

FREE METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# Newsletter

WINTER 2014 — Volume 14, No. 2



B.T. Roberts  
(1823-93)

Published by the  
**Marston Memorial  
Historical Center**  
ISSN 1546-4199

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## Reinventing Connectionalism

“Connectionalism” means all the ways people in a denomination are linked together or “connected.” In the 1800s, some denominations were called “connections.”

The Free Methodist Church is a *connection*—not just a bunch of independent congregations. We’ve always been a connectional church.

Today, many people lament the decline in FM connections. We are not tied together by the same bonds that linked us “in the olden days”—District Quarterly Meetings, week-long annual conferences held during camp meetings, high loyalty to *The Free Methodist* and our Sunday School literature, close attachment to our colleges, shared lifestyle distinctives, and for years *The Light and Life Hour*. And so forth.

Has connectionalism died? Are we no longer really a denomination, *a people*?

*Light & Life Magazine* recently addressed this question (October 2013). In the lead article, International Child Care Ministries Director Linda Adams argues that connectionalism is being reinvented in the twenty-first century through burgeoning FM networks—Clear Blue Global Water Project, Eden Reforestation, the microenterprise initiative SEED, the Set Free Movement, Heavenly Treasures, and others. International Child Care and Free Methodist World Missions are a huge and important part of this.

Growing up in the church and then as a pastor, Adams had been “deeply enriched” by denominational connections such as “camps, choirs, colleges, conferences and Continental Urban Exchange (CUE).” But now, she says, “an exciting new level of connection has emerged” through FM-related networks that link Free Methodists in North America with our

(Continued on page 4)

## Meet Our New Editor

The new editor of the *Free Methodist Historical Society Newsletter* is Christy Mesaros-Winckles. Christy, a member of the Committee on Free Methodist History and Archives, takes over editorial responsibilities with the next issue.

Christy is Program Coordinator for Communication Studies at Siena Heights University in Adrian, Michigan. Her 2012 dissertation at Bowling Green State University, “Only God Knows the Opposition We Face: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth Century Free Methodist Women’s Quest for Ordination,” just won the Dissertation of the Year Award by the Religious Communication Association. Christy has extensively

researched early FM women.

Christy is a graduate of Spring Arbor University and completed a Masters of Communications degree there in 2008. She is married to

Andrew Winckles, who will be assisting with book reviews for the Newsletter. Howard Snyder will remain on the Editorial Committee, along with Cathy Fortner, Julianne Class, and Doug Koskela. □



Christy Mesaros-Winckles

# GROWING UP IN THE DUST BOWL

BY DONALD MARVIN JOY

My mother, Marie Royer Joy, went into labor with me at the homestead of Charles and Carrie Joy, my grandparents. Their home was twenty miles southwest of Dodge City, Kansas. Dad's younger brother drove to Dodge City to alert Doctor E. W. Adams to come and deliver Marvin and Marie's firstborn. It was August 20, 1928.

Doc Adams, as everyone knew him, was the son of the original pioneer Doc Adams popularized by the fictional TV series *Gunsmoke*, which was set in Dodge.

Doc Adams delivered me with forceps clamped around my head, leaving scars on my forehead visible in early photos—and also a bleed scar or *meningioma* across my lower back skull, discovered only after a fall when I was in my seventies!

My home was on a dirt farm in Meade County, thirteen miles from the Joy homestead in Gray County. Dad recruited help and built a reinforced concrete basement with a roof designed to serve later as the first floor of an eventual home.

Our farm was in Kansas' Artesian Valley. When dust storms struck in the early 1930s, thick clouds of dust would roll in from the northwest and darken the sky until even at noon you couldn't see your hand up in front of your face. The buffalo grass prairies had been plowed under and tilled, and even a small shower would form a crust of hardened soil. Then the high plains never-ending winds would carve gouges deep into the soil. Thousands of tons of high plains fertile soil moved to the southern states!

During a dust storm, we could not see the barn. Cattle would slowly come into the corral. Chickens went into the chicken house and climbed up on the roosts, thinking it was night. It was all but impossible to drive an automobile or truck in blinding total darkness and dust thicker than fog.

The dust storms were followed by massive infestations of grasshoppers which would lock on to fence posts and eat the soft wood between the grains of the wood, making them honey-combed. Rabbits and other wild animals had no vegetation to eat.

