

SR The Sabbath RECORDER

February 2005

News for and about Seventh Day Baptists



Handing Down our Heritage

**Historical Society
says 'Thank You'
to Don Sanford**



Who are Seventh Day Baptists?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are. Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

The seventh day

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience—not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs just a little bit different.

For more information, write: The Seventh Day Baptist Center, 3120 Kennedy Road, PO Box 1678, Janesville, WI 53547-1678. Phone (608) 752-5055; FAX (608) 752-7711; E-mail: sdbgen@seventhdaybaptist.org and the SDB Web site: www.seventhdaybaptist.org

Robe Nominations

* * *

The SDB Women's Society is accepting nominations for the Robe of Achievement for 2005. Please see the recent *SRs* for more details, or apply on-line at www.sdbwboard.org.

**Deadline is
March 31, 2005**

Australia trip cancelled

With leadership transitions underway in the Australia churches, the SCSC trip for trainers Althea Rood and Helen Goodrich was cancelled. Donated money will be used to bring an Australian SCSC coordinator to the U.S. this summer.

GENERAL SERVICES

BOARD of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Here's your **LAST CHANCE** to—

Make **TWICE**
TWICE the Difference

The Seventh Day Baptist Memorial Fund trustees have opened a window of opportunity where you can **make TWICE the difference**. Until the end of February, the Memorial Fund will **MATCH ALL GIFTS** earmarked for any SDB board budgeted item.

Want to make your gift through your local church? *It will be matched.*

Does your church tithe to the Conference? *It will be matched.*

Care to send an undesignated gift toward our over-all ministry and budget? *It will be matched.*

Please send your designated gift or general donation to:

"Twice the Difference"
Seventh Day Baptist Center
PO Box 1678
Janesville WI 53547-1678

Your gifts may also be sent directly to these specific SDB ministries, or made through your local church treasurer. **THANK YOU** for making Twice the Difference!

CENTER ON MINISTRY

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ACTION

TRACT and COMMUNICATION COUNCIL

WOMEN'S SOCIETY

ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MISSIONARY SOCIETY



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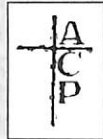


A Seventh Day Baptist publication

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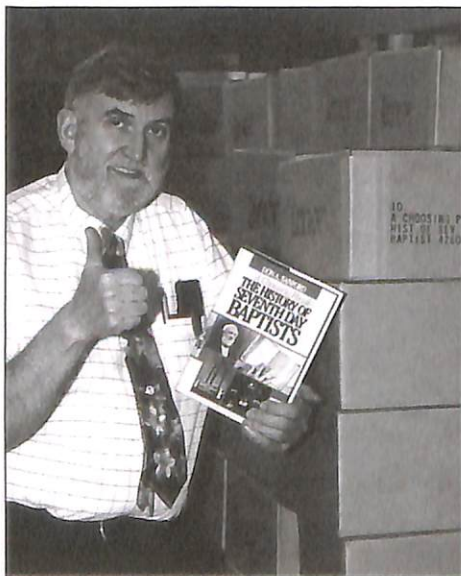
A word from the Historian

by Don A. Sanford

When the editor asked me to write a word about the highlight of my 18 years as historian for the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society, it seemed like an impossible task. How could one who has written thousands of words write “a word”?

But upon further reflection, it seemed that the one word which typifies much of my writing has been the adversative conjunction “but.” Webster defines “but” as “an expression of antithesis or difference.” This word—together with similar words “except” and “however”—implies an agreement in areas, *but* a difference on particular ideas or attitudes.

In the English translation of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7, Jesus used the word “but” over 20 times, contrasting the difference between the custom of the times and the Gospel he proclaimed. Jesus said “you are the salt of the earth—but if salt has lost its saltiness it is no longer any good.” Similarly he condemns



A happy day for Don Sanford in the spring of 1992, when Broadman Press delivered the long-awaited *Choosing People* books.

**Seventh Day Baptist
writers from 1650 until today
have played the role of making
the distinction between
scriptural integrity and
popular custom.**

those who abolish the law, “but whoever practices and teaches these commandments will be great in the kingdom of heaven.”

In speaking of several of the laws concerning unfaithfulness in marriage, Jesus used the little word “but” as he gave alternative actions or attitudes held. The same formula was given in relation to one’s neighbor, prayer, forgiveness, storing up treasures, forms of worship, entering through the broad road, *but* it is the narrow road that leads to life.

Then he ended this classic sermon with those who build on the sand, “but everyone who hears these words is like the man who builds on the solid rock.”

My time at NABF

Soon after I became historian, I was involved in the North American Baptist Fellowship. At a meeting held in Toronto, Canada, I was invited to give a paper that I entitled, “Seventh Day Baptists, A Microcosm of Baptist History.” It used the illustration that one does not need to test the whole ocean to tell that it is salty. Just a small test tube is sufficient.

Seventh Day Baptists, in their history, provide a sample of Baptist history from our mid-17th century beginnings in England through our parallel life experiences in America.

The distinguishing history is our observance of the seventh day Sabbath.

One of the other speakers at that session in Toronto was Dr. Albert Wardin, Professor of History Emeritus at Belmont University and the President of the Southern Baptist Historical Society. Years later, in his book *Baptists Around the World, A Comprehensive Handbook*, he included information on Seventh Day Baptist churches and Conferences in 17 countries. Much of that information was taken from my book *A Choosing People, The History of Seventh Day Baptists* that had been published three years prior.

When Wardin came to the chapter on Baptists in the United States, he invited me to write the section about Seventh Day Baptists. In 1996 this was reprinted as the tract, “A Thumbnail Sketch of Seventh Day Baptist History.”

A couple of years later at another session of the NABF, Dr. Wardin introduced me to a delegate from the National Baptist Convention. He stated that I was a Seventh Day Baptist who “believes the same as we do, *except* they keep the seventh day as their Sabbath.” To which my new acquaintance responded, “Well, they are right. Where did we go wrong?” So I told him.

Much satisfaction in my mission as historian has been in ecumenical

circles, particularly among Baptists where we share much of our history, polity, and theology, *but* differ primarily on the point of the Sabbath.

A list of FAQs

In the year 2000 I was invited to participate in the formation of the BaptistHeritage.com Web site. This overview of Baptist history and practice contains a wealth of information, including a list of 23 “Frequently Asked Questions.”

Two questions were assigned to me to answer. Question No. 7 was, “Why do Baptists immerse?” This I could do without any adversative conjunction:

Baptists believe that “when Jesus came up out of the water” at his own

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baptism by John, it implies being immersed in the water. Immersion also carries the symbolism expressed by Paul when he spoke of being “buried with Him through baptism into death and raised from the dead through the glory of God” (Romans 6:3-6). An 18th century Baptist hymn writer used the term “liquid grave” to describe this meaning of immersion.

(That 18th century writer was Joseph Stennett, a Seventh Day Baptist).

If it were not for Seventh Day Baptist representation in this enterprise, it is doubtful that question No. 17 would have even been considered:



Historian Don Sanford has spent countless hours in the Historical Society library, a treasure-trove of Sabbath and SDB family resources.

“On what day do Baptists celebrate the Sabbath?” My answer included the adversative conjunction “*however*,” indicating our distinguishing doctrinal belief:

The vast majority of Baptists today worship on Sunday—the first day of the week—continuing in the tradition dating back to the early days of the Christian Church with its rejection of Jewish legalism and its celebration of the Resurrection. However, there are some Baptists who from about 1650 in their Bible study believed that the seventh day of the week as commanded by God in the Ten Commandments and practiced by Christ and the New Testament Church is still valid and ought to be observed.

English attempts at Biblical support for Sunday observance

Many historians credit Nicolas Bounde’s 1595 book, *The Doctrine of the Sabbath*, with the attempt to secure a biblical basis for a strict, disciplined observance of the Puritan Sunday. He argued that “the Sabbath must needs be still upon the seventh day as it always has beene,” **but** then he stated: “Concerning the very special seventh day that we now keepe in the time of the Gospel, this is not

the same as it was from the beginning which God himself sanctified... all men must keepe holy this seventh day, and none other, which was unto them not the seventh day, but the first day of the weeke as it is so called many times in the New Testament.”

This inconsistency has placed Seventh Day Baptists in the position of having to use the “adversative conjunction.” One such Confession of Faith in Baptist churches of England in the 17th century includes Article XXII entitled, “On Religious Worship and Sabbath-day” and calls for all to worship God:

“According to God’s own institution and appointment. And hath limited us by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations whatsoever, or any other way not prescribed by the holy scriptures (Ex. 20:8-11). Yet the assembly of the church ought not be neglected by any. And in order to his being worshipped and served, God hath instituted one day in seven for his sabbath to be kept holy unto him, which from the resurrection of Christ is the first day of the week which is called the Lord’s day, (1 Cor. 16 xvi 1, 2;

Acts xx. 7; Rev. 1, 10); and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian sabbath; the observance of the last day of the week being abolished.”

Seventh Day Baptist writers from 1650 until today have played the role of making the distinction between scriptural integrity and popular custom, as exemplified in the preceding document. It begins with God’s own appointment and revealed will, and ends with devices of man in abolishing God’s original command. As early as 1650 James Ockford took an *adversarial* position in his “Doctrine of the Fourth Commandment, Deformed by Popery & Restored in its Primitive Purity.”

The records of the Particular Baptists reveal that the concept of the “*adversative conjunction*” existed in 1660. They reported “two members who observe the seventh-day Sabbath yet did not forsake the church. A meeting was held to determine how far they could walk together with those who held the seventh-day Sabbath, or in what things they could have communion together. Their recommendation was that in case nothing else be found amiss but the bare observing of the 7th day Sabbath, then the saying of the apostle Paul in Romans 14:5: *One man considers one day more sacred than another. Let each one be fully convinced in his own mind. He who regards one day as special does so to the Lord.*”²

For three and a half centuries there have been Seventh Day Baptists who have held this “*adversarial*” position concerning the Sabbath as our distinctive. In England men such as James Ockford, William Saller, Peter Chamberlain, the Stennetts, Francis Bampfield—and in later years, men such as William Henry Black and William Meade Jones—have written extensively on the Seventh Day Baptist distinctive of the Sabbath within the Baptist tradition. My college and seminary classmate, Oscar Burdick, has devoted years to the investigation and preservation

of the role of Seventh Day Baptists in their distinctive witness of the Sabbath within the English Baptist tradition of Protestantism.

