

## Ready for Puerto Rico

The upcoming national gathering of American Baptists means the staff has been busy. The biennial convention will be in San Juan, June 24-26th at the Puerto Rico Convention Center.

Since 1899, following the Spanish-American War, Iglesias Bautistas (Baptist Churches) de Puerto Rico have been a part of American Baptist Churches, USA.

In the early years, the American Baptist Home Mission Society and the Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society planted churches and educated leaders. Today, Puerto Rican Baptists comprise one of the 34 regions of the denomination.

ABHS staffer Betsy Dunbar went to Puerto Rico in the 1990s, when she worked with American Baptist Women's Ministries and AB GIRLS. "It was the best meeting we ever had. We met for a full week and worked from breakfast to bedtime. But we didn't mind. It was February and we had meetings outside by the pool!

"Best of all was the fellowship we had with our Puerto Rican Baptist sisters and brothers. They welcomed us into their homes, their churches and their hearts."

In getting ready for Puerto Rico, staff have searched home mission records in a database ABHS created – made possible by a grant. We now know that the American Baptist Home Mission Societies record group includes 248 files on Puerto Rico, covering work in Rio Piedras, Ponce, Barranquitas, San Anton and others. The files also document work by pioneers such as Maria Escobar, Petronila Nieves, Laura Fish, Olga Mercedes Hernandez, Manuel Almodovar, Gustavo L. Amezquita and Jose Delgado.

Getting ready also means making arrangements



1968 Puerto Rico Church Strategy Study Committee. On the staff of the Puerto Rico Baptist Convention, (Standing L) Ruth Maldonado, then Director of Christian Education, and ( Standing R) Dr. Oscar Rodriguez, Executive Secretary. Seated at the head of the table is Rev. Angel Luis Gutierrez, then pastor of First Baptist Church, Caguas.

for the ABHS breakfast on Sunday morning, June 26.

Meanwhile, the work of staff continues; assisting researchers from Montana, Washington (DC) and Georgia with materials on home missionaries, China, and black Baptist association minutes. Staff also provided special tours and materials for delegates to the annual meeting of the American Baptist Churches of the South.

These visitors also help prepare staff for San Juan – when we pulled a box of pamphlets on Georgia, we discovered one about Puerto Rico. We'll be there soon, and we hope to see you!

### Got an Old Book?

Bring it to the ABHS booth during the ABC Biennial, and Rev. Paul Reeder will repair it for you. Cost? A donation to the Historical Society.



# A BIG "Thank You" to Our 2010 Donors

The American Baptist Historical Society thanks all those listed below who gave a significant gift in 2010 towards our ministry of memory.

Thanks also to the many who supported this vital mission of preserving and sharing Baptist history with smaller amounts throughout the year.

"Without these friends, we would not be able to preserve and share Baptist history with

researchers from around the world," said executive director Dr. Deborah B. Van Broekhoven.

"Every gift is important. We understand the demands on everyone's budget, and we know that every dollar represents your conviction that Baptist history matters!

"We're excited about the plans we have for 2011 and our continued partnership with you."

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# Bon Voyage, Betty!

April 1st, colleagues, former co-workers, family and friends joined in the retirement celebration of Archivist Betty Layton. Executive Director Deborah Van Broekhoven read a commendation from the ABHS Board of Managers that honored her for her dedication and skill in caring for American Baptist historical records. For her contribution as an educator enabling many to understand better the contributions of Baptists, the ABHS board named her American Baptist archivist emeritus. They also requested her presence in Atlanta on September 23rd, when they will honor and thank her—in person.

“The archives are in good hands,” Betty noted to those assembled, expressing her gratitude for the rewarding work she enjoyed and her appreciation of the next generation of ABHS archi-



The family of Betty Layton joined her and colleagues in Valley Forge for her retirement party. Grandchildren Elizabeth and Isaac hold ABHS bears.

vists. Others remembering her work described her help as “amazing,” “incredible,” and “a tremendous blessing.”

## *In Memoriam*

### **American Religious History Scholar, ABHS Board Member, Ed Gaustad**

Edwin Scott Gaustad, one of the foremost historians of American religious history, died Friday, March 25, in Santa Fe, NM. He was 87.

“The loss of Ed Gaustad is a great one—to his family, the scholarly community, Baptists, and to those who understand the fight for separation of church and state still goes on,” said Dr. Deborah B. Van Broekhoven, ABHS executive director.

Concerned that local congregations value and publish their stories, Dr. Gaustad served on the Society’s Board of Managers and authored the still popular booklet, *Doing Church History – Your Own*, published in both English and Spanish.