## CAVE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

I was in church within a week or two of my birth. I was the first grandchild of Charles and Carrie Joy. My grandmother was the youngest child of William Wesley and Mary Baird Hulet. William was a frontier Free Methodist evangelist and church planter (mentioned in Hogue's *History of the Free Methodist Church*, 2:103, 104).

The Hulet children sometimes traveled by horse-drawn wagon with their parents to William's revivals. Three of his and Mary's four sons became ordained FM ministers.

Grandma herself should have been ordained! She single-handedly scheduled evangelists, often from Kentucky, to preach two- or three-week revivals in Cave School, the one-room schoolhouse we attended. Grandpa Joy was among the converts.



1. Carrie Hulet Joy
2. Cave Free Methodist Church building soon after completion
3. Joy and Gardner children together (L to R): Gevene Gardner, Ardith Gardner, Carol Gardner, Ellen Mae Joy, Irvin Joy, Eva Joy, Mary Lorene Joy, Carrie Belle Joy, Clarence Joy, Oral Gardner

For more images visit:  
[www.flickr.com/photos/53054380@N03/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/53054380@N03/)

The converts formed a Free Methodist "society," part the West Kansas Conference. Soon John Anton offered to donate five acres on the northeast corner of his homestead for Cave Free Methodist Church. A building was erected with living quarters in the basement for a pastoral family to use until a proper parsonage could be built.

The sloped floor of the sanctuary, the gothic windows with crinkled opaque glass, and the raised preaching platform and communion/mourners' rail were nicely finished but plain and in good taste.

Why the name "Cave" for the school and church? It denoted the dwellings most homesteaders used to survive their first winter. Grandpa and Grandma Joy lived in a dug-out cave with southern exposure. Before the second winter and the birth of my Uncle Irvin they built a granary and lived there. Soon my father, Marvin, was born. Grandpa Joy built the first of several sections of their pioneer home.

## THE HULET HERITAGE

Grandma Carrie Hulet Joy told us her name "Carrie" had a connection to Vivian Dake and his remarkable world mission group, the Pentecost Bands. William Wesley Hulet and Vivian Dake had encouraged each other's freelance evangelizing work. Dake named one of his daughters "Carrie" (later Mrs. Carrie Dake Kline).

Both Dake and my great-grandfather Hulet laid down their lives early. Dake died at age 38 while on a missions trip to Africa. William Hulet was a frontier street preacher. He preached on the old Chisholm Trail where it passed through Dodge City. The ranchers and hands driving cattle from Texas and Okla-

homa to Kansas City markets customarily bedded down the cattle there and hung out in Front Street saloons. An old man I once met in California had grown up in Dodge City, where his father was the postmaster, and he told this story:

As a young boy I liked to sit on the steps of a barbershop on Front Street, and I always enjoyed hearing your grandpappy preach. He was unafraid of the cowboys, even though some were a little drunk and rowdy. I watched one day as a tall very sober cowboy walked up to your grandpa and stood beside him and quieted the crowd. He pulled out both revolvers and held them on the crowd and said, "Men, this preacher came here to preach, and you're going to listen!"

He held his guns on them until Rev. Hulet invited men to turn their lives over to Jesus. Your grandpa said he wanted to see them and to pray with those ready to have a new life.

The cowboy then put one gun in its holster and pulled off his ten-gallon hat. The hat in one hand and gun in the other, he said, "Now it is time for you to give this preacher an offering!"

I heard your grandpa often as he made his circuit of places where he knew there were hardworking people all over the frontier.

Grandpa Hulet planted churches in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. My grandmother, Carrie Bell Hulet Joy, often recited the list of states where Grandpa Hulet traveled preaching. Grandpa Hulet and his wife maintained a home in Kansas City, Kansas. He died of a heart attack on the street in the saloon district, dressed in his best preaching clothes—and passersby assumed he was a drunk! He was fully committed to offer Jesus to the discouraged and the desperate.

### OUR CLASS MEETING

Drop into Cave Church on any quarterly "fifth Sunday" morning, and you'd find yourself welcomed into the FM version of the Wesleyan class meeting. Our members lived in six counties. They always came the distance to class meeting to keep faith with each other by reporting on their walk with Jesus. This meant they came from Satanta, Montezuma, Fowler, Ensign, and Dodge City.

