



"WE are the end-product of our history."

FLASHBACKS



Revealing glimpses of our creative past

Official newsletter of the
UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ANNA HOWARD SHAW!

February 14, 1997 was the 150th anniversary of the birth of Anna Howard Shaw, one of the first women to be ordained in the American Methodist tradition. She is considered one of the most prominent ordained women and is thought of as a "pioneer clergywoman."

Shaw was the second woman to graduate from the Boston University School of Theology. She was also a graduate of the Boston University Medical College in 1886. She is best remembered for her leadership in the women's suffrage movement and was instrumental in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

Anna Howard Shaw was born in England. Her parents emigrated to the United States in 1851 and eventually settled in the wilderness of the Michigan frontier. Her formal education was haphazard. At the age of twenty-four, she went to high school, then enrolled in Albion College in Michigan and later in Boston University.

Shaw was encouraged to preach after she heard a Universalist woman preacher. She began as a local preacher against the wishes of her parents and family. She continued to preach while a student at Boston University, again, against the wishes of the faculty and the male students.

Her first pastorate was in East Dennis and Brewster, Massachusetts. Because she was not ordained she could not administer the sacraments. She and another Boston University graduate, Ann Snowdon Olive, applied for ordination to the Methodist Episcopal Church. The bishop refused their request despite the recommendation of the examining committee. The women appealed to the General Conference and were refused there.

Shaw then turned to the Methodist Protestant Church and was ordained on October 12, 1880. One of the conditions of ordination was that she refrain from the use of tobacco. As she answered

the vow, there was a ripple of laughter in the congregation. After ordination, she returned to East Dennis where the congregation presented her with a silver communion set inscribed with her name and they celebrated communion.

More than 100 years later, in 1989, the Southern New England Conference rectified its mistake with the posthumous election of Shaw and Oliver as full conference members.

Shaw's life is being celebrated during 1997 at the Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University School of Theology. The United Methodist Historical Society will hold its annual meeting at the Center on October 3-5, 1997.

ENGLISH SETTLEMENT

Joining the churches in the Wisconsin Conference celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding is the English Settlement United Methodist Church located in the town of Rochester, near Burlington. The name implies the church was established by settlers who came from England. One of these was Edwin Bottomley, who initiated the Methodist meetings. He died in 1850 of typhoid fever, only seven years in the United States,

The current building was erected in 1946. The anniversary celebrations were held on October 19, 1996. A number of former pastors were present as well as many members and friends. One of the artifacts displayed was a Bible, dated 1855 which belonged to William Bancroft, a local pastor in the late 1850s. The Bible had been rescued from an old farm building which had been a house occupied by one of the founders.

DAVIS CORNERS

Just as some Americans include a wide variety of national origins in their heritage, some churches can look back at a number of denominational influences in their background/. The Davis Corners Church has a series of influences in its history.

In 1880, several people gathered to hold meetings at the Davis Corners school and formed a Congregational Society. The society was organized in September 1880, and in November, they elected officers and adopted Articles of Association. On July 17, 1881, land was purchased by the society from Franklin C. Davison at the cost of \$25.00/ The name of the village came from Mr. Davison.

In a joint effort, the people of the community hauled stones and lumber from Necedah to build the church. The building was completed on November first and dedicated on November, 10. 1881.

For many years, the congregation had no assigned pastor. Local elders, itinerant preachers and students held services in an irregular schedule. A Ladies Aid and Sunday School thrived.. The Ladies Aid was diligent in raising funds for the upkeep of the society. Despite this, the official board of the church was all male except for the clerk who was a woman.

Among the various pastors to serve the church was a woman, Mrs.Christy. Another pastor was Robert O'Neil, a recent immigrant from Ireland. One of the amusing anecdotes of the church tells that just before the offering one Sunday. Rev.O'Neil announced that he was about to bring his new bride tot he church. A young lady in the choir had her offering in her hand, but after the announcement, she put the money back in her pocket.

The last Congregational pastor served in 1915/ From 1919, several Presbyterian ministers served both the churches in Wisconsin Dells and in Davis Corners. In 1925, the first Methodist pastor came, the Rev. Edward Dougherty. The church became affiliated with the West Wisconsin Conference. S.J.Lambright was appointed to serve the three point charge: Wisconsin Dells, Lake Delton, and Davis Corners.

Through the years numerous improvements have been added to the church and the parsonage, including extensive remodeling of the interior as well as construction of a social hall.

The congregation celebrated its 100th anniversary on September 20, 1980.

From material written by Amber Nemitz and Annellese Bennwitz.

