

# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST HISTORY AND HERITAGE SOCIETY

**Taking history into the 21<sup>st</sup> century is not easy.** Yet, that is exactly what we are finally achieving. The Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society has been in existence, in some form or another, since 1834. For 181 years we have been supporting Universalist heritage as it unfolds and later Unitarian history as it emerged. We want people to remember the stories, the events and the people. We want Unitarian Universalists to learn from the past as we grow into the future.

In order to carry our mission into the future and to reach each new generation, we are happy to announce three events:

*\*A beautiful and engaging new  
website: [uuhhs.org](http://uuhhs.org)*

*\*Entrance into social media of  
Facebook and Twitter*

*\*New endowed fund to ensure  
our annual Conrad Wright  
Lecture continues long into the  
future*



C. Conrad Wright

## **UUHHS is proud to co-sponsor two GA workshops:**

*Learning From Women's Outreach to Other Outsiders*, co-sponsored with UU Women's Federation and *A Way out of No Way*, co-sponsored with the Living Legacy Project.  
(Cont'd pg. 2)

## **Journal Reflects Historical Social Activism Us & Us**

By now most of you have received your copy of volume 38 of our *Journal of Unitarian Universalist History*. This issue celebrates the UU History and Heritage Convocation that met in fall 2013 in Chevy Chase, Maryland.  
(Cont'd pg. 4)

## **The Story of Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage: 1988-2011 (see pg. 6)**



# UU History and Heritage in the 21st C. page 2

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## **UUHHS in the 21st century cont'd.**

Seems obvious doesn't it? Not so easy with a small volunteer run organization such as ours. But we are determined to adapt to the future even as we honor and celebrate the past.

The Board members of the UUHHS were elected to ensure the mission of celebrating and honoring those who have previously created history and heritage. We take this mission very seriously as we continue the task set for us 181 years ago.

We need your help. We are asking you to do two things:

***\*Ensure your membership is up to date (you can check in this newsletter below).***

***\*Make a pledge to our endowed fund for the annual Conrad Wright Lecture***  
**Contact Kate Walker, President of UUHHS, [kwalker@uuma.org](mailto:kwalker@uuma.org)**

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## **GA Workshops cont'd**

*Learning From Women's Outreach to Other Outsiders*, is co-sponsored with UU Women's Federation and led by Dr. Cynthia Grant Tucker and Rev. Dr. Susan Ritchie

Cramped in a church that stifled their voices and vision 100 years ago, liberal women went outside its walls to practice a larger faith of community service and social betterment. This lecture and panel

response will explore how these early rebellions can help our own witness become more prophetic today.

Also being offered, *A Way out of No Way*, co-sponsored with the Living Legacy Project is led by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson.

When Unitarian Universalists have faced difficult conditions in the past, we have developed fresh energy. In the segregated, repressive southern society of the 1950s and '60s Unitarian Universalists "made a way out of no way." This workshop will include young adult UUs from the #BlackLivesMatter movement as respondents, creating dialogue about how the past offers wisdom for the present, and how the present helps us better understand the past.

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### ***Universalist New England Heritage Tour***

***September 21-27, 2015***

***Cost: \$900 incl. fees, accommodations  
and meals (except two lunches)***

***Highlights include Ferry Beach, Clara  
Barton Homestead and Camp, Green  
Mountain Academy in Vermont, the  
birthplace of Calvin Coolidge, tour of the  
first Universalist Church in America, the  
Judith Sargent Murray Museum***

Contact Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Strong at  
[estrong110@comcast.net](mailto:estrong110@comcast.net)

Sponsored by the Universalist Heritage  
Foundation

[www.universalistheritage.org](http://www.universalistheritage.org)



# History and Heritage Prizes

page 3

In 2015, we will be offering prizes for the best research essay by a seminarian and the best history-related religious education curriculum created since 2010. We will also offer a prize for the best recent history of a congregation in 2016.

## **Seminarian History Prize**

**\$1000 awarded in 2015**

The Seminarian History prize will be awarded for the best research essay on Unitarian Universalist history. Essays should be approximately 15-25 pages in length, and they must draw on primary sources and be organized around a clear thesis. Persons currently enrolled in an M.Div. program and/or who are Candidates for Ministerial Fellowship are eligible to participate.     Deadline: June 1, 2015

## **Religious Education Prize**

**\$1000 awarded in 2015**

The Religious Education Prize will be awarded in 2015 for the best original curriculum created since 2010 covering some aspect of Unitarian Universalist history. Both professional and volunteer religious educators may submit curricula; however, curricula commissioned by the UUA are not eligible. Curricula for children, youth, or adults are all eligible.     Deadline: June 1, 2015

## **Congregational History Prize**

**\$1000 awarded in 2016**

The Congregational History Prize will be awarded in 2016 for the best history of a local UU congregation prepared since 2012. Congregational histories should be at least 40 pages in length.     Deadline: June 1, 2016

Please direct submissions and questions to Dan McKanan at [dmckanan@hds.harvard.edu](mailto:dmckanan@hds.harvard.edu). As appropriate, winning submissions may be considered for publication in the *Journal of Unitarian Universalist History*. In addition to the \$1000 award, all winners will receive a free one-year membership in the Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society.

