



**ALABAMA – WEST FLORIDA CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPRING 2015



**Oldest Methodist Church in Florida
Pensacola First United Methodist Church**

The First United Methodist Church, Pensacola, FL dates back to 1821, when a mission was established by the Mississippi Conference and the Reverend Alexander Talley was appointed as missionary to Pensacola. The mission began by holding meetings in the courthouse and the old theater of Pensacola. However, in 1827, a lot was purchased on the north-east corner of



Intendencia and Tarragona Streets and a church was built. The first services were held on June 2, 1828. These early years, 1870 – 1880, were crucial years for the church, which suffered two fires, in which the church was completely destroyed, and an epidemic of yellow fever.



In 1881, the first site was sold and property was purchased at the northwest corner of Palafox and Garden Streets and a new building was started. In the fall of the next year, 1882, another epidemic of yellow fever struck and took the lives of many of the people, including the pastor, the Reverend C. B. DuBose.

The Palafox Street Church was completed in 1890, in time to host the Annual Conference.

In 1901 several preaching missions were organized, later becoming independent churches: Gadsden Street, Richards Memorial and Warrington. It was at this time that the mother church became known as First Church.

In 1906, the Palafox Street property was sold and a new site was purchased on Wright Street with the cornerstone for the new sanctuary being laid on October 14, 1908. The pastor, the Reverend C. W. Gavin, supervised the construction of the church. Some services were held in the basement until the building was completed in 1910. The first services were held on October 30, 1910. On September 14, 1919 all indebtedness was removed and the church, with a membership of 709, was dedicated by Bishop W. F. McMurry.

Methodism continued to grow in Pensacola, and First Church was instrumental in starting other churches: Cokesbury, St. Andrews and St. Paul's at Midway, FL.

In 1951, the Education Building was constructed and in 1959, the Chapel of the Good Shepherd was built in memory of W. C. Mackey and E. R. Malone. To give more room for youth activities, the Ark was opened in 1970. The Wright Place, the property adjacent to the church, was acquired on March 10, 1983 for use as an activity center. The Education Building was badly damaged by fire in 1983 but was reopened in 1984, after renovation.

A new administrative/classroom building was constructed during 1988-89 linking the Sanctuary to The Wright Place. In the early 90's, the church acquired additional property and transformed it into a seventy car parking lot for its members. This property and an additional building bought in 1997 will also serve future expansion needs as outlined by the church's long range plan. Also, in 1997, the church added a Columbarium unit and renovated the area surrounding it. Powers McLeod, who came to

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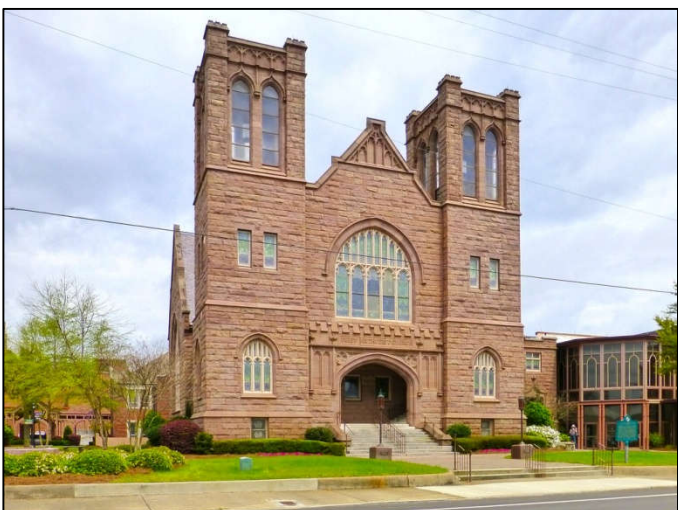
First Church in 1970 as the Senior Minister was the first to be inurned here.

In May, 2000 Pensacola First Church acquired another building and designated it as the Outreach Ministry Center to be the home for adult Sunday School classes, a non-profit recovery organization, and a church sponsored Boy Scout Troop. Another building, opposite the sanctuary, was acquired in 2000 to become the Youth Ministry Center and it was dedicated on November 18, 2001.

The expanded choir loft was dedicated in early 2002 and the organ, built by Tom Helms, was dedicated August 2002. It contains 73 ranks of pipes, weighs some 50,000 pounds, and consists of a four-manual and pedal ebony console, a solid white oak case plus 4,153 pipes all strategically voiced for this church.

