



"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

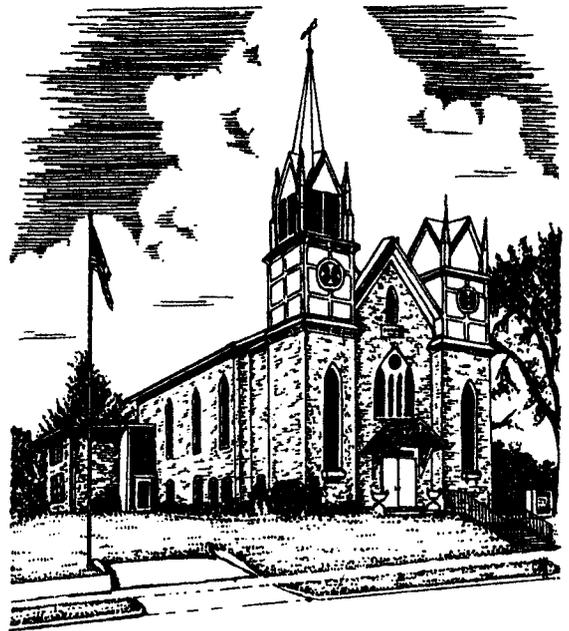
Vol. 23 No.3

August, 1997

FALL PILGRIMAGE EVANSVILLE

The United Methodist Church in Evansville, Wisconsin, welcomes you to this year's Historical Pilgrimage on Saturday, September 27, 1997. Evansville is located about 20 miles south of Madison and about 17 miles west of Janesville. The congregation has a 158-year history and still uses the sanctuary that was built in 1867. Recent restoration and refurbishing has sought to be true to the original designs and plans.

In 1939, when a group of settlers moved toward the fledgling city of Madison, a group of them broke off from the main body of travelers to settle an area known for years as "The Grove," which later was renamed Evansville. Among that first group were Boyd Phelps and Steven Jones, Methodist circuit riders. They immediately held services and organized a church, which first met in homes. The congregation built three buildings, each larger than the previous ones, until the one which today still serves as sanctuary. Additional additions were added twice after that. Since 1989 the congregation has engaged in a number of projects to "keep up" the church.



Evansville United Methodist Church Evansville, Wisconsin

The whole city of Evansville has maintained a rich architectural history, with a 23-block area designated as an historical district by the National Register of Historic Places. This district has some of the finest examples of architectural design from the time of settlement to the 1920's, in the State of Wisconsin. The United Methodist Church is located in that district.. If weather permits on September 27th, a

program will include a walking tour of a few of the historical places. Also, the community historian, Ruth Montgomery, will present a brief history lesson on Evansville and the United Methodist Church.

The church invites "history buffs" to enjoy a fall day to soak up some of our history. The quiet, tree-lined streets, the restored homes and public buildings, the pleasant small-town community, offer you an "open-arms" welcome.

ARGYLE

Argyle United Methodist Church celebrated its 140th birthday on September 14, 1996 with Bishop Sharon Rader leading the worship service for the three-point charge.

Methodist ministers began to work in the area around Argyle in 1829. In 1837, Elder Weed of the Galena District presided as a camp meeting. The congregation began as a class meeting. Circuit riders held preaching services at irregular intervals. In 1852, the congregation became part of the Fayette Circuit and services were held on alternate weeks. The church was chartered as a part of the Argyle Circuit, Mineral Point District. This affiliation was maintained from October 1857 until 1884. The circuit included Green's Prairie, Pickett, Woodford, Blanchardville and Moscow as well as Argyle.

The first services were held in the school house. When the Baptist church was built in 1857, they granted Methodists occupancy for a while. When this permission was revoked, the Methodists moved to the third story of a house, and then back to the school house. The Argyle church separated from the Fayette Circuit under the care of the Rev. A. Thurston, the first appointed minister of the congregation. The first building was erected in 1859.

The present building was erected in 1885. The congregation is currently one of the three-point charge of Lamont and Blanchardville.

From material supplied by James J. Dillon, Ph.D and Mildred Malinski

STODDARD

The United Methodist Church in Stoddard is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 1997 with a series of special events including preaching services led by former pastors. Bishop Rader will lead a service in October. A number of renovations have been made on the property.

UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY FACES CRISIS!