BELOIT CHRIST

The organization of the Christ United Methodist Church in Beloit had its seeds in the national campaign of the Methodist Church called "Crusade for Christ," One of the goals of the campaign was to raise money for the post-way reconstruction of congregations. Another emphasis was evangelism.. The Rev.Guy Nelson traveled through Wisconsin for five years, surveying communities where Methodist efforts were most needed. One of these sites was the west side of Beloit.

Rev Claire Wolf and his family arrived in Beloit in July, 1946 to begin the task of organizing the congregation. The Board of Missions of the Wisconsin Conference purchased five lots and chose the name, Christ Methodist Church. The first services were held at the Seventh Day Adventist School in August, 1946. A Sunday School and Methodist Youth Fellowship were started at the same time. A women's Society of Christian Service was organized in September, 1946 and a Methodist Men's Club in 1951

The ground breaking ceremony for the new church building was held on September 13, 1953 and the building was consecrated on May 9, 1954. The consecration services were led by Bishop H. Clifford Northcott.

The building was designed so that when a new sanctuary was added later, the original sanctuary would serve as a chapel. An education wing was completed in January 1865. A parsonage was purchased in 1970.

The fiftieth anniversary celebration was held on September 29, 1996. Bishop Rader brought the morning message.

SHELL LAKE

The establishment of a Methodist Episcopal congregation in Shell Lake was preceded in 1884 by the organization of a Ladies Aid "as a spiritual, financial, and social group to support the future church" In 1886, the congregation was organized with eleven members who worshipped in the boxcar school.

During the next year, membership had grown to sixty and two lots were purchased. A building was erected and was dedicated on June 9, 1888. In 1897, the mortgage note was burned.

Two years later, in January, the building was destroyed by fire. Among the things saved were the pulpit chairs which are still in use in the church in 1996. In July 1899, the new cornerstone was laid and by December, 1899, the construction of the new church was finished. In 1901, a parsonage was purchased. An active Epworth League was a part of the church program.

Myron Taylor began as pastor in 1909. He sometimes used a motorcycle for transportation. He also made a serious change in church finances. Up until this time, the Ladies Aid had been responsible for the finances. Pastor Taylor made it the responsibility of the total membership of the church.

IN 1910, the Saronia church was built. It is currently part of the Shell Lake Charge. In 1914, Shell Lake and Saronia, which had been part of the Spooner charge, became an independent charge.

The Women's Foreign Missionary Society was formed in 1916. An affiliated organization of girls was called the Standard Bearers. In 1940, the Missionary Society and the Ladies Aid joined to become the Women's Society of Christian Service.

A parsonage was built in 1948. In 1961, an addition was made to the church building. In 1968-69, children from the Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church in the Twin Cities spent time with church families during the summer. In 1974 church services were broadcast on radio station WCSW.

The church celebrated the 110th anniversary on September 8, 1996. Bishop Rader preached the morning sermon.

PRAIRIE FARM

As I read the origins of United Methodist congregations in Wisconsin, it is interesting to see the melding of people and languages until the current congregation emerges. In addition to the unions that brought together groups of people, and some times separated them, on the national level, such unions and separations occurred independently on the local level. Some of this happened with the now United Methodist congregation in Prairie Farm.

The story begins with a Methodist preacher, John Dyan, who was stationed at Downsville, Wisconsin. He traveled north to what is now Rice Lake and then south to Prairie Farm. he gathered settlers and lumbermen and preached the first sermon in Barron County.

Eleven years later, in 1871, a Methodist preacher, Rev. Bowen arrived and preached his first sermon in the dining room of a boarding house. He preached not only in Prairie Farm but in a number of points in Barron, St. Croix and Polk counties. The first quarterly conference and communion were held in 1875 in the school house. The Ebenezer Methodist Episcopal church was organized in 1876. The corner stone for the building was laid in 1892.

The Evangelical, Zion, church originated in 1878. The first quarterly conference was held on July 20, 1878. A church building was erected in 1895. Services used the German language until 1915.

Another Evangelical Church, Emmanuel, began in 1906 when Jacob Schneller began preaching services in Vanceburg and Little Beaver. A building was erected in Vanceburg in 1908. The building suffered two serious fires in 1951. In 1952, the congregation purchased the Methodist Episcopal building.

After the national merger of the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist Church in 1968, Emmanuel and Zion united and chose the name Faith

The Congregation chose September 24, 1995 as the 100th anniversary of the church, the date of the completion of the Emmanuel Evangelical building. The Rev. Don Frank, Northwest District Superintendent, delivered the sermon at the morning service.