A capital project consisting of a new three-story church lobby connecting the Sanctuary, Library, Activity Center, Wright Place, and the Education Building was completed in 2004 along with a new elevator in the Activity Center.

In October of 2008, exactly 100 years after the cornerstone was laid for the Wright Street sanctuary, First UMC continued preparing for the future by purchasing the Gov. Edward Perry Home and the attached building, previously owned by the Scottish Rite Masons. The Gov. Perry Home has been restored and is open to the public as a part of Pensacola history, while the attached building (known as Wesley Abbey) was remodeled to house ICON, First UMC's fourth Sunday morning service.



With a membership of more than 2700 in 2014, First Methodist has always believed that it is essential to preserve the past while embracing the future.

Adapted from <http://fumcpensacola.com/www/about-us/history/>

AWFC-HS Book Reviews

Dusty Books & Faded Papers – Writing a Community History by Marie J. Amerson, 2013, 60 pages, paperback, \$12, Amazon.com

Despite the subtitle, this 8-1/2 x 11 inch book actually discusses how the author helped her mother who had been asked to become the historian of Corinth UMC near Meeks, GA, write a history of that church. In chapters titled *Discovering, Gathering and Sifting, Compiling, and Printing/Publishing* she gives straightforward advice on how to write a church (or community) history and illustrates with examples encountered in her own project.

This is an excellent introduction and guide for anyone who wants to undertake a church history project.

Anchors of Faith – Early Wooden Churches of the Deep South by Martha Lee Dickson, 2014, NewSouth Books, paperback, 200 pages, \$27.95, available from Amazon.com as a Kindle Edition for \$9.99.

This is a pictorial overview of 145 mostly late-nineteenth century wooden churches located in southern Alabama, Mississippi, and throughout Florida. The descriptions and full-color photos provide detailed information about both the architecture of these houses of worship and the related history from their founding to their current state.

The book has beautiful pictures with many examples of very unusual design features. She took 4 or 5 photographs of more than 450 church buildings and selected 145 for inclusion in the book.



Autaugaville UMC, Autaugaville, AL. Built in 1845 in the Greek Revival style. Rare "crown of thorns" steeple.

In the Introduction, she says: "Of note during this early era of Southern wooden church building was the rapid, unprecedented growth of Methodism, largely due to the diligent efforts of seemingly untiring Methodist circuit-riding preachers who traveled the Southern states by horse or buggy, taking from two to six weeks to make their assigned rounds. A proverbial saying persists about these faithful early circuit riders, once spoken on a bitterly cold winter day, "There is nothing out today but crows and Methodist preachers."

This is a wonderful book and a valued resource.

Puryearville Methodist Church (1820 – c. 1943) and Burnt Corn Methodist Church (1913 – c. 1960)

Burnt Corn is now an unincorporated community on the border between Monroe and Conecuh counties in southwest Alabama. It is one of the oldest settlements in



Alabama and was on an old Indian trail which was widened and improved and became the Federal Road which allowed settlers to move into what was then called the Mississippi Territory.

The origin of the name Burnt Corn is uncertain but the most commonly accepted story is that two Indians returning from Pensacola camped at the spring there.

One was taken ill and the other, impatient to get back home, poured a heap of corn on some dry leaves for his companion to eat and then left. The leaves caught fire and the corn was partially burned. Later travelers stopping at the spring found the charred corn and called the spring Burnt Corn Spring.

In 1820, Puryearville Methodist Church was established two miles southwest of Burnt Corn on the Conecuh circuit. Isaac Betts, Mrs. Puryear, and George Watson were leading members. Rev. James King was a member from 1820 to about 1834. A church deed, dated March 25, 1843, shows that Richard C. Puryear deeded two acres to Isaac Butts, George Watson, William Black, Joel B. Walden, and Thomas Pritchett as trustees.

A church building was constructed and the upstairs of the church was reserved for the use of the Washington Monroe Academy and was also used for Masonic meetings. The Puryearville Methodist Church was closed circa 1943 and the building it occupied is no longer there.

A cemetery was established next to the church in 1840 and many early settlers of Monroe and Conecuh counties who settled along the old Federal Road are buried here in the Puryearville cemetery.

The cemetery is still in use and is well-maintained. As of 2015, 134 interments have been recorded. Among the families represented here are Allen, Barnett, Betts, Brantley, Green, Lowrey, Rumbley, and Steadman. Mary E. Puryear's grave is here as well.

