



"Fellow-citizens, we cannot escape history." — A. Lincoln

FLASHBACKS



Revealing glimpses of our creative past

Official newsletter of the

UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

Vol. IX No. 1

January, 1980

One life - a little gleam of time between two Eternities.

Thomas Carlyle - The Hero as a Man of Letters

SINCERE THANKS

The Commission expresses its appreciation to Evergreen Manor for hosting the archives for many years without any cost to the conference and to Rev. Harvey for his excellent leadership in arranging for new quarters and for superintending the move itself.

TWO NEW PROJECTS

The Commission has authorized for the history center (1) a collection of cassette tapes and (2) a history of Black Methodism in the state of Wisconsin

OUR LIBRARIAN

Mrs. Kitty Hobson, librarian of the conference archives, is now well on her way in organizing the materials in the new quarters at the Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church in Oskosh.

LENT

Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us that "to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven." For us now there are the days of Lent.

The history of Lent goes back to the fourth century when it was decided to celebrate Easter on the Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox. Originally it was a forty-hour period from Good Friday until Easter morning, a time set aside for self-examination and penitance. In 325 A.D. this period was extended to thirty-six days excluding Sundays. Four days were added in the reign of Charlemagne about 800 A.D., making the number forty.

But the importance of Lent is not in number of days or outward observances. It should be an intensifying of the relationships with our Creator. Some refer to it in terms of penance, spiritual discipline, self-inventory, and self-denial. It implies a quiet time when we try to see our lives in relation to God's infinite love.

MRS. DELLA COLBY

Mrs. Della Colby, now ninety and living in the Morrow Home, was a guest at the consecration of the newly built fellowship hall of the Westby United Methodist Church in December, 1979.

Mrs. Colby was baptized and grew up in the Westby Church before she spent twenty-five years as a missionary in Malaysia.

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PILGRIMAGE TO CAMPGROUNDS

Echoes of the days when camp meetings provided the most powerful form of evangelism dominated the 1979 annual pilgrimage of the Historical Society Saturday, October 6. Fifty or more participants ate lunch in the Camp Byron dining room, and made a tour of the grounds, guided by Gordon Kolterman, resident manager. The old tabernacle, dating back to early days, was inspected.

Mrs. Bennett Bird, who has been a nearby resident as well as an active participant in the camp activities for 56 years, outlined the history of the institution, beginning in 1848, the year the Wisconsin Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was formally organized, and the territory of Wisconsin attained statehood. Only for two years, during the Civil War, was activity suspended at the camp. At the first meetings settlers came from 40 to 50 miles away to hear the pleas of the preachers and sing the songs of Zion.

Personal recollections of experiences at Byron were given by the Rev. Samuel G. Beers, Waupun, and Mrs. H. A. Ladwig of Fond du Lac.

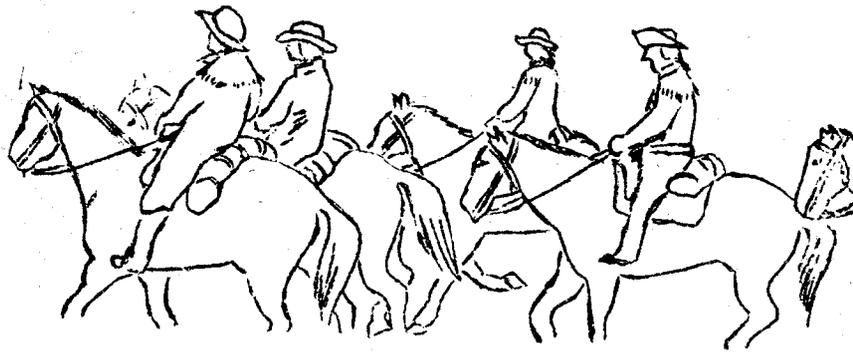
From Camp Byron the pilgrimage proceeded to Trinity Church, Lomira, seat of the most vigorous and important of the camp meeting centers established by the Evangelical Association. It is built on the former campgrounds, and represents a merger of three congregations: Salem, Emanuel, and Ebenezer belonging to the old Lomira circuit.