Sabbath distinctive within American Baptist heritage

From American history one can cite many examples of men and women who played an adversarial role in sharing Sabbath convictions within the Baptist tradition, as well as Protestantism as a whole.

In 1647’s Puritan Connecticut, Tacy and Samuel Hubbard came to the conviction of believer’s baptism and were forced to migrate to Rhode Island where they joined the First Baptist Church of Newport. In 1665, largely through their study of the Bible, the Hubbards and their family came to the conviction of the Sabbath.

For six years they worshipped within the Baptist Church and even

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represented Baptists in their struggle with the established church in Massachusetts. *Yet* when Sabbath conviction and communion became an issue, their adversarial position on the Sabbath forced a withdrawal of covenant membership. *Yet* they continued close relationship within the Baptist community, cooperating in shared worship as well as supporting the educational and political leadership of the colony.

Seventh Day Baptists were influential in the founding of Rhode Island College (which later became Brown University). The school’s



Don caught the attention of the local media (newspaper and TV) during the first Gulf War, discussing the communion cups that Leon Maltby fashioned out of unspent ammunition.

charter was signed by Governor Samuel Ward, a Seventh Day Baptist. Seven others served on its governing boards as part of the charter’s mandatory “Baptist majority.”

Among the early laws of the college was the requirement that students participate in public worship “every first day of the week.” However, attached to that requirement was the statement: “Such as regularly and stately observe the seventh day as a Sabbath, are exempted from this Law; and are only required to abstain from secular employments, which would interrupt their fellow students.”³ Ebenezer David, who served as a chaplain in the Revolutionary War, was a graduate in the class of 1772.

General Conference Sabbath promotion

The beginning of a concerted evangelistic effort can be traced to Henry Clarke. In 1801 he proposed that several churches “unite in an institution for propagating our religion in the different parts of the United States, by sending out from the various churches in said Union missionaries.” The five purposes outlined in the resulting Conference

were to: 1) Give people an identity; 2) Help define doctrine; 3) Serve as a communicating agent; 4) Provide a means for education; and 5) Initiate some programs.

The first article of the 1805 constitution specified the name "Sabbatarian General Conference." *However*, since so many other churches followed the tradition of Nicolas Boudene and the early English creeds that affirmed the Sabbath was changed from the seventh day to the first, the term "Sabbatarian" was often applied to those who accepted Sunday as their Sabbath. Thus in 1817 the name was changed to the Seventh Day Baptist General Confer-

share with others the Gospel that includes the special distinctive of the seventh day Sabbath.

"The Letter"

General Conference voted in 1843 that it was "advisable to make an appeal to the various orders of Christians in reference to the Sabbath of the Bible, urging them to a thorough examination of the subject." The impetus for this letter was from one of my personal heroes, Thomas B. Brown.

Brown was the son of a Baptist minister, graduated from seminary and served as a Baptist pastor. *But* in his second Baptist pastorate he

day as an institution entirely new; and 3) Those Baptists who considered neither the Old nor the New Testaments to impose any obligation of rest, and advocated one on the grounds of expediency.⁵

Although this letter from the SDB General Conference did not attain its intended goal, many contemporary Seventh-day Adventists accept it as contributing to the Sabbath concept of the followers of William Miller's millennial teachings, some of which were canonized by Ellen G. White's "visions."⁶

The second quarter of the 19th century showed an increased effort to spread the distinctive doctrine of the Sabbath through the Tract Society, publishing the *Sabbath Recorder* and distributing various tracts. The Missionary Society was active in both home and foreign mission. Much of their primary emphasis was in evangelism, reaching those who were unchurched. The Sabbath was an integral part of the Gospel preached. **SR**

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ence, more clearly defining their distinctive doctrine.

In 1821 the first denominational periodical, the *Missionary Magazine*, was published with four stated purposes:

- to acquaint the public with the sentiments and religious observances which distinguish this people from other Christian denominations;
- to circulate Religious and Missionary information among the societies of our denomination;
- to cultivate harmony among all evangelical Christians;
- to unite with others in the laudable work of holding up the doctrine of the cross.

This publication was followed by the *Protestant Sentinel* in 1830, the *Seventh Day Baptist Register* in 1839 and the *Sabbath Recorder* from 1844 to the present. Each of these has appealed to various audiences, but they all carried two major thrusts—to uphold individuals and churches in their convictions, and

read Robert Burnside's 1825 book *Remarks on the Different Sentiments Entertained in Christendom Relative to the Weekly Sabbath*. Burnside had been pastor of the Pinner's Hall Seventh Day Baptist Church in England.

The contemporary Baptist Historian, H. Leon McBeth, wrote of this letter:

"One would be hard put to find a better defense of the Sabbath; the address is calmly stated, biblical in emphasis, and fraternal in tone. The authors included an appeal for first day Baptists to adopt seventh day views, and, failing that, to show more understanding for their sabbatarian brethren."⁴

That letter was directed at three positions held by Baptists: 1) Those who acknowledged the obligation of the Sabbath, but changed the day from the seventh to the first day of the week; 2) Those who regarded the Sabbath law as having been nailed to the cross and considered the first

(Next month, more Sabbath promotion in ecumenism.)

¹*An Orthodox Creed of Protestant Confession of Faith (Hanserd Knollys Society, London, pub. 1678). Chap. XXII, pp. 215-216.*

²*Association Records of the Particular Baptists of England, Wales and Ireland in 1660. Edited by B.R. White (The Baptist Historical Society of London 1974). Part 3, The Abingdon Assoc., p. 195.*

³*Walter Bronson, The History of Brown University 1764-1914 (Pub. by Brown Univ., Providence, RI 1914). Appendix Chap. 3D, p. 510-11.*

⁴*H. Leon McBeth, A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage (Nashville, Broadman Press 1990), p. 543.*

⁵*Thomas B. Brown, ed. An Appeal for the Restoration of the Bible Sabbath (New York, American Sabbath Tract Society 1843), p. 5.*

⁶*Yoshio Murikami, Ellen G. White's Views of the Sabbath in the Historical, Religious and Social Context of Nineteenth-Century America. (UMI Dissertation Service, Ann Arbor MI 1994), p. 244.*

A history worth recording... and reporting

“A people who have not the pride to record their history will not long have the virtues to make history worth recording; and no people who are indifferent to their past need hope to make their future great.”

—Source unknown

For three and a half centuries, Seventh Day Baptists have been recording their history of a covenant people based upon the concept of regenerate membership, believer’s baptism, congregational polity, and the Scriptural basis for belief and practice.

They have presented the Sabbath as a sign of obedience to God’s commandment, reaffirmed in the teachings and example of Jesus and the New Testament Church. In addition, the Sabbath has been an important ingredient in the covenant relationship of a people who have survived great odds because they have not been indifferent to their past and continually search its relevance for the future.

The SDB Historical Society is heir to generations of records and other reminders of the past. It continues to add to this store of information so that it may be used effectively to communicate the past and give insight for the present and the future. The Historical Society’s Mission Statement, adopted in 1989, highlights four principal areas of service:

- Maintaining a repository for safekeeping and easy access to significant documents relative to the Sabbath and Sabbath-keeping Baptists;
- Continuing research into the roots and history of Seventh Day Baptists;
- Interpreting the significance of the past for both present and future;

•Communicating this through such means and resources as books, articles, pamphlets, and other print media; answering requests from other agencies, churches, or individuals; and representation in denominational and interdenominational meetings and publications.

Repository maintenance

General Conference has designated the Historical Society as its official keeper of the archives, and encouraged its related agencies and member churches to place significant records with the Society for safekeeping and easy access.

Ownership of the records can still remain with individual churches, but for purposes of research, there is great advantage in having the records of churches and significant families in one location. The history of each church is also the history of the denomination and its families.

In addition to these records on file, a number of the more significant records have been microfilm-

ed, with the originals stored in acid-free archival containers.

When General Conference moved its offices from Plainfield, N.J., to Janesville, Wis., in 1982, most items in the valuable Sachse collection—including primary records from the Ephrata Cloisters—were placed on loan with the Pennsylvania Historical Society, where they would be more accessible to researchers. This material has been microfilmed with proper notation of ownership by the SDB Historical Society.

Other significant documents have been microfilmed and made available by the archives of the Southern Baptists in Nashville, Tenn.

Research

Although the archives are maintained primarily for Seventh Day Baptist history and understanding, they serve a much broader clientele.

In 1996, Harry Langworthy’s book, *Africa for the African, The Life of Joseph Booth*, was published posthumously.

The Society

The SDB Historical Society is a membership corporation that had its origin as the “Committee on Denominational History,” established by the 1893 General Conference and incorporated as an independent society in 1916. Membership is available to any member of an SDB church recognized by General Conference, upon payment of \$10 annual dues, or a life membership fee of \$100.

The Society is supported largely by endowment giving of the past. It receives only designated giving from the Denominational Budget, but does receive facilities and services in exchange for work rendered on behalf of all Seventh Day Baptists.

A five-member Board of Directors, elected at the Society’s annual meeting, governs the Historical Society.

In his acknowledgment, Langworthy stated that, "The institution from which I received the most material and the most positive cooperation is the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society. This study would have been impossible without their contribution."

Our extensive collection of Sabbath material has been researched by Sabbathkeepers from other denominational connections. A Seventh-day Adventist student from Japan spent considerable time at the Center researching his thesis on *Ellen G. White's Views of the Sabbath in the Historical, Religious and Social Context of Nineteenth-Century America*.

