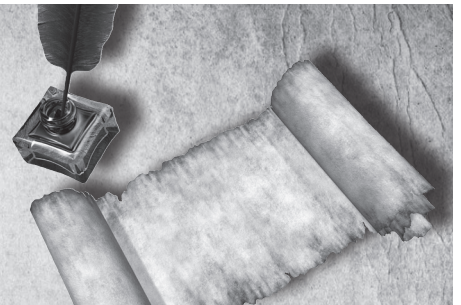


HISTORIAN'S DIGEST



Volume 50, Number 4

Fall, 2010

GCAH General Secretary, Bob Williams, Accompanies General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns Staff and Directors to Site of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre

On Friday, September 24, I accompanied the directors and staff of the General Commission on Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns to the site of the Sand Creek Massacre of November 29, 1864 in eastern Colorado. GCCUIC planned this trip in response to the resolution adopted at the 2008 General Conference calling on that agency to plan an Act of Repentance for the 2012 General Conference recognizing the injustices done to indigenous peoples. (See the *Book of Resolutions*, pages 437-439.) The 1996 General Conference had adopted a resolution entitled, "Support Restitution to the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma for the Sand Creed Massacre." The importance of the historical aspects of these two resolutions compelled me to join with GCCUIC and make this journey. It was a powerful and moving experience.

The specific Methodist connection was through the commanding officer of the military unit that carried out the raid. He was Colonel John Milton Chivington, referred to in the resolution of 1996 as "a Methodist lay preacher." The *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* indicates that in 1844 he was ordained and stationed at Zoar Church in the Goshen District of the Ohio Conference. I have not been able to find in the minutes of the annual conferences that there was a Goshen District or that he was ordained at that time. Instead, in the minutes, I have found that he was admitted "on trial" in 1848 in the Illinois Conference; in 1849 transferred to the Missouri Conference; 1850 admitted into full connection, elected but not ordained deacon; 1851 ordained deacon; 1852 elected and ordained elder; and in 1853 appointed to the Wyandott, Delaware, and Shawnee Indian Mission in the Platte Mission District of the Missouri and Arkansas Conference. For the rest of the 1850's, he was a member of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference.

Most importantly, for the story of Sand Creek, was his appointment as Presiding Elder of the Rocky Mountain District of the Kansas-Nebraska Conference in 1860. In 1862 he located and was left without an appointment. This enabled him to assume a military command and not to be limited to serving as a chaplain. In 1868 he



returned to Nebraska and was readmitted "on trial." He was appointed as Agent of the Conference Church Extension Society on the Nebraska City District and was a member of the Nebraska City quarterly conference. What does this say about the attitudes of the church and of the dominant population when someone with Chivington's record is readmitted "on trial?" In 1870 he was "located" again and died in 1894.

My interest in this history is to be clear as to Chivington's place in the Methodist Episcopal Church because he is so often referred to as Methodist clergy. Beyond Chivington, however, are the boarder issues of the complicity of the church in brutality against Native Americans, the attitude of society in general, and how to insure justice and equity for indigenous peoples today. The link of United Methodists today to Sand Creek through Chivington's place in the church is open to historical scrutiny but the obligation of United Methodists to address the contemporary injustices suffered by Native Americans is an imperative of faithful discipleship.

Bob Williams, General Secretary

Historical Society of the UMC

Dan Swinson, President
223 North Emerson Street
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-2509
djswinson@wowway.com

Jim Morris, Vice President
1103 Joshua Avenue
Creston IA 50801
641-782-2715
mjmorris_jm@hotmail.com

Barbara Essen, Secretary
P.O. Box 655
Pomeroy, WA 99347
509-843-1212 (h)
bessen@peoplepc.com

Charles Yrigoyen, Treasurer
950 Willow Valley Lakes Dr.,
#1-106
Willow Street PA 17584-9663
717-464-3276
jyrigoyen@cs.com

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

Philip Lawton, Membership Secretary
P. O. Box 247
Felton DE 19943
philip.lawton@verizon.net

Program Committee:
Carol Roszell
crozell@txwes.edu

Linda Schramm
lars@greatlakes.net

Rob Sledge
rsledge@mcm.edu

Chris Shoemaker
brothershoe@zebra.net

Please send address changes to Phil Lawton. Editorial correspondence should be directed to Pat Thompson. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is January 15, 2011.

