

HISTORIAN'S VIEW

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1 APRIL, 2012

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Welcome to the first issue of Historical Society Newsletter. We will be present at Annual Conference with gifts for new members who sign up at our booth. Our Annual Meeting will be held at Huntingdon College on Saturday, October 13th, so plan now to attend and benefit from the program about this great school and how it came to be. More information is included in the Registration Form in this Newsletter.

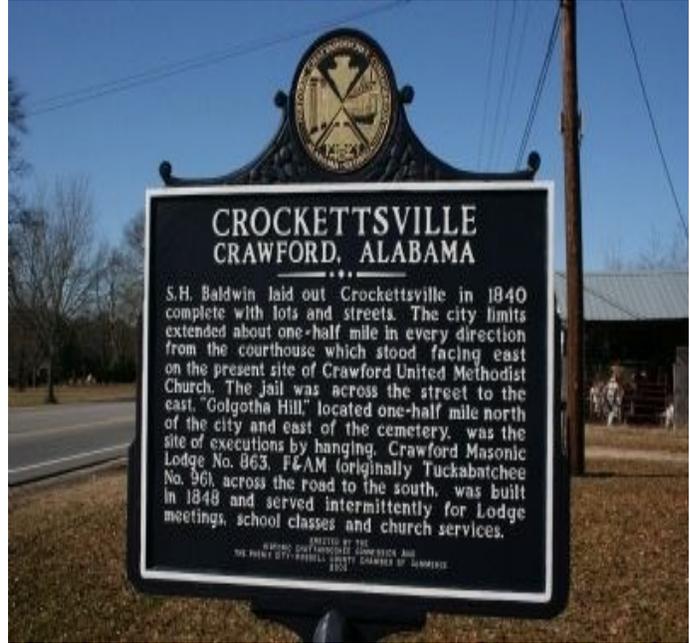
Education, both primary and college levels has been, historically, part of the foundation of the Methodist Church. Although Alabama became a state in 1819 with the capital located at Cahaba, parts of the state remained a domain of four Indian tribes, namely the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creeks. By 1836 all these lands had been ceded to the state by treaties. But, the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church voted to establish a mission school for the Creek Indians in 1821, to be located in what is now Russell County. At the Conference held in Augusta, Georgia, the Rev. William Capers, later a bishop, was appointed in charge as superintendent.

Success did not come easily as the Indians had an aversion to their children being taught to "read and write and other good things". This was to include agriculture in "other good things". Trouble started at the newly built Fort Mitchell (across the Chattahoochee River from the current Fort Benning) from the appointed Indian Agent and fort commander, Colonel John Crowell. He was quoted as being negative to missionaries preaching to the uninformed savage who, "neither understood the language nor believed in their doctrines". He further was heard to say, "preaching to the Indians was 'fudge' ". The Rev. Capers was not to be thwarted and obtained permission from the chiefs, through the Creek Agent, and went ahead with his plans.

The Mission was located just outside of Coweta Town and one mile west of

Fort Mitchell on a hill one mile west of the river, where it was navigable. He reported kneeling at the summit of the hill and prayed, aloud, as it was a time of joy and a time to bless God. The Conference named the school, Asbury Mission School in the Creek Nation. The school opened in 1822 with an enrollment of twelve Indian children and twelve more were added the first week. The school and mission served up to seventy persons eventually and several converts to Christianity were reported, some of the names were preserved. The Carolina Conference discontinued the school by resolution in 1830, largely due to a conflict between Rev. Capers and Colonel Crowell that resulted in a court hearing in Georgia, called by Governor George M. Troup.

Source: [Russell County in Retrospect](#), An Epic of the Far Southeast, by Anne Kendrick Walker, published in 1950



CRAWFORD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The church is located in Crawford on highway 80, west of Phenix City. It was originally the courthouse for Russell County, but records were stolen in the middle of the night in saddle bags on horseback and moved to Seale in 1870. The land was obtained for a Methodist Church and rebuilt, much as the picture shows. The sanctuary was built using the same bricks, which were made in the Bickerstaff Brick Yard in Columbus, GA by slaves. If looking carefully, one can still see the hand prints of the slaves in the bricks.



