

FROM THE EDITOR

No matter how you look at it, 2008 was a year of milestones. Americans elected Barack Obama as the first African-American President of the United States. The nation's economy took a nosedive and by November gasoline prices had fallen from summertime highs of over \$4.00 per gallon to less than \$1.80 in most places. The Cubs failed to make it to the World Series -- nothing new here -- but the Olympics were held in China and Michael Phelps won a record 8 gold medals. It was a remarkable year by any measure.

All things considered, it was a great year for Baptist history, too! For openers, The American Baptist Historical Society and the Samuel Colgate Historical Library and Baptist Archive relocated to Atlanta, GA. They dedicated their new facilities at 2930 Flowers Road South, on September 27 and they are now ready to receive visitors and scholars. Dr. Deborah Van Broekhoven serves as Executive Director of the American Baptists Historical Society. You may visit them online at: www.abhsarchives.org

On the book front, 2008 was an excellent year. An increasing number of scholars are finding that religious groups are fascinating to study and this is proving to be a blessing for Baptists. A number of excellent works appeared last year including Monica Najar's *Evangelizing the South: A Social History of Church and State in Early America* (Oxford University Press), Jewell L. Spangler's *Virginians Reborn: Anglican Monopoly, Evangelical Dissent, and the Rise of the Baptists in the Late Eighteenth Century* (University of Virginia Press) and Randolph Scully's *Religion and the Making of Nat Turner's Virginia* (University of Virginia Press). It is past time for scholars to revisit religion in the late-Colonial/Early National era and these works are all top-notch inquiries into Baptist thought and life in the nation's early years. Moreover, those searching for a brief Baptist history textbook may find just what they need in C. Douglas Weaver's *In Search of the New Testament Church: The Baptist Story* (Mercer University Press).

This issue of *The Journal of Baptist Studies* features two review essays. April C. Armstrong's "Service Is Not Slavery: A Review of Recent Literature on Women in the Southern Baptist Convention" examines recent works on women in Southern Baptist life. Ed Crowther's essay, "Southern Baptist Faith in Black and White after World War II: An Examination of Recent Monographic Literature," addresses recent trends in the scholarship of Baptists and race relations. Finally, Jeffrey Riddle's, "The 1919 Statement of Beliefs and the Tradition of Confessional Boundaries for Southern Baptist Missionaries," explores the SBC's Foreign Mission Board and its decision to adopt its own confession of faith in 1919. We reprint this essay with the kind permission of *Faith and Mission*.

Finally, as we enter 2009 readers will notice that baptiststudiesonline is sporting an entirely new look. Unfortunately, our site was hacked in early December so we decided to redesign it from the ground up. Naturally, we would have preferred not to become mired in any form of technical calamity, especially during the Christmas/New Year season. Nevertheless, we hope you like the new look and the scholarship in this edition of the *Journal of Baptist Studies*. Like I said, 2008 was a year of milestones and it is a great time to be a student of Baptist history.

Keith Harper