In 1913, some members of the Puryearville Methodist Church organized the Burnt Corn Methodist church two miles northeast of the Puryearville church. The land was donated and the plans for the church were made by James K. Kyser and his wife, Cora Betts Kyser. The Rev. D.F. Ellisor was the first pastor of this new church. A service was held in the Masonic Hall shortly before the church was completed and a large number of children and young people joined the Church. The first service

held in the new church was on the third Sunday in June 1913.

When Rev. Ellisor later left Burn Corn for another appointment, a silver loving cup was presented to him. Years later his descendant Rev. Tom Ellisor said that the cup was in their home and that they cherish it.

Rev. Franklin S. Moseley was the pastor from 1928 to 1930. A short history of the church was written by Rev. Moseley in the 1940s and he related that there were many beautiful programs presented under the leadership of Mrs. Kyser. As was true of most rural churches, the Burnt Corn Methodist Church became the center of social life for the young people of the community.

According to Rev. Moseley's account, some of the early members of the church were Kysers, Betts, Brantleys, Mosleys, Salters, Northcutts, Grahams, Fountains, Cul-breaths, Harpers, Shofners, Ellises, Days, Greens, Lowreys, and many more.

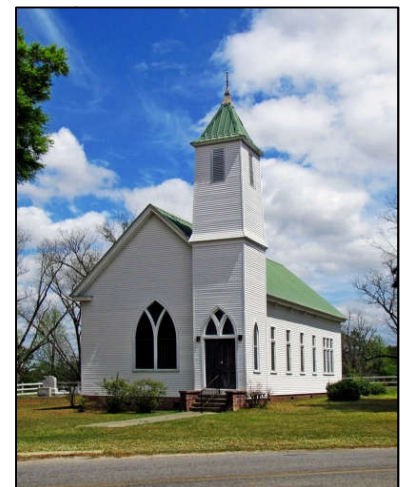


There are four graves next to this church: Cora Betts Kyser (with the entire 23rd Psalm on her tomb), James Keathly Kyser, Robert L. Mosley, and Mabel C. Mosley. Most of the members of this church apparently continued to use the Puryearville Cemetery.

Pastors who served the Burnt Corn Methodist Church from 1913 to 1943 were: D. Frank Ellisor (1913-1915), C. A. Williams (1915-1919), A.E. Shafer (1919-1920), H.G. Cowan (1920-1921), Edward E. Cowan (1921-1925), I.W. May (1925-1926), Edgar A. Howell (1926-1928), Franklin S. Moseley (1928-1930), Cecil M. Ellisor (1930-1931), A.H. Vanlandingham (1931-1934), Wallace G. Barnes (1934-1937), Gerald L. Kling (1937-1939), Nathan R. Blocker (1939-1941), and Samuel E. Hudgens (1941-1943).

Based on information in the AWF Archives, the Burnt Corn Methodist Church was probably closed circa 1960.

The church building is still there and is a beautiful example of rural Methodist church architecture.



Sources for this article included the *Alabama Christian Advocate*, September 15, 1915; *History of Conecuh*; *Alabama Historic Highway Markers*; *Burnt Corn Methodist Church* by Rev. F.S. Moseley, Eutaw, Alabama; and Findagrave.com. Special thanks to the Alabama-West Florida Conference Archivist, Montgomery, AL.

Reverend James Thomas "Tom" Carr (1932 – 1975)

Tom Carr came to First UMC DeFuniak Springs, Florida, in August of 1974 from five plus years serving Grace UMC in Auburn, AL.



Tom was born July 15, 1932, in Dothan, AL, the son of Mr. & Mrs. Cherry Wood Carr. His home church was the Lafayette Street UMC and he was the third young minister to come out of Rev. Charles Hildreth's ministry at that church.

Tom married Myrtice Ann Greene of Opelika and they had two children.

Tom's internment was in Rosemere Cemetery in Opelika, AL.

Tributes to James Thomas Carr

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
First United Methodist Church, DeFuniak

Seven months ago Reverend James Thomas Carr came to serve the First United Methodist Church of DeFuniak Springs and the surrounding community. On Friday, March 14, 1975, Reverend James Thomas Carr met tragic death in an automobile accident in Pensacola.