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Letter from the President

When you receive this issue of *Historian's Digest*, we will be around or past the Christmas season. At some point, you may hear/have heard a setting of Longfellow's single foray into Christmas poetry, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day." We could hear, in our mind's ear, a bell choir and the "old familiar carols" they would play. Or would they?

Longfellow wrote his poem in 1864. A visit to the 1856 *Methodist Collection of Hymns and Tunes* finds fifteen hymns on the Incarnation and Birth, dominated interestingly not only by Charles Wesley but also James Montgomery (1771-1854), a remarkable Moravian/Methodist/Anglican poet/editor/controversialist (Gealy, Lovelace, Young, *Companion to the Hymnal*, pp 621-2). Of the fifteen, only three are in the current United Methodist hymnal: Montgomery's "Angels From the Realms of Glory," Wesley's "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and Tate and Brady's "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks." Of these, only one is to a tune we would associate with Christmas.

Tate and Brady's "While Shepherds" is set to "Christmas," adapted by James Hewitt from an aria from Handel's opera *Siroe* (1728). Montgomery's "Angels" is set to "Happy Zion," which is no longer familiar. Wesley's "Hark the Herald Angels" is set to "Hendon" (which we know as "Take My Life and Let It Be"). William Cumming's adaptation of Felix Mendelssohn's Lied (No. 2), from his *Festgesang* (1840) in celebration of the invention of printing, was only applied to "Hark" in 1855.

We do not know if Methodists hymnodists knew that Mendelssohn considered the "soldierlike and buxom motion of the piece" better suited to a "national and merry subject," and that it would "never do to sacred words" (McCutchan, *Our Hymnody*, p. 120), but we do know that it took a few years for the tune we now associate with "Hark the Herald Angels" to appear in Methodist hymnals. Thus, if a Methodist Episcopal/United Methodist Christmas celebration met around the 1856 *Hymnal* under Longfellow's bells, it would be a one tune concert.

In *The Past Is a Foreign Country*, Lowenthal reminds us that the past we remember is not the past that was. This imparts a provisional quality to the formulations of the past that we call history. It also injects caution and humility into any catalogue of lessons learned and wisdom received. I am grateful to see these qualities generally displayed among historians of Methodism, as well as those who follow the history of Methodism.

At our recent meeting in Seattle, when John Wigger received the Saddlebag Award for his biography of Francis Asbury, he used part of his acceptance speech to praise the AAR panel which responded to his work. He particularly noted Jane Donovan's insights into Asbury's relationship with wealthy Methodists like Henry Foxall and the manner in which her insights adjusted his own view of Asbury's voluntary poverty, which Wigger had drawn largely from Asbury's self portrait. Wigger wrote a definitive biography but recognized that there is yet more to learn about his subject.

Unfortunately, there have always been efforts to marshal an incomplete past to the support of a preferred present. From international conflicts to national politics to matters of race, gender, etc., a past is constructed to serve a present. Certainly historians, and historians of the Methodist families, have played their part in freezing a single view of a single moment to advance an agenda.

Admittedly, it has required debate to adjust icons; to bring Oxford into the discussions of Aldersgate, or Charles Wesley into the formation of the Holy Club, or Hester Ann Rogers and Mary Bosanquet into the ranks of the preachers. However, I would argue that the result is richer, more nuanced,

(cont.)

(letter from the president cont.)

nearer the "past that was," and more useful to the present.

Our adjustments may pale against those needed in Israeli/Palestinian self portraits, or our own "Christian America" industry, among many others. However, I believe the result would be worth the effort, if only in honesty, if not greater usefulness.

Dan Swinson

Highlights of the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Historical Society

President Daniel Swinson called together the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Society by lining out the hymn, "Amazing Grace."

Treasurer, Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., presented the 2010 Treasurer's report and the proposed budget for 2011. Both were accepted as presented. However, Yrigoyen reported that due to cash flow concerns he had cashed in our last remaining CD, and if there is not an influx of funds during the next few years, the HSUMC may run out of money. The membership report from Philip Lawton indicated that our membership totals continue to decline. In June 2008, there were 264 members, in June 2009, 263 members, and in July 2010, 255 members. As membership continues to decline, so our income declines, as well.

In an attempt to address some of these issues, it was voted that the President, Daniel Swinson, should appoint a Long Range Planning Committee to develop a 5-year plan for the Society. Members of the Committee include Daniel Swinson, chair, Pat Thompson, Linda Schramm, Jim Morris, Rob Sledge, and Jane Donovan.

