1967-78 Records of the Conference on Faith and History are housed in the Billy Graham Center Archives
Wheaton College in Illinois
http://www.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/archhp1.html

Records since 1978 are housed at the CFH Office
Huntington College in Indiana
http://www.huntington.edu/cfh/

Forty Years Into It:
Somewhat random thoughts for, and bits from, the archives of
The Conference on Faith & History
PART ONE:

Somewhat Random Thoughts on CFH and Its People

============================================
From Richard V. Pierard
Professor Emeritus, Indiana State University
Scholar-in-Residence and Stephen Phillips Professor of History, Gordon College

As one who helped to launch the Conference on Faith and History, I would like to offer some comments on its beginnings. When I was in graduate school at Iowa, I was not aware of the informal breakfast meetings that had begun at the American Historical Association convention, organized by Wheaton College's Earle Calms (a grand old man who at age 95 is still with us) and other historians from Wheaton and Calvin Colleges. Charles J. Miller of Calvin, who was there in 1959, described the beginning in a presidential address at the 1976 CFH annual meeting (Flinders et Historiae 10 [Spring 1977], 59-63). These humble gatherings were in out of the way places—in 1969 at the austere Chicago YMCA—but it provided the opportunity for people of diverse religious convictions who still could be lumped together in that vague rubric of "evangelical" to get to know one another.

Christianity Today's founding editor, Carl F. H. Henry, himself a historian as well as a theologian and journalist, organized a panel discussion critiquing William H. McNeill's Rise of the West at the December 1964 AHA convention in Washington, D.C. Its participants were a youthful contingent: John W. Snyder of Indiana University, John Warwick Montgomery of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and a recent Ph.D. from the University of Iowa who had just turned 30, Robert D. Linder. A few months later Linder would assume a position at Kansas State University where he still serves today as University Distinguished Professor of History. Unfortunately I could not be there as I was in the West at the time, where my father had suffered a fatal heart attack.

From time to time various Christian colleges would sponsor history meetings, and the "Seminar on Christianity and History" at Malone College in Ohio, March 31-April 1, 1986, made a lasting impact on me. Organized by Joseph L. Grabill (who soon would move on to Illinois State University), the featured speakers were two of the foremost Christian historians in the country, American Baptist Kenneth Scott Latourette, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Missions and Oriental History at Yale University, and Church of the Nazarene scholar Timothy L. Smith, then at the University of Minnesota and later at Johns Hopkins University. For this young assistant professor, only in the second
year of my teaching career, the opportunity to meet and interact with such distinguished Christian scholars was as humbling as it was energizing. My most precious memory of the occasion was sitting in a booth at breakfast time talking with Professor Latourette, who, although he was 80 years older than I, treated me as a colleague and brother.

Soon after this event, my colleague at Indiana State University, Robert G. Clouse (also an evangelical, an Iowa graduate, and the one who had encouraged to apply for the ISU position in 1984) and I were contacted by Richard L. Millett, a young history professor at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. He had gone through the most recent intervarsity Christian Fellowship’s directory of Christian faculty members, identified all the historians, and sent letters to them laying out his vision of forming an organization of Christian historians. After having received some indications of interest, he talked to us in earnest about the idea. He was going to a meeting of some kind at Ohio State University in Columbus and asked us to ride along with him so we could discuss his idea more fully. In the course of our conversations he came up with the idea of a name for his envisioned group—“Conference on Faith and History”—and Bob and I both felt it had promise.

A flurry of correspondence followed, and it was decided that we would discuss the matter further at the next AHA convention in New York City. On December 29, 1988 an informal caucus took place in the hotel room of Professor Harry Rosenberg, Colorado State University, and the idea of an organization was batted about there. The conversations continued further on April 28, 1987 during the Organization of American Historians meeting in Chicago. At the first gathering we worked out a tentative statement of purpose and at the second we formulated a provisional organizational structure.

Meanwhile, Millett had worked out an arrangement with a historian at Greenville College in Illinois to host a “Conference on the Historical Heritage of American Protestantism,” and they obtained some grant funding to underwrite the costs. Some 70 historians attended this meeting on November 3-4, 1987, and it was an invigorating, even life-changing experience to discover how many people were practicing historians and committed Christians as well. At the same time, we heard about many others out there who also fit in this category. That convinced us that we were on the right track.