For years our class leader was Gladys Zortman. Her father, Orville Newell, was an ordained FM preacher and a self-supporting mechanic. He was our tender and effective pastor. Gladys, a former school teacher, was a full-time mom tutoring four sons, Ed, Chuck, Cay, and Gary. Ed was with me all through school from first grade through our junior year of high school, when the Navy V-12 program whisked me into college to speed me toward officer's training.

Gladys was a fine Bible teacher. In class meeting she always gave us a clear, brief homily before asking us to stand and report on our "walk with the Lord." We could stand and volunteer—or if not, Gladys would call us by name and ask whether we were

### LIGHT & LIFE HOUR QUARTET MUSIC:

3-CD sets are now available.

A set will be sent free to everyone contributing \$50 or more to the Marston Memorial Historical Center.

ready. There was never any humiliation or hint of shaming.

Javene, one of our members, had married Caleb, an unchurched young farmer. My dad once reported on his own experience of walking with Jesus and then, turning to look a few rows back, said, "I appreciate how faithful Caleb S— is and how much we all respect him. I would like it sometime if Caleb would just stand and tell us how he experiences Jesus."

Caleb slowly rose and thanked my Dad. "I don't talk much," he said. "But I want to walk close to God like many of you do. You help me by making me feel welcome."

### "A PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY"

I served as pastor at Cave Church for two years, 1950-52. Robbie and I had been married in 1948, just before my senior year at Greenville College, and were now both teaching elementary school in Minneola, Kansas. When the previous pastor, Robert Carver, was elected conference superintendent, I accepted part-time appointment as pastor while continuing to teach. We lived in the parsonage which had recently been provided.

I reached out to a wider constituency. I made "cold" drop-in visits to farm families, most of whom I already knew. I visited two or three homes each Saturday afternoon. I handed them a welcome card and schedule. I reminded them that we were the only church within many miles, and we wanted them to know they could call on us for any kind of help. "Send word, and we'll get folks together to help you," I said. None of us had telephones, but it was common for folks to "go for help in an emergency."

### SOLIDARITY

I was twelve or so when, following an evening service, Gladys Zortman called several adults together before we left to drive home. She said, "I have just learned that H--- R--- is graduating from Central College in a few weeks. We gave him his exhorter's license, and we recommended him to the conference for his preparatory membership on his way to ordination. If the conference doesn't have a place for him, we are responsible to make a place for him to serve here."

I cannot explain even now how deeply that brief appeal formed my sense of the safety of unconditional mutual honesty within the body of Christ. □

▷ MORE B. T. ROBERTS LETTERS FOUND – Going through a box of letters labeled "Missions – Ebey, Arnold, Kelley to 1891" our new archivist, Julianne Class, found several previously unknown letters of B. T. Roberts. The letters are addressed to T. B. Arnold and Samuel Chesbro in Chicago and relate to the church's growing missions program; they were written in 1889 and 1890. Roberts signed his letters, "Yours in Jesus."

▷ The FREE METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY now has over 400 members. See the list enclosed with this issue of the *Newsletter*. Use the enclosed response envelope to join or to renew your membership.

▷ Recently Dosseh Takpale from Togo did research at the MMHC on the history of the FMC in West Africa. He is working on his Masters thesis, and will give a copy to the Center when it is completed.

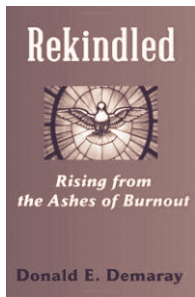
▷ THANK YOU to the 132 people and several local churches who contributed \$17.14 or more for expanded staff hours in 2014. So far approximately \$6,000 has been received toward our \$35,989 goal.

News  
& Notes



# Books in Review

**Rekindled: Rising from the Ashes of Burnout**, by Donald E. Demaray (Emeth Press, 2013). xxv + 255 pp. (paper).



From the prolific pen of Dr. Don Demaray comes another very practical and timely book, *Rekindled*. Demaray always writes with profundity masked by simplicity, and that's true here. Designed to be read over a quarter, the book is divided into thirteen weeks, each with seven brief daily readings. A feature I especially like: Each day's reading begins with the heading *Rx info-med*, indicating both informa-

tion and meditation. The readings "indicate causes and suggest cures." This is a very helpful and hopeful approach for people (pastors, or anyone) struggling with burnout or discouragement, since it weds instruction with gentle encouragement.

