Editor’s Letter by Wm. C. Hardt

Did you ever stop to think that the single most iconic image of Texas, the single most recognizable image of Texas, is a church? I am speaking, of course, of the Alamo in San Antonio. Religious roots run deep in San Antonio, and it is a wonderful site for the joint meeting of the Jurisdictional Convocation of Archivists and TUMHS. October 8-11.

When I was a teacher, I loved to teach about San Antonio, because just about all the currents of Texas history ran through it. It has been a railroad town, a cotton town, a banking center, a food processing center, and now it’s an oil town. Its industries have included textiles and garments, cement, automotive assembly, flour milling, and brewing. Some of the most important civil rights and labor rights events in our history occurred there. Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, German Americans, African Americans, European Americans have all left their mark on the city. Of all the cities in Texas, San Antonio has had the largest and most continuous military presence, and it’s the most important tourist destination in the state. Notice I haven’t even mentioned the Alamo.

What about our Methodist heritage? Methodism had a hard time getting started in San Antonio. There is only one reference to San Antonio in all of the Fowler Collection, and that a negative report. John Wesley DeVilbiss held a meeting in the County Clerk’s office, but stated in his memoirs that he did not form a class there. In the latter part of the 19th century, though, Methodism really took off. The decisive event was the coming of the railroad. San Antonio had always been an important transportation hub, but the railroad magnified its importance many times over.

San Antonio grew, and Methodism grew with it, and not just the MECS strain of Methodism. The MEC had African American, German, and English speaking churches. The Evangelical Association (a forerunner of the EUB) had a significant presence there. One of the highlights of the Methodist experience in San Antonio was the 1934 Centennial celebration. The program committee has done a fantastic job, and you will be renewed, enlightened, and inspired by coming.

C. D. Barrington sends the following note While October 8th seems a long time away, early registration ends August 1. Early registration increases your likelihood of obtaining the more affordable lodging rates offered by the Oblate Retreat Center. Due to some of our contractual requirements, registration must be cut off on Friday September 19, and on-site registration will not be available.

You may register on line at http://www.umcswtx.org/scj-convocation-archivists

C. D. will be happy to answer any questions about the program.
cdb@earnlink.net
or (210) 601-2687.
Transitions

Alfred Day Named New GCAH General Secretary

On July 1, 2014, General Secretary Robert (Bob) Williams entered that blessed state of retirement (or “tired and worn out” as our *Journals* once put it) and the Rev. Alfred (Fred) Day III, assumed the position of General Secretary. We wish to extend our thanks to Bob for his years of service. He became a good friend to many of us in Texas and the SCJ even though he persisted in wearing a Phillies baseball cap in Astros/Rangers territory.

That part of the relationship may not change. Fred comes to the GCAH from the pastorate of St. George UMC in Philadelphia, founded in 1767 and distinguished by many claims to fame including its being the home church of Richard Allen, founder of the AME Church.

I met Fred at a HSUMC meeting and found him to be a congenial and engaging fellow historian in spite of the difference in our sports allegiances. At least we found common ground in agreeing that the 1980 NL Championship (Phillies v. Astros) was the single best post-season series in baseball history. Welcome Fred! We in the TUMHS greet you warmly.

Here is Fred’s greeting to the UM historical community.

Greetings from the New General Secretary

Greetings from the Office of the General Secretary:

Day by day the packing boxes are getting fewer and I’m acclimating to the work. YIKES!!!! Thank heavens for Bob Williams and the rest of the staff for their mentoring assistance in the transition.

I feel overwhelmed, exhilarated and deeply honored all at once. What a joy and privilege to be in this role. I am blessed with this opportunity.

A prayer of thanksgiving and petition is in my heart. I invite you to pray it with me at this time of new beginnings:

*Lord Jesus Christ, carpenter of creation,*
You knew the satisfaction and responsibilities of human work
and hallowed it forever in a Nazareth woodworker’s shop.
As I begin this new job may my work be worthwhile,
useful to the Church and its ministry of memory,
and may I be a blessing to the others for and with whom I serve
by living and working to the honor and glory of your holy name.

(*UM Book of Worship* No. 538 - At the Beginning of a New Job, adapted)

Thanks for all the good words, best wishes and congratulations you’ve sent my way.

Fred Day
General Secretary
Frances Long Named Jurisdictional Archivist

Our friend Frances Long has put on another hat. In addition to her service as Archivist for the North Texas Conference she is now Archivist for the South Central Jurisdiction upon the retirement of Rev. Bill Hedges. Both the NTC and the SCJ archives are housed at Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology, SMU.

