

# NEWS

from the **EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED HISTORICAL SOCIETY UCC**

*Sponsored Agency of the Historical Council, United Church of Christ*

Dear Member,  
Due to our increased costs we must revise our mailing list and drop those who have not paid their dues for the past three years. Please remit your annual dues in order to show your support for the work of the Society and to continue receiving the newsletter. They may be sent either to the Historical Council or to ERHS UCC. See membership form.

May 1981

Volume 9, No. 1

## TRIBUTE AND MEMORIAL TO DR. GEORGE H. BRICKER

The Society sustained a severe loss when its beloved President since 1973, the Reverend Dr. George H. Bricker died on January 11, 1981. He had been librarian and archivist of the Central Archives and Library of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society since 1967 as well as archivist of the United Church of Christ since 1970. His devotion to the work of this Society and his love for the traditions which it seeks to preserve are well known to readers of this newsletter. That dedication to its work was demonstrated to the very end since his final accomplishment before entering the hospital was the preparation of the last issue of the newsletter for mailing.

The aspect of the Evangelical and Reformed heritage for which he had the deepest affection was the Mercersburg Theology of John W. Nevin and Philip Schaff. He was an author and joint editor of the Lancaster Series on Mercersburg Theology as well as joint editor of two volumes of writings by Nevin and Schaff recently published by Pickwick Press. He taught a popular course at Lancaster Theological Seminary on Mercersburg Theology and gave frequent lectures on the topic before church groups.

Besides being a remarkable theological scholar and historian George Bricker was an exceptional administrator. He served as this Society's President, librarian and archivist while also carrying on his duties as professor of theology and librarian at Lancaster Theological Seminary. Under his management the library grew to become one of the most distinguished libraries in the country for a seminary of Lancaster's size. His reputation as an outstanding theological librarian was widely known so that his services were frequently sought as a consultant under the auspices of the American Theological Library Association, of which he was a former president.

But George Bricker was more than scholar, teacher and administrator. He was more than a historian interested in the church's past. He was a dedicated pastor who was always deeply concerned about the life of the Church in the present. He himself preferred to be known as "pastor". Before becoming librarian and professor of theology at Lancaster Theological Seminary, he had served pastorates at St. John's Reformed Church, Johnstown, 1936-1944, Trinity-Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church, Waynesboro, 1944-1954 and St. Peter's Evangelical and Reformed Church, Lancaster, 1954-1957. But even after coming to the Seminary, his work as pastor continued, to students at the seminary, to pastors in the community, as well as to the churches in which he would often preach and sometimes serve as interim minister. He was interim pastor at Zion UCC, Millersville and St. Luke's UCC, Lancaster. He was also a valued member of the Church and Ministry Committee of Lancaster Association of Penn Central Conference.

He leaves a gaping hole in this Society, in the Seminary, and in the United Church of Christ which no one person or several persons can hope to fill. We can be deeply thankful to God for such a life, that it has touched ours, and that it will continue to inspire us in the days ahead.

This newsletter is dedicated in honor of Dr. George H. Bricker, President of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, 1973-1981. We include the meditation



of the Reverend Horace Sills, Conference Minister, Penn Central Conference, which was given at the funeral for Dr. Bricker, in Santee Chapel, Lancaster Theological Seminary, January 14, 1981. The fund of gifts to the Society in memory of George Bricker now totals \$ 1,110.00. As the minutes of the Executive Committee indicate, this memorial fund will be used to publish the register of Reformed Church records held in the Central Archives. This is a project which Mrs. Florence Bricker, the present archivist has been working on for several years and the publication of which George Bricker was very much interested in. It is therefore a fitting memorial in his honor.