When he first came to us, we knew only that he grew up in Dothan, Alabama, son of Mrs. Gladys P. Carr and the late Mr. Cherry Wood Carr, went to college at Troy State University and seminary at Emory University in Atlanta; that he had a lovely wife Myrtis [sic] Ann and two children Katherine Ann and Timothy James. We knew that he had served Methodist Churches in Coffee Springs, Seale, Crawford, Sweetwater, Citronelle, Clayton, Montgomery, and Auburn, Alabama. We knew we were pleased and fortunate to have him come to DeFuniak Springs.

In that short time he was with us, we learned much more and the more we learned, the more we admired, respected, and loved Tom Carr. He was a preacher seven days a week. He rode the bus to school with the kindergarten children. He ate lunch in the lunchrooms with the school children. He sat in the cells with the prisoners in the jail. He visited with the aged and the ill. He continually gave of himself. Everyone he met could feel his genuine concern for them and his sincere interest in their problems.

His sermons were well planned and prepared and helped the members of his congregation better understand God's love and purpose for all of us. However, his life spoke more eloquently than words ever could. It was amazing the people he met in his various visitations and no matter what their problems or how they might have wasted or misused their lives, he never judged or criticized. He had a talent for finding the good in people

and helping them find the good in themselves. His every deed was an evidence of his love of God and his fellow man.

No one was around him very long without sensing that he loved them because God loved them and he was God's man. Everyone whose life he touched could better understand what being a Christian really means.

**He gave, he cared, he understood
He went where he might do some good
The jail, the school, the invalid bed
The paths where Jesus gently led**

**He helped, advised and sympathized
But never meddled, criticized.
He had a smile that love shown through
That said, dear friend God loves you too.**

**Young and old, rich and poor
He loved them all, but none the more.
He spoke their language, knew their needs
Honored men, respected creeds.**

**He found the way to the hearts of youth
Who knew his love, learned his truth.
At the altar or in the gym
The children felt he was one of them.**

**We felt such loss, such pain, such grief
A shock that goes beyond belief.
It's hard for us to realize
He is with God in Paradise**

**We knew so well he was God's man
And he'd be the last to doubt God's plan.
Because of him we understand
He's found his home in the Promised Land.**

PROCLAMATION

by the City of DeFuniak Springs

WHEREAS the Rev. James Thomas Carr has served with distinction as a minister in the United Methodist Church for a period of 20 years, and

WHEREAS the Rev. James Thomas Carr recently departed this life suddenly as a result of a tragic automobile accident, and

WHEREAS during his life and throughout his ministry he rendered outstanding service to his church and to the communities in which he served through loyal, faithful and unselfish efforts resulting in a lasting contribution to the community, church, and nation, and

WHEREAS the City of DeFuniak Springs is desirous of making official recognition of his dedicated ministry in the First Methodist Church of DeFuniak Springs, Florida, and our community,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED that I, Harold Goodwin, Mayor of the City of DeFuniak Springs, Florida, do hereby proclaim the night of Sunday March 30, 1975, to be known as Rev. James Thomas Carr Night in recognition of the dedicated, faithful and unselfish efforts above enumerated and may this Proclamation serve as a lasting memorial in appreciation of same.

This 25th day of March, 1975.

Union Service for Tom Carr

"A Tribute to Tom Carr" will be the theme of the Union Service to be held at the First Baptist Church this Sunday evening, March 30 at 7:00.

Dr Bob Jaye, pastor of the First Baptist Church and director for the event, said that several persons from the community will be speaking at this time. The purpose of the occasion is to give a cross section of the city an opportunity to say a few words of appreciation for the ministry of the late Reverend James Thomas Carr, who at the time of his death, was pastor of the First United Methodist church of DeFuniak Springs.

Comments are expected from the religious, civic, and government leaders of the community, with Dr. Jaye making some concluding remarks. Among others, words will be heard from Rev. Henry Mooney, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Mr. Cleve Jones, past president of the local chapter of Kiwanis International, and Mr. Arthur Goolsby, chairman of the administrative board of the First United Methodist Church. Music will be under the direction of Mr. Eddie Centanni.

Dr Jaye also has asked for everyone who will, to write a letter to Mrs. Carr, the children, or simply entitle the letter "A Tribute to Tom Carr" and sent to Dr. Jaye at the First Baptist Church. These letters, which should be on regular sized typing paper, will be attractively bound and presented to Mrs. Carr that night.

The entire city is urged to be present for this "Tribute to Tom Carr" event.