During the afternoon program, the contents of the first cornerstone were displayed which included the 1895 church newspaper, A German Bible, a Book of Discipline and a list of donors of the original building. Former pastors and members recounted stories of the early church and contributions by family members.

From material contributed by Barbara Bender.

BLACK RIVER FALLS

The city of Black River Falls is one of the earliest founded in the state of Wisconsin. During the winter of 1795-96, two French traders established a trading post at the upper falls. Logging the exceptionally fine stand of white pine along the Black River marks the beginnings of the county's recorded history. The influx of loggers into the area had a permanent influence on the community. The first of several saw mills was built in 1819.

Among the early loggers were a group of Mormons who arrived in June, 1841. They cut lumber for their growing city of Nauvoo, Illinois. These men brought their families and held weekly worship services until they left the area in 1844.

The first recorded Methodist service was led by the Rev. Alfred Brunson in June 1843. Rev. Brunson of Prairie du Chien had been appointed sub-Indian agent for the Bad River band of Chippewa Indians of Lake Superior, with a station at La Pointe on Madeline Island.

"He, with a party of English miners from southern Wisconsin going to Lake Superior to mine copper, made the trip overland with wagons, teams of horses and men. There was no road above Prairie du Chien."

The Mormons requested The Rev. Brunson to preach for them, the first sermon preached by other than a Mormon in Black River Falls. "Brunson was prominent in Wisconsin Methodism as a circuit rider and 'itinerancy' and presiding elder. When his health failed in the 1850s from the strenuous life as a circuit rider, he practised law for several years before returning to the ministry. During the Civil War he was chaplain for the 31st Regiment of Wisconsin Volunteers, stationed in Kentucky."

Judge William T. Price and Judge B.F. Heuston were the chief instigators in the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Black River Falls. One story says that one of the men in a logging camp was killed by a falling log. No preacher was in the area to conduct the funeral service and Mr. Price was asked to say something appropriate. Unable to find a Bible, Mr. Price said a few fitting words. The incident encouraged him to find a preacher for the area.

A group gathered in one of the local saloon, the Shanghai House, to vote on what kind of a church they wanted. Heavily influenced by Mr. Price, they voted for the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The first preacher appointed by the conference was the Rev. Reuben R. Wood. On September 26, 1847, he held his first service in the ballroom of the Shanghai House. He continued to hold

services for two years. In February of 1848, the first quarterly meeting was held.

"He was sometimes obliged to send into the adjoining bar room, and interrupting a game of twenty deck poker in order that one of the players might go into the meeting and start a tune for the singers. The players readily consenting, but immediately after the singers got well going, would return to the game, pick up his hand and get his pile on three aces and two kings."

The next preacher was the Rev. Snow. "A Rev. Snow was next to locate here and remained one year. He had been a counterfeiter for years before and of course did not suit this community. He has since been arrested and set to work in a State Prison a place better suited to his nature and disposition than a Methodist pulpit. Our information puts him down as a Dirty Dog." He had not been appointed by the conference.

The next pastor was the Rev. Jesse Pardun, apparently a local preacher. He frequently carried the preaching responsibilities when there was no appointed preacher. He owned a farm and also operated a lumber mill.

In 1856, a church building was started. The frame work was put up but the roof was not added for over a year. Finally, Judge Price put on the finishing touches.

In the fall of 1856 the Rev. D. McIndoe was appointed to the Black River Falls mission with the Rev. William Haw as "Junior Preacher." He was only twenty years old. The Black River Falls Circuit embraced Black River Falls, Roaring Creek, Melroes, Sheppards, Hixton, Alma Center, Garden Valley, an appointment near where Merrilan now is and one on the east side of the Black River.

In 1858 a Sewing Society was formed. Also in that year a parsonage was erected. The Sunday School was an important part of the church.

"There was much excitement in Black River Falls on June 15, 185 when the first steamboat arrived and docked at Lower Falls...Albina Brockway, a 20-year-old teacher at Lower Falls...was invited to bring her 40 students aboard the steamer for an afternoon ride of three miles down river and back. She relates' The same evening an excursion was to be given for the young People at which time there would be music and dancing. Following the afternoon voyage, One of the officer said, "Well, when you get these little fellows back home you can with the young people tonight and have your treat"

"I looked at the man and said, I have a Methodist foot and it doesn't dance."

From local history, Black River Falls had all the rowdy aspects

of a western frontier town. In July 1858, the court house was set afire and totally destroyed.. There was some stealing and the owners of a house of prostitution were suspected of the crime as well as the court house arson. Two years later, a second fire destroyed forty buildings in the business district.