Here the Rev. Theodore Jordan, Amherst pastor, and secretary of the Historical Society, presented the history of the Lomira camp. The first session was held June 15-20, 1853. Rev. W. Strassburger was then the Lomira circuit pastor. Its location was in a grove owned by Michael Zickerick, on the eastern slope of Evangelical Cemetery hill. After two years there it was moved to what is now the Lomira village park. After 10 years in that spot it was moved to the more familiar location, where the new Trinity Church stands.

Mr. Jordan testified to the crucial spiritual experiences which came to him and to many others at the camp. Others of the group added their own witness to the power of spiritual experience generated by activities at the camp in their own lives. It was also pointed out that 39 individuals from the Lomira circuit, centering around the campgrounds, entered full time Christian service.

As times and conditions changed, the use of these facilities changed too to meet the needs of the new days. The youth movement made large use of both Byron and Lomira. Christian education was promoted through summer conferences and institutes. Byron still serves as an important center for both summer and winter activities.

Details of the pilgrimage were cared for by the Rev. Arthur W. Vieth, Trinity pastor, and Gordon Kolterman, Camp Byron manager. The Rev. Samuel Beers arranged the program. The Rev. Richard A. O'Neil, membership secretary of the Historical Society and United Methodist pastor in Arlington, presided over the affair.



A CIRCUIT RIDER GUEST

The 135th anniversary celebration of the Clinton United Methodist Church featured Reverend Billy Richardson from Greeley, Nebraska, as their guest speaker September 21 - September 23, 1979.

Reverend Richardson has been a professional football player. He has also ridden horseback over many of our nation's historic trails, including the famous Cherokee Trail of Tears. He walked from Epworth to London, England, for the reopening ceremony of Wesley's Chapel in 1978.

On Friday, September 21, Reverend Richardson gave the message following the love feast banquet. On Saturday he took part in the parade of horse and motorcade from the place of the church's origin (Summerville) to the present church site. That evening he attended the luncheon and old fashioned class meeting. On Sunday September 23, he gave the message of the day.

(Thanks Shawn Ibeling,
Clinton Church Historian)

WESTBY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CELEBRATES

An article by Ester Bakke in the BROADCASTER-CENSOR of Viroqua on October 18, 1979, gave a fine report of the 125th anniversary celebration of the Westby United Methodist Church.

The congregation at Westby was formally organized in 1854 by the Reverend O. B. Knutson, meetings previously conducted in the homes in 1852 with Reverend O. P. Peterson as pastor. In 1863 a church was built on East Coon Prairie, Reverend Bright of Sparta conducting the dedicatory service. The present church located on East State Street in Westby was built in 1884-1885 under Reverend A. Peterson's pastorate and was dedicated on December 16, 1888.

The first Sunday School organization in Westby was that of the Methodists. Paul T. Paulsen was the first superintendent after the present church was built and held that position for twenty-eight years.

(The list of ministers too long for FLASHBACKS
has been sent to the Archives.)

HISTORIAN GIVEN COMMENDATION

Our conference historian, the Rev. William Blake, retired and living in Berlin, was awarded a "Special Commendation" by the Wisconsin State Fair and Security Savings and Loan Association this fall. It was given in connection with the "Ten Most Admired Senior Citizens" competition for 1979. While not among the first ten finally selected, Mr. Blake was given special recognition for his work in United Methodist history in the Badger state, his history of religion in Berlin, "Berlin Altars," and the hymns he has written. The presentation was made to him at the Berlin Senior Citizens Center by Mrs. Beverly LaBuda, it's director.

THE CROSS AND FLAME, Mr. Blake's book, may be purchased from the conference office: 325 Emerald Terrace, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin 53590. Hard backed book \$4.00; paperback \$3.00.

(Really not a secret -- Many of the longer articles in FLASHBACK are written by Mr. Blake.)

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

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Rev. Robert W. Kuhn, *president*

Mrs. Josephine Rowlands, *vice president*

Rev. Theodore Jordan, *secretary*

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