

Reports

Commission on Archives and History

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4 *"If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday"*

5 Pearl S. Buck, Noble Prize Winner and Daughter of American Missionaries in China

6 *"For history does not long entrust the care of freedom to the weak or the timid... A people that values its*
7 *privileges above its principles soon loses both."*

8 President Dwight D. Eisenhower's Inauguration Speech, January 20, 1953

9 The highlight of our work this year was hosting a workshop on how to research, manage, write and publish a
10 local church history, which we sponsored last September in Madison and Glendora. Marie Amerson led two
11 identical workshops at The United Methodist Archives and History Center in Madison and at the Chews United
12 Methodist Church in Glendora. There were twenty-nine registrants for the Madison workshop and eleven
13 registrants for the Glendora workshop. The group was comprised primarily of United Methodists with a few
14 Lutheran and Unitarian representatives attending as well. Besides drawing from the Greater New Jersey Annual
15 Conference, there were also United Methodist representatives from the Eastern Pennsylvania. Each workshop
16 contained four sessions, which lasted for almost five hours of instruction time. All of the participants expressed
17 great satisfaction with the workshop. Amerson agreed to privately coach any of the participants as they work on
18 their future histories. Prior to the workshop CAH published an article in the *Relay* on how writing a church
19 history benefits and unites a congregation for future outreach. Archives and History is currently preparing
20 another five articles for the *Relay* on the present themes for vital congregations.

21 It is important to honor those churches and institutions which shaped our present through the vital work of their
22 past deeds of ministry. In 2015, there were three such places recognized as historic sites because events and
23 witness that shaped the direction our annual conference in different ways. They are Flanders United Methodist
24 Church, Port Elizabeth United Methodist Church and The Neighborhood Center in Camden. Upon recognition as
25 such by the General Commission on Archives and History, each place received an historic site plaque which the
26 chair and vice chair presented at separate celebrations.

27 Another way of honoring local churches is through Robert B. Steelman Methodist History Award for best local
28 church history submission on a yearly basis. The Commission on Archives and History honors the hard work of
29 local churches who reach back to document their past ministries as a way understanding who they are as a
30 contemporary congregation that looks forward to future successful ministry. The submitted history immediately
31 becomes an outreach tool to their community as way of reintroducing the church to potential visitors and
32 members. This year's winner, United Methodist Church of Pearl River, Pearl River, New York, did exactly that
33 with their storied gift to the larger understanding of what it means to be United Methodist. The submission
34 gives the reader a useful overview of Pearl River's 250 years of active ministry within the community. The
35 church's 68 page history also illustrates their faithfulness to live and preach the Good News while lifting up their
36 godly heritage both as a Methodist congregation and those individuals who stepped forward to lead during their
37 respective lifetimes. The reminiscences towards the end are a nice addition as Pearl River continues to live their
38 story for many years to come.

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40 Walt Jones, our archivist, reports that he has have spent hundreds of hours researching 16 baptisms, 4
41 marriages, 11 genealogies and 31 other information requests. Ancestry.com is still processing the 38 boxes of
42 closed church digital records we sent them in October, 2014. The final project produced 721,231 records in the
43 form of 99,264 images. Walt also promoted the idea of placing a Christian flag on the graves of ministers as an
44 important project for those churches that have attached cemeteries or in other cemeteries. Closed church
45 records archives this year include Gladstone, Barnegat, Gloucester, Highland Park, Bridgeton churches
46 Central and West Portal. This year's acquisitions are the pastoral record book for Rev. Lawrence Atkinson; six
47 boxes of charge conference reports from the Northern Shore District; several boxes of old relays from Whiting
48 UMC; twelve four inch binders of the Bradley Beach history and old records from the Blairstown UMC.

Reports to the 2016 Annual Conference

1 Resourcing the history of our annual conference and beyond came in the form of digitizing previous historical
2 publications of the former Northern New Jersey Historical Society that are now available on our GNJ web pages.
3 Titles include: *The Civil War Diaries of James B. Faulks and The Personal Diaries of John Summerfield Coit; The*
4 *Diaries of Stephen S. Day, 1895-1934; The Journals of the Reverend Thomas Morrell, Methodist Patriot and*
5 *Preacher, 1747-1813; The Maverick Strain: Dissent and Reform in the United Methodist Tradition, On the Trail of*
6 *Francis Asbury, Untrod Paths, A Forgotten Chaplain of the Civil War: Commander John L. Lenhart; One Hundred*
7 *Twenty-Five Years of Methodism; Skeletons in Our Closets: Unique, Amusing, and Human Incidents from the Life*
8 *of Our Churches; The Story of Our Ethnic Churches; Visiting the Past, Present and Future: A Tour of Methodism in*
9 *Northern New Jersey.*

10 We remained active in our jurisdiction CAH connection through attending the annual meeting in Connecticut
11 and by having Don DeGroat serve as a member on NEJCAH's Executive Committee. The same is true with our
12 close connection with the General Commission on Archives and History, who rents us shelving to properly store
13 the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference archives. We also offer professional assistance in all phases of
14 archival practices. Our archivist served as one of the test contributors to GCAH's revamped on-line catalog of
15 United Methodist annual conferences' holdings for public searching.

16 Other items of note include a survey of annual conference commission on archives and history budgets in order
17 to see where we fit in to the larger annual conference funding picture. A result of the survey revealed a mean
18 average budget of \$27,034. There were three conference budgets over \$100,000 and nine conference budgets
19 below \$10,000 in the mean average calculations. Some of our members speak at local churches on the value of
20 archives and history in a vital congregation. We help churches date and interpret their history. Another
21 important aspect of CAH's work is supplying and subsequently advising proper records management through
22 retention scheduling. There were times when our members helped churches with preservation of their
23 treasures whether at our repository or how-to discussions with the local church historian.

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Report

[Boston University School of Theology](#)

Greetings in the Spirit of Jesus Christ! The Boston University School of Theology (STH) walks with you on the journey of discipleship, seeking to love God and to love our neighbors with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength. Thank you for your prayers that inspire and support the STH mission to love God, build knowledge, and equip leaders for the church and society.

News

New faculty: This year, Boston University welcomed new faculty in ethics, psychology, theologies of spirituality, comparative theology, church renewal, Black church leadership, and mission studies. We welcomed: Nimi Wariboko (Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics); David Decosimo (Theology); Theodore Hickman-Maynard (Evangelism and Church Renewal); Andrea Hollingsworth (Theology); Barbod Salimi (Psychology and Peace Studies); and Daryl Ireland (Associate Director of the Center for Global Christianity and Mission).