

TEXAS UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Winter 2017 vol. 8, #3

Editor's Letter by Wm. C. Hardt

We are delighted to invite you to the dedication and grand opening of the Texas Conference Archival Center in Conroe, Texas, at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28.

The Archival Center is on the campus of the Texas Conference Mission Center, but is a building devoted solely to archives. The grand opening of the Mission Center will also occur on the 28th so visitors can see facilities devoted to two different conference ministries.

The road to the Conroe facility has been long and winding. The *Discipline* written after the creation of the United Methodist Church in 1968 mandated that each annual conference maintain its archives in a "fire safe" building under the direction of a Commission on Archives and History. The various annual conferences complied with the mandate in various ways. Some annual conferences placed the archives in the conference headquarters. Some had a college or university library available. A small number used a museum or historic structure.

The constituent conferences of the TUMHS have examples of all three. The Rio Texas, New Mexico, and North West Texas Conference Archives are in the Conference offices. The North Texas and Oklahoma Indian Mission Conferences are in University Libraries (SMU and OCU respectively). The Central Texas Conference Archives are in a repurposed church building.

The Texas Conference Archives have had a curious journey. Before the creation of the CAH the main ministry of memory was the Conference Heritage Society and the "Conference Trunk." The custodian of the trunk, the Rev. Charles F. Smith (1859-1958), brought the trunk of historical artifacts to conference every year for display, and when the Central Building at Lakeview was completed, one room was designated the Heritage Center.

The first response of the Texas Conference to the 1968 General Conference action was to designate the Heritage Center in the Central Building at Lakeview as the Archives. Such an arrangement proved unsuitable. The space had been designed more as museum display than records storage. The site was inconvenient to researchers. As the Lakeview facility proved inadequate, the Archives moved to Lon Morris College. The college president, Faulk Landrum, solicited funds for the construction of an addition to the library to serve as archival storage. One of the librarians became the Archivist.

Later the Archives were removed from the library and were moved to a double classroom in an academic building. Archival duties were removed from the library staff and entrusted to a retired pastor. In July 2010, Dr. Landrum, who had since retired and was Conference Archivist, was informed that the space in the academic building was now needed for instructional purposes.

The archives were moved to rental storage units in Jacksonville, and the CAH was tasked with planning for a permanent facility. The “exodus and exile” period of our history is finally over. We are coming out of the wilderness. I hope to see you on the 28th as we celebrate.



Rev. Scott Moore who has been “our man on the ground” during the construction process, at the entrance to the Archives. The address is 3771 N Loop 336 E, Conroe, Texas 77302.

New Bridwell Library Exhibition Focuses on Archives

Numerous exhibitions at Bridwell Library have used archival materials to tell the stories of important individuals, groups, and events. “The Archives at Bridwell Library,” a new exhibition presented in The Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Galleries, takes a slightly different approach. Rather than focusing on a person, organization, or historical moment, this exhibition uses archival materials to inform visitors about archives and the long-standing, collaborative archival program at Bridwell Library.

“The Archives at Bridwell Library,” features seventy-seven items produced or collected by Perkins School of Theology, Bridwell Library, the South Central Jurisdiction, the North Texas Annual Conference, the former Rio Grande Annual Conference, and the Texas United Methodist Historical Society. The exhibition tells the story of archival collaboration dating back to 1940. By working together, Bridwell Library and four church-related bodies have succeeded in amassing the most extensive set of Methodist-related primary resources in the Southwestern United States. Altogether more than three thousand linear feet of archival documents in diverse formats are available for study in the Decherd Turner Reading Room from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with the exception of university holidays.

“The Archives at Bridwell Library” is open to the public, free of charge, February 1 through June 30, 2017. A complete online version of the exhibition is available at <http://www.smu.edu/Bridwell/SpecialCollectionsandArchives/Exhibitions/Archives>. To schedule exhibition tours and research visits, please contact archivist Timothy S. Binkley at 214-768-1989 or tbinkley@smu.edu.



In the exhibition: Saddlebags and spurs, circa 1890, used by Rev. M. D. Long (1849-1917) during his ministry in Texas and Oklahoma. Later these items were used by Long's son, Rev. Charles A. Long (1881-1986) who served forty-one years as a Methodist evangelist in Brazil. (Images: Bridwell Library Special Collections, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University.)

TUMHS Archives at Bridwell Library

Jean Traster is the TUMHS Archivist. Our archives are housed at Bridwell Library, Perkins School of Theology, SMU. A special thanks to those listed below who have contributed items to the archives.