Another doctoral candidate from Andrews University relied heavily upon our resources for his thesis, *A Comparison of the Sabbath Theology of A.H. Lewis and J.N. Andrews*. The Seventh Day Baptist historian participated in the five-member panel to review and vote on its acceptance.

A number of college and high school students have requested help in researching for their religious or historical papers. Several religious courses in colleges require students to write about some denomination other than their own. Baptist students are particularly drawn to research Seventh Day Baptists.

The Society would encourage more Seventh Day Baptist students to supplement their secular history by studying the faith of their own ancestors who influenced both local and national history.

Much research has also been done for local churches celebrating significant anniversaries, as well as for other agencies and committees of the denomination.

Genealogical research continues to occupy much of the attention of the Historical Society. The Seventh Day Baptist home page, along with many local church pages on the

Web, alerts an increasing number of people to their Seventh Day Baptist biological roots. Even though some may know little of their spiritual roots, an answer to their e-mail request often brings a discovery and appreciation of their religious heritage.

Interpretation

Over the past two decades, research has led to the production of books, articles, pamphlets, and

Historical Society librarian, Janet Thorngate, assisted in the editing and formatting of this book which interprets an extended history in times of extreme political change.

Communication

An important by-product of the preservation, research, and interpretation of this "history worth recording" is the challenge to communicate it to those who otherwise might be uninformed or indifferent.

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programs interpreting Seventh Day Baptist history and heritage. *A Free People in Search of a Free Land*, originally written in 1975 and reprinted by the Historical Society, traces the migration of Seventh Day Baptists and interprets its meaning on churches and individuals.

The 1992 comprehensive book, *A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists*, interprets over three centuries of history within the context of the environment which helped shape it. *Conscience Taken Captive* recasts that history for the more casual reader as an introduction to SDBs.

A companion volume, *Greater Than Its Parts*, interprets the polity and organization of the denomination, particularly for new members or those coming from a more authoritarian background.

In 1995, the Historical Society published a book by James Siwani entitled, *The Unknown Made Known: The History of Sabbathkeepers in South Africa*. Former

For over 18 years, monthly "Pearls from the Past" columns have appeared in *The Sabbath Recorder*; books have been distributed, both at home and abroad; contributions have been made to other books, magazines, and papers across denominational lines; and participation in ecumenical conferences and programs for historical or genealogical societies have all provided opportunities to communicate our history.

One of today's greatest challenges is answering the questions of those who are becoming aware of Baptists who observe the Biblical Sabbath. Many of these requests ask specific questions concerning family history, beliefs, differences with other Sabbathkeepers, or location of nearest churches. Personal responses, drawing upon the resources of the Historical Society, supplement the sending of other material.

The Historical Society acts as the representative voice of Seventh Day Baptists. This is a privilege and responsibility which is not taken lightly. **SR**

Tribute to Don A. Sanford, Historian

by Janet Thorngate, Historical Society president

*The Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society
honors*

Don A. Sanford

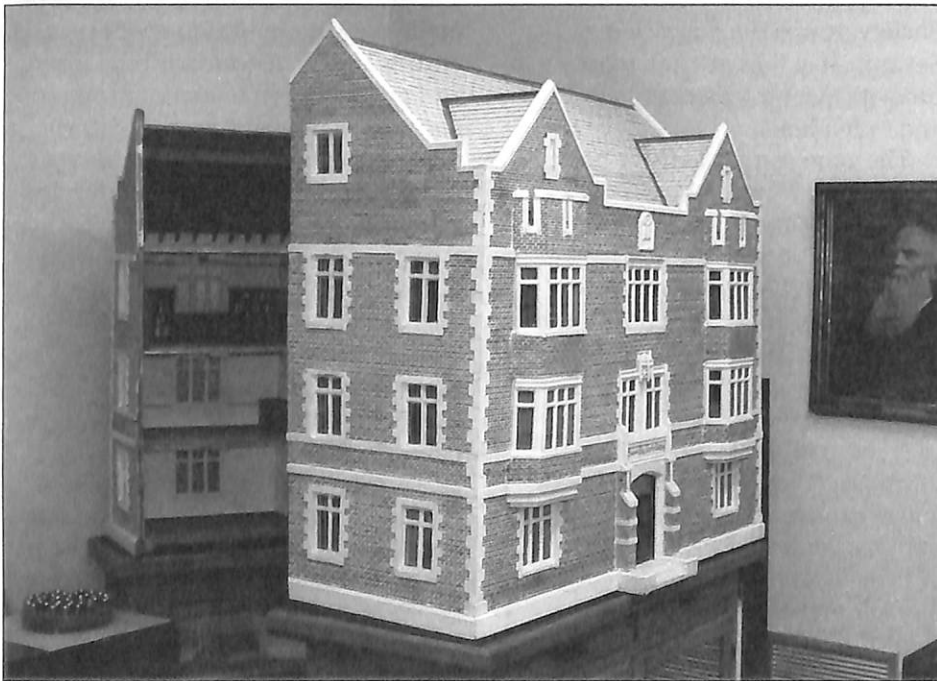
- with the title -

"Historian Emeritus"



*For the past 18 years, Don
has served our denomination
as Historian. His work and his
witness have honored us, and*

*we now honor him. At the
same time, we are grateful
he will continue his writing.
How could he do otherwise?*



This replica of the old Denominational Building in Plainfield, N.J., is just one "monument" of historical work crafted by Don Sanford.

Soon after the Seventh Day Baptist Center opened in Janesville, Wis., 23 years ago, a giant replica of a building appeared in what is now the museum room (to the left of the front entryway). This edifice is a scale model of the old Seventh Day Baptist Building that was left behind in Plainfield, N.J.

Someone had foreseen that emotional ties to that building would make the move to the Midwest difficult for many Seventh Day Baptists.

Someone remembered that throughout the decade between World War I and the Great Depression, great sacrifice went into raising the funds to build that three-story gothic structure. Brick by brick, the weekly sketch in the *Sabbath Recorder* had filled in until its completion.

The dedication of that building marked a tangible symbol of denominational energy and unity during

a stressful period of theological and social controversy.

Now this huge model stands six feet high, and four feet wide and deep—an impressive monument to the structure's 50 years of service as a publishing house, office building, and educational center for the denomination.

That replica remains in a corner of the museum room at the Center. Children love to swing it open (yes, there are casters and hinges) and flip the light switches to check every room's details—from patterned floor tiles to shelves in the vault.

Most aren't aware that its builder is better known as a writer. Thoughtful observers, however, will see parallels between creative conception and careful construction of the model, and the creative conception and careful construction of Don Sanford's every piece of historical work.

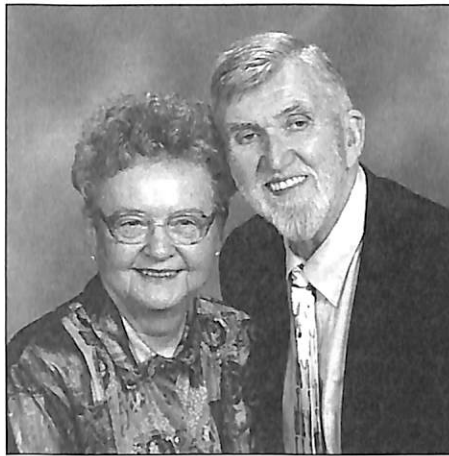
According to the builder's calculations, 1,160 man-hours went into the model. I doubt that Don calculated the hours that went into his first book, completed five years earlier as a master's thesis.

Ten years after they published his book, the Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society called Don to the office of historian. They charged him with a specific task: write a short, popular history of Seventh Day Baptists.

Five years later, in 1992, Broadman Press published Don's monumental book, *A Choosing People: The History of Seventh Day Baptists*. It was not what one would call a "short," popular history!

As librarian for the Historical Society during those five years, I had the honor and challenge to work side-by-side with Don in the unofficial capacity of research assistant, editor, proofreader, and critic.

Don Sanford is the only person I know who speaks in sentence fragments but thinks in sentences rivalled in length and complexity only by those written by the Apostle Paul. (There is no doubt a direct relationship between these two gifts.)



Don and Ilou Sanford

He will never be cured of the ubiquitous propensity to craft sentence after sentence in the passive voice. That may have something to do with the gift of humility, or the theological premise that God is the only actor in His-story.

At the time, Don was employed "part-time" (one-third time, to be exact). But he was always in his office, among that morass of books and papers. (That office was a librarian's nightmare, but ask him for one document—or one piece of information—and he was able to produce it instantly. Another incredible gift!)

Every word a writer writes is sacred writ. Yet Don was able to take his humongous original manuscript and pare it down by one-third so that Broadman would finally accept it for publication. I could tell you more about the detailed construction of *Choosing*, but the creative conception remains a marvelous mystery.

Once Don had completed the research and writing of *A Choosing People*, the writing of the "short, popular history" came much more easily and quickly.

Conscience Taken Captive: A Short History of Seventh Day Baptists was instantly popular and has gone through many printings, as has the original thesis book, *Free People in Search of a Free Land*.

Other books followed as new needs emerged: *Greater Than Its Parts: A Study of Seventh Day Baptist Organization and Polity*,

and *Newport Trilogy*.

Meanwhile, Don was writing a monthly column—"Pearls from the Past"—for the *Sabbath Recorder*, and delightful vignettes for Summer Institute classes in history, polity, and Sabbath theology. These were short biographical sketches and incidents from church or family histories that filled in the rich textures of broader panoramas.

A steady stream of correspondence with pastors, professors, students, genealogists, church members, and colleagues in other denominations ran parallel to Don's other writings.

And if there's one thing that our historian does better than writing about Seventh Day Baptists, it's *being one*.

Those who know Don know he holds firm personal beliefs, but his personal valuing of "freedom of thought" and "liberty of conscience" invite others into dialogue; not only through his writing, but also through his personal relationships. Because of Don, many outside our denomination know who Seventh Day Baptists are and what they stand for.

