



History Happenings

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Check resources
on our
website:
www.sdbhistory.org

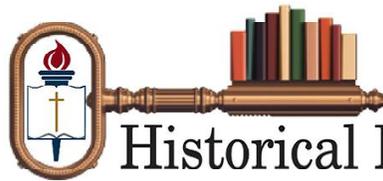
Website Bringing Your SDB Library to You

Priority #1: Scanning of all SDB periodicals and microfilm for wider access

In his October report to General Council, Director Nick Kersten highlighted the Council on History's major project: digitizing library holdings and making them available online. For three years the library catalog has been searchable on our website. Now the entire collection of *Sabbath Recorders* has been digitized and will soon be available on the website. Next will come the remaining periodicals (newspapers,

magazines, yearbooks). Then more!

Council member **Tim Lawton** has taken the reins of the "new" website. It sports a new logo created for us by Pat Cruzan (below). Changes and updates are gradual as Tim prepares the scanned files for placement there, but a remapping of the site to make it easier to use is in process this fall and winter. Check it out!



Seventh Day Baptist Historical Library & Archives

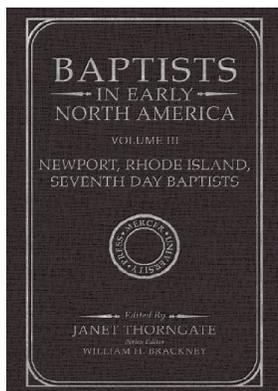
Newport History, Records, Hubbard Materials Published

Students of American colonial Baptist history now have a Seventh Day Baptist resource parallel to that of other colonial Baptist churches. People whose family history hooks into that of early American SDBs now have a fully documented and indexed resource for their genealogy searches.

The publication in January of *Baptists in Early North America: Newport, Rhode Island, Seventh Day Baptists* makes available not only the previously unpublished records of the Newport SDB Church but also all of the writings of Samuel Hubbard that document the origins and early history of the church and its extensive correspondence with SDBs in England. The

Newport volume is third in a series of fifteen (3 others published so far: Swansea and Boston MA, and Providence RI).

Editor for the Newport volume is Janet Thorngate, chairman of the SDB Council on History. Her extensive introduction includes a history of the church in its historical context, background on SDBs in England, biographical sketches of founding members, pastors, and other leaders, and discussion of the covenant, beliefs, and practices of these early SDBs. The records are fully annotated with notes keyed to a full bibliography. Maps, timelines, and photos are included plus indexes to subjects, people, and places. (Cost is \$60 from the publisher.)



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To Keep or Not to Keep--Check the Scope!

Priority #2: Evaluating current holdings to determine what really belongs here.

No one wants to dispose of a flag or a Bible, so they give them to a museum or a historical library. Some flags and some Bibles have historical significance; others take up space. It may take years to recognize the difference. The same holds for books, manuscripts, pictures, recordings, and artifacts. Therefore, *de-accessioning*, the process of removing items from a collection, is “necessary and healthy work for a functional historical library,” as Director Kersten noted in a recent report.

Since 1990, a carefully crafted scope statement guided additions to the library and archives, but until all holdings were entered into a computer searchable data base, it was not possible to systematically examine various parts of the collection to determine what items collected over the past 300 years are appropriate to keep. Now the Council on History can focus on that process. As the review is conducted, items not in line with the scope will be removed and disposed of (sold, deposited in other institutions, etc.). The full scope statement is on the website.

Books are the first category to be reviewed. An ad-hoc committee of people familiar with our collection and its uses has worked individually with the list of books over several months, examining how each fits our purpose and scope, how and when each came into the

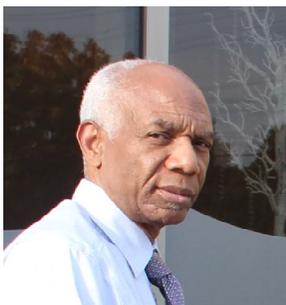
collection, and whether it “belongs here.” In May members of the committee met together in the library for further review and discussion of individual volumes. About 600 have been tagged for potential removal.

One 19th century practice which led to many books being brought into the collection was that of receiving whole libraries of deceased pastors or researchers. Today it’s easier to identify which of those contribute to “the study and appreciation of SDB life and thought” and which are “obsolete” or clearly belong elsewhere. The process of deciding what to do with de-accessioned items will be a later step requiring no less wisdom and care.

Members of the book de-accessioning committee are Janet Thorngate, chairman, Nick Kersten, Paul Green, Wayne Maxson, and Oscar Burdick. Others with specific expertise or interest are consulted. The committee invites questions (contact the chairman).



Nicholas Kersten, Director of Education & History presents his report to General Conference, in Azusa CA 2017



Elon Sinclair

Meet Our New Council on History Member, Elon Sinclair

The Council on History welcomes Elon Sinclair of the Toronto, Ontario, Church, elected to a five-year term at General Conference in August.

