

TEXAS UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Fall 2011 vol. 3, #2

President's Letter by Wm. C. Hardt

It's been a busy three months since the last edition of the TUMHS Newsletter. Your editor had the great pleasure of attending two dedication services for historic site designations at Pasadena First UMC and Grace UMC. McMahan's Chapel celebrated 177 years of proclaiming the faith in East Texas. You will read in a related article about a creative project in the Central Texas Conference. They have created a garden on the campus of Texas Wesleyan University. Our friends in the New Mexico Conference are really on the ball. They have announced the program for next summer's Jurisdictional Convocation of Archivists (see related article) If you ever had any idea you might want to attend a jurisdictional convocation, 2012 will be the year.

Another positive development is that we are receiving more inquiries from university graduate students researching Texas Methodist history topics. Your editor has received inquiries requesting research help from students at Perkins, Iliff, Rice, and the University of Houston. According to several articles in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, university course offerings in the history of religion are increasing. As religion has become more prominent in our politics and public dialogue, it is natural that historians would become more interested in it. In 2008 Jeremiah Wright, a pastor in Chicago, became a household name. In 2011 the campaign of a Mormon for his party's presidential nomination is again holding the magnifying glass up to the role of religion in American history.

We are naturally pleased at the resurgence of interest in religious history as demonstrated by more university course offerings on the subject, a steady stream of local church histories, and inquiries from seminarians, university students, local church historians, and genealogists. On the other hand, we are continually disappointed in the ignorance of American religious history as displayed by commentators on the talk shows and news television programs. In their quest for ratings, they tend to concentrate on the eccentric and bizarre rather than the mainstream. So it is that we moderate Methodists are rarely featured in the popular press and then usually when there is scandal or controversy.

The same is true for our history. Our Methodist archives are stuffed with reports, journals, minutes, and other documents that show people going about their business of work, worship, and service. It's not the stuff that makes for sensational headlines or history, but is probably more important than most things that do.

Central Texas Conference Cornerstone Garden

The *Discipline* of the United Methodist Church tasks conference commissions of Archives and History with collecting the records of closed churches. It also authorizes those commissions to salvage the cornerstones of abandoned church buildings. The following report from Jean Traster tells how the Central Texas Conference is meeting that responsibility in a creative way.

The dedication of the Central Texas Conference Cornerstone Garden took place on October 22 at 10 AM at Texas Wesleyan University. Seven cornerstones from closed churches have been gathered from across the conference, and are in place in the Garden at the present time. The stones date from 1895 to 1969, and represent various sizes of congregations no longer in existence. One marker is from the Methodist River Oaks Apartments in Waco, a project of the former West Texas Conference, Central Jurisdiction, which provided non-segregated housing for low income families.

The Garden is located in a tree-shaded area of the campus with a fountain and pond, benches, gravel and stepping stone walkways, and many varieties of native Texas vegetation and flowers. Already it has become a favorite site on the campus for students to study and visit with one another.

Texas Wesleyan University is located southeast of downtown Fort Worth. If you visit the Cornerstone Garden, you might also want to include a tour of the West Library which houses the Central Texas Conference Archives. You will also want

to tour the historic Polytechnic United Methodist Church at the corner of Collard and E. Rosedale on the southeast corner of the TWU campus. Polytechnic was founded in 1892.

CLOSED CHURCH AT LOTT

As mentioned in the previous article, the conference CAH collects records of closed churches. Here are photos of the church at Lott in Falls County that your editor recently visited in order to secure records.



2012 ANNUAL MEETING

The 2012 Annual Meeting will be March 23-24 at Cochran Chapel UMC in Dallas. The theme is *Our Texas Methodist Musical Heritage*. The program will feature not only scholarly presentations, but also personal recollections from some of the persons who have shaped the Texas Methodist musical heritage.