On the second day, the proposals worked out during the previous months were submitted to the people present for their consideration. They unanimously decided that we should forge ahead with the formation of an organization to be called the Conference on Faith and History. A set of provisional officers was named who would function until such time a constitution could be drawn up and a formal election held. The above-mentioned John Snyder, a respected scholar of ancient Greek history and dean of the undergraduate division at Indiana University, agreed to serve as the provisional president (he would later go on to a distinguished career in academic administration in California and Ohio), and Dick Millett as the vice-president. I said I would handle the books as secretary-treasurer, while Bob Linder offered to initiate preparations for a publication of a regular organ.

It was clear to us that a real need existed and this was confirmed by the rapid movement that took place in the next months. The CFH sponsored its first function at the AHA convention in Toronto on December 26, 1987, a well-attended private session (not listed in the formal program) in a large room, with Professors Charles Miller and Mary Rogers offering enlightening presentations on the theme: “Is There a Christian Approach to History?” This was followed by a provocative question-answer period and coffee hour.

Things came together quickly in the next year. I sent out letters all over the place to recruit members for the CFH, while the organization and program committee composed a draft constitution and began laying plans for a session at the 1988 AHA convention. Originally set for Chicago, the AHA moved the convention to New York at the last minute to protest the actions of the Chicago city administration in dealing with demonstrators at the Democratic National Convention that summer.

A publications committee was created, comprised of Bob Linder, chair and editor, George Glaznakos (California State University, Fullerton), Joe Grabel (Illinois State University), Harold Lindell (editor of Christianity Today), and Robert Selby (LeTourneau College). I well remember a hectic 1200-mile drive that Bob Linder and I made together from Kansas to Longview, Texas, one week during the summer of 1988 to help Bob Selby, the social science division chair, persuade him that they should print our new bulletin, to which our editor in consultation with the committee had now given the name *Filos of Historia* and to do so free of charge. We succeeded in our mission and volume 1, number 1 of *Foh* appeared in the fall. The first issue from the LeTourneau print shop was a photo offset 24-page publication. The second issue, Spring 1989, was 40 pages, and in the next year it grew to over 100 pages.

The membership drive went well, and we recruited people from a variety of denominational and academic backgrounds as well as non-academic "laypeople" who were interested in history. It was intended to be a democratic and welcoming organization, with a bare minimum of bureaucratic structure and red tape. The fact that our initial dues were $3.00 certainly helped. Although the founders were obviously an enthusiastic and brash young bunch, several older, established historians cast their lot with us. By early 1989 we had enlisted 212 charter members. Many of them have since gone to their eternal rewards while others simply lost interest, but a remarkable number have stayed with the CFH throughout its nearly four decades of existence.

We envisioned the CFH as a *minimalist* organization and one that would be open to all. Since we had no paid staff, it was impossible to do targeted recruitment of underrepresented groups and this soon brought criticism upon our heads. We also were trying desperately not to become a new "establishment" ourselves, but someone
did have to do the work that was necessary to keep the group going and growing. Having no secretarial help at all, I had to handle all the correspondence myself, and this was in the days before e-mail and the internet. People often received overly brief and superficial communications from me because I just didn't have the time to compose and type long and thoughtful letters. The fact that I wanted to pursue some scholarship of my own and that I was being paid by ISU to teach our students meant that I could not give as much time to enterprise as I would have liked to.

Other problems we faced were those of self-definition and determination of our goals. Various people had their own ideas of what the nature of such an organization should be and what it should be focusing upon. Questions swirled around our heads like: What is meant by "evangelical"? Isn't the term "Christian" good enough? What sorts of historical problems should we focus on? What is a Christian philosophy of history? I remember getting a nasty letter from a person who talked about how "irrelevant" the CFH was because it was not paying attention to "cosmologic law." I didn't even know what that was.

The appearance of the first issue of Fides et Historia and sponsoring a breakfast gathering at the 1968 AHA reflected the increasing viability of the fledgling organization. Because meal events at the convention hotel were exorbitantly expensive and many of our members lived on shoestring budgets, I persuaded a member in the New York era to arrange a catered breakfast in a nearby church that was appreciably cheaper. Over 60 people showed up and after the meal were treated to a stimulating discussion of "American missionaries and U.S. Foreign Policy." Bob Linder ran a detailed report of the presentations in the second issue of FeH.

Since members wanted to be able to write off their dues payments as a professional expense and we needed to avoid paying any more taxes than necessary (our bank balance on September 1, 1969 was only $317.84), we decided we had to become incorporated. Bob Clouse persuaded a lawyer in Terre Haute (who was the wife of an ISU colleague) to handle our paperwork on a pro bono basis, and we succeeded in 1969 in becoming a non-profit corporation under the laws of Indiana and were granted 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service.