Don's great contribution to our understanding of SDB history is the context in which he sets the detail: the context of Baptist history, the context of Christian history, the context of political and social history.

Only when seen in context do the characteristics of "freedom," "choosing," and "conscience" have meaning. Only when seen in context does our identity emerge.

Thanks to Don, we Seventh Day Baptists have a better sense of who we are and where we came from. With that firm understanding, we can step into the future unafraid, knowing that what we were, and what we left behind, is not lost.

That theme inspired Don to replicate our Plainfield denominational building. It also inspired his writing. That, after all, is what history is all about: knowing who we are and where we came from so that we can step unafraid into the future. **SR**

Exploring the Sabbath

by Linda Greene

Our journey through all the Old Testament references to the Sabbath continues.

Isaiah 58:13-14

Here again, I'm to spend my Sabbath trying to please God. Where I go, what I do, and what I say on the Sabbath are to please God, not myself. As I grow closer and closer to God, what pleases Him will also please me, but that's the fruit, not the purpose.

So the important question is, "Does what I'm doing please God, or does it displease God? What displeases Him on the Sabbath that wouldn't the rest of the week?"

The answer? Anything that takes the focus off God or gives the honor due Him to something else. It's anything that takes my eyes off His glory. Anything that prevents God from doing the work in me that Sabbath is supposed to provide time for.

And what pleases God? Humility, selfless service to others, a heart that longs to know Him better. He wants me to take up my cross and lay down my pride, my desires, and my agenda. He wants me to try to discern *His* desires and agenda. And I'm supposed to call all of this delightful—my favorite thing to do!

I need to do this with an honest and sincere heart, and not as an empty ritual or religious activity, keeping a list of rules. If I do it purely from longing to make God happy, then I will find my joy in the Lord. I will ride on the heights of the land and feast on the inheritance of Jacob. What a promise!

Jeremiah 17:21-27 and Nehemiah 13:15-22

These two passages are so similar that I'm going to deal with them together.

In these two texts, God repeatedly

tells the Israelites not to carry a load through the gates or out of their houses on the Sabbath. If I don't believe that it's wrong to carry something on the Sabbath (and I don't), then what does this represent?

From the rest of these passages, we know that this carrying of burdens represented their livelihood. This earned them a living or somehow maintained their lives.

They had a choice about when they would do these things. No one was hurt if they waited until after Sabbath, as might be the case if they didn't help the sheep out of the ditch (Matthew 12:11). But they could lose money over the delay. Where were their priorities?

The issue was obedience to God versus worldly gain. *Do I trust God to provide for me if I take a day off?*

Grace is ours for the asking, and Sabbath is a reflection of God's grace. We mustn't try to carry the burden of our own salvation or our own well-being. God never intended for us to be self-sufficient; we are to find our sufficiency only in Him.

Lamentations 2:6 and Hosea 2:11

These are two brief Scriptures, but what a lot of questions they raise!

The Lord *made Zion forget* the Sabbath! Why would He do that?

Zion's sin and rebellion were an abomination to Him. If she was not gathering to repent, He would rather she not come to the temple at all!

Sabbathkeeping is an insult to God if we are swallowed up in sin the rest of the week. He *destroyed the temple* to make sure the Israelites would not continue in the meaningless rituals that were not even close to a reflection of what was actually in their hearts. He would rather destroy His own dwelling place than have Israel come in religious posturing to *pre-*

tend they were okay, when the exact opposite was actually the case.

I don't believe that any of us would presume to think that our behavior during the week, no matter how hard we might try, is anywhere close to what would truly please God. Our sin is an affront to Him. It's only our repentant hearts, combined with the blood of Jesus Christ, that makes it possible for us to enter the Holy Place of His presence.

God's grace shouldn't be taken lightly, and the Sabbath has been a symbol of that grace from the very beginning. So I had better make sure my heart is humble before God when I come to church on Sabbath.

There's no room for self-satisfaction here; no room for smug confidence that I have somehow managed to please God when the rest of the world has "missed it." I can't allow these feelings to take root in my heart. I must check my pride at the door and enter with humility as my banner.

Don't get me wrong. I know God adores me and longs to be close to me, but it's only because of His grace, *not* because I deserve it in any way.

I don't think there's any room here for being passive, either. Probably a lot of people in Israel weren't openly worshipping other gods or rebelling, but they passively let others lead them down the road to destruction. They were eventually taken into captivity, along with the others.

It would seem, then, that the condition of my heart on the Sabbath is more important to God than whether or not my actions line up with what is considered to be "correct behavior."

If my heart is not impacted by what I'm doing, then God would rather that I not bother with the "doing" at all—especially with regard to the Sabbath, His symbol of grace from the dawn of time. **SR**



A blank page?

A favorite part of being a Child of God is that He gives me a blank page each new day. My sins of yesterday are blotted out completely.

As I contemplated this first attempt at writing the Women's Page, I considered myself a blank page on which God could write as He pleased. Then I realized that I am not at all blank. (Although women my age often feel we are!)

Since none of us is a blank page, we all have a story to tell—something we've learned that would encourage the rest of us.

Through the years, God has printed indelibly on me lessons from the IEP (Individualized Education Plan) that He designed with me in mind. Have I been an "A" student? I don't *think* so!

While traveling with my husband, I saw something that made me feel better about my placement in God's classroom: an elegant-looking motel, several stories high, bedecked with green shutters and fancy trim. We stayed there a few years ago when it was brand new. Now it is undergoing "reconstructive surgery" all over its "face." My husband's conclusion? "It was cheaply built."

Well, I am *not* cheaply built. Are you?

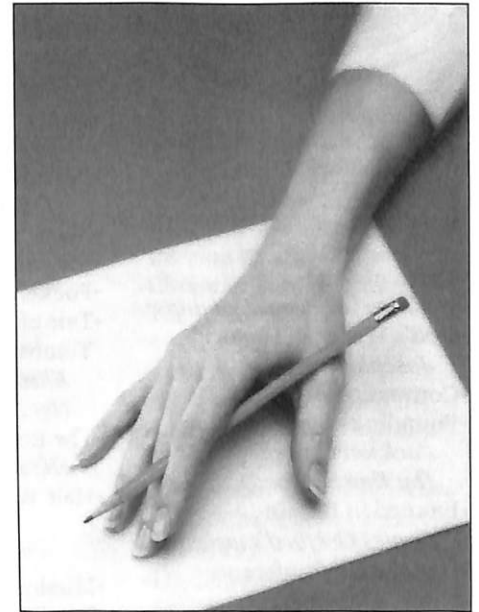
God is doing a painstaking job of putting me together so that I will last forever and eventually look like—and be like—His other Child, His first-born. God has to repeat some of His lessons several times to be sure I "get it."

Part of this training is direct, hands-on experience, and part comes from interacting with other classmates whose lessons are recorded in the Bible or yet to be written. This is where you come in.

The class roster does not end with Abram, Samuel, David, or Moses. Class is still in session. What are *you* learning?

Since none of us is a blank page, we all have a story to tell—something we've learned that would encourage the rest of us. I invite you to contact me with your story about what God is doing in your life so that we can glorify Him together.

If you're like me and want a specific topic to jump-start your thinking, try comparing one of your life experiences to that of one of the patriarchs named above. Or submit your own question for other classmates to respond to.

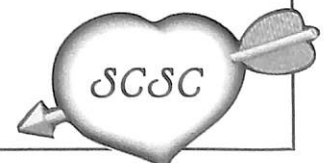


As for me, one of this month's subjects has been patience. (I'll tell you about that next time.) Do any of you have something to say about that subject? Meanwhile, enjoy "feasting" on 1 Peter 1. **SR**

You can write me at:
Susan Bond
30 Bear Den Path
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
E-mail: richcbond@earthlink.net

Would you like to celebrate Valentine's Day with a Love Gift to SCSC? If the Women's Board treasurer receives your gift for the Summer Christian Service Corps this month, the Memorial Board will see that it is doubled. Send your contribution to Enid Nobles, 9 Little Pond Trail, Ormond Beach, FL 32174.

Do you have a Robe of Achievement nominee? See inside the front cover.





Stringing the Pearls

Editor's note: Don Sanford's "Pearls from the Past" column has graced the pages of the *SR* for 18 years. We're happy to say that Don plans to continue "stringing" the Pearls in his retirement. This month, we present the title and/or topics that have provided great historical perspective for nearly two decades.