95-year-old church's closing is bittersweet, but members 'saw it coming'

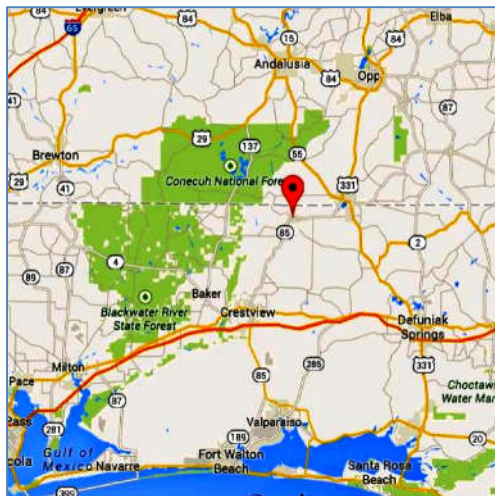
Christian Home United Methodist Church near Laurel Hill, FL, closed its doors after Sunday services, April 12, 2015, thus ending 95 years of ministry. The Rev. Kevin Holland, the church's pastor, said because of the church's declining membership, "the congregation decided it was time to close the small church."

"We only had three active members," Betty Willis who attended Christian Home with her husband Jim said, adding that her siblings made sure to attend the final service. "All my brothers and sisters grew up there, and they all came home for this." So did other former members, friends and supporters.

"We had a church full," Willis said. "It was just as pretty and spiritual as it could be."

Members began meeting in 1912 at what was then the Church of Piney Grove, a Methodist-Episcopal congregation that met in the Dixie School on the highway between Wing and Lockhart, Ala.

Under the Rev. W.M. Fuqua and his wife Lydia's direction, the church reorganized in 1919 as Christian Home. A new



Location of Laurel Hill, FL, Near AL State Line

Up until Sunday, some of the Fuquas' descendants still worshipped at the church, which was the center for spiritual and social activities in the 1930s and 1940s, he said. "Revivals would draw people near and far with a mule and wagon tied to every pine tree around the church," Holland said. "Dinners were held outside on chicken wire tables."

Christian Home was part of a three-church charge that included Hopewell United Methodist Church, outside of Laurel Hill, and First United Methodist Church in Florida.

The Willis family knows where they will worship this Sunday. "We will go to Hopewell," Betty Willis said. "We have gone back and forth from one church to the other, and they have come to our church. We're already like one big church family anyway."



Upon closing, Christian Home's ownership reverted to the United Methodist Church's Alabama-West Florida District.

Willis said no decisions have been made about the building's future, though recently there was talk of it being moved to Hopewell to serve as a fellowship hall.

Source: The Crestview (FL) News Bulletin, April 15, 2015, Staff Writer Brian Hughes

2014 ANNUAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETING

January 24, 2015

The 2014 Annual Meeting of the Alabama-West Florida (AWFC) Historical Society was held at the First United Methodist Church, DeFuniak Springs, Florida. It had been delayed in order to coincide with the 2015 Chautauqua activities so that attending Society members might participate in them.



A warm welcome was given by the pastor, Dr. Larry Teasley, and Craig Reynolds, church historian and organizer and host of the meeting. Mr. Reynolds described the history of the church and provided us a brochure, "A Timeline of the First United Methodist Church of DeFuniak Springs, Florida", which outlined the organization and growth of DeFuniak Springs and its Methodist church. Many members expressed their desire to create a similar timeline for their churches. Mr. Reynolds also shared his story as a former member of the Evangelical United Brethren Church which united with The Methodist Church in 1968 to form the United Methodist Church.

The meeting included presentations by leaders of the Florida Chautauqua Association who told how the New York Chautauqua Association fostered the creation and development of DeFuniak Springs in founding a southern Chautauqua location.



A tour of the church featured the unusual number and placement of beautiful stained glass windows as shown in the example at the left.

The business meeting was held at lunch time.

Mary Ann Pickard gave a financial report for the period since the last annual meeting (August 24, 2013), through the annual meeting today and said that the balance on hand, after current expenses, was \$4,333.77.

Sharon Tucker, AWFC Archivist, gave a presentation discussing which records are archival and should be preserved. The handout she distributed indicated which records are archival, which should be stored for a period of time before destroying, and which can be destroyed.