For many years the United Methodist Historical Society of Wisconsin has encouraged interest in the history of United Methodism in Wisconsin through the publication of *Flashbacks* and the promotion of Historical Pilgrimages. In recent years our membership has declined, and the dues that we receive are no longer enough to cover our expenses for publishing *Flashbacks* and promoting the pilgrimages. In 1996 our expenses exceeded our income by \$226.55. If that continues we will soon run out of funds. If you want to see *Flashbacks* and the pilgrimages continue, please send your dues to our Membership Secretary, Harriet Alicea, W1568 Ranch Road, Seymour, WI 54165. Dues are \$5.00 for a single membership, \$8.00 for family membership or \$100.00 for Life Membership. Checks should be made payable to the United Methodist Historical Society of Wisconsin.

And please attend the Society's business meeting at the Evansville United Methodist Church at 11:00 am on September 27th. It may be time for us to consider raising our dues, or to find new ways to promote membership in the Society.

Sincerely,

Bob Kuhn, President

BEAVER DAM

In 1846, Beaver Dam had been a village for only five years when First Methodist Church was organized. Members met in L.H. Marvin's cabinet shop or in homes. Five people and a leader made up its membership. The church became part of the Horicon mission. In 1847 a church building was constructed.

The German Methodist church was officially organized in 1864 with a membership of 63. The Rev. H. Scheutz was the pastor. The German church built two buildings, one in 1871 and a second in 1895.

The Evangelical church began as a mission in 1851 led by the Rev. Schnake. It became an organized congregation in 1861 and was a part of the Lomira Circuit.

The use of the German language in the Methodist Church ended in 1917. In 1933, the two Methodist churches merged. The current building was erected and dedicated in 1953. Zion and Trinity churches united on July 1, 1996.

Trinity has an active ministry in the community. In 1992, the Church Health Services were organized. This is a free clinic which provides health services to the underserved in Dodge County.

Members of the congregation have served in mission outreach teams to the Czech Republic, to Mexico and Haiti.

The Sesquicentennial celebrations were held in September, 1996. On Home coming Sunday on September 29. a number of former pastors joined in the worship services.

From material supplied by Marian J. Youngdale

BELLEVILLE

The earliest gathering of Methodists in Belleville was in 1847, meeting in homes and a school. Later a large white building was shared for separate worship services by Methodists, Presbyterians and Adventists. In 1895, the Methodists purchased that property and the building was moved to another location. A new building was completed in 1896. A parsonage was purchased in 1916

From material supplied by Joyce Fritz

MINOCQUA

As the logging industry flourished in Northern Wisconsin, numerous settlers were attracted to the area. When the railroad was completed in 1887, villages and towns were established along its route. In Minocqua in 1892, two factors were instrumental in the founding of the Methodist church. The first was a visit of two Methodist preachers: Rev. McChesney of Appleton and Rev. Williams of Tomahawk who looked at the possibility of starting a church. The second was a group of women who organized a Ladies Aid Society. Their immediate goal was fund raising. One of their early efforts was to serve a New England dinner for 25 cents plate.

The first pastor, the Rev. H. Decker, was assigned in May 1892. Early services were held in school houses. In June, 1894, the Methodist Episcopal Society purchased the Minocqua school house to be used as a church. A lot was donated by Henry C. Payne of Milwaukee. In July 1894, the church was moved to the site of the present church. The original sanctuary seated about ninety persons. When there was an influx of visitors in the summer, services were held in the community building.

In 1895, Minocqua was part of a three point charge which included Star Lake and Hazelhurst. At various times, the circuit included Woodruff, Hill's School, Hall's School, Faulkner School, Plum Lake, Sayner, Winegar, Mercer, Fosterville, Winchester, and Arbor Vitae. At some locations, services were held during the week, on alternate weeks, or on Sunday afternoons or evenings. Sometimes the pastor traveled from church to town by train and sometimes by walking.

During the early part of the century, baptisms were by immersion.

In 1914, the pastor reported ten baptisms, seven of which were by immersion., The baptisms were conducted in Bolger Lake. Until 1923, there was no parsonage. The pastor found lodgings over the laundry, over a boat livery and in the local hotel. In 1923, the congregation purchased property and a parsonage and garage were completed on November 14, 1923.