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THE METHODIST ARCHIVES CENTER - Where Did We Come From?

By Sharon Tucker, Archivist

The Reverend Doctor R. Glenn Massengale was the **right man** in the **right place** at the **right time**. In 1976 he was the Director of Houghton Memorial Library at Huntingdon College, an ordained minister in the Alabama West Florida Conference, and a member of the Commission On Archives And History (COAH). It was the dream of many to have a depository for the conference, a place to store important records and artifacts from closed churches. Dr. Massengale was the right man to establish this. Knowing also that Huntingdon College had the need for this type of facility he knew the time was right to suggest an archives be established.

In August of 1976 the conference Historian, Reverend Franklin Shackelford Moseley passed away. He had been the Historian since 1952 and over time he had compiled research on every pastor appointed in the Alabama West Florida Conference and its predecessors. Just two days before his death all of his work was transported to the Huntingdon College Library.

With Rev. Moseley's paperwork and artifacts from the college, Dr. Massengale knew the archives would become a reality. He approached the Alabama West Florida Conference Council on Ministries to discuss this project and ask for assistance. Mary Ann Pickard (Mrs. William A.) was also attending this meeting and offered her help.

The Alabama West Florida Conference approved funding for the establishment of the Commission On Archives And History in 1976. The COAH receives an apportionment from the AWFC each year based on its request to the Council on Finance and Administration. At the 1977 AWFC annual session Dr. Massengale was named Archivist/Historian for the AWFC and Director of the Depository. In 1978 an agreement between the conference and Huntingdon College was approved. The college would provide the space, pay the building expenses, and continue to support the archives. The conference would provide the director.

Mary Ann Pickard served as Dr. Massengale's secretary with the special project of helping him organize the depository. In June of 1984 Dr. Massengale retired as Director of the Library and as Conference Archivist/Historian. Mrs. Pickard was appointed Conference Archivist.

In the 1987 expansion of the Houghton Memorial Library an area was created to include a climate controlled vault and a research/reading area and office space. When the Dixon-Rowland Wing of the library was dedicated in 1989, The Methodist Archives Center was established. The Alabama West Florida Conference and Huntingdon College now had a depository.

As the archives center began to fill with records and artifacts from both the conference and the college research requests were rising tremendously. In 2001 Mrs. Angela Childress was employed part time and worked for two years. Mrs. Sharon Tucker was employed full time in 2005. The Archivist focuses on processing the records as they come in and the Assistant focuses on servicing the records. Both work on research requests.

In 2008 Mary Ann Pickard retired. Sharon Tucker was employed to take her place. Mary Ann Pickard continues to work on a part-time basis. In 2012 Beth Clements was hired to work four hours a week to assist in the processing and servicing of the records.

The Methodist Archives Center is open from 8:00a.m. until 5:00p.m. Monday through Friday. You are encouraged to visit and complete any genealogical research, research on conference churches (active and closed), cemeteries, conference agencies or Huntingdon matters you want to explore. If the Houghton Memorial Library is open it can be arranged for you to visit the archives even when it is closed.

AWF UNITED METHODIST ARCHIVES CENTER

Phone: 334-833-4413 Fax: 334-263-4465

Email: archives@huntingdon.edu



**WHEN & WHO
FIRST PETITIONED
ORDINATION OF WOMEN
IN THE METHODIST
CHURCH?**

ANSWER: Anna Oliver
(1849 - 1892)

Anna Oliver (1849 - 1892)

She brought the first test case on the ordination of women before the 1880 General Conference. Check out this remarkable woman and her story on the General Commission on Archives & History Web Page.