Plans for upcoming annual meetings were presented:

2011 - July 21-24 at Oklahoma City University, in Oklahoma City, OK. This meeting will be held in conjunction with the quadrennial Historical Convocation sponsored by GCAH and will focus on, "United Methodism in a Land of Many Cultures: Native American and Latino History." See the Winter issue of *Historian's Digest* for more information and a registration form.

2012 - May 14-17 at Gettysburg, PA, hosted by the Northeastern Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History and the newly formed Susquehanna Conference. The program will include a presentation on the Spirituality of Abraham Lincoln, the singing of Civil War songs, and presentations on Methodist Episcopal, United Brethren and Evangelical churches in the conference.

2013 - still to be determined

2014 - hosted by the North Central Jurisdiction in the Chicago area during the first full week following the 4th of July.

Pat Thompson was approved as the editor of *Historian's*

Digest for the coming year.

The decision was made by the Board to make the Society's web page a link on the GCAH web page so that it can be managed by GCAH staff.

2010 HSUMC Treasurer's Report

Balance, June 30, 2009.....	\$ 6,702.10
Income:	
Dues.....	\$ 5,609.50
United Methodist Development Fund.....	<u>\$14,700.86</u>
Total income.....	\$20,310.36
Expenses:	
<i>Methodist History</i>	\$ 4,745.44
<i>Historian's Digest</i>	924.24
Awards.....	576.55
Travel (Board of Directors)	3,115.58
Insurance.....	<u>210.53</u>
Total expenses.....	\$ 9,590.34
Balance - June 30, 2010.....	\$17,422.12
Investments in United Methodist Development Fund:	
June 30, 2009:	\$14,329.01
(Matures 9/11/12) - liquidated 6/21/10.	

2012 HUSMC Budget

Income:	
Dues.....	\$ 5,600.00
From reserves	<u>6,500.00</u>
Total income.....	\$12,100.00
Expenses:	
<i>Methodist History</i>	\$ 5,000.00
<i>Historian's Digest</i>	1,300.00
Travel (Board of Directors)	4,000.00
Awards.....	1,500.00
Insurance.....	250.00
Miscellaneous.....	<u>75.00</u>
Total expenses.....	\$12,100.00

Missouri Commission Hosts Workshop for South Central Jurisdiction Archivists

—by Joy Flanders

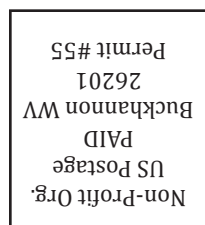
The Missouri Commission on Archives and History hosted a Jurisdictional Convocation for Archivists in July at Central Methodist University, organized by John Finley and Joy Flanders - with about 30 people in attendance from Missouri, Louisiana, Texas, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Arizona.

Our own Arnold Parks and John Wright opened the meeting with a presentation about their research on the Central West Conference, highlighting the problem of African-American church records not being kept throughout the years. This problem was further highlighted by Robert Williams, General Secretary of GCAH, in his "State of the Archives and History" address at the banquet. Great interest was generated about a forthcoming publication by Parks and Wright on the Conference. In a hands-on session, Dale Patterson, GCAH Archivist-Records Administrator, addressed the retention schedule published on the GCAH website. Many questions and discussion about best practices helped all participants re-evaluate their policies - or lack thereof. Joy Flanders then led the group on a walking tour of Central Methodist University.

On Friday, Richard Seaton led a group discussion about local church histories, coming from an historian's standpoint, rather than an archivist's. At the same time John Finley offered a workshop regarding archival supplies and best practices, especially when operating on a shoestring budget; he provided samples of many archival supplies, provided by a number of vendors.

Lunch was held at the Glasgow UMC where the history of the church was presented with tours, sharing of record books, and stories. After lunch we were treated to a tour of local sites and the Community Museum, including a large dose of Civil War history, followed by a tour of Fayette. The Friday evening banquet included the address by Robert Williams and a personification of Jacob Lanus by Cleo Kottwitz.

The Convocation concluded on Saturday morning with a presentation by Dale Patterson on digitizing archival information and making it available on the internet - a daunting journey into the unknown in many ways - made more manageable and doable by Dale's many concrete tips and information



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c/o WV Annual Conference of UMC
P. O. Box 2313
Charleston WV 25328