— 1989 —

- A Sabbath-Observing Anabaptist
Andreas Fischer
- Thank You John Comer
(by Janet Thorngate)
- Periodical Changes
SDB publications
- Music in Worship
- Reforms Begin at Home
- Fouke, AR, Academy
- Tale of the Lonesome Tombstone
Elizabeth Wayne (by Ilou Sanford)
- The Eccaleobian
1844 Hatching Machine
- Half-Way Covenant

— 1990 —

- Missions in the 1900s
- Denominational Organization in a Commercial Age
- Charles Saunder's Palestine letters
- Walter Crandall's Civil War letter
- Rally Round the Sabbath
Elizabeth Fisher Davis' song
- First Pre-Con, 1940
- Milton, WI, Church pew rentals
- A 1917 Look at the Denomination
Analysis by George Shaw
- A Pioneer Wife
Elizabeth Clayton (by Ilou Sanford)
- A Prayer Meeting in a Haystack
Foreign Missions started (Everett Harris)
- New Age Predictions 1900
A.H. Lewis

— 1991 —

- Gold Coast Missions
- And the Anvil Remains
Blacksmith Mark Sanford
- Luther's "Here I Stand"

- Bullets Into Communion Cups
Leon Maltby's project
- Sale of Historical Society books
- On Human Life
- "When God Said No"
God's answer to A.H. Lewis
- A Christian Industrialist
George H. Babcock
- Historical Society's Diamond Jubilee
- BJC calendar
- Research Reveals Plain Truth
Distortion of history

— 1992 —

- Kim Merchant's work at the Center
(by Janet Thorngate)
- The Trinity in creeds
- Quotes from L.A. Platts
- A Sabbath Clock
- A.J.C. Bond's children sermon
- Workshop, Memorial, Symbol
Denominational building, Plainfield, NJ
- Growth of Islam
- Oasis in Desert of Gloom
Columbian Exposition
- General Conference acts
- Moving the Past Ahead
Newport, RI, Meeting House
- The Good Parson

— 1993 —

- James L. Scott's missionary journal
- Revival by Teamwork
Quartet movement
- The Call to Ministry
A.J.C. Bond
- Mystic Meeting House was Greenmanville church
- Snowhill Sabbath "Blues"
Blue Law persecution
- Father of Our Country Stands Up for Baptists
George Washington quotes

- Quite an Experience
"Perry" Fitz Randolph Burdick
- How About a Little Faith and Order?
F&O Committee origin
- Dr. George Thorngate
- Jubilee Issue in Missions

— 1994 —

- He Being Dead Yet Speaketh
Thomas B. Brown
- Scared from Death to Life
Samuel Davidson
- Indentured Servant
Mazzini Stillman
- Lucky Conversion
Theophilus Christian Luck
- Sabbath Change "Suicidal"
- 1944-1994 remembrances
- Building for the Glory of God
Senior Saints
- The Sabbath—A Dusty Antique?
- Conference themes
- SR* not Our First Magazine
- Doctor, Pastor, Reformer
Dr. Peter Chamberlen

— 1995 —

- Little Missionary on the Prairie
Mrs. T.J. Van Horn
- How to Pray in Public
A.H. Lewis
- Fearing the True King
Execution of John James
- It Only Takes a Spark
Jess Babcock & Senior Saints
- A Wedding Ring
Mrs. T.J. Van Horn
- Sabbath Recorder* in the Home
Nellie Daland, Furrows on the Land
- Interim pastors in English history
- A Shield of Faith
George Thorngate's award (China)

— 1987 —

- Grain of Sand
"Intro" to Pearls columns
- God's Works in History
Joseph Stennett
- Conversion of Vianna Davis
- Founding of a Church
Jackson Center (by Ilou Sanford)
- Banned in Britain
James Ockford's writings
- On Hosting Conference
- Faith in Worship
Nancy Goodrich
- Franklin Proposes Prayer
Continental Congress
- Thanks in Giving
Memorial Board
- Faithful in Bible Study
Edmund Dunham

— 1988 —

- Motivated by Conviction
Jonathan Davis
- Covenant in History
Pinner's Hall in England
- Matters of State
Mill Yard Petition on England
- Baptist Beginnings in North America
- Aunt Dora's Broken Dish
Sabbath breaking
- A Loyal Bunch
Edwin Shaw's letter
- Newport Reflections
Julie Ward Howe
- A Fly on a Window Pane
Henry Clarke, 1811
- Early missionary journeys
- Sharing the Joy at a Ball Game
Sammy Davis

- Historical Society
Ken Davis' Conference talk
- Dear Mrs. Greene
Children's page in SR
- Herman Clarke's call for responsibility

— 1996 —

- Westward Ho!
John T. Davis, home missions
- My New Kentucky Home
Missions in 1890s & 1996
- Helping Hand history
- One of God's Vineyards
L.A. Platts recalls Milton
- New Sabbath Notions
Yoshio Murakami & Millerism
- Farmer Sneezes for Luck
Stewardship message
- Offenbarung 14:12
Keeping commandments
- Will the Real Westerly Please Stand Up?
Confusing church names
- Senator Jennings Randolph honored
- First Baptist Indian an SDB
"Indian Jephthah" of Newport
- 325 Years of Covenant
Newport anniversary

— 1997 —

- 100 Pearls and Counting
- Was It Worth It?
150 years of China Mission
- Booth for the Africans
Harry Langworthy "bio" of Joseph Booth
- Thomas Hubbard vs. Thomas Higbed
- Milton College Legacy
Main Hall restoration
- A Stand for the Sabbath
Jonathan Allen, Amos Spicer, Ethan Langworthy
- Conference 1829
Maxson Greene's diary
- Brookfield Pastors Made Their Mark
- Inventors Hall of Fame
George Babcock & Steven Wilcox
- Reflections of Associations
- Scattering Seeds
James Leander Scott in Ohio

— 1998 —

- Sabbath: Part of Our Kinship
- A "Pardon" for Pardon Davis
Pardon Davis helps runaway slaves
- The Orphan Train
Herman Clarke's role in placing orphans
- A History Worth Recording and Reporting
Denominational agencies
- From Sabbath to Sunday
Answering e-mails
- First Baptist Communion in Georgia was SDB
- Why Form a Conference?
- Conversion of Joel Jones
- Next Stop... Milton House
Underground Railroad
- A Learning Experience
Perie Fitz Randolph Burdick
- A Soldier of Many Wars
Abolitionist Daniel Newcomb

— 1999 —

- The Missionary Magazine
- Chicago Council Revisited
1890 planning session
- That Pocketbook
Una Dell's poem on giving
- Sunday to Sabbath Struggle
Madison Harry
- Elizabeth Fisher Davis' Rally Song
- A Call to Ministry
O.S. Mills
- Scott, NY, Church
- Sabbathkeeping Meets Believer's Baptism
James Ockford
- Letters of Walter Dunn & Emma Randolph
- Old Letters for a New Century
A.H. Lewis

— 2000 —

- Following "The Voice"
Robert St. Clair & Jamaica mission
- Vision for Future
Nathan Lewis' endowment
- The Meter's Still Running
Metric pattern for hymn singing
- What's in a Word?
Nathaniel Bailey's Etymology of English language

- "Waffling" on the Sabbath
Dr. A.E. Waffle
- Baptist Web page formed
- Old Sunday laws in Rhode Island
- Baba, White Sheep
Story based on Psalm 23
- Our Amazing Week
Chart by William Meade Jones
- The Lyceums Live on
Stennett hymns presented at Green Lake, WI

— 2001 —

- Our First Periodical
- April Blizzard in Nebraska, Oscar Babcock
- DeRuyter Institute: A Blessing to the World
- Indebted to Transitions
Leaders from other denominations
- Eight Days in a Seven-day Week?
- "I Cannot Tell a Lie"
George Washington's father
- 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith
- The Little White Church in the Vale
Little Genesee church fire
- Conference's 1802 founding
- Conference Recollections
Salem Conference of 1903
- Celebrating the birth of Jesus

— 2002 —

- Our Responsibilities in Missions
George Thorngate's philosophy, 1964
- Maxson Green travels to Conference, 1829
- Maxson Green's water route, 1835
- Lottie's [Baldwin] Legacy Lives on
- Martha Wardner, Battle Creek, MI
- Choosing Our Grandparents
A.J.C. Bond, Don Sanford
- A History of General Conference Leadership
- How Many Sisters Make a Brotherhood?
Joseph Davis & Harriott Slator Black
- 175th anniversary, Little Genesee

- Memorial Quarterly, 1852-1854
- Room to Work
Plainfield building acquired

— 2003 —

- Pit Stops on the Frontier
John Green's missionary journey
- Did Stephen Mumford Found the First SDB Church in America?
Organizers Samuel & Tacy Hubbard
- Wm. Robinson's 1920s mission to Argentina
- Christian Stewardship
- The Bailey Bunch
Silas, Eli, James, & Mary Bailey
- An Overlooked Evangelist
Mrs. Malvina Townsend
- Music on Music
Professor David W. Music
- Name Changes Are a Part of History
- Leaders from 'the Outside'
- Spicing Up the Joint
Spicer Manufacturing
- God in History
A.H. Lewis' thoughts

— 2004 —

- Blue Laws' Blues
Blair Bill prohibits work on Sunday
- Robe Research
Lois Wells
- Four Generations of Associational Camping
The Don Sanford family
- Sabbath in the North Wood
David Cartwright, New Auburn, WI
- Socwell family genealogy
- Refurbishing Newport meeting house
- Natural vs. Moral Absolutes
- Campbell Soup
Two Alexander Campbells
- Adding More Spice to History
Spicer's Universal Joint & Alfred University
- A Word from the Pews
Little Genesee, Newport

— 2005 —

- A 385-Year-Old Covenant
Colonists sign Mayflower Compact, 1620

CAST Training Seminar scheduled

(Contact and Support Team)

by Ron Elston

The Missionary Society's National Missions Department will be conducting the first National Field Development/CAST Training Seminar May 13-15, 2005, at the Faith Training Center in Doniphan, Mo.

Seminar goal

The goal of the seminar will be to "CAST" a vision that will encourage individuals, churches, and Associations to participate in outreach. We will train the students in contact and support for outreach on the National Field—"...For equipping of the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephes. 4:11-16).

Specific goals include: to provide foundational training and opportunities to develop ministry skills, promote personal goal development, and to glorify God. We plan to do this through personal study, training seminars, and field work.

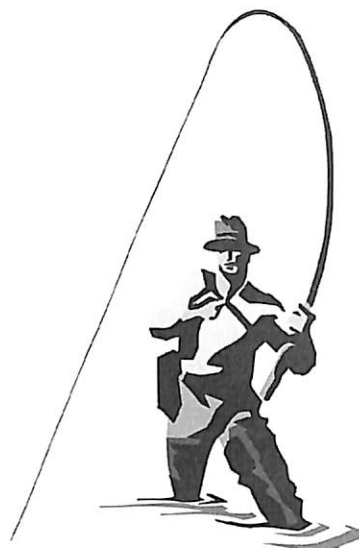
Subjects to be covered: Personal Evangelism, Polity, Seventh Day Baptist Beliefs, Problem Solving (in Church plants and extension), and Organization.

If you feel called to evangelism, outreach development, and church support ministries—or have a desire to be equipped to defend the faith—you may be interested in this opportunity.