Frances sent us the following overview of the SCJ Archives

Bridwell Library, SMU, the official repository for the records of the South Central Jurisdiction, is committed to the acquisition, preservation and dissemination of the archival records of the SCJ. The archivist will acquire, organize and preserve the records for use by researchers and other individuals, under the supervision of the archivist of the SCJ or archivist of Bridwell Library.

The permanent records collection of the SCJ shall retain no more that two copies of any item. Excess copies of an item, above two, shall be made available for distribution to annual conference archives depositories and annual conference offices of the SCJ, or shall be disposed of according to standard archival procedures.

There is a finding guide for the SCJ archives as follows:

A. SCJ journals/preliminary reports: Records in archives 1939-2009

B. Christian Advocates relating to Quadrennial Conferences: Records in archives: 1944-present

C. Delegate Materials/Brochures/Flyers relating to Quadrennial Conference: Records in Archives-1944 to present

D. Records in archives relating to mergers: 1939, 1968, 1970

Records shall be retained in the SCJ Central Office for a minimum of 8 years: the present Quadrennial and the prior one. These records include SCJ Director's Records: SCJ Financial Records and SCJ Office equipment/SCJ Office Expenditures Records.

It is interesting to see how through the years the names of groups, committees, organizations with the church have changed. We are lucky to have some records that apply to most of these groups. As needs have arisen or changed over the years, so have the names.

My goal is to be able to bring the SCJ Archives up to date and keep them in working order for those that are interested in or want to know the history of the SCJ and want to use them.

Frances Long/North Texas Conference Archivist/Church Historian

If you have questions for either the North Texas Conference Archives or the Jurisdictional Archives, Frances may be reached at eflong@mail.smu.edu

The South Central Jurisdiction is one of five jurisdictions of the United Methodist Church. It was created in 1939 and consists of United Methodist Churches in Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, and New Mexico.
Historic Church Pictures

Each issue asks you to identify one of our many historic churches. Here is the one from the previous issue.

This is Anderson UMC in Grimes County. Anderson is well known in Texas Methodist history because of the many preachers and even bishops who stayed at Fanthorp Inn in Anderson during the Republic era. It is sadly remembered as the point at which Martin Ruter became so ill that he turned back to Washington on the Brazos rather than continuing to the United States to get his family. Readers of this Newsletter will know that Ruter died within days of his return to Washington. He was buried twice there, but buried a third time in Navasota—just a few miles from the church at Anderson.

The church at Anderson began at Fanthorp’s Inn in 1839. This church building was built in 1931 on the site the church acquired in 1849. Yes, that means Methodists have been worshipping on this same site for 165 years. The church has several historical artifacts including the bell and a silver communion service.

Fanthorp Inn is now a State Historic Site with public tours on Saturday and Sunday. Anderson is also the county seat of Grimes County and has a magnificently restored courthouse.

Here is the next church for you to identify.

Tafolla Collection Deposited at Texas State University

The Witliff Collections at Texas State University has announced the acquisition of the Santiago Tafolla Collection. The Texas Historical Foundation made the acquisition possible. Santiago Tafolla, like his friend and colleague, Polycarpo Rodriguez, was a Methodist preacher whose life story reads like an adventure novel. The Tafolla Collection includes an autobiographical manuscript which covers his life from 1837 to 1876. Unfortunately that span does not include the years he was a Methodist preacher. To learn more see the Witliff Collections site

http://www.thewittliffcollections.txstate.edu/research/a-z/stafolla.html
Directory

President
Dr. Garry L. Nall
7206 Versailles Drive
Amarillo, Tx 79121
806-355-1450
gnall@att.net

Vice President
Dr. Daniel F. Flores
PO Box 64394
Fort Worth, TX 76164

Secretary
Rev. Barbara Huggins
901B Palestine St.
Jacksonville, Tx 75766
903-586-2494
bh@jacksonvillemethodist.org

Treasurer
Mr. Stewart Caffey
5426 89th St.
Lubbock, Tx 79424
stewacs@aol.com

Warnick Awards Chair
Rev. Dr. William J. Bryan III
P. O. Box 750133
Dallas, Tx 75172
214-768-4900
wbryan@smu.edu

Heritage Journal Editor
Rev. Dr. Robert W. Sledge
3141 Chimney Circle
Abilene, Tex 79606
rsledge@mcm.edu

Newsletter Editor
Wm. C. Hardt
10375 New Wehdem Rd.
Brenham, Tx
979-830-5210
wchardt@gmail.com
Membership/Registration 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 $20 annual dues. Please send your dues and gifts to the address below.

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