John B. Payne

#### THE INTERPRETER OF THE STONES

You have come to this place, as I have come, out of a deep and abiding respect for a friend. Everyone within the sound of my voice could recite a eulogy of praise for George Bricker. Each one could recount an instance in time when an illuminating thought, a challenging dream, a lesson of history, an appreciation of tradition, a recollection of humor passed between you and the professor of many titles, the holder of many honors, the voice of many challenges. He was to us what we needed him to be -- what we wanted him to be -- what God expected him to be. He was to one a husband, to another a father, to another a brother, to others a pastor, to others a teacher, to others a storehouse of historical fact, to others a traditionalist with a sense of duty to preserve that which should be preserved and to improve that which needed improving. In these and other roles, he was sometimes blustery, sometimes insistent, sometimes pensive, sometimes patient, sometimes impatient, sometimes demanding, sometimes compromising, but always in there trying to make things come out right for the church he respected, the people he loved, and the Lord whose banner he carried everywhere. No one can really be all things to all people, but George Bricker came very close to the challenge.

The Church is always in tension between that which has been and that which ought to be. We are caught in the vortex of time with almost indistinguishable forces pulling at our resources and our energies to move this way or that without regard to consequences. There are those who believe we must give up traditions of recent memory to address what some consider to be the immediacy of a new age. There are some who seek to hold on to those traditions at the expense of losing relevancy as new experiences are revealed to us. How to maintain balance as creativity for God in the tension of two worlds is a constant challenge to the church of our Lord. It has always been so.

When Joshua took over the leadership of the tribes of Israel following the death of Moses, there were still miles to travel to the Promised Land and there were still barriers to cross. One such barrier was the river Jordan which at that season overflowed its banks with flood waters. At God's command, Joshua planned his strategy and sent the priests with the Ark of the Covenant, the history of God's word to his people, out into the water. The water from above ceased to flow and there appeared before the priests a measure of dry ground on which the people walked to the other side. When all had crossed over, Joshua selected twelve men, one from each tribe, and sent them back into the river to take up twelve stones on which the feet of the priests had stood. They brought the stones to the other side of Jordan and made there an altar to the Lord. Joshua explained to the people that this was to be a sign to future generations, some of whom might ask: "What do these stones Mean?" And the people could answer that here the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord and the stones would be to the people of Israel a memorial forever.

The significance of this crossing and the magnitude of this little rehearsed moment in time and space cannot be ignored. Joshua knew and the people knew that



they could not stand still beside the Jordan. But they also knew that river separated them from past slavery and future freedom. They knew they stood at that moment in the today of necessity remembering the yesterdays past as important ingredients to meet the tomorrows yet unseen. And they marked the place as a chain link to history. They would go on to new adventures, they would go on to new challenges, new trials, new victories, but they would never forget the way they had come. The stones from the Jordan had a meaning and there would always be people who could interpret that meaning for those who might want to forget.

Throughout his professional career, George Bricker served the whole Church as an Interpreter of the stones. Never was he ashamed of our history. When, in the exhilaration of trying something new in the ministries the Lord lay before us, many would have ignored the contributions of yesterday's generation, George would call us to task and remind us of our rich heritage. When in our enthusiasm to always be on the so called "cutting edge of society" some would have us soften the impact of the Gospel message, George would blast us with cautions and make us remember in love and importance the stones of another age. When it no longer seemed fashionable to some people to have students learn the intricacies of church government, George took it upon himself to produce a course par excellence to transmit knowledge of what it was and is and should be in the workings of the church. He didn't always wait for us to ask the meaning of the stones, he often told us whether we wanted to hear or not -- and thank God he did.

And now this Interpreter has departed. He has reminded us for the last time. He has left us at the Jordan of our own crossing -- at the space between yesterday and tomorrow -- between the what was and what ought to be. But the stones remain, and although, perhaps not as eloquently, not as forcefully, not as dramatically insistent, another will come forward -- must come forward -- to tell us what they mean. George Bricker would insist upon that, and so do I.

The Church of our Lord will go on without George Bricker, but we will go on more confidently because of him. We embrace one another in our sorrow. We put arms around each other in spiritual and physical comfort. We shed our tears of sadness together in love, and we sing with rejoicing in celebration of the fullness of life for him whom the Lord called to give the meaning of the stones. There is, therefore, no more appropriate verse of scripture to recite than the last one in the Book: "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen." And, although my friend would never admit it of himself, George Bricker was and is a saint. Amen and Amen.