That same year, on October 3-4, we held our first annual fall meeting at Concordia Teachers College in River Forest, Illinois. Some 81 people registered for the gathering, whose topic was "Themes of God and Country in Western History." The discussions were quite stimulating and they reflected the progress the young group had made in just two years. From this point on we sponsored regular fall meetings and some kind of an event at the annual winter AHA convention. We felt the latter was necessary to demonstrate our professional commitment and to enhance our visibility as an organization of Christian historians.

Provisional President Snyder then appointed a nominating committee for the first election of regular officers, and assuming the leadership in September 1970 was Robert E. Frykenberg (University of Wisconsin) president; Earle E. Calms (Wheaton College), vice-president; and Robert G. Clouse (Indiana State University), Marvin R. Zahniser (Ohio State University), and Ruth Zemer (Lebanon College, CUNY) as Executive Board members. They in turn asked me to continue as secretary-treasurer and Bob Linder as editor of our publications.

Linder succeeded in bringing together some of the Concordia presentations in the one and only book the CFH ever published: God and Caesar: Case Studies in the Relationship between Christianity and the State (1971). The Horrible effort that went into this essential modest project caused it to cut to us that the problems of publishing by a volunteer organization with no money were extraordinarily great. We just could not go into the book business and needed to focus all our efforts on making Fides et Historia a quality journal.

Then Bob Selby's sudden death in the summer of 1971 meant we no longer had the grassroots use of the LeTourenne press, and we had to make new arrangements. The following year Keith Sprunger at Bethel Collge in North Newton, Kansas, took over the physical production of the Journal and employed a commercial firm (Mennonite Press) to print it. Of course, that resulted in a dues increase to $5.00 and the need to create a separate newsletter. Linder would continue to edit our organ until 1978 when he decided it would be better to turn over the editorship to someone else. During his ten years of selfless labor Fides et Historia developed from a small bulletin into a handsome scholarly journal, and it gave the CFH visibility and credibility as a professional society of Christian historians.

There is much more I could say about the early years of our organization, but the dedication of all the innumerable men and women who gave papers at meetings, contributed to the journal, and served as officers and committee members is what made the CFH a success. I tip my hat to them.

From William Ringenberg, Professor Emeritus, Taylor University

The early years of my academic career and the early years of the CFH coincided. Fortunately the organization was just what I needed after many years in the academically stimulating but intellectually incomplete environment of the largely secular world of academe. The fellowship among members was not merely based upon common craft but more meaningfully upon a shared philosophy of history. One part of the CFH intellectual milieu that I found especially liberating was that the Christian faith and the Christian understanding of history did not need to—indeed, dare not—combine in a necessary "package deal-like" manner with a specific human tradition in, say, politics, diplomacy, or economics. Very helpful in this regard were books like Protest and Politics (Clouse, Linder and Pierard, eds.), whose authors included many CFH members; Revivalism and Social Reform (Timothy Smith); and Inasmuch (Moberg).
More than any other organization in which I have been involved, the Conference on Faith and History from its inception intentionally has combined a clear, vital but concise confessional base with an intellectual openness and welcoming dialogue with peoples of all branches of Christendom. Churches tend to focus on faith more than learning, precision and certainty rather than nuance and doubt, and—too often—an apologetics that moves in the direction of defensiveness. Christian colleges usually give a larger focus to the life of the mind, but operate as businesses as well as centers of inquiry and thus somewhat temper their ability and/or willingness to be intellectually free. Most secular institutions either don't want to or don't know how to deal with the spiritual dimension of the human condition. Still other organizations either study the Christian faith without commitment or practice faith with minimal self-reflection.

For over a generation now, the Conference on Faith and History has served as one of the best developed models of a faith and learning integration organization. May it continue to do so with even greater effectiveness as we move further into the new century.

From Robert Eric Frykenberg
Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin

After reading Dick's Plerard's splendid reflections on the origins of the CFH, let me try to contribute a few small crumbs of recollection.

1. Perhaps my first real participation in CFH was at the Greenville Conference in 1987. I remember it well, since | was somewhat disturbed by what | saw as a less than balanced presentation on fundamentalism by R. Sandin. On a brighter note, I was also encouraged by the over-all spirit of the meetings, and by the leadership -- i.e. Dick Millett, Dick Plerard, Bob Clouse, Bob Linder and others. My membership in CFH dates from then.