Criteria

Each CAST Training Seminar student must be an active member of a Seventh Day Baptist church and be sponsored by the church or Association. The local pastor or a designated church leader will mentor the student.

There will be required reading and workbook assignments prior to attending the CAST seminar. Each student will be responsible for the expenses incurred traveling



to and from the seminar, but the National Missions Department will provide food and lodging during the training.

Applications

Applications may be obtained from the SDB Missionary Society office, 119 Main St., Westerly, RI 02891, or by calling (401) 596-4326. E-mail: sdbmissoc@verizon.net. Fax: (401) 348-9494. **SR**

Denominational Dateline

February

- 5 Tract and Communication Core Committee, Seventh Day Baptist Center, Janesville, Wis.—Kevin Butler
- 19 Alfred, N.Y., SDB Church, Ordination Council for Pastor Pat Bancroft—Gordon Lawton
- 25 CLT meets in Daytona Beach, Fla.
- 26 Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Lawton
- 26-28 General Council meets in Daytona Beach

March

- 5 North Loup, Neb., Seventh Day Baptist Church—Rob Appel
- 12 Benton, Ill., SDB Fellowship—Appel
- 13-17 Committee on the Uniform Series Meeting, Charlotte, N.C.—Andrew Camenga

- 14 Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, Washington, D.C.—Butler
- 20 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Annual Meeting, Westerly, R.I.—Looper

April

- 9 Salem, W.Va., SDB Church, Ordination Council for D. Scott Smith—Lawton
- 16-17 SDB Memorial Fund Quarterly Meeting, SDB Center, Janesville—Morgan Shepard, Appel
- 19-23 SDB Pastors' Conference, Alfred Station, N.Y.
- 24 SDB Missionary Society Board of Managers Quarterly Meeting, Westerly—Looper, Elston
- 24 SDB Board of Christian Education Directors Meeting, Alfred Station—Camenga



FOCUS Malawi on Missions camps

by Kirk Looper

Camp is always an exciting time for all involved. Brother Nedd Lozani, General Secretary of the Central Africa Conference, reported on the camps that Seventh Day Baptists recently held in Malawi.

"We were pleased to hold our camps in Malawi three times—one in November, 2004, and two in December. They were scheduled for November 28–December 4 in the Northern Region, December 5–11 in the Central Region, and December 12–18 in the Southern Region."

SDB pastors staffed the camps. Current Youth Director, Pastor S. Muheziwa, attended each of the camps. Pastor L. Nantikwa, Director of CE, assisted him in the North, while Pastor E. Mzumara, principal at the Makapwa Bible Center, assisted in the Central and Southern Regions for two weeks.

Mr. Kusamale and Mrs. Chanza taught a program on "HIV/AIDS and the Youth." Dr. E.E. Ngalande taught the young people "Youth and Economics," and Mr. B. Molande led a unit on "Leadership." The attendees were enthusiastic about the subjects and enjoyed listening to all the instructors.

"We were honored by the presence of the Malawi Broadcasting Company and Television Malawi during the Central and Southern Regions' Sabbath services," Brother Lozani reported. "These programs will be rebroadcast at later dates.

"We often try to get the activities of the Church broadcast when the opportunity arises. These two media companies have been very cooperative in the past," Lozani added.

Future plans include adding separate camps for younger children. This will allow them to be more effective, specializing in classes, crafts, and activities.

Our SDB brothers and sisters in Malawi hope to obtain even more camp craft materials. They look forward to larger groups of campers as they strive to present studies that have more bearing on the lives of Malawi's youth.

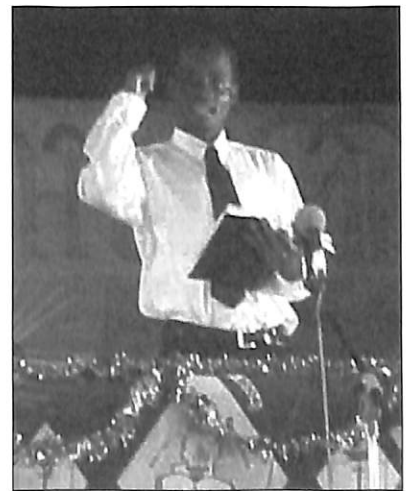
"We feel we need to have a variety of lessons and presenters in order to maintain the interest of youth groups; however, this will mean that we'll need more financial support," Lozani said.

"We pray that our sister Conferences and churches will feel the lead-

ing of the Holy Spirit and donate to these activities."

Brother Lozani pointed out that camps play a vital role in encouraging youth participation, in turn, leading young people to develop even deeper commitments to their Conference's churches.

"We look forward to our camps at the end of the year," Lozani said. "Please pray that many will attend and learn what Seventh Day Baptists are all about." **SR**



A young preacher sharing the Word.



Class time at a Malawi SDB camp.



Campers young and old filled this hall.



the BEACON

Produced by the Youth Committee of the Board of Christian Education
For and by members of the SDB Youth Fellowship

February 2005

The Poem

by Jenn Layton

Someone e-mailed me a poem a few years ago that really grabbed my attention. It was called "The Poem" and went something like this:

I knelt to pray but not for
long,
I had too much to do.
I had to quickly get to work
For bills would soon be due.

So I knelt and said a hurried
prayer,
And jumped up off my knees.
My Christian duty was now
done,
My soul could rest at ease.

All day long I had no time
To spread a word of cheer.
No time to speak of Christ to
friends,
They'd laugh at me, I feared.

"No time, no time, too much
to do,"
That was my constant cry.
No time to give to souls in
need,
But at least the time to die.

And when I went before the
Lord,
I stood with downcast eyes.
For in His hands, God held
a book;
It was the Book of Life.

God looked into His book
and said
"Your name I cannot find.
I once was going to write it
down...
But I never found the time."



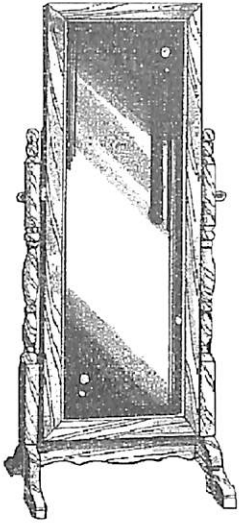
This poem really made me think about how true this is in our society. Some of us really do take life for granted. We go on with our everyday lives (school, homework, jobs, etc.), and then we do it all over again the next day. It's a constant routine that we get into.

We take for granted the fact that we have the choice to worship God. We are given the opportunity to freely serve Him, yet some people don't. They go about their day without even stopping to worship or praise God for all His creations and everything He's done for us.

So many keep putting it off and putting it off. They figure they'll have plenty of time for God, just not right now. Then, one day, they can't put it off anymore. And by then, it's too late.

Ask yourself today whether God will find your name in His Book. He wants all of us there, and we have a part to play in that listing.

Remember to "Give thanks to the Lord for he is good; his love endures forever" (Psalm 107:1). **SR**



Reflections

by Leanne Lippincott

"Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face." —1 Cor. 13:12

I'm so glad I'm a part...

As a Christian, I believe that God, the Author and Finisher of the universe, created earth and all of its wonders—majestic mountains, magnificent meadows, raging rivers, fabulous fauna and forests. These and a myriad of other blessings of nature lighten my heart and lift my spirits. Seeing, hearing, and touching them stretches my mind as well as my senses. Whenever I experience them, I can't help but contemplate the loving Supreme Being who brought all of them into existence.

Some of God's gifts are less conspicuous. But their impact on us—spiritually, emotionally, and physically—is profound. One such gift is "family."

I tend to divide families into four categories:

Immediate family

The "immediate" family is the one most of us think of first. It's made up of a father, mother, and children—or any combination thereof.

It's human nature to want to belong somewhere, to someone. We want to "fit in," to be a part of something outside ourselves. It's difficult to imagine, but there are people who have no one other than themselves.

Even within families, there still are insecurities.

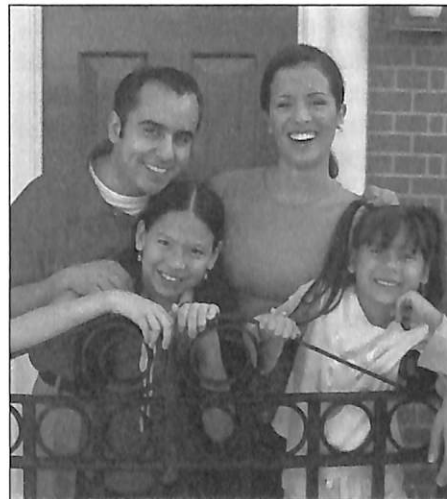
When I was a little girl, it puzzled me that both of my parents' names began with "B" (Bob and Bernice) and that my siblings' names started

with "J" (Jim and Jean). *Where in the world did "Leanne" come from?*

For a time, I thought I was adopted. I later learned that my sister, for different reasons, thought that *she* was adopted. We weren't, but even if we had been, we still would have been members of that family.

Extended family

Almost all of us have extended families—grandparents and great-grandparents, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, cousins twice



removed, and others we'd like removed, period.

When I married, my "extended family" *really* extended, giving me all sorts of in-laws and out-laws—another set of "parents," new aunts and uncles, etc. The biggest blessing was that I gained a grandfather. (My paternal grandfather died before I was born, and I was only 7 months old when my Mom's dad died.)

Almost 22 years after my husband's death, I remain a member of the large and loving Lippincott family.

Local church family

My marriage also introduced me to a third type of family—the Church.

I grew up in a Christian home, but my "family experience" in church was limited to a few friendly words before and after worship. There were a few handshakes but no warm hugs; brief conversations but no heartfelt sharing. Contact with fellow parishioners the rest of the week was limited or nonexistent.

When I became a Seventh Day Baptist, I quickly learned that our denomination IS a family; a wide-spread yet close-knit group of Christians who love and care for each other as Christ cares for them. What a profound legacy that is!