UUHHS is honored to support the publication of *Southern Witness: Unitarian Universalists in the Civil Rights Era*, by the Rev. Dr. Gordon Gibson, an engaging account of the roles that UU individuals and congregations played in the civil rights movement in the South in the 1950s and '60s. Orders are being taken now by the UUA bookstore.

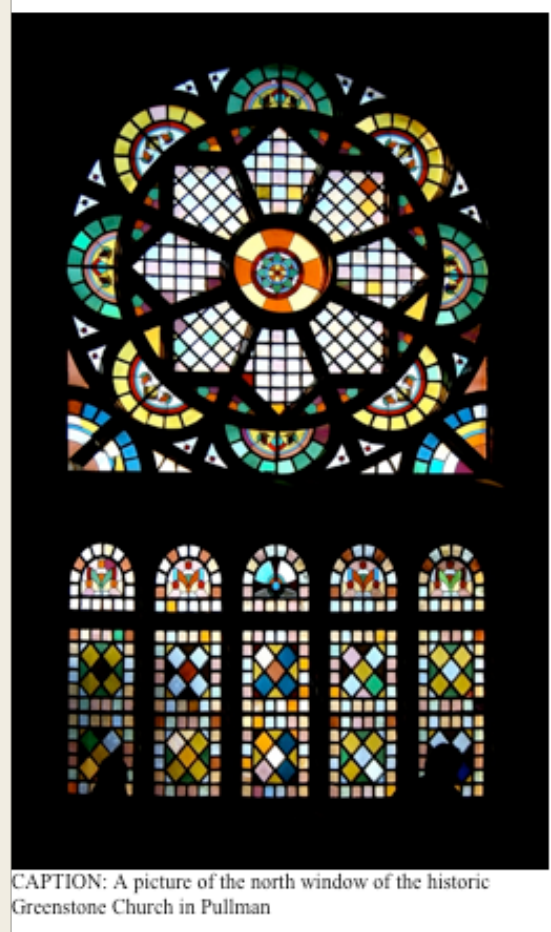
Our 2013 Convo was a fantastic gathering in which nearly 100 folks interested in UU history and heritage gathered for three days at the 4-H Conference Center. The theme of this memorable occasion, "Unitarian Universalism in our Nation's Capital and Beyond," is evident in the contents of the current journal.

The Collegium-sponsored scholarly address given by Philip Gura identifies the selfless virtue of benevolence toward one's friends, community, and nation as the theological link that connects Jonathan Edwards and Ralph Waldo Emerson. The keynote address of Mark Morrison-Reed reflects on the long largely unsung role of Unitarians and Universalists in civil rights activism in the twentieth century. Several primary research articles reveal stories of social activism among Unitarians and Universalists in the nineteenth century: Abby Price's desire for women's rights at Hopedale, George Lippard's compassion for the plight of the poor and degraded, Mila Tupper Maynard's devotion to social action ministry, John Niles's commitments to democratic governance and anti-slavery, and the 1845 Antislavery Protest of the Universalists.

We hope this issue of our journal properly captures for our readers a sense of the momentous contribution to UU historical research that our 2013 Convo meeting made possible. There is much excellent UU historical investigation going on out there! This worthwhile work continues to inform us in deep and compelling ways about our liberal religious past. Further, our connection with that legacy continues to enliven and enrich our faith perspective today.

We are currently planning the next UU History Convocation, to be held in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul in fall 2016. We hope many of you will plan to be there, when once again we will have the privilege of celebrating together the rich history we share.

### Bit of History:



CAPTION: A picture of the north window of the historic Greenstone Church in Pullman

### National Monument designation for Pullman

President Obama was in Chicago on February 19, 2015 to designate the Pullman neighborhood a national monument, the first step toward National Park status. The neighborhood is the site of Universalist George Mortimer Pullman's 1880s utopian factory town. Pullman thought all faiths could share one "non-denominational" church building so he had his architect and craftspeople create abstract or non-denominational windows. For more on Pullman read his DUUB biography on-line at: [uudb.org/articles/georgemortimerpullman.html](http://uudb.org/articles/georgemortimerpullman.html) or visit the National Park Service page at: [nps.gov/pull/](http://nps.gov/pull/)





## Summer Reading: Book Reviews

### By Jim Nugent, DUUB editor

Ernest Cassara's two mysteries are great beach reads. The mystery plots might not rate an Edgar Award but his recreation of the 1848 Boston of Universalist preacher Hosea Ballou will intrigue Universalist scholars.