-Horace S. Sills  
1/14/81

THE REV. DR. JAMES H. LIGHTBOURNE

Together with his host of friends everywhere the Historical Society mourns the passing of the Rev. Dr. James H. Lightbourne. His leadership and executive ability will be missed in many places and in many ways. His devotion to the United Church of Christ enabled him to speak with a voice of deep concern and authority for the Church. But his concern given to the more serious matters of church leadership was intermingled with a great sense of humor. Perhaps one of the most vivid memories that I have of Dr. Lightbourne was when, after a meeting of the Historical Commission in Lancaster, the members would gather in our home for a time of relaxation and fellowship. He shared with others the joys of reminiscing and the telling of stories and he seemed to enjoy it all wholeheartedly.



Dr. Lightbourne's death came suddenly, but now that we have had time to reflect upon that loss, we should accept it as a challenge to take up the work that he began and carry it forward for the sake of the Church, because, in so doing, we can truly honor him.

Mrs. George H. Bricker/Archivist

MARY MARGARET RUPP

Mary Margaret, who was a Volunteer on the staff of the Lancaster Central Archives, died on April 26, 1981. She worked on special projects one morning a week for over four years and gave excellent, meticulous service in cataloging: deeds, and related materials; genealogical materials; and the Papers of Rev. Theodore Appel (1823-1909). One of the daughters of Dr. Appel, Miss Charlotte (1855-1940) served as Curator of our Society from 1920-1940 and was no doubt responsible for keeping this valuable historical collection together which was recently given to the Society.

Mary Margaret made a very real contribution in putting in useable order very valuable archival material.

Herbert B. Anstaett/Executive Secretary

150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA CLASSIS OF THE REFORMED CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

The North Carolina Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States was organized at Brick Church, Whitsett in May, 1831. On May 23, 1981 the 150th anniversary of this occasion will be celebrated at the same Brick Church. The original seventeen churches of the Classis will be recognized and some of the delegates to the centennial celebration in 1931 will share in this year's event. All members of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society are invited to take part in the celebration which will begin at 10:00 A.M. Brick Church is located South of I-85 off Highway 61. It is between Highways 61 and 62, near the Alamance Battle Ground. Send luncheon reservations to the Reverend Robert Disher, Route 1, Box 287, Burlington, N.C. 27215.

A CONVOCATION ON THEOLOGY AND WORSHIP IN THE TRADITION OF MERCERSBURG

On May 6, 1981 a Convocation on Theology and Worship in the Tradition at Mercersburg took place at St. John's U.C.C., Reading, Pa., the Reverend Harry G. Royer, Pastor. Featured speakers were Dr. Howard G. Hageman, President, New Brunswick Seminary and Dr. Erik Routley, noted specialist on hymnody from Westminster Choir College. Other participants in this colloquium which concluded with a Service of Word and Sacrament were The Rev. Dr. John C. Shetler, Conference Minister, Pennsylvania Southeast Conference, United Church of Christ, The Rev. Robert F. Harting, Moderator, Reading Association, The Rev. Stephen W. Hoffman, Co-Pastor, St. John's U.C.C., Chambersburg, Pa., and the Rev. R. Howard Paine, Pastor of St. Thomas U.C.C., Reading.

On the next day, May 7, there was a meeting of the Biblical-Liturgical-Theological Group of the United Church of Christ at St. Mark's U.C.C., Reading, The Revs. Jack H. and Marilyn P. Haney, pastors. The Reverend R. Howard Paine presented a paper on "The Influence and Presence of Mercersburg in the Writing of the New United Church of Christ Book of Worship." There was also a panel discussion of "Mercersburg in the Context of Ecumenical Christianity." Participating on the panel were the Reverend Joseph Bassett,



Minister, First Parish, Unitarian-Universalist, Chestnut Hills, Massachusetts; Dr. Scott F. Brenner, Member of the Evangelical and Reformed Book of Worship Committee, 1947; and Dr. Hageman.

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
March 10, 1981

The Executive Committee of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society met at the Old First Reformed Church in Philadelphia on March 10, 1981. The meeting was opened with a prayer by Rudolf Schade at 11:30 A.M. The following members of the Committee were present: Mrs. George (Florence) Bricker, Owen L. Fox, John B. Payne, Rudolf G. Schade, Banks D. Shepherd, Frank W. Snider, Philip W. Weiss, Myron E. Wolf and Lowell H. Zuck.