Plans for the sanctuary building were begun during the war. In 1946, the Wisconsin Board of Missions advanced \$2000 for the purchase of a lot with the stipulation that the congregation raise \$20,000 toward the new building. By March, 1949, \$331,242.00 was raised by the congregation and the Board of Missions gave an additional \$5,000/ The new church was built of Lannon stone veneer and included a Sunday school unit, a parlor, a basement dining room and kitchen in addition to the sanctuary.

The new building was also given a new name: Church of the Pines. An outstanding feature of the building is the stained glass windows, designed executed, and installed by T.C.Esser Co. In all, twenty-seven windows of Gothic design were installed. The triple lancet window over the altar gives expression to the deity. The seven windows on the south depict seven festival days of the church year. The six windows on the north wall are chosen to portray some of our doctrines and beliefs. To the rear and high over the entrance to the memorial parlor, the large rose window gives particular emphasis to the teachings of our Lord. The building was consecrated on June 17, 1951 with Bishop H. Clifford Northcott officiating. The debt was fully paid by November, 1957 and the mortgage was officially burned on March 16, 1958.

Extensive remodeling of the narthex and the annex were done in 1978 and again in 1994. The 1977, the congregation became a single charge, separating from the Mercer congregation.

The congregation has reached out beyond itself with strong support of mission efforts, locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally. Efforts have included support of the local food pantry, collecting coats for Eastern European nations, providing supplies for flood victims. For the last several years the church has received recognition for meeting of exceeding the per-member allotment in missions.

The Centennial year, 1994, was celebrated with numerous events. A history of the church was compiled by Arlene Renken while Pat Miller wrote a history of the various pastors. A centennial Tea and fashion show was held in conjunction with St. Patrick's church. A number of special Sunday services marked the anniversary: some dedicated to former pastors and one with a recognition of the choir. The Minocqua Museum had a special display of the church.

From material supplied by Arlene Renken.

EARLY CAMP MEETINGS LOMIRA

The Lomira camp grounds meetings date back to June 15-20, 1853 when the first Evangelical camp meeting was held in Lomira Center. For two years, the meeting was held on the eastern slope of the Evangelical cemetery. The meetings were then transferred to what is now the pond in the Lomira Village Park (Sterr Park.) The meetings were held there for ten years

Nelda Ehrhardt wrote of the early camp meetings. Huge crowds attended, up to 3000 people. Some came on foot, some with horse-drawn carriages. About this time, the narrow gauge railroad passed through Knowles and no doubt, many rode the train. The 1880 History of Dodge County states: "The Fond du Lac, Amboy and Peoria Railway was organized under the general law of the state in 1874, to build a narrow gauge road from the city of Fond du Lac to the south line of Rock or Walworth County." This line junctioned the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul RR at Iron Ridge and was used by many who came to camp meeting from the larger cities.

Ms Ehrhardt also wrote "A large tent was erected for evangelistic services and many people dedicated their lives to the Lord. The group singing was inspiring. The natural springs in the grove provided pure drinking water. A long kitchen tent sheltered the food. There were little comfort stations in the far corners of the grove. People could stroll along flowery paths and meditate."

In 1906 during the Reverend Umbreit's ministry, the meetings were established in Lomira, where more permanent buildings were later erected. Here June Camp meetings and August General Conventions continued to be well attended.

Tents sheltered worshipers before cottages and dormitories were built. The Dodge County Pioneer, June 13, 1886, states "The Knowles area was hit by a cloudburst, causing the greatest confusion at the Methodist (sic) camp ground at Spring Rock. Here the low lying area had two feet of water. Many tents were knocked down and the large number of people in attendance were soaked to the skin."

Maurice Ehrhardt recalls: " I see a zig zag rail fence made with split oak rails along the gravel road that led to Knowles. A gateway at the north west corner of the grove opened to a wagon trail. Several hundred years to the east was a shanty with a slant roof made of overlapping boards. The west side of the shanty had a hanging, hinged door which enclosed a counter. I was told that the building was used as a refreshment stand during camp meeting. A stone pile at the north east corner of the woods marked where one of the "relief stations" stood. To the south, a

few hitching posts remained. The horses were tied to the room rail while their masters attended the meetings. Various vehicles brought families in surreys. It was not unusual for individuals to come on horseback.