NOTE: Ernest Cassara died on April 10, 2015. A memorial service is scheduled for May 30 in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The next two books address family, race, and faith in America. They trace the multi-generational journeys of families with some marginal UU connections. Just enough connection maybe to warrant coverage in this newsletter. ***Damn Near White*** by Carolyn Marie Wilkins contains stories about her (great) grandfather John Bird Wilkins, one of the first black Unitarian ministers. Sheryll Cashin's book, ***The Agitator's Daughter*** gives us a glimpse into the civil rights struggle in Alabama when her father was running against George Wallace. The Cashin's attended Huntsville Unitarian for a time and the Huntsville UU "Drek Squad" provided campaign support and occasional comic relief.

Our final book, ***The Antiracism Trainings*** is the satirical story of a group of people working in a Boston office called the Liberal Religious Center (LRC). According to the author, the LRC "... has no dogma or commandments, but many members find it useful to follow, or be guided by, the Six Suggestions." You might like this more if you were a 25 regular in the 90s.

1. **Murder on Beacon Hill (1996)** by Ernest Cassara – Out of print
2. **Murder On the Boston Common (1998)** by Ernest Cassara – out of print but available used
3. **Damn Near White (2010)** by Carolyn Marie Wilkins - \$14 Kindle
4. **The Antiracism Trainings (2010)** by David Reich - \$3 Kindle
5. **The Agitator's Daughter (2008)** by Sheryll Cashin - \$18 Kindle

### **Piece of History:**

#### **The Mother of Balboa Park in San Diego**

"Kate O. Sessions chose a very unusual profession for a woman in 1885," according to San Diego historian Clarence Alan McGrew. She took up gardening and landscaping and opened her own nursery. Her nursery grew to encompass 30 acres in Balboa Park which later became the home of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition and the 1935 Pacific International Exposition.

When she graduated in chemistry from the University of California in 1881 she predicted that her future occupation would be "Woman's Rights," and that her favorite beverage would be vinegar. As a horticulturalist she worked to harmonize plants with the varied coastal climate in California. She planted hundreds of trees and introduced palms and poinsettias to the city. You can find out more about Kate Sessions on the web at [balboapark.org/info/history](http://balboapark.org/info/history) and in her Wikipedia entry but not in the DUUB. That biography has not yet been written.

On the hundredth anniversary of the Panama-California Exposition that coincided with the opening of the Panama Canal we remember Kate Sessions, the Unitarian horticulturalist of California.

**Membership Dues:**

2015: Student \$20    Regular \$40    Three year \$90  
2016: Students \$30    Regular \$50    Three year \$125

**Membership Renewal!**

Your membership expires in June of the year on your mailing label or in the Subject line of the email you received. To renew or extend your membership, contact: Paul Sprecher, UUHHS, 27 Grove St., Scituate, MA 02066, or email [membership@uuhhs.org](mailto:membership@uuhhs.org). You can also renew ONLINE at [uuhhs.org/Join](http://uuhhs.org/Join). Simply print out the form, fill it in, drop it in the mail, or use PayPal option from that page.

**Annual Meeting:**

Please join us on Saturday, July 11, 2015, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. for our Annual Meeting, lunch included, at the First Parish, Unitarian Universalist, 35 Church St, Watertown, MA 02472. RSVP to [membership@uuhhs.org](mailto:membership@uuhhs.org)

**Have you seen it?**

**Brand new UUHHS website!!**

**[UUHHS.org](http://UUHHS.org)**

**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST WOMEN'S HERITAGE STORY: 1988-2011**

"The Unitarian Universalist Women's Heritage Society discovered and preserved the stories of Unitarian and Universalist and Unitarian Universalist women's lives so that future generations could be inspired by their wisdom and courage, celebrating the valuable gifts we have received from our Universalist and Unitarian foremothers."

"Introduction" to the UUWHS Story.

It is impossible to name or even count the number of people who participated in the UUWHS "movement" from the inception by Rev. Dr. Dorothy May Emerson's work with the Women's History Publication Project, through over a decade of activity as the UUWHS, to becoming part of the Unitarian Universalist History and Heritage Society. The UUWHS Story describes years of activity, with details about the calendars and publications, the events at General Assemblies and elsewhere, the Library, the Traveling Exhibit, and much more. A primary source for the UUWHS Story is about three hundred articles from the UUWHS newsletter, *The Flame*, including special articles of about forty Universalist and Unitarian women not published elsewhere.

Rev. Helen Zidowecki, UUWHS Board member and Board member of UUHHS, worked with Dorothy Emerson and others to compile the UUWHS Story. The existence of UUWHS is to be honored and celebrated; the stories of connections with these women must not be lost! With the large number of people involved with the UUWHS, you may find yourselves in the pages of the Story!

Copies the UUWHS Story will be available at the General Assembly booth or contact Helen at [hzmre@hzmre.com](mailto:hzmre@hzmre.com)