The Minutes of the Executive Committee of October 11, 1980 were read. It was moved by Owen Fox to accept them as read. The motion was carried.

Myron Wolf presented the Financial Report for the year 1980. A discussion followed in which the Treasurer explained in detail the financial accounts and the financial situation of the Society. The remarks on his report will explain fully the concerns: "You will note that we again operated with a deficit. We have operated with a deficit for the third consecutive year. We rejoice that we were able to hold the deficit to \$866.09 and we rejoice that the support we have received has made it possible to hold our deficit to manageable figures. We are particularly grateful for the generous gifts listed on the Statement of Income and Expenses. Without this support, our days of operating as we do would be limited. If more Associations and Conferences could include us in their budgets for very modest amounts, this could help us build a more firm basis from which to operate." The Financial Report was received with much appreciation by the members of the Committee (See Reports Attached).

It became evident that all members felt the absence of George Bricker, President of the Society and Archivist of the E & R Archives and the UCC Archives for many years. His dedicated leadership and his outstanding services as Archivist became a part of the human treasures of the Society and the Archives. A fund has been established in his honor known as the "George Bricker Fund." As of this date \$925.00 have been received. Frank Snider reported that the Southern Chapter has established a George Bricker Memorial Fund which is to be used for the recording of "Oral History."

Philip Weiss nominated John B. Payne for President of the E & R Historical Society. Weiss emphasized that anyone who is to succeed George Bricker should be close to the Lancaster Archives. John Payne is a member of the Historical Council of the UCC, but he had not been active in the E & R Historical Society. All members of the Executive Committee approved the nomination. John Payne stated that it is an honor to try to fill the place left vacant by the death of George Bricker.

Florence Bricker was nominated by Philip Weiss for Archivist of the E & R Archives. The discussion centered around the concern about the UCC Archives. It was agreed upon that Florence Bricker would serve also as Archivist of the UCC Archives until such time when a full time Archivist can be called. The motion was carried.

The report by John Payne concerning salary increases was adopted. According to this the following monthly increases were granted: Florence Bricker \$50, Elizabeth K. Sanders \$15, Herbert Anstaett \$15, Wilferd W. Bohley \$10, Lowell Zuck \$15. Myron Wolf's annual honorarium was set at \$500.

John Payne presented the request from General Synod to the Lancaster and Eden



Archives to have a display set up by the archives at the next General Synod portraying the various aspects of the history of the UCC Church. The committee members expressed their agreement and encouraged those responsible for the archives to set up a proper display.

The Congregational Christian Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on March 30 in Boston. They have asked John Payne to attend this meeting but he will be unable to attend.

Dr. J. Yorke Peeler, Jr., from Upper Montclair, New Jersey would like to be helpful in the publication of the "News". Due to the distance it would be very difficult to make such services meaningful. Florence Bricker expressed the continuous need for contributions to the newsletter.

Owen Fox reported for the auditing committee, "I have examined the records of the Treasurer as of December 31, 1980 and found them correct and in order. Owen L. Fox, Chairman, Auditing Committee."

The annual meeting of the Society will be held October 9-10, 1981 in Lancaster (note change of date in announcement at end of newsletter). The program will center upon a formal presentation of the Archives, a visit to the Archives and an address by John Payne.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rudolf G. Schade, Secretary

#### REPORT OF THE ARCHIVIST

It was an honor and an expression of confidence when the Executive Committee of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society asked me to take over the responsibility as archivist of the Society. I cannot fill that office as my husband did, but for his sake and for the Church I will do the work to the best of my ability. George and I worked together in the Archives for the past ten years. He was an excellent and patient teacher as step by step he pointed out to me the importance of archives. He gave me knowledge of why and how church records; reports of our Boards and Committees at all levels in the Church; and biographical material for church leaders should be preserved. He taught me the technique of searching for records and obscure information in order to aide those persons visiting the archives and for those who write to us.

At the spring meeting of the Executive Committee, held in Philadelphia, March 10th the Rev. Dr. John Payne, professor of Church History at the Seminary, was elected President of the Society. We are grateful for his willingness to assume the responsibilities of this office. Dr. Payne will also be serving as Editor of the Newsletter.