Martin E. Marty, professor emeritus at the University of Chicago, commented, “Edwin Scott Gaustad has been for decades the premier historian of religious dissent in the United States, a scholar who set his biographical subjects—Roger Williams, Benjamin Franklin, and others—into the context of the larger story, well told in his pace-setting *Religious History of America*. He was also the atlas maker for two generations of Americans who wanted to fuse geographical



Ed Gaustad at Auburn University.

and historical interests, as he himself did so well. His *Faith of the Founders* is much used in our time when it has become urgent to get an accurate reading on the story of religion in the national founding.”

Dr. Gaustad served on the ABHS board and it was his wish that memorial gifts in his honor be given to the American Baptist Historical Society. *For more about Dr. Gaustad visit our website, [www.abhsarchives.org](http://www.abhsarchives.org).*

# From the Archives

For more than 50 years, Ruth Maldonado served “among my people” in Puerto Rico. Beginning in 1938, she served as a home missionary and nurse, commissioned by the Woman’s American Baptist Home Mission Society. She also served as the Executive Secretary for Religious Education for the Puerto Rico Baptist Convention, and

— upon retirement — as Minister for Religious Education at Primera Iglesia Bautista (First Baptist Church) of Caguas, where she was ordained in 1987. Featured below are excerpts from her eight-page annual report in 1954 — written in bright green ink!

*Dear Coworkers in Christ:*

*Words can not express my deep and sincere appreciation to God for another year of work and service in His Name among my people.*

*More than ever before, I am grateful for His guidance and provision as I have endeavored to serve Him, helping others.*

*This year has been a good and fruitful one in many ways.*

*The Summer Activities:*

*I accepted to be chairman of the Pastors and Missionaries Institute with fear and trembling. It was the first time that the workers voted for a woman to lead them in this activity.... The Women’s Convention followed... The Young People’s Retreat... Vacation Bible Schools....*

*District Institutes:*

*...It has been quite a thrill to lead groups in the three sections of the island in presentations for better worship in their meetings. Discussion on how to prepare better programs and organize activities for group development have been useful too....*

*Music in Rural Churches:*

*I never thought I could unite a group of young people who had never had the experience of singing together and form a choir...The significant point about this whole situation was that...the group not only sang well but also had a better feeling between each other and a better understanding to do missions work in the church and community.*

*Church Visitation:*

*I continued my two week visitation trips to the local churches...Some have improved their Christian Education program. Others are using their lay lead-*

*ers who have received guidance during these two weeks. Still others need more help in order to use their potential leaders.*

*The Most Urgent Need:*

*As I see it...we need a better prepared [lay] leadership in order to meet the needs....*

*My dream is that the churches may supply us with...potential women leaders so that when they are ready after their training at our school they may be able to render a better service and the churches may be willing to support them....*

*As I close...[m]ay I be more than ever conscious of my responsibility as your worker and more fitted to be called your representative among my people.*



Woman's American Baptist Home Mission Society  
 164 FIFTH AVENUE  
 NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

Name of Minister: *Ruth Maldonado*  
 Field: *Puerto Rico*  
 Month of Report: *July 1954*

Activities	No. of Sessions	Attendance	Income	Woman's Responsibility
Church Service	20	2000	100	Participated in service
Sunday School	26	2500	2000	participated
Evolution Sunday School	13	200	100	participated
Woman's Society	10	200	200	participated
Young People's Meeting	11	100	100	participated
Gift Service	2	100	100	participated
International Meeting	2	100	100	participated
Junior Society	2	100	100	participated
Daily School	2	100	100	participated
Week-End Religious Education	2	100	100	participated
Vacation Bible School	2	100	100	participated
Mid Week Service	2	100	100	participated
Social Meeting	2	100	100	participated
Choir	2	100	100	participated
Companion Meeting	2	100	100	participated
Prayer	2	100	100	participated
Openings in and outside of church	2	100	100	participated
Conferences	2	100	100	participated
Cuba Meet	2	100	100	participated
Lectures	2	100	100	participated
Conventions	2	100	100	participated
Retreats	2	100	100	participated
Seminars	2	100	100	participated
Other Activities	2	100	100	participated
Conventions	2	100	100	participated
White Collar	2	100	100	participated
Weekend Institutes	2	100	100	participated
Class Hours	2	100	100	participated
Constitutional Services	2	100	100	participated
Orientation Service	2	100	100	participated
Prayer - 12 hours of praying	2	100	100	participated

*Lovingly yours,  
 Ruth Maldonado*

*Handwritten notes in green ink, including a list of names and dates, and a paragraph of text.*

# Wish List

One of the joys for ABHS archivist Betty Layton has been helping a new generation of archivists, including former intern Heidi Holmstrom, now working at the National Archives. With the blessing of student staff members this year, she began their training, now ably managed by archivist Jan Ballard.