The last item on the agenda was the election of officers. President Myrtice Carr asked for volunteers to be nominated for AWFC Historical Society offices. Since there were no volunteers, Mary Ann Pickard suggested that the society elect executive committee members who would later meet and elect officers from among themselves. This suggestion was adopted by the membership and the following members volunteered for and were elected to serve: Carolyn Coker, Craig Reynolds, Joyce Stimak, and James Young. The ex officio members of the Committee were determined to be AWFC Archivist Sharon Tucker and AWFC Historian Ed

Shirley. Mary Ann Pickard, assistant to the archivist, will continue to serve as the Financial Secretary. The group expressed gratitude to Craig Reynolds, host for this occasion, the church's kitchen staff, and the young people who provided music during the luncheon and served tables, for their radical hospitality. The payment the Historical Society made to the church for the lunch will go for the young people's mission trip.

The meeting was adjourned around twelve o'clock noon so that the group could participate in the 2015 Florida Chautauqua Assembly activities and visit the outstanding exhibits.

Extracts from *A Timeline of the First United Methodist Church of DeFuniak Springs, Florida*

1887 – Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) North, officially established in DeFuniak Springs (DFS)

1889 – C.H. Newell, 1st recorded minister and presiding elder of the DFS Mission District

1890s – 1st church building constructed north of present building



1899 – MEC South, began meeting at the courthouse, J.F. Feagin appointed to serve

1900 – MEC South, listed in Alabama District but no minister appointed

by Annual Conference

1901 – Original MEC North building burns, new wood frame building built, used bell from a Troy, Ohio church

1902 – DeFuniak MEC South, listed in Marianna District on circuit with Freeport, Rev. J.W. Mathison serves both

1904 – MEC South served by Rev. D.F. Ellisor

1905 – MEC North parsonage built on site of original church

1907 – MEC South and MEC North merge, kept MEC North building and sold MEC South building, stayed part of MEC South Conference

1926 – 96th Annual Conference of the MEC South held in the Chautauqua Hall of Brotherhood with all 3500-4000 seats filled and some on platform; largest religious gathering ever in DeFuniak Springs.

1954 – Educational wing completed, Rev. Cecil Bradley appointed through 1958

1964 – Rev Langdon Garrison served as pastor until 1968

1967 – Old church building razed, present building constructed incorporating original stained glass windows and bell. Chapel built using salvaged pews.

1974 – Rev. Tom Carr appointed (died in car accident in 1975)

1987 – Large 2-story frame "Gordon House" behind church acquired for youth building, recreational activity and food ministry.

2004 – Small brick building (Blake House) behind church acquired for use as day-care facility.

Information and Events of Historical Society Interest

The Alabama-West Florida Conference Historical Society was formed in order to work with the Annual Conference Commission on Archives and History in the collection and preservation of materials related to the history of The United Methodist Church and its antecedents; to promote research, writing, and publication in the field; to locate and support the preservation of appropriate sites of historical interest within the conference; to develop interest in United Methodist history and skills for pursuing it among local church historians and others; to develop and promote observances of historical anniversaries and other events of interest; and to engage in such other appropriate activities.

2015 Executive Committee and Officers of the AWFC-HS

The Executive Committee of the AWFC-HS met on Friday, February 20, 2015. The meeting was held in the Methodist Archives Center at Huntingdon College at 10:30a.m. Carolyn Coker, Craig Reynolds, James Young, Sharon Tucker, Ed Shirley, and Mary Ann Pickard were in attendance. As directed at the January 24th Annual Meeting, the Board elected the following officers.

President – Jim Young, Fort Walton Beach, FL, retired USAF, electronics engineer, currently Trinity UMC historian; dishwasher in church soup kitchen; active in the UMM, member of the choir and currently serves on the Trinity UMC SPPRC; father of two and grandfather of four. Edits AWF-HS Newsletter.

Vice-President – Rev. Ed Shirley, elder in the AWF Conference, currently serving as the Conference Historian. In July will complete his second year serving Brundidge UMC. He enjoys portraying historical characters including John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and Francis Asbury. AWF-HS webmaster and Facebook editor.

Recording Secretary – Sharon Tucker, lives in Lowndesboro, AL, has working at the Methodist Archives Center for 9 1/2 years, presently the Archivist for the Alabama West Florida Conference and Special Collections of Huntingdon College, married to Allen Tucker and they have two grown children.