At the present time we are fortunate in having the following part-time staff to carry on the work at the Lancaster archives: Dr. Herbert B. Anstaett, Executive Secretary of the Society, Elizabeth K. Sanders, Researcher, Josephine Royce, Cataloger, Connie Stetter, full-time Secretary and Mrs. Florence M. Bricker, Archivist. It seems to me that since January every member of the staff is working harder, sharing more responsibility, and trying to make sure that the work of the Society goes forward. This is sincerely appreciated.

At the present time several members of the staff are taking an inventory of our



holdings. Jeffrey Dick, a seminary senior, is helping with the moving of books and shelves.

The Historical Society has been requested to submit pictures and materials pertaining to the work of the archives for display at the 13th General Synod meeting in Rochester, N.Y. June 27-July 1, 1981.

Mrs. Florence M. Bricker/Archivist

LUCILE BRACKBILL

The following letter was sent to Lucile Brackbill, the Society's former cataloger, after her profile was published in the last News...

January 23, 1981

Dear Lucile Brackbill:

After I saw in the E. and R. Historical Society "News" for December that appreciative summary of your fruitful life and your service to the church, I just felt I wanted to write you a note of gratitude; and I persuaded our mutual friend, Herbert Anstaett, to trust me enough to give me your proper home address.

Your name became a familiar one to me during the years when you were at Franklin and Marshall College and with the E. and R. Historical Society. I've lived long enough (80 years now) to have learned that it is folks who serve quietly, humbly, and efficiently as you have all through the years who really make it possible for a few of us to get our names and pictures in the paper fairly frequently. I feel that the old Reformed Church, and later the Evangelical and Reformed, and more recently the United Church of Christ, have an immeasurable debt to you for your lifetime's work. I'm sure there are more people than you would ever imagine who, like myself, cherish a sense of gratitude for "Lucile Brackbill" even though they may never have had the privilege of meeting you personally.

God bless you.

Dr. James E. Wagner

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE 1981 ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society will be held October 17, 1981 (not October 10 as stated in the executive committee minutes), at Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. There will be an address by the new President, Dr. John B. Payne, the annual business meeting, a tour of the archives, and a luncheon in the refectory of the seminary. The executive committee of the Society will meet on October 16 at 7:30 P.M. in the Historical Society room of the Philip Schaff Library. The general meeting of the Society will commence at 9:00 A.M., Saturday, October 17. Bloc reservations have been made at the Holiday Inn, 1492 Lititz Pike Lancaster which gives the Seminary a special rate.

The group from Southern Conference under the Reverend Frank Snider's leadership will be staying at the Quality Inn, Lancaster.



REGISTRATION FORM FOR ANNUAL MEETING

Please return this form by September 15, 1981 to:

Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society  
The Annual Meeting  
555 West James Street  
Lancaster, PA 17603

- ( ) I plan to attend the Annual Meeting at Lancaster Theological Seminary.
- ( ) Please make reservations for \_\_\_\_\_ persons for October 16, 1981 \_\_\_\_\_  
and/or October 17 \_\_\_\_\_ at the Holiday Inn, 1492 Lititz Pike Lancaster, PA.

Single @ \$23.00

Double @ \$30.00

Please indicate whether you wish single rooms and how many or a double room.

- ( ) Please make my reservations for \_\_\_\_\_ persons for the luncheon, 12:30 P.M.,  
Saturday, October 17, 1981.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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MAILING LIST TO BE REVISED

At the present time there are over 1400 addresses on our mailing list. Due to the increased costs of printing and mailings we are revising our mailing list and will send the N E W S during 1981 only to those who have contributed during the last three years and/or those who are life members.

We urge you to send in your membership contribution now for the 1981 year. It may be sent to the Historical Council or to the ERHS UCC.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please enroll me as a member of the CCHS and the ERHS for 1981. Enclosed is my check.

Memberships

\_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor (\$100 or more)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Supporting (\$50 to \$99)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Sustaining (\$25 to \$49)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$10)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please detach and return to either the Historical Council UCC, 105 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016 or Evangelical & Reformed Historical Society, 555 W. James Street, Lancaster. PA 17603.