2. I believe it was at the CFH meeting at Concordia College in River Forest, Illinois (3-4 October 1969) that I made my first formal presentation: "The State and Christian Faith in Historical Perspective: A Theoretical Analysis" (or some such thing). Despite wonderfully encouraging words from Earl Cairns, Bob Linder, and others, urging me to publish the piece, pressing demands of my work at UW-Madison made it necessary for me to put it off. To date, this essay has never been published. Perhaps I should dust it off and revisit it, for Fides.

3. The following year I was elected as the second president of CFH. Warm recollections of those days remain with me -- working with Earl Cairns, Bob Clouse, Marvin Zehnle, Ruth Zerner and, of course, Dick Plerard. Two preoccupations, among others, kept us busy: (1) Getting CFH properly recognized by the AHA and accredited as a legitimate affiliate organization; and (2) Determining whether CFH was to be a smaller, more elite research-oriented society for advanced Christian studies or a more broadly based society reaching out to any and all, no matter how non-rigorous or soft its non-professional members.

As president, I became involved in the efforts to gain recognition from the AHA. On one occasion, when one CFH member wrote a scathing and somewhat insultingly phrased letter to AHA officers, I attempted to pour oil on the troubled waters and smooth them. On another occasion, to this same end, I invited Roland Bainton to address the CFH -- I believe this was at our winter meeting in New York. In due course, the AHA changed its ways and became more open.

On the second question, my efforts were not successful. But this seems to have been just as well, especially since Fides at Historia increasingly achieved a high quality of scholarship. Thus, instead of becoming somewhat like the Society of Christian Philosophers which gained a leading role within the APA, we reached out to high school teachers and students.

4. Thereafter, while continuing to be a CFH member, over the years I did not get to many CFH meetings as I would have liked -- due to heavy demands of administration, scholarship, and guiding some fifty Ph.D. dissertators. But, on at least one or two occasions, I did give an address or paper at a CFH winter meeting -- once at the invitation of Professor Spiekard (and of Bob Swierenga).

In closing, let me make two further comments. First, it has been an honor to be a member of CFH and to see its growth in stature. Second, since my memory might not be quite accurate, I hope that Dick Plerard will check these comments. What I have written to you has been in haste -- stream of consciousness recollections. You may not need or want to use any of them. If there is any item of information that you can use, please feel welcome to whatever I have written.

From Paul E. Michelson
Huntington University, Secretary of CFH

I was a beginning graduate student at Indiana University in 1967, but my direct involvement with the CFH came only in October of 1973, when, fresh from 2 1/2 years of graduate research in Romania, I attended the fall CFH conference at Capital University in Columbus OH. By my reckoning, that would make me a member of the second generation of CFH members, behind old-timers like Dick Plerard, Bob Clouse, and my undergraduate mentor Glenn Torney.

Initially, the CFH played a role in my development simply by existing, by affirming and demonstrating that "Christian" and "historian" were not incompatible. My personal experiences were in secular undergraduate and graduate historiographical environments, which, I have to admit, were perhaps stodgy. Though most of my professors and peers were not people of faith, they did not seem either antagonistic or condescending to people who were. Nevertheless, it was encouraging to know that Christians were operating on an equal and thoughtful footing with the historical
profession as a whole. I also know that for many others whose colleagues were less sympathetic toward faith the CFH played a crucial developmental role.

In the fall of 1974, I became more or less gainfully employed at Huntington College in Indiana. My renowned senior colleague, Jack Barlow, was very active in the CFH (including service on the editorial board of Fides) and it seemed natural for us to attend CFH meetings. Jack was head of the College’s lectureship program; looking back, I now realize that quite a few of the outstanding speakers that he brought in were people he had met at CFH sessions: Carl F. H. Henry, Timothy L. Smith, Dick Pierard, and others. Jack was an ideal associate and friend, always thinking about the big issues and important subjects, always willing to talk about them (actually, truth be told, he was always willing to talk about anything). I think he inspired a lot of students and professors (and even a few administrators) to take such matters seriously as well.

I participated for the first time formally in a CFH meeting as a roundtable discussant on the subject of “Civil Religion and Christianity in the Orthodox Lands” at the October 1974 Bethel MN conference. The whole department (both of us) carpooled up to Minnesota with colleagues from Taylor University, Dwight Middaugh and Phil Loy. Our discussions during the twelve hour trip, enlivened by one hilarious anecdote after another from Jack, impressed me with their combination of seriousness and humor. This sense of playfulness, it could be argued, has been a traditional trait of most CFH members and meetings. To paraphrase the noted historian, Cindy Lauper, “Historians just wanna have fun.” The ready sense of camaraderie with our Taylor neighbors and with the rest of the CFH gang developed then has persisted over three decades.