*Rekindled* is an updated version of Demaray's earlier book, *Watch Out for Burnout: A Look at Its Signs, Prevention, and Cure* (Baker, 1983). It is a thorough revision and draws significantly on new sources and research. Each week's reading

ends with a pithy "Summary Point of Hope and Healing"—for example: "Laughter does surgery on negative thoughts and ushers in joy and peace"; "Frozen anger often creates depression; forgiveness results in peace."

The book covers many practical topics: real spirituality, time, family life, anger, the healing power of humor, and the inter-relationship of body, mind, and spirit. It can be as useful in the prevention of burnout as in its cure.

## OTHER BOOKS OF NOTE

*Methodist Doctrine: The Essentials*, by Ted Campbell (rev. ed.; Abingdon Press, 2011, 159 pp., paper). Campbell, professor of church history at Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, summarizes the main doctrines held by denominations in the Wesleyan tradition and compares these with other traditions. Useful features include a republishing of Wesley's "General Rules" (1743) and a fairly extensive combined glossary and index.

*American Methodism: A Compact History*, by leading Methodist historians Russell Richey, Kenneth Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt (Abingdon, 2010, 2012, 276 pp., paper). A very useful overview covering the period from 1760 to 2000. It is a concise companion to the authors' two-volume *The Methodist Experience in America*. — Howard A. Snyder, Wilmore, Kentucky

## IN MEMORIAM: ELTON O. SMITH, JR.

Rev. Elton O. Smith Jr. passed away on October 12, 2013, in North Chili, N.Y. Elton was a longtime student of Free Methodist history and a former member of the Committee on Free Methodist History and Archives. He was named to the committee in 1980 and served as chair, 1990-1998.



Elton was born on January 18, 1939 in Geneva, N.Y., the only son of the late Rev. Elton Sr. and Ruth (Gould) Smith. He was a graduate of Asbury Theological Seminary and served as a pastor and conference superintendent in New York and North Michigan. He is survived by his wife Wilda, son Gregory, and daughters Wendy and Ronette and their families.

The Smith family has suggested that friends of the Historical Center who wish to make memorial gifts send them to the Marston Memorial Historical Center. □

## LETTERS

A recent issue of the *Newsletter* [Winter 2013] had an item about Mrs. Emma J. Ray and her husband, Rev. L. P. Ray. She wrote the book, *Twice Sold, Twice Ransomed*. The Rays held meetings in many FM churches in our area, beginning about 1890. In 1920, My mother was 12 when she attended a service where they spoke. She wrote, "That meeting was the first time I realized that the Holy Spirit was speaking to my heart. I went forward to the altar, and my spiritual journey was begun." — Robert McDowell, Stanwood, Wash.

## Reinventing Connectionalism (Cont'd)

sisters and brothers in the global church. She writes, "We previously experienced nowhere near this level of partnership. The stunning fact is that our maturing global family has branched out in so many ways, with so many connections, only the Lord of the church could possibly track them all!"

From a historical perspective, we celebrate all these new ways Free Methodists are now connected globally. Other key connections: FM Bible quizzing, FM Healthcare Fellowship, Men's and Women's Ministries International, FM Chaplains Association, Infuse Youth Ministry, and several other networks.

And yet a network of networks is not the same as connectionalism. Question to consider: What would be some "functional equivalents" today of such things as the DQM (District Quarterly Meeting), week-long annual conferences, and other face-to-face events that the Internet can't replace? Connections that give a shared, high-touch sense of radical Free Methodist identity for the sake of God's Kingdom now and into the future.

What do you think? Do you have ideas? If so, send them to us at [history@fmcusa.org](mailto:history@fmcusa.org). □

## the QUOTABLE Roberts

[Ordained ministers] do not constitute the church. . . . They are simply the servants of the church, useful while they keep their place, but usurpers when, in their pride and arrogance, they lord it over God's heritage.

— B. T. Roberts,  
*Fishers of Men* (1878), p. 321-22.