To date, all records on hand have been inventoried, organized, and filed.

There are several gaps in the records which might be filled by items in the hands of members of this group. Please check to ascertain if you have any of the following:

TUMHS Newsletters	1993, 1994, 1995	2006
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Kate Warnick Awards	1994	2011, 2012	2014 to present
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If you have TUMHS-related items which you would like to have added to the archives, please bring them to the April 28-29 meeting in Richardson. Bradley Sue Howell, Frances Long, Bill Bryan, Tim Binkley, and I added records from our "stashes" during 2016.

T U M H S 2017

Crossing Boundaries

Texas United Methodist Historical Society Annual Meeting

6:00 PM Friday, April 28 – Noon Saturday, April 29

This year's annual meeting will be held at the First United Methodist Church of Richardson, 503 N. Central Expressway, Richardson, TX 75080.

Although 2017 marks the 150th anniversary of the North Texas Annual Conference, presentation themes will cross conference boundaries to include stories of a leading early Texas Methodist family, a famous gospel music singer, a 1920 SMU graduate who served as a missionary in Africa, and former Rio Grande Conference charges in North Texas that did (and did not) join the North Texas Conference.

The keynote address will be given by **James A. McMillin, Ph.D.**, retired Associate Director of Bridwell Library and professor of American Religious History at Southern Methodist University. Additional presenters will include:

- **Rev. Ben Anderson David Hensley** (Oak Lawn UMC, Dallas)
- **Rev. Priscilla Pope-Levison, Ph.D.** (Perkins School of Theology)
- **Rev. Emily Robnett** (student, Perkins School of Theology)
- **Rev. Daniel F. Flores, Ph.D.** (Tarrant County College)

Optional Friday afternoon pre-conference opportunities will include guided tours:

- 1:00 PM St. Luke "Community" UMC, Dallas
5710 East R. L. Thornton Frwy, Dallas, TX 75223
Led by the Rev. Dr. Zan Wesley Holmes, Jr.
- 3:00 PM "The Archives at Bridwell Library" exhibition at Bridwell Library
6005 Bishop Blvd., Dallas, TX 75205
- 5:00 PM The Archives of First UMC, Richardson
515 Custer Rd., Richardson, TX 75080

Historic Church Pictures

Each issue contains the picture of some historic church and asks readers to identify it. Here is the picture from the Fall 2016 issue.



This is Art UMC in Mason County. It was built in 1890/91 on land donated by Ernst Jordan. Texas Methodist historians will recognize the Jordan name as one of the most significant families in German speaking Texas Methodist history. Gilbert Jordan (grandson of Ernst) was an early member of the TUMHS, and his *Yesterday in the Texas Hill County*, (1979) is an important memoir of the German Texan Methodist experience.

Here is a passage from Jordan

The church stands on an elevation and can be seen from afar, especially in the morning from the eastern approach. The people wanted to build an impressive edifice, and they succeeded.

This beautiful church is constructed with Cambrian sandstone from local quarries. The Hill Country or “Central Mineral Region” is more famous for its limestone and Texas pink granite than it is for its sandstone. The granite was so hard that it required industrial techniques (and convict labor) for the quarrying, but European

immigrants could quarry the limestone and sandstone with hand tools. That’s why we have so many historic buildings in Mason, Llano, Gillespie, and surrounding counties constructed from these local materials.

Your editor admits to a preference for churches built with local materials. When congregations build churches from local materials, they are demonstrating an organic connection with the land, and therefore the community.

The next image for you to identify is another example of a building that is connected with the community by the earth itself. Hint: It is adobe construction.



NWT CONFERENCE NEWS

Beryl Waddell has announced her retirement from the position of Archivist for the North West Texas Conference. Her last day is tentatively March 1.

We are all indebted to Beryl for her hosting the Jurisdictional Convocation last October. A highlight of the meeting was a tour of the Conference Archives which could serve as a model for all the rest of us.

Beryl intends to remain active in the TUMHS and plans to attend the annual meeting in Richardson. We wish her well in her retirement.

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Membership/Registration Information

We do not send annual membership renewal statements. Our not doing so means that many of us neglect to send our annual dues. If you can't remember the last time you sent dues, it's probably time to send them again. Please print this page and send your dues and gifts to

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Name(s) _____

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Annual dues

\$20 _____

(If you wish, you may join at the lifetime dues rate of \$300)