"The only other building that remained in the days of my youth was another shed, also made with plain board vertical siding and again overlapped boards on an A-shaped roof. This stood near the south central border of the grove. I was told it was accommodation for the speakers. Sawhorses were used to hold bed springs for the corn husk mattresses. Folks brought their own bed covers. There also ample room for many tent sites on the slopes in the woods."

"It is difficult today to envision what "Spring Park" must have looked like. Much of the virgin timber was there when I was a child. Some of the elm measured nearly four feet across at the base and towered to more than a hundred feet. Maple were tapped for their sweet sap and were not harvested for firewood or lumber. Because of the leafy cover, undergrowth was minimal. As children we gathered moss for lining Easter baskets. The ruts made by the wagon wheels made trails easy to trace. May flowers, violets and trillium flourished in the spring."

Taken from the history provided by Maurice Ehrhardt in the Trinity Harvest of Lomira Church.

MEET THE MISSIONARIES: FRANK AND MARTHA KUHLMAN

Our missionary career began in June, 1961 when we were approved for service in Japan under the World Division of the Methodist Board of Missions. At DePauw University in Greencastle, IN, we joined other new and many returned missionaries at an inspiring gathering. Our daughter was just five months old.

Next we went to Allegheny College in Meadville, PA for the NCCUSA culture and linguistic training for new missionaries of several denominations. Then we sent to Ann Arbor, MI for a semester of study in the University of Michigan program: "Teaching English as a foreign Language" (TOEFL) because we expected to do a lot of English teaching in Japan.

Bishop Ralph Alton commissioned us as missionaries at Elm Grove Community Church in January, 1962. A month later we became the first missionaries to fly to an initial assignment in Japan. (all our predecessors traveled there by ship.) Then began two years of Japanese language study and limited work in a local church and at Aoyama Gakuin university. Our son was born in Tokyo two months before we left that huge city.

In April 1964 Palmore Institute, an English language night school for teenage and adult Japanese became our place of residence and work, primarily teaching English conversation. Frank also did the work of chaplain: teaching the Bible in both curricular and

extra-curricular classes, leading worship service, conducting baptism preparation classes, and performing wedding ceremonies. Except for the home-assignment years and one year of teaching in China (1983-84) we served at Palmore until July 1987.

Our 29 years under the Board of Global Ministries was concluded by two years' service through the Amity Foundation in Fuzhou, China. We taught English one year each at a teacher-training college and a medical school.

On our return to the USA, Frank was appointed to serve the Pepin/Alma charge from August 1, 1990. The seven years here have included five international Volunteers in Mission work team experiences (Costa Rica, Dominica, Belize, Brazil and Montserrat). and a 1996 parish exchange in northeast England. Christian world mission continues to be one of our great interests and involvements.

Material supplied by Frank and Martha Kuhlman

 DO you have some memories of the early church or of one of the saints that served the church in Wisconsin? Why not share it with the readers of *Flashbacks*. Send it to me and I will include it in a future issue. the Editor.