God's family

I have a wonderful immediate family, a great extended family, and a loving and supportive church family. But the family I cherish the most is the one where God is my Father, and His children are my brothers and sisters in Christ.

* * *

All families have their ups and downs. The beauty of *true* families is that they continue to accept and love and forgive each other, just as Jesus does.

Whether we like it or not, we're "married" to our families; "for better or worse, in good times and in bad." Unlike many of today's secular marriages, families really are a lifetime commitment.

Whatever happens, whatever our circumstances, God can use families to provide solace and refuge, a place where we can renew ourselves while forming even stronger bonds. **SR**



The President's Page
by Don Graffius

Sextants and satellites

Seeking direction in your life is critically important and difficult to determine at times. Where should I live? What college should I attend? What job should I take? Should I start a family, confront an employee, retire?

Then...

My father-in-law, Leland Bond, was the quartermaster on a small naval supply vessel (LCI) during World War II. There were no landmarks in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, but they needed to accurately determine their position.

Leland used a sextant to measure angles from fixed reference points—such as the stars—to determine latitude. He would then compare the reading to astronomical charts and mathematically calculate longitude. He still can readily point out star constellations.

...and now

Today, we can determine position and direction with the assistance of 24 satellites circling above the earth at 11,000 miles.

On the ground, a global positioning system receiver (GPS) is always linked to four satellites. Each satellite broadcasts a unique radio signal to earth. A computer calculates how long it takes the signal to leave the satellite and arrive at the GPS. Then, by multiplying this travel time by the speed of light, they can determine the distance.

By calculating the distance from the four different satellites, a precise

location can be determined. Thus, a trapped mountain climber can be found or a stolen vehicle located.

Five control stations around the world synchronize atomic clocks in the satellites. The timing of the satellites must be perfect since an error of one-thousandth of a second translates to a 200-mile error on the ground.

A higher navigation

Spiritual direction is also critically important.

As Christians, our spiritual direction goal should be to be more Christ-like. To achieve this goal, we must regularly seek detailed, specific directions from our Heavenly Father.

In Proverbs 3:6, we find my life verse: "In *all* thy ways acknowledge Him and He will *direct* your paths" (emphasis added).

I have found that God directs my life in three ways:

His Word

First, God directs me through His Word. Too often we look everywhere else for direction before consulting His Word. In 2 Timothy 3:16, we see that Scripture is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." The Word is the ultimate GPS system.

Prayer

But if God's Word is unclear to you, the second way to seek direction is through prayer.

We don't need to spend a lot of time debating and asking God's di-

rection, but He is always ready to hear our every question, our requests for direction, our litany of disappointments, joys, and desires.

Sometimes rather than seeking direction, we may need to ask for strength to do what God says is right. Philippians 4:6 urges us, "to let our requests be made known to God."

Godly counsel

Finally, God directs us through the godly counsel of others. Proverbs 19:20 says, "Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days."

I have been blessed to have a father who has always been there when I needed him. And God put others in my life to help me—my extended family, people in my church, those in my denomination and work place. Don't hesitate to ask when you need wise counsel.

While serving in the Navy, my father-in-law determined his ship's position daily and plotted its direction. He explained that being just a few degrees off could result in being many miles off course a day later.

Similarly, it is good to regularly examine our spiritual position to determine if we are "on course." To remain "strong, steady, and enthusiastic for the Lord," we must *daily* seek God's direction and guidance. When we do, He will direct us through His Word, through prayer, and through the godly counsel of others. **SR**



Two new churches— two unique approaches

This past fall, I had the pleasure of visiting two new yet distinctively different churches.

The one in Grand Rapids, Mich., is a new church start-up (see page 23). Nate Crandall is the pastor of the All Nations SDB Church, located in the north part of the Grand Rapids area. A major high school is just down the block, so the location is perfect for a youth outreach that the church plans to undertake.

In Alexandria, Va., the Spanish House of Worship meets for a Spanish-only celebration. Ramon Igata leads the group in music, and Alfredo Torres is the worship leader.

The Sabbath I was there, I preached on "The Unique Nature of Christ," with Pastor Juan Amaya translating my English into Spanish. I pray that the sermon inspired and encouraged this unique group in their journey as Spanish-speaking SDBs.



Ramon Igata leads music at the Spanish House of Worship in Alexandria, Va.

What a great time to be a Seventh Day Baptist! We are starting to think "outside the box." We are beginning to look at what is around us and use that in our outreach and ministry opportunities.

If Seventh Day Baptists are to be new church starters during the coming years, many individuals will need to sense God's leading and become leaders of these new churches.

What type of person does it take to be a successful church starter?

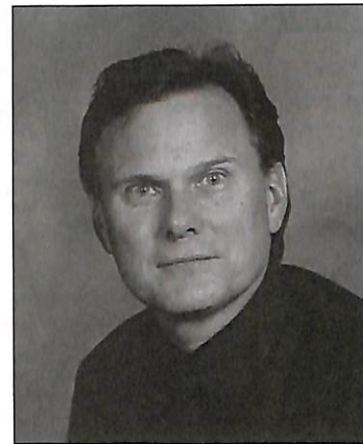
Age is not a factor. Many church planters are young and fresh out of school, while others are more "seasoned." Gender also is not a barrier. Both male and female roles are important in starting churches. There needs to be a balance.

Prerequisites include:

•**A clear call from God.** Church starters much have a passionate, undying call from God.

•**Leadership skills.** The mortality rate in new churches is due almost entirely to poor leadership.

•**Endurance.** Look for leaders who are long-distance runners; those who will carry through a project.



by Executive Director
Rob Appel

•**Entrepreneurial spirit.** This is needed to think creatively, outside the box.

•**Innovation and risk taking.** A "needs assessment" will have to take place to discover new ideas, and then to test and refine them.

•**Evangelistic spirit.** Church starters must be willing to lead the way in talking directly to people about their faith.

•**People-oriented.** It takes exceptional people skills to be able to build a congregation from nothing.

•**Faith.** Starters must have the attitude that "this thing is going to happen."

Raising up new churches can be an exciting ministry, but not all Christians are equipped to be church starters. Those who do not have the gifts or calling can be involved in many other ways, including prayer and financial support.

If you sense God's leading to start a church, please contact Missionary Society Executive Director Kirk Looper (Ph. 401-596-4326; e-mail: sdbmissoc@verizon.net) or National Extension Minister Ron Elston (Ph. 573-857-2764).

For years, these Conference executives have been supporting new start-up groups. They have the knowledge of what has worked well, and what has not. Let's grow new churches! **SR**

Centennial year a success in Battle Creek

by Judy Parrish

The Battle Creek, Mich., Seventh Day Baptist Church had a wonderful year celebrating its 100th Anniversary, culminating in activities December 10-12, 2004.

All year long we praised God for His blessings to us by supporting the local Christian homeless mission with items they requested. Copy paper was their most asked-for item, so we finished the year with a challenge among three church groups. The Ladies Aid won, and the homeless mission was blessed. Praise God!

Each month we heard a historical vignette telling various aspects of our church's life since 1904. The vignettes told of our connection to Dr. J.H. Kellogg of the Battle Creek Sanitarium and his wife Ella Eaton Kellogg (first SDB in Battle Creek, a native of Alfred, N.Y., and alumna of Alfred University); the years Battle Creek hosted General Conference, including the last Conference held using private homes for housing; Camp Holston and its 60th birthday, and more.

An old-fashioned Fourth of July picnic was held at Camp Holston, featuring some participants in costumes, sack races and other old-time games, and more things reminiscent of times gone by. All had a great time!

Homecoming weekend, November 27, 2004, was truly exciting. Along with his wife Jean, our longest serving pastor, S. Kenneth Davis, "came home" to give the morning message during the worship service.

An Anniversary Banquet followed at the Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center (formerly the Battle Creek Sanitarium), where Battle Creek SDBs worshipped until our build-

ing was completed in 1929. Rev. Gordon Lawton, Dean of Pastoral Services and a former Battle Creek resident, was guest speaker.

Special guests, greetings and music, historic displays and banner, and an authentic Ladies Aid Chicken Pie Supper menu added greatly to the occasion. Each one attending received a copy of our 100th Anniversary History Book (compiled by Ruth Bennett) and a commemorative coffee mug.

To complete the day, a variety show at the Aroma Coffeeshouse featured an anniversary skit—"Dagnet BC"—that was a fun takeoff from the old TV show.

The last events, on the actual "birthday" of the church's founding,

included vespers Sabbath eve with special guests from our sister church in White Cloud, Mich., and an encouraging and challenging message by our pastor, Harold King, during Sabbath worship.

More "extended family" worshipped with us that day and fellowshipped at our Meal of Sharing that



Rev. S. Kenneth Davis—Battle Creek's longest-serving pastor (1970-1985)—returned to give the Sabbath morning message on November 27.



A sumptuous Anniversary Banquet was served in the former Battle Creek Sanitarium, now a Federal Center. SDBs worshipped here until 1929.



Photos, bottom left: Longtime member Jean Albion greets longtime Pastor Ken Davis. Top left: Judy Parrish (right) received a well-deserved thank-you gift for chairing the Anniversary Committee. Pastor Harold King emceed the afternoon program. Above: A ladies quintet shared tunes that were popular in 1904. Singing out were (l. to r.): Suzie Mesaros, Kathi King, Dian Cantrell, Judy Parrish, and Marilyn Discher.

included the premier showing of the Living History Video Project. We had recorded our older members' recollections and family associations with the Battle Creek church and made a special tape that was eagerly anticipated and enjoyed by all.

An All-Church Christmas Party on December 12 ended the weekend and the Anniversary Year events.

A big "thank you" to all who attended or sent greetings. SDBs in the North, South, East, and West were represented. It is wonderful to be part of the Seventh Day Baptist family!

Having had a "Centennial of Remembrance Celebration," we now look forward to what God has in store for Battle Creek, and for all of us, in 2005 and beyond! **SR**

All Nations Fellowship signs covenant



On September 25, 2004, Seventh Day Baptists in Grand Rapids, Mich., signed a church covenant to become the All Nations SDB Fellowship.

