



Here & Now

Vol. 3

An update for Florida Baptist Historical Society Board of Directors and friends

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Penny Baumgardner
Secretary

Dear Board Members and Friends of the Florida Baptist Historical Society,

History never seems to stand still. Even when names, dates and places are in proper order there are always unusual interventions that affect our view of the past.

Last week Jerry Mae, Don Hepburn and I had lunch with John G. Crowell. Dr. Crowell is an assistant professor of history at Valdosta State University and is an authority on Baptist work in Florida from 1815-1830. *His book Primitive Baptists of the Wiregrass South, 1815 to the Present*, is a gold mine of Baptist work along the Georgia, Florida, Alabama frontier from its earliest days. His research is interesting (In 1821 land was one cent per acre in south Georgia) and informative (Early Baptists loved to sing but were not keen on books with musical notes or musical instruments). His break through research informs us that Hephzibah Baptist Church was constituted on January 23, 1825, (North Gadsden County, five miles inside the Florida State line) and that Mt. Gilead church of Jefferson County was constituted in 1826. The historical significance of these two churches is that neither of them appear in the Florida Baptist history works of Rogers, Rosser, Dalton or Joiner. These are Baptist churches that existed in Florida before the Southern Baptist Convention (1845) and before the Florida Baptist Convention was formed (1854).

Baptists are people of the Book and say they want to know the unvarnished truth. Baptists have always permitted valid research to find the light of day even when it re-evaluated the past (Roger Williams, William Whitsitt, Jack Dalton). The Crowley research tells of the Primitive Baptist origins in Florida and the anti-mission work of John Ryland, Sr., Matthew Albritton and Isham Peacock. History will not stand still. Dr. Crowley is one of the ones who is nudging it.

Our FBHS spring meeting is set for April 7-9, 2011. Our board of directors will meet Friday morning from 9-12 noon at Palatka and on Saturday, April 9 at 11:00 am we plan to dedicate a historical marker honoring Billy Graham at the Bostwick Baptist Church. It was at Bostwick that Billy Graham preached his first sermon on Easter Sunday night on March 28, 1937. Don Bailey, a retired member of the BGEA will represent Dr. Graham at the ceremony. Don served as Director of Public Relations for the BGEA for many years and was also the one who gave direction to the radio ministry of the association.

Our fall FBHS board meeting will be Monday morning, November 14, 2011, 9-12 noon at Coral Springs. This will be during the Florida Baptist Convention Pastor's Conference/Convention. Mark your calendar and plan to be with us for these important meetings.

Honoring those who honor Christ,

Jerry M. Windsor
Secretary-Treasurer
Matthew 6:33



Billy Graham, 1994
Cleveland Stadium