A visitor from the American Sunday School Association reported that "it was the most wicked and abandoned village I ever was in." He reported swearing, drinking, and no respect for the Sabbath. however, he was instrumental in starting a Sunday School which had considerable success. The war against liquor was waged with much energy, and in 1879,. Black River Falls voted " no license." (No legal sale of liquor.)

In May 1887, the congregation voted to construct a new building. The old building was moved to a farm outside the city. The new church was a brick structure with the sanctuary on the Akron plan. The sanctuary included a memorial window to William Price and included his picture.

While the Ladies Aid, the Women's Foreign Missionary Society and the Women's Home Missionary continued to function, a fourth women's society was formed, the Martha Society. "They were more interested in having fund raisers for the church than studying the scripture lessons as did the Ladies Aid did." One of their early projects was to furnish a three-bed ward at the Methodist Hospital in Madison. Later, they assumed the debt on the church. At the time of the merger in the national Methodist church in 1939, the three women's societies merged to form the Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS). The Marthas continued as a separate organization until 1960.

On January 27, 1946, the brick building was completely destroyed by fire, apparently started by a gas explosion. all of the furnishings in the sanctuary were destroyed. Worship services, Youth Fellowship and organizational meetings were held in the Masonic Temple. "Those attending service at the Masonic Temple recall the altar area was located under the head of a moose. This distracted from concentrating on the sermon and after about a year the altar area was moved to another side of the Masonic Dining Room area."

Plans to erect a new building were begun immediately and solicitation of funds were begun. A ground breaking ceremony was held on August 6, 1951 and the opening of the red brick building was on December 9, 1951. The new building in addition to the sanctuary contained classroom, dining room, kitchen a chapel and the pastors study. In 1967, additional class room and a new kitchen were added. In 1993, a new sanctuary was built and major changes in the building were begun. The new addition was dedicated on September 18, 1994.

Several members of the congregation had entered the ordained ministry: Sandra Herrmann and Donald 'Iliff' in the Wisconsin

Conference of the United Methodist Church and James Iliff in the United Church of Christ.

Numerous events commemorated the 150th anniversary of the church. Starting in March 1996, items of historical interest were displayed during the service once a month. In September, 1996, a special event was celebrated each month starting with the recognition of long time members and included a historic hymnal display, a video which showed scenes of Black River Falls and the old church, a wedding gown review and an ice cream social. Clergy will be recognized on April 20. The final event will be a Commemorative service on September 28 at which time Bishop Rader will be the guest preacher.

Quotations and information taken from the history compiled by Jean G. Anderson.

MEET THE MISSIONARY : ELLA MAY HANAWALT

I have often been surprised when missionaries live to an advanced old age after having spent time in areas where contagious diseases are every day events, where water is not safe to drink, and where food may be limited in quantity and variety,. These condition were encountered y Dr.Ella Hanawalt who died when she was 105 years old.

Dr.Hanawalt was born on April 7, 1889 in Williamsfield, Illinois. Her education included primary and secondary school in Galva, IL., Knox College in Galesburg, IL., and the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She earned a Bachelor's degree at Michigan in 1915, a master's in 1926, and a PhD in 1929. She also attended Scarritt Bible Training School in Kansas City, Mo. from 1920-21.

Prior to going to China, Dr.Hanawalt taught for three years in a rural primary school and then in a high school in Oregon, IL.

From 1921-26, Dr. Hanawalt taught at Ginling College in Nanking, China as a missionary under the Methodist Board of Missions, her teaching expertise was in education and psychology. Unable to return to China after 1926, due to political unrest, she continued contacts with students and friends in China, long after she returned to the United States. She studied the Chinese language but felt she never achieved proficiency. She was able to assist a Chinese woman friend to enter medical school in Shanghai.

After her return to the United States, Dr. Hanawalt taught at Milwaukee Downer ?College for thirty years. After she reached the mandatory retirement age of seventy at Downer, she continued to teach at the Northern Illinois University at DeKalb, Rockford College and Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.

She moved to Cedar Crest Retirement Center, a United Methodist Institution in Janesville in 1976. She continued to maintain contact with her former students. On her 100th birthday, she was overwhelmed with cards and letters from former studnets Dr.

Hanawalt died on March 12, 1995, a month before her 106th birthday.

Dr. Hanawalt was a member of my church, Kenwood UMC. Several members of the church traveled each year to visit her on her birthday. I was there when she was 105. She was confined to a wheelchair, but was mentally alert. It was a privilege to honor a woman of such courage and wisdom.

**PLAN TO ATTEND THE FALL PILGRIMAGE OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 27, AT EVANSVILLE.**

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Material of historical interest, church
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