Payne Institute Marker designating the site of the Payne Institute which had been established by the AME Church in 1870 (see page 4 for more information.)



Payne Institute Marker

At the site of the former Cokesbury College we were able to tour the building where the Rev. Dr. Ted Morton gave a more in-depth history of the history of the Tabernacle community which led to the construction of the school. The origins of the community can be traced to a successful planter named George Connor, who organized a Methodist society in his home. His meeting house was most likely the forerunner of the Tabernacle Church where services began in 1812. The cemetery was adjacent to the church and the Academy was on the other side of the church. Early on they began thinking about education which had been strongly encouraged by Bishop Asbury. The Rev. James Glenn came as the first full-time pastor and was also the first teacher of the Academy. When he left, Stephen Olin from Vermont was hired after answering an ad which he saw posted in an Augusta, GA, newspaper. He began teaching on January 1, 1821, and brought distinction to the area, giving the Academy its edge on education.

Around 1824 there began to be a lot of sickness around the cemetery and the community believed that they needed to move to higher ground. They located a site on the highest point between Augusta, GA, and Greenville, NC and called the community Mt. Ariel. The community eventually offered the building and \$6,000 to the South Carolina Conference to establish a manual labor school known as Dougherty Manual Labor School, eventually becoming the Cokesbury Conference School (after the town changed its name to Cokesbury), serving only young boys. The young women were educated at the village school. In 1854, however, the local Masons decided to establish a college for young women and received a charter for the Masonic Female College which operated successfully for many years as a "finishing school" for young women. It operated until 1874 when the property passed to the nearby conference school. It was then operated as the Cokesbury Conference School from 1876 to 1882 again just for males, becoming co-educational in 1882. The school continued until 1918 when it became a public school.



Cokesbury College as it is today

The evening program consisted of awards given by the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church and the SEJ Historical Society, along with a program, "Moravians and Methodists: The Love Feast" by Dr. John M. Bullard, retired Albert C. Outler Professor of Religion at Wofford College and a former Trustee of the Moravian Music Foundation. Along with his remarks about the Moravian and Methodist Love-Feasts, Dr. Bullard also engaged the group in singing some of the more popular hymns which would have been sung at the Moravian love feasts. See page 8 for information on HSUMC awards.

Our final presentation took place on Thursday morning, when Dr. Ronald Robinson spoke on "The State of Methodist Influence and Faith at Methodist Founded Colleges and Universities." He basically addressed three questions, 1) What is an United Methodist College, 2) What is the state of Methodist influence at such institutions, and 3) What is the state of "faith" at Methodist related institutions of higher education?

Dr. Robinson presented an in-depth overview of the state of religion and religious belief not only on college campuses but also in this country in general, presenting several graphs which showed not only the per cent of religious affiliation in the country by age groups, but also interest in religion by current age groups, including

intensity of religious affiliation, attendance at religious services, daily prayer and importance of religion. He then analyzed how this relates to our young people on college campuses today which he describes as the “Millennial Generation.” Robinson then answers his original questions with these words:

...At the risk of being overly simple, any precise answer must be contextual. Each institution has its own educational context, and the accrediting criterion of the University Senate wisely recognizes this and therefore deals with each institution individually. Methodist influence varies greatly, from impacting the selection and/or approval of trustees to the offering of courses in Christian theology and Methodist history, to the commitment to social justice and social holiness. It would be incorrect to say there is a single litmus test for determining what qualifies a higher education institution to be affiliated with the United Methodist Church, but it would be accurate to say that some overarching themes do appear.

As each institution is distinctive in philosophy, course offerings and Methodist sensibilities, so also the spiritual and religious qualities and preferences of each institution’s student body differ. Nonetheless, a thoughtful and careful consideration of the North American religious context, particularly as it relates to the Millennial generation, is telling. One may deduce trends and gear pedagogy and ministry to address students who approach life with the sensibilities of their cohort. Religious and spiritual affiliation are decreasing, yet an awakening may be happening as significant change occurs in the culture. United Methodists engage the changing religious landscape and they engage other faiths not in spite of being Methodist, but because of being Methodist. The stories told here through historical reference, anecdote, policy and polity, and data describe a denomination’s history of commitment to higher education. They also describe a changing religious culture. Being able to adapt, though not always quickly nor nimbly, has enabled United Methodist higher education to survive—even thrive—and become a positive force in the culture. The times are changing once again, and only time will tell whether the church will continue to be faithful to and effective in its educational task.

GCAH Hires a New General Secretary

It seems only appropriate that we also say a few words in *Historian’s Digest* regarding our new General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History, the Rev. Alfred T. Day, known to most of us as “Fred.” Fred comes to the position from his current appointment as the senior pastor of Historic St. George’s UMC, in Philadelphia, one of the Heritage Landmarks of the UMC. He is a clergy member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference, where he previously served a term as District Superintendent.

Though we will miss working with Bob Williams, who served us so well as General Secretary for the past eight years, we wish him well in his retirement and thank him for commitment to the HSUMC during those years. And we welcome Fred to his new position and look forward to working with him in the years to come.



*The Rev. Alfred T.
Day, III*

Summary of Actions Taken by HSUMC at 2014 Annual Meeting

The Historical Society met a number of times over the course of the meeting in South Carolina. The most important action of the Society was reported on page one with the acceptance of the resignation of Dr. Russell E. Richey as our current president and the election of Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison as our new president. All reports were received and approved. Since Priscilla was a current member of the Board on the Program Committee, the Board voted to elect Joyce Plyler from the Southeastern Jurisdiction to fill that vacancy on the Program Committee. We welcome both Priscilla and Joyce to their new positions.

The Financial Report for 2013-2014 and the 2014-2015 Budget will be printed in the Fall issue of *Historian’s Digest*. The membership report indicated that we have had only a net loss of one member since our 2013 annual meeting in September and our 2014 annual meeting. Our membership, however, stands at only 175 and is a major concern as both membership and income continue to decline.

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(cont. from page 7)

The major discussion revolved around the need to review and finalize the Guidelines for Groups Hosting HSUMC Annual Meetings. As soon as those Guidelines are in final form, they will be posted on the Society's website and Vice-President and Chair of the Program Committee, Dan Swinson, will assure that they are sent to each of the groups planning annual meetings in the coming years.

On Wednesday evening the HSUMC presented its annual awards. The Ministry of Memory Award was presented to Patti B. Russell from Virginia for her work in archives and history in the Virginia Conference for more than 50 years, including serving as conference archivist for more than 30 years and establishing the current archives. Due to illness Patti was not able to be present; Carlton Casey accepted the award on her behalf. John Baughman from Indiana will be the 2015 awardee.

The Saddlebag Selection Award was given to the *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, 3rd ed. by Charles Yrigoyen and Susan E. Warrick, and Scarecrow Press. No one was able to be present to accept the award. See the Fall issue of *Historian's Digest* or the Society's website, historicalsocietyunitedmethodistchurch.org for a full listing of all of the books which were submitted.



*Patti Russell receiving an award from
Bishop Kammerer and Steven Mansfield*

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