“With the added workforce, which includes a volunteer with archival training, our goal is to complete the processing on seven record groups comprising 215 linear feet,” said Jan. “This exciting development poses a challenge. More than usual, we’ll need 3x the usual amount of archival supplies used in past years. These supplies are the gas in the engine of archives work, so this need jumps to the top of our wish list.”

This pressing need happily matches ABHS’s desire to honor its recently retired archivist. Send your gift marked “In Honor of archivist Betty Layton,” and we’ll know to use it toward archival supplies.

## Archival Supplies

- ◆ **Folders, boxes, & labels** \$3500. Vital for collection processing.
- ◆ **Film Preservation Supplies** \$1000. We received a donation for a small freezer, now we need the special containers for the film.

## Reading Room items to be used by researchers

- ◆ **Computers** (2) \$1000. each For access to ABHS databases and our new electronic catalog, *Past Perfect*.
- ◆ **Table Reading Lamps** (4-5) \$80-\$150 each.

## Collection & Workroom Equipment

Carts move materials safely from shelf to researcher and holding space for materials pulled for staff projects.

- ◆ **Shelving Carts** \$300-\$400 each.
- ◆ **Shelves for processing room** \$500.

Your gift will make a difference for decades to come, helping us preserve and share in a ministry of memory. Thank you!



## Annual Fund

**Yes! I/We believe in a Ministry of Memory and enclose a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support the American Baptist Historical Society.**

- Use this gift for archival supplies in honor of archivist emeritus Betty Layton
- This gift is in memory of Dr. Edwin S. Gaustad.
- Giving online at [www.abhsarchives.org](http://www.abhsarchives.org) (click on the “Donate Now” button)
- Charge to my  Visa  MasterCard

Acct # \_ \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_ \_ \_

### Please Print

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to ABHS and mail** with this form to ABHS, P.O. Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851. (Yes, the VF address is correct for donations.) Questions? Call Kay at 610/768-2269.

## Contact Us

**Website:** [www.abhsarchives.org](http://www.abhsarchives.org)

**Phone:** 678/547-6680 Research appointments, materials donations, general questions.

**Phone:** 610/768-2269 *American Baptist Quarterly* subscriptions or accounting questions.

**Mail:** 3001 Mercer University Dr., Atlanta, GA 30341

**Shipping:** 2930 Flowers Rd. S., Suite 150, Atlanta, GA 30341

**Email:** [abhs@abhsarchives.org](mailto:abhs@abhsarchives.org) For all the above.

## PRIMARY SOURCE

American Baptist Historical Society

P.O. Box 851

Valley Forge, PA 19482-0851



**INSIDE**  
◆ A BIG "Thank You!"  
◆ Ready for Puerto Rico!

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### *At the Biennial*

## What You Can Experience

American Baptist Churches, USA, Biennial Meeting San Juan, Puerto Rico, June 24-26

### ABHS Booth

**Book Repair** by Rev. Paul Reader. Learn how books are bound and repaired. For the cost of a donation to ABHS, Rev. Reader will repair *your* book!

**Book Signing** by Rev. Dr. George Tooze. Stop by our booth for dates & times.

**Exhibits** Demo: How to be your own archivist • Judson Bicentennial Sneak Peek • Younger Award display

**Shop** Resources for churches, fun stuff for you!

**ABHS Biennial Breakfast** Sun., June 26 7:00-8:30am Fellowship, good food and Baptist history!

Open to Baptists and non-Baptists alike. Tickets (\$16) are available through Biennial registration [www.celebrate2011.com](http://www.celebrate2011.com) or through the ABHS office by phone 610/768-6680 or email [abhs@abhsarchives.org](mailto:abhs@abhsarchives.org).

## Save the Date!

Friday Evening  
September 23, 2011

## ABHS Annual Baptist History Celebration Atlanta, GA



Join us for a preview of the Judson Bicentennial, including dramatic presentations on the continuing legacy of these missionary pioneers.

The Rev. Dr. George Tooze will be the featured speaker and available to sign his latest book in the series, *The Life and Letters of Emily Chubbuck Judson*, at a reception immediately following. If you can't come to San Juan to experience his presentation, you've got a second chance in Atlanta!

Back by popular demand, actress Carol Anderson will reenact her interpretation of Emily Judson.

In addition, the Board will recognize archivist emeritus Betty Layton for her years of service.