Elon and his wife Isolyn were married just before moving to Canada from Jamaica in 1971. The Toronto Church started in their home where a few SDBs from Jamaica

began meeting for Sabbath School. Others joined them and the church was organized under the leadership of Herlitz Condison. A deacon in the church, Elon is now retired from the manufacturing company where he held several different positions. “I look forward to learning the ropes and to working with the council,” he says.

SDB Council on History

Meets May 5-6 in Janesville.

Meets online several times a year.

Chairman--Janet Thorngate

janvanthorn@aol.com

Secretary--Judy Parrish



Council members

Janet Thorngate,

Tim Lawton,

Kim Merchant,

Judy Parrish

Rudert Receives Cane, Church Celebrates Centennial

At General Conference in California in August, Director Nick Kersten announced that the 20th Gold Headed Cane award would go to Norma Rudert of the White Cloud, Michigan, church in recognition of her long service to SDB history: as First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Secretary of the Historical Society from 1997 to 2008, as member of the merger ad hoc committee, chairman of the Centennial Fund, and proof reader for two recent SDB history

books. Council Secretary Judy Parrish officially presented the cane to Norma during the Centennial Celebration of the White Cloud Church on September 30th.

Parrish, who brought official Centennial greetings on behalf of the Council on History, reported a festive day of church history reminiscing from the origins when the 7th Day Churches of God in Michigan decided to join SDBs. Descendants of founders and former church pastors and leaders joined with church members in shared remembering.



Norma Rudert receives Gold Headed Cane award.

New England Yearly Meeting Worships in Newport, RI

Every fall, SDB churches in Rhode Island and Connecticut commemorate one of the oldest SDB customs by sharing in what is now called New England Yearly Meeting. Churches rotate in hosting the special Sabbath but about every five years they meet in the 1729 Newport SDB Church Meeting House, owned and maintained since 1884 by the Newport Historical Society (NHS).

In welcoming the SDB's Sept. 30th, NHS Director Ruth Taylor noted how happy they were to welcome "two Saturday Sabbath groups" to worship in the ancient sanctuary that day: SDBs and a Jewish Synagogue celebrating Yom Kippur. "I think our religious-freedom-loving ancestors would be very proud," she said. Note the white cupboard holding the Torah, in front of the famous pulpit in the photo at right. Note also that one

of the tablets of the 10 Commandments behind the pulpit is missing. It recently fell off the wall setting off the motion detector alarm in the middle of the night! Director Taylor assured us that it was not damaged at all. "So, if you believe in divine intervention--," she smiled. Both tablets will soon be securely re-hung.

Members of the Pawcatuck Church in Westerly, RI, hosted this year's event, which included lunch in the United Baptist Church down the street (formerly Newport 1st Baptist Church from which SDBs separated in 1671). An electronic keyboard (not part of the 18th century furnishings) accompanied the lusty singing of hymns for the service, and COH Chairman Janet Thorngate brought the message, weaving the themes of Psalm 77 through the experience of Newport SDBs during times of persecution, war, and an uncertain future.



A high Sabbath in the Newport



WANTED for the SDB Historical Library! something old, something new

- ☞ a manuscript play "Freedom for Faith" written by Albert N. Rogers & Shelley Austin Sudbury performed by an SCSC team (of Ruth Burdick, Martha Welch [now Vaught], Dale Harris, Tom Pederson--also Deborah Barber [now Keown]) in RI & CT churches and in the Newport SDB Meeting House as part of the Newport 300th Anniversary Celebration during General Conference in 1971. (We'd like to use it for the 350th in 2021!)
- ☞ recent pictures of your church and of your current pastor
Mail good paper prints by USPS or attach good digital copies (not compressed) to an email (not via Facebook).

Seventh Day Baptist Council on History

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Our Mission

“...to preserve and communicate Seventh Day Baptist history and heritage and to develop and maintain a repository for safekeeping of archival and research materials relating to the history and culture of the Sabbath and Sabbathkeeping Baptists worldwide and to take appropriate measures to make the collection available to Seventh Day Baptists and others.”

*Articles of Incorporation of the Seventh Day Baptist
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*Remembering our past to inform the present
and envision the future*

You may also order our books from the Conference website “Store” at www.seventhdaybaptist.org



Yes, I want to partner with the SDB Council on History to ensure that future generations remember what God has done for us and through us!

Name

Address

City

State Zip

Phone Number (optional)

E-mail Address (required for special website privileges)

SDB Church Name (optional)

Please have someone contact me regarding a current or future contribution to the Centennial Fund.

I would like to be a History Advocate in my church receiving information and materials to share.

I would like to ...

- be a Friend of SDB History in 2018 with this contribution of \$25.00 or more:
\$ _____.
- become a Patron of SDB History through this one-time contribution of \$250 or more \$ _____.
- contribute to the Centennial Fund, thus generating future endowment income \$ _____ (or check the box at bottom left of this page).
- make a special contribution toward our scanning project \$ _____.
- order ___ copies of *A Choosing People* (\$35 each; \$31.50 for Friends & Patrons).
\$ _____.

Make checks payable to
SDB Council on History

Thank you for your help to preserve and communicate SDB history & heritage!