HERITAGE SUNDAY

May 20, 2012 is designated as Heritage Sunday and the theme is "Stamping out Killer Diseases of Poverty by Improving Health Globally: Our Heritage". The theme is to undergird our Methodist denominational emphasis on Four Areas of foci affirmed by the General Conference. Each of these areas of focus is a legitimate heir of the movement that included Wesley. Heritage

Sunday is a time for congregations to remember the vital ministries that have marked our denomination so that in 2012 churches can find inspiration and insight for engaging in these ministries today for the sake of the future.

Source: General Commission on Archives & History Web Page.

The Society is a voluntary membership organization to promote Methodist history. It is affiliated with the General Commission on Archives and History, an official arm of The United Methodist Church, but welcomes everyone who is interested in studying and preserving the heritage of the various branches of the Methodist movement.

Genealogy Research Tips

Predecessor denomination names of the United Methodist Church would help if researching information about an ancestor believed to have been a preacher or missionary. Below is a list .

- Methodist Episcopal Church (1784-1939)
- Methodist Episcopal Church, South (1845-1939)
- Methodist Protestant Church (1828-1939)
- Methodist Church (1939-1968)
- United Brethren in Christ (1800-1946)
- Evangelical Association (1803-1922)
- United Evangelical Church (1894-1922)
- Evangelical Church (1922-1946)
- Evangelical United Brethren (1946-1968)
- United Methodist Church (1968- present)
-

HOW DO I JOIN?

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Individual	\$ 12 per year
Student	\$ 8 per year
Institution	\$ 15 per year
Benefactor	\$ 50 per year (Gift tax credit of \$38 per gift)
Life	\$100

Make checks payable to the Historical Society and send to:

**Charlotte B. Hobson
P. O. Box 191
Elba, AL 36323**

Consider a gift membership for a family member, friend, colleague, or local church librarian or historian. Recipients will receive a special letter acknowledging the gift.

CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

The Historical Society will have a booth at Annual Conference with membership applications available. If you would like to join there, a special gift awaits you. Several current members who are involved and interested in preserving the history of the Methodist Church in Alabama will be present to assist you there. We strive to preserve the history as a guide post for the present and for the future. We encourage submission of articles for this Newsletter or to the Archives of History, located at Huntingdon College. We featured the history of Blue Lake at the 2011 Annual Meeting, held at Blue Lake. Other places of interest featured have included The Three Notch Trail showing how the circuit rides survived on horseback, how the Camp meetings sprung up and spread the gospel and how churches developed from those meetings. One year the Annual Meeting was held at Little Texas Camp Ground, still in use today. The 2012 Annual Meeting will be held at Huntingdon College to feature the development of higher education.

CLIP & MAIL

**MEMBERSHIP
FORM
AND**

**ANNUAL MEETING
REGISTRATION**

**FORM
NOW!**

**HOPE TO SEE YOU
AT
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**

**REGISTRATION
FOR THE
2012 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE AWF CONFERENCE
AT HUNTINGDON COLLEGE**

Name (s) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone: (H) _____ Email: _____
(O) _____

Registration Fee \$20.00 per person, includes lunch \$ _____

Program starts at 10:00 and ends with a tour of the Archives of History starting at 2:00. Register now and further details of the program will be sent to you with acknowledgement of receipt of your registration. The history of Huntingdon College will be depicted with a possible showing of the Red Lady. Music will be provided by students who will take you on a tour of the campus if desired. The humble beginning of the college in Tuskegee cannot be imagined with the modern campus and focuses of study available to all who are interested in a degree or continuing education.

Make checks payable to: Historical Society of UMC

Send checks with registration fee to:

**Charlotte Hobson
P.O. Box 191
Elba, AL 36323**

**WHAT IS THE ANNUAL
MEETING OF THE
ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY?**

This organization and arm of the Commission on Archives and History meets once a year for the purpose of studying some aspect of the history and development of the Conference of the United Methodist Church. These meetings are designed to be fun and interesting as well as educational. The purpose is to help all Methodist and prospective Methodist appreciate what we are today as a Church body. Hopefully, we can learn from the successes and mistakes of the past in order to better efforts of today and tomorrow to spread the words of Christ.