Financial Secretary – Mary Ann Pickard, Administrative Assistant, AWF Conference Archives

Member-at-Large – Carolyn Coker, native of Indiana, moved to Auburn, AL from Missouri in 1959, a return to husband Sam's undergraduate school and his native state; Masters from Auburn, worked in Speech Pathology field, and continued to live in Auburn in retirement. Member of Grace UMC; presently Church Historian and Oral Historian and President of UMW. Has pledged to write a history of Grace UMC and plans to call it "The Spirits of Grace". Four children reared in Grace UMC.

Member-at-Large – Craig Reynolds, DeFuniak Springs, FL, FUMC DeFuniak Springs historian

Member-at-Large – Joyce Stimak, Fort Walton Beach FL, retired quality assurance specialist with Defense Contracts Command; lifetime Methodist, active with UMW and Emmaus community, and serves as assistant Trinity UMC historian; married, with three sons and seven grandchildren. .

Previous Past President – Myrtice Carr, widow of Rev. Tom Carr, teacher, counselor, supervisor, rehabilitation consultant, currently church historian, two children, 3 grandchildren, 4 great grandchildren so far

The Historical Society Website

Thanks to our Vice President, Rev. Ed Shirley, we have a new website which can be found at:

<http://www.awfhistory.com/>

Alabama West Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church Historical Society

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Home

Welcome to the website for the AWF Conference's Historical Society. This website was created so that we may be more accessible to everyone with information and offer an avenue of interaction concerning our shared interest in Methodist history. Please browse through the pages to learn more about early Methodism in America and Alabama. We will be adding more to our internet files through the efforts of volunteers (we invite you to be one), members of the Historical Society (you can become one), and our conference archivists (we have some good ones). We regularly plan events where we enrich our knowledge of history, enjoy fellowship, and actually visit a historic location.

Share your information and your comments with us. Visit our Facebook to share your story, pictures, and insights into our history. If you have artifacts or documents that you would like to deposit in the archives, our conference archives address is posted on this website.

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.

Alabama West Florida Conference Historical Society

“Welcome to the website for the AWF Conference’s Historical Society. This website was created so that we may be more accessible to everyone with information and offer an avenue of interaction concerning our shared interest in Methodist history. Please browse through the pages to learn more about early Methodism in America, Alabama, and West Florida. We will be adding more to our internet files through the efforts of volunteers (we invite you to be one), members of the Historical Society (you can become one), and our conference archivists (we have some good ones). We regularly plan events where we enrich our knowledge of history, enjoy fellowship, and actually visit a historic location.”

We're Also on Facebook!

Follow us on Facebook. Enter "AWF Historical Society" in the search box at the top of your Facebook page.



"Like" us – Follow us! Participate with comments and photos. Invite your friends.

Next Historical Society Annual Meeting September 24, 2015

Plans are being made for the AWF Historical Society's 2015 Annual meeting. Mark your calendars now!



It will be held on Thursday, September 24th, at 9 a.m. at Ivy Creek United Methodist Church in Autauga County west of Montgomery.

More information and brochures will be available soon and will be posted on our web site and on our Facebook group page.

AWFC-HS at the Annual Conference

If you will be at the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference (May 31 – June 3 at Frazier Memorial UMC in Montgomery), please stop by the table that we share with the Commission on Archives and History.

We will have a tri-fold display board, membership forms, copies of this newsletter, and information about our next annual meeting.

We'd love to talk with you about what you are doing in your church to preserve and display your historical treasures and how you are helping your folks appreciate the value of doing this.

Change of AWFC-HS Fiscal and Program Year

An important decision by the Executive Committee at the February 20, 2015 meeting was to change the fiscal and program year of the AWFC-HS to June through May to conform with the annual sessions of the Alabama-West Florida Conference.

The rationale resulting from the discussion was that annual conference is the best place to promote the AWFC-HS and a convenient time for people to renew their membership or become new members. Formerly the fiscal and program year were from annual meeting to the next annual meeting of the AWFC-HS.

Note that dues paid at the annual meeting January 24, 2015 will be good until the 2016 AWF Annual Conference and the term of the present Executive Committee and officers will last until then also.

The AWFC Historical Society Newsletter

The newsletter will be published quarterly and all comments and suggestions are welcome.

If you would like to submit an article or a notice or an announcement for publication, please contact the editor, Jim Young, at youngjmy@cox.net or by phone at 850 862-8642.

AWFC Historical Society Contact Information

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Mary Ann Pickard, Assistant Archivist

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PRESERVING OUR HISTORY

Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. Deuteronomy 32:7 (KJV)