Bill Bryan has secured expert guide service for the Cochran Chapel, Cochran Chapel, and Cochran Cemetery, all on site. Here is a link to the history page on the church's web site

<http://www.cochranchapel.org/aboutus/churchhistory>

Cochran Chapel is close to Love Field. There will be shuttle service from the airport to the Embassy Suites Hotel and to Cochran Chapel.

Program details and registration materials will be in the *TUMHS Newsletter* you should receive on Feb. 10.



SAVE THE DATES

March 23-24, 2012 TUMHS annual meeting Cochran Chapel UMC, Dallas, (see above)

May 14-17, 2012 Historical Society of the UMC, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, *Methodism's Civil Wars*.

August 1-3, 2012 *Preserving and Sharing Our Story: 2012 South Central Jurisdiction Convocation of Archivists*, Albuquerque, NM.

March, 2013, TUMHS annual meeting, Marvin UMC, Tyler, Texas

There will be much more information about the Jurisdictional Convocation of Archivists in the May 1, 2012 *Newsletter*, but I wanted to put in a plug now to encourage you to attend. The event is not strictly for archivists although there will be sessions designed especially for them. Anyone with an interest in Methodist history is welcome and would profit from the meeting. The event planners have included something very special for Aug. 2. Attendees will be treated to a round trip train ride from Albuquerque to Santa Fe and a tour of Santa Fe with expert tour guides. A brochure can be obtained by emailing nmarchives@nmconfum.com

Walter Vernon Student Essay Contest

The Texas United Methodist Historical Society announces an award of \$250 for the best article written by an undergraduate or graduate student on some aspect of the history of Methodism in Texas.

Eligibility requires that the essay, ranging from 5 to 10 pages in length, be written by a student enrolled in a college, university or seminary and be sponsored by a faculty member of that institution. A nominating letter from the sponsoring faculty member and a one-page abstract of the paper must accompany the submitted manuscript.

The winning essay will be included on the program of the annual meeting of the Society and will be published in the *Heritage Journal*, the Society's historical publication.

Style: *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th Edition (2003) is the style sheet. The manuscript and endnotes which should be double spaced must be submitted on a computer disk in the Microsoft Word or Word Perfect format, by email or in a typed quality that can be scanned into the computer.

Criteria for judging are the following: 1) readability and style of the presentation; 2) use of primary source research materials; 3) overall conception; and 4) contribution to the history of Methodism in Texas.

Entries should be sent to Dr. Garry L. Nall, TUMHS Student Essay Chair, 7206 Versailles Drive, Amarillo, Texas 79121 or gnall@att.net

Deadline for submission: January 31, 2012

News from Bridwell Library

Friends of the TUMHS know that Bridwell Library features exhibits in the Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Gallery. The current exhibit is *Books and Prints by Albrecht Dürer*. The exhibit will run through December 10. If you cannot travel to Dallas, you may access the exhibit via the web at <http://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/Collections/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/Durer2011.aspx>

Until December 5 you will be able to see another exhibit in the Bridwell Foyer, *The King James Bible of 1611*. This exhibit also has an on-line presence at <http://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/Collections/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/TheKingJamesBibleof1611/King%20James%20I.aspx>

Membership Information

The good works of the TUMHS including the Warnick Award, the Walter Vernon Student Essay Award, the Annual Meeting, the publication of the *Heritage Journal*, and lifting up the UM heritage depend upon the dues and gifts of its members. Your dues and gifts are used exclusively for these programs. We pay no rent, utilities, or insurance. Board members are not reimbursed for travel expenses. The membership benefits are a real bargain. The *Heritage Journal* alone is worth the \$15 annual dues. Please send your dues and gifts to the address below.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email _____ **telephone** _____

Annual Dues _____ **Regular at \$15** _____ **Life at \$200** _____

I wish to support the TUMHS with a donation of _____

Total enclosed _____

Please mail this form and check to TUMHS Treasurer Jean Traster

2014 Iron Horse Court
Arlington, Texas 76017

