

# TEXAS UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Spring 2017 vol. 8, #4

Editor's Letter by Wm. C. Hardt

The annual meeting of the TUMHS was held April 28 and 29 at FUMC Richardson. We are all deeply grateful to the church for hosting this event and for the senior pastor, the Rev. Clayton Oliphint, for his gracious words of welcome. Frances Long is the church archivist who invited the group to meet there, scheduled the facilities, arranged for the banquet, and kept things running smoothly. Thank you Frances!

The vice president of the TUMHS, Tim Binkley serves as Program Chair, and what a program he put together! The program theme was CROSSING BOUNDARIES, and the speakers all related to that theme. Emily Robnett took us back to the 1920s and the Belgian Congo with her presentation on a SMU graduate who served as a missionary there. Jim McMillan's presentation on Littleton and Missouri Fowler included their times in Mexico, the Republic of Texas, and the United States. Ben Hensley told us about the life and career of Bill Mann, an evangelistic singer with a global ministry. Our Walter Vernon Essay Award winner, Mark Grafenreed told us about someone who crossed a racial boundary, Professor Nathaniel Lacy who was the first African American faculty member at Perkins School of Theology.

In addition to planning the program, Tim also presented. His presentation treated us to a slide show of the Methodist sites in Dallas County that have received historical markers from the Texas Historical Commission. Thank you Tim, and also Michelle Grimm who provided not only nutritional sustenance but also spiritual when she volunteered to lead the group in *Blest Be the Tie. . .* which we used as our benediction. Thank you too, Dr. Priscilla Pope-Levison, for a powerful, imaginative, scriptural devotional.

The annual meeting also provides an opportunity to learn what's going on in the Commissions on Archives and History in the constituent conferences of the TUMHS (Central Texas, New Mexico, North Texas, North West Texas, Oklahoma Indian Mission, Rio Texas, and Texas).

Here are some highlights

- Three Conferences have expanded their archival faculties. CTC and Texas now have their own buildings. Rio Texas has expanded its space at the Conference Offices.
- Rio Texas Archivist Bonnie Saenz has gone from part time to full time status.
- The OIM is in the process of resuming work on the published history of the conference.
- Beryl Waddell has retired from the North West Texas Archivist position.
- New Mexico Conference Archivist Will Steinsiek invited us to hold the 2018 annual meeting in El Paso. The group accepted his invitation enthusiastically.

## Jean Traster Honored

Jean Traster received the Ministry of Memory Award from the Historical Society of the United Methodist Church at the Friday night banquet. No one is more deserving of such recognition, but perhaps not everyone knew how Jean was honoring all of us too. The recipient has a choice of the venue at which the award will be presented. It may be presented at the annual meeting of the HSUMC, the recipient's annual conference session, or some other celebratory event. The fact that Jean chose to have the award presented at the TUMHS annual meeting pleased me very much.

Rob Sledge presented the award. Who could possibly be more qualified? As he said, he has known Jean 80 years, and her family was responsible for taking him to Sunday School as a small child.

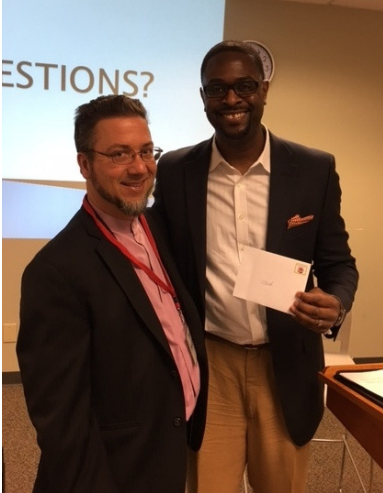
In her acceptance speech, Jean shared some of the highlights of her journey, including her training at Lake Junaluska when the General Archives were still located there. She came back to Texas from Junaluska

“empowered” (her words) to save the records of the Central Texas Conference. That empowerment gave her courage to storm past the obstacles to our ministry—the indifference, the gatekeepers, the naysayers, the ahistoricism. Her work has enriched not only the TUMHS and the Central Texas Conference, but also the jurisdiction and the entire UMC. Well deserved Jean!



## Grafenreed Wins Again

The Rev. Mark Grafenreed, Chaplain at Houston Methodist Hospital, Sugarland, has done it again. He won the Walter Vernon Essay Contest again. We are so proud and happy. The 2016 essay was on the desegregation of Houston Methodist Hospital. The 2017 was on the life and career of Nat Lacy, the first African American faculty member of Perkins School of Theology. Rev. Grafenreed wrote the winning essay while studying with Dr. Ted Campbell as a course leading to his M. Div. degree from Perkins School of Theology. As an added bonus for attendees, we learned about Mrs. Lacy and her artistic talents. Here is Vice President Binkley awarding the prize.



## **Warnick Award**

Speaking of awards, the Warnick Award for the best local church history was awarded to our Treasurer, Stewart Caffey for his history of the Methodist church in Sidney. It is likely that you have not heard of Sidney, since the church closed over a decade ago. Sidney is located in Comanche County and was once known as Jimmie's Creek and also as Round Mountain.

Stewart's work means that the Methodist legacy in Sidney and the neighboring area of Comanche County will not be forgotten. Thank you so much for keeping the legacy alive.

Dr. William J. Bryan, III, retired from his position as Warnick Awards chair at this annual meeting. He retired from Perkins on March 1. It is our tradition to close each annual meeting with Bill's announcement of the winners. One of the reasons we place this award at the end of the business meeting has been to encourage members to stay all the way through to the end rather than slipping out early. Bill's announcement of the winners is a work of art. He combines summaries of the works, criticism, highlights, and wit in such a skillful manner, that the Warnick presentations have become a high point of the annual meetings.

Bill suggested that Tim Binkley succeed him as chair. We are grateful to Bill for his service and to Tim for accepting the new responsibility.

## 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 Fort Davis UMC in Jeff Davis County, in the New Mexico Conference. The building was built in 1884 during the pastorate of Samuel G. Kilgore (1858-1924) who was born on a ranch near Yorktown, and was recruited to the ministry by A. H. Sutherland while he was a student at Southwestern University. At the West Texas Annual Conference session of 1883, he was appointed to Fort Davis which included Marfa, Alpine, Shafter, and North Presidio. The Board of Missions of the MECS supplied \$350 for the construction of this one room, adobe building.

Willard Steinsiek, who supplied the information about the history of Fort Davis UMC, says this is the oldest Protestant church building in continuous use between San Antonio and El Paso. If the name “Kilgore” rings a bell, it should. Samuel’s brother, James Kilgore was a founding faculty member of SMU and acting president 1922-1923.

Here is another historic church picture for you to identify.



## Position Available

The TUMHS does not have a web site or any presence on social media. If you would like to help the organization by developing a site or by creating and maintaining a social media account such as Facebook, let me know.

## Send your dues

We usually collect dues at the annual meeting. Some of the readers of this Newsletter did not attend the annual meeting so consider this your reminder to remit your dues.

Please print the last page of this Newsletter and send your check today.

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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

Stewart Caffey  
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Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues

\$20 \_\_\_\_\_

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