HISTORICAL PILGRIMAGE

Saturday, September 27, 1997

1839



1997

Evansville United Methodist Church

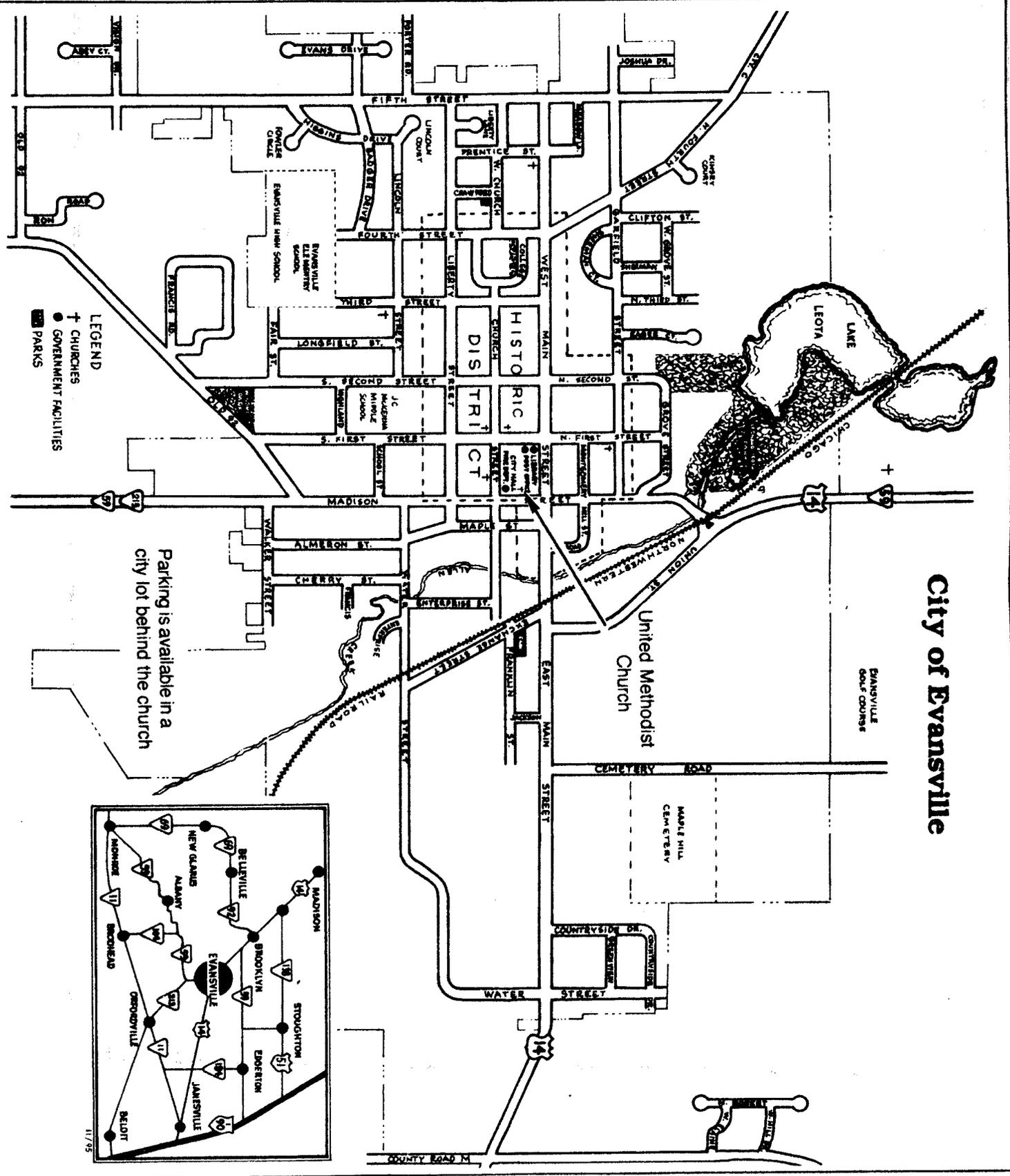
21 South Madison Street (Highway 213/59)
(About 4 blocks south of US 14)
Evansville, Wisconsin

Schedule

- 11:00 am United Methodist Historical Society
Business Meeting
- Noon Lunch - \$5.00 per person
Send reservations to Rev. Hilbert Lohr
P.O. Box 91
Evansville, WI 53536
by September 13
- 1:00 pm Worship and Program about Evansville's History
2:30 pm Walking Tour of other Historic Buildings

Sponsored by the United Methodist Historical Society of Wisconsin

City of Evansville



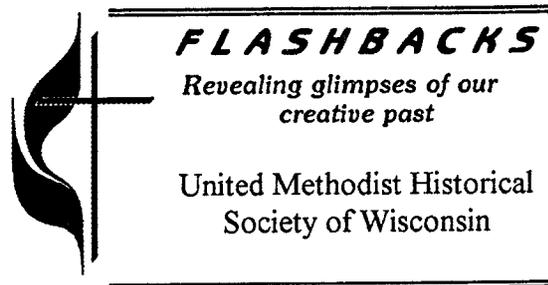
Parking is available in a city lot behind the church

- LEGEND**
- † CHURCHES
 - GOVERNMENT FACILITIES
 - PARKS

The United Methodist Church
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Official newsletter of the United Methodist
Historical Society of Wisconsin

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Material of historical interest, church
anniversaries, recollections, activities of
local historical committees and historians,
should be sent to her at the above address.

OFFICERS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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