Participants included (l. to r.): Candi Link, Leanna Wethington, Michelle Crandall, Pastor Nate Crandall,



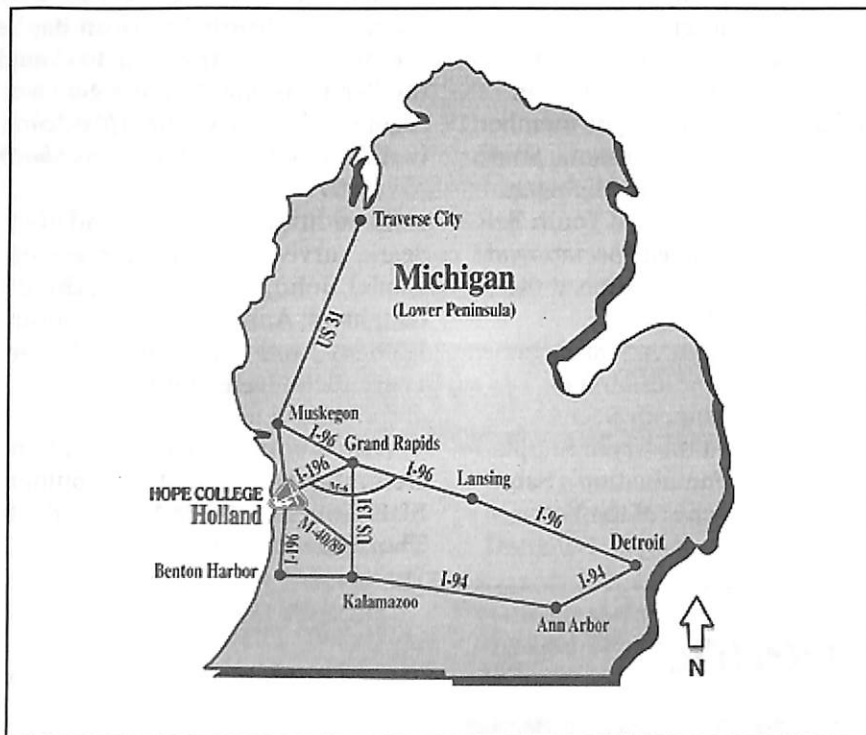
Pastor Nate Crandall watches Dave and Diane Fleegler sign the church covenant.

Brian Hall, Deb Nienhuis, Sarah Shick, and J.R. Shick.

The All Nations Fellowship is in a special mentoring relationship with the SDB church of White Cloud, Mich., and receives some funds from the Seventh Day Baptist Memorial Fund and the North Central Association. **SR**

Holland, Hope, to host hundreds

by Judy Parrish



Holland, Mich., is the place to be for General Conference, August 7-13, 2005.

Settled in 1847 by Dutch immigrants and with a population of about 40,000, Holland was named an "All American City" in 1996, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation designated it a "Distinctive Destination" in 2002.

The reasons for these accolades are many: quaint cafes and unique, locally-owned downtown shops on cobblestone streets; easy walkability; family activities, etc.

Visited by 2.5 million people annually, Holland is located on Lake Macatawa and is five miles from Holland State Park and Lake Michigan.

The Holland Museum certainly showcases the city's Dutch heritage, while the Cappon and Settler Houses are both on the National Register of Historic Places and open to visitors.

No less than four other attractions in the city highlight tulips and all things Dutch, from wooden shoes to

Delftware, to an authentic imported windmill in a recreated Dutch village.

Hope College, chartered in 1866 and two blocks from downtown Holland, will host our Conference meetings. Current enrollment at the private, four-year liberal arts college is about 3,100. Students come from 45 states and territories, plus 32 foreign countries. The college takes its name from Hebrews 6:19 and Psalm 42:5: "Hope from God."

Our worship services will be held in beautiful Dimnent Chapel, where



One of Hope College's newer dorms, Cook Hall.

the abundant stained glass and two organs will enhance our worship.

Young Adult Pre-Con will gather on campus just prior to General Conference.

Sidewalks between buildings are short and level, but your Host Committee plans to have courtesy transportation of golf carts and wheelchairs available for those who would find them helpful.

If you have never been to Conference, or if you have been to every Conference in modern history, be sure to make plans now to join your fellow SDBs from "Cali to Rhodi" in Holland this summer.

Programs, facilities, and activities are planned for nursery babies, children, youth, young adults, and all ages upward.

Conference is a time to meet new friends and renew old friendships. Bible studies, prayer, worship, "neat" programs from our denominational boards and agencies, social times, musical presentations, and even a little business fill our days during Conference week.

One of our guests at the 2003 Conference noted the "collective family" feeling of Conference, so don't miss out!

Let's boost Holland's visitor numbers by several hundred this summer. You will come away "Strong, Steady, and Enthusiastic" for the Lord! **SR**



Dimnent Chapel, the site of our evening and Sabbath worship.

KEVIN'S

ORNER

Facing a tsunami

This month's *Sabbath Recorder* takes a look at SDB history, and at those who have played a part in preserving our stories and family heritage.

Several references to the *SR* made me think that "this isn't your Grandfather's *Recorder!*" Back in its early days, the *Sabbath Recorder*—as a weekly newspaper—kept readers informed of Conference work, plus national and world events. First based in New York City, it was a primary news source for many Seventh Day Baptists.

The *Recorder* became a monthly magazine in 1974. Today, with the lead

time necessary to get the files to the commercial press (so they can print and mail them out by the first of the month), we must finish prepping most of the pages by mid-month. So, if some news comes in to us near the middle or end of the month, sometimes it doesn't appear in your home for another six weeks to two months. Talk about "history!"

Plus, we can't compete with the saturation of instant-news sources today. That's why you rarely see references to "current" news events. We did pre-empt our usual features for the first Gulf War, and for the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the U.S.

It's time to mention one more catastrophic event.

The latest death toll from the massive tsunami in southern Asia stands at over 225,000 in 12 countries. December 26, 2004, was the last day on earth for so many, and that date will remain transfixed in the minds of countless survivors—especially the orphans.

Evil in mankind, it seems, is fairly easy to explain. But natural disasters usually prove a greater challenge to believers in a just and good God.

Searching for a Christian response to this tragedy, I came across some interesting writings on the Web.

One Methodist pastor, Frank Schaefer, pointed out that "the Bible does not blame God for disasters; it assures us that God will help us through the hardships that befall us in life. God wants to guide us and carry us through catastrophes."

He then quotes from Isaiah 43:2—*"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze."*

Schaefer asks, "How do we tell that to the millions who lost their homes and loved ones?"

"Very difficult questions cannot be answered with theological clichés. They are questions to be raised and heard and to be pondered without jumping to a quick-fix answer."

Nathan Nettleton, a young Baptist pastor from Melbourne, Australia, expressed his anguish in prose. He imagined all the people who were partying and preparing for Christmas, oblivious to the mounting pressure beneath the ocean.

"'All is calm, all is bright,' we sang. 'Sleep in heavenly peace.' 'Now ye hear of endless bliss,' we sang. 'While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.'"

"'We will live forever more, because of Christmas Day,' we sang. But the pressure grew and grew, knowing nothing of the bliss of our songs or the angels' watch."

Nettleton then detailed the gruesome horrors of the tsunami, finishing that section with, "It was all over in minutes. The water ran back into the sea, taking with it whatever it wished; whatever it hadn't impaled or trapped or buried."

"What do those songs mean now? Do the angels' tidings of great joy mean anything in the face of this? Can we stand in the mud and debris of Banda Aceh or Phuket or Galle and speak of the one who is called Emmanuel, God with us?"

"Or would it sound obscene? But that's the challenge, isn't it? Because if the Christmas Gospel has nothing meaningful to say in [these devastated places] then it doesn't really have anything meaningful to say at all. Someone once said that any theology that can't be preached in the presence of parents grieving over their slaughtered children isn't worth preaching anywhere else."

Anglican Vicar John Wilkins sums it up this way: "Our faith can survive such disasters. What we can do is help one another, and continue looking in the distance, knowing that while creation is in agony, in our hands we have the tools to do a little—open a small breathing space, light a candle, hold a hand, or carry a dead body lovingly to its grave, the same way our Savior's body was carried into the tomb."

Faced with one of the worst natural disasters in modern history, may we do what we can to preach—no, *live*—the Gospel for those who are hurting. Give to the SDB United Relief Fund and other reputable agencies for the multitudes who need the hope of a new day.

Librarian-Historian Job Notice

The Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society is seeking a Librarian-Historian. Major responsibilities of the position include:

- **M**anage the Society's historical library and denominational archives (collections related to the history of Seventh Day Baptists and the Sabbath) at the Seventh Day Baptist Center, Janesville, Wis.
- **M**anage the computerization of the library catalogs and extensive periodical indexes (currently not computerized).
- **E**ngage in historical research and communication of Seventh Day Baptist history and heritage through many media and for a variety of audiences.
- **A**dminister the Society's work, reporting to the president of the Society and its Board of Directors.

Tasks included in the role of librarian include acquisitions, accessioning, cataloging, indexing, and preservation; much reference assistance and question-answering through mail, e-mail, and telephone correspondence. It may also involve employing and supervising part-time or volunteer assistants.

The historian role includes writing and publication, programs and speeches, displays, teaching, and responding to requests from SDB agencies, churches, officers, members, and the general public through visits, correspondence, and professional meetings.

The historian may also be called upon to represent the Society and Seventh Day Baptists in a variety of settings.

The Librarian-Historian's office will be in the Seventh Day Baptist Center in Janesville, Wis. Interested applicants may send a letter of introduction and resumé of education and experience to the president of the SDB Historical Society:

*Janet Thorngate
88 Terrace Ave.
Salem, WV 26426*

Phone: (304) 782-1727

E-mail: djthorn17@aol.com