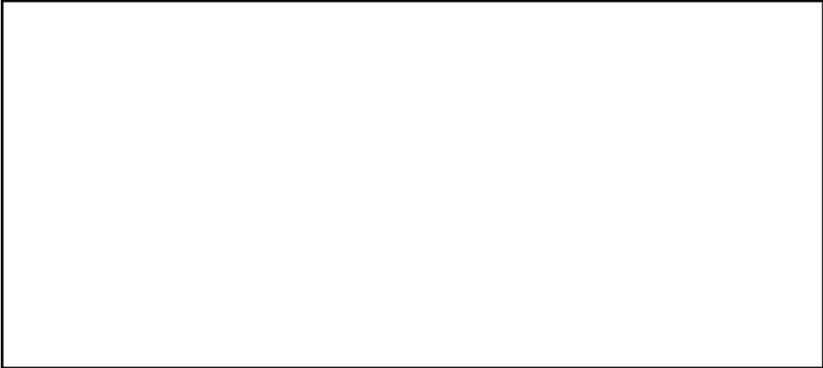
At the Annual meetings, the Society elects new officers or Executive Board members who help to carry out the business of the organization, which is facilitating communication to local church members and helping to preserve the Methodist heritage, no matter the size or membership of the local churches. Anyone is eligible to join, but you do not have to be a member of the Society to attend the meetings. We welcome anyone interested in preserving history.
Myrtice Carr, President



Executive Board
President—Myrtice Carr
myrticecarr@att.net
Vice President—Lynda Biddle
334-494-3591
Secretary—Bettie Letlow
blelow@bellsouth.net
Treasurer—Charlotte Hobson
chobson@troycable.net

ANNUAL MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 2012

PUBLISHED BY
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF
THE ALABAMA-WEST FLORIDA
UNITED METHODIST CONFERENCE



**"TALL OAKS FROM LITTLE
ACORNS GROW"**

In Lazeby's book, History of Methodism in Alabama and West Florida, he noted that the Methodist Church was not formally organized in America until three years after the close of the Revolutionary War and one year after the signing of the treaty of peace between England and the United States. There were, however several American Methodist societies scattered along the Atlantic Seaboard during the late eighteenth century. These societies were formally organized into a Church at Baltimore on Christmas Eve of 1784. Under the leadership of Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury, Methodism began its march across the con-

continent from this humble and small beginning.

At the Christmas Conference the question was asked: "What may we reasonably believe to be God's design in raising up the preachers call Methodists?" The answer came in these words: "To reform the continent and to spread Scriptural holiness over these lands." There were only 83 preachers and fewer than 15,000 Methodist people. A catch phrase came into being that described these early pioneers in Methodism. - "Methodism is Christianity in earnest". What a great heritage we have. We should ask ourselves if History is still but a prologue for the future? What a future it has!

A MESSAGE TO LOCAL CHURCH HISTORIANS

You have an important job in your church to encourage and promote interest and preservation of the history of your local church organization. First, ask yourself if your church has the room and expertise to preserve old records and historical information. Here is where the Archives of History can be of great help to you. Do you have a time and opportunity to promote remembrances of those great souls and events that brought your congregation together and built the various buildings of worship? Homecomings are great times for such activities and never forget the ability of story tellers to keep your history alive. Do you have a means of capturing this oral history and preserving it? Video taping those stories is a great way to do so. These tapes can be converted to DVD's and stored easily.

**COME TO THE ANNUAL MEETING TO LEARN
MORE ABOUT THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVES
AND RECEIVE TIPS FOR YOUR CHURCH HISTORIAN POSITION.**