It was also quite evident from the start that the members of the CFH were well advanced in the consideration of the relationship between faith and learning (a subject that was yet to be really addressed in many other disciplines). The work and contributions of C. T. McIntire, Ron Wells, George Maredon, Frank Roberts, Mark Noll, David Bebbington, J. Sanford Reid, John Warfield Montgomery, Dick Pierard, and Bob Clouse, to mention just a few, were widely discussed in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s, and provided a solid intellectual foundation for the intelligent participation of the second and, now, third generation of historian/Christians in the wider historical profession.

Many of my memoirs of the CFH relate to the (unfortunately) irrepressible Dick Pierard (no, he just kidding, Dick). Without going into too many details, let’s just say that for years he was an inspiration to anarchists and libertarians everywhere as he tirelessly fought the rules in organizing the CFH breakfast/discussion sessions at the AHA. At the same time, despite the fact that the entire administration of Indiana State University conspired to impede him and his work, Dick was also an inspiration to all of us with his enthusiasm, his output, and his indefatigable labors on behalf of the CFH around the world. One of my favorite amusements was to get Dick and Jack Barlow into the same room, sit lightly, and then stand back and enjoy. Thanks, guys.

I also appreciated the central role played in the intellectual work of the CFH by our colleagues at Calvin College, in particular the wickedly witty Ron Wells, who somehow combined a sardonic sense of humor with a surprising degree of personal affirmation. Jack Barlow had patiently explained to me that Calvinists by nature were doomed to be the Intellectual Leaders of the Christian world; their work on behalf of the CFH did a good deal to validate this claim.

==================================================================

From Ronald A. Wells
Calvin College

It all started in 1988 at Point Loma Nazarene University (though “college” at that time). Harry Groenwald, then of Trinity Christian College in Chicago, now of King’s University College in Edmonton, had a gracefull insight: he thought I needed a beer.

We were at a meeting hosted by the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities, organized to discuss the draft version of what was to become the book: History Through the Eyes of Faith. It was the most daunting experience of my professional life to have to sit for three hours while about sixty people picked apart my book. Harry’s act of grace emerged after that grueling session, when he thought I could use some downtime to relax and have a beer.

Please recall that we were in the company of a large number of conservative evangelicals. In 1986, most of them had not crossed over — like the Wheaton people were later to do — and be allowed to taste the fruit of the grape and the fig. Harry and I believe that such gifts are among God’s good gifts to us that [we hasten to add] we celebrate in responsible and modest consumption. Not wanting the weaker brethren to stumble, we felt we couldn’t just say we were going for a drink, so we said we were going to have “Reformed Fellowship,” in which Evangelicals thought, rightly as it turned out, would not be interested.

Well, somehow the word got out about this fellowship, and at future meetings of the Conference on Faith and History, there was a growing expectation to expand its scope and frequency. While Harry and I were glad to see the broad acceptance of the Reformed idea that the gospel applies to all areas of life, this was not exactly what we had in mind.

By 1992, when the CFH biennial meeting was at Westminster College in Santa Barbara, the fellowship attracted a large number to the Calvin motel rooms in the evening. Doug Howard, now department chair at Calvin, was new at the time. He was himself an ex-Baptist, and he took to his new reformed role with considerable enthusiasm, thus attracting other Baptists, both current and “ex.”

As said, I am completely unembarrassed about this fellowship. Some of the best conversation we’ve had occurred at such gatherings. There was never even a hint of excess at these impromptu assemblies — a point I would stress. But, for some CFH members from culturally conservative backgrounds, sipping a beer in the Calvin motel rooms was something of a walk on the wild side.
Driving home from the Cedarville meeting I thought about what all of this had come to. After all, I was a leader in the Conference on Faith and History. I had been editor of Fides et Historia, and would soon be again. I had written History Through the Eyes of Faith and was thinking about History and the Christian Historian. I was glad for the contributions I had made, both professional and personal, in helping the CFH to grow and flourish. But, there was another reality for which I was becoming known at CFH meetings that possibly caused more excitement than my scholarship or my welcoming young scholars among us. In truth, I was also the procurer of beer for a motley assembly of Baptists, Mennonites and other assorted Evangelicals [with a few Presbyterians and Episcopalians leading such aid as they could]. This was not the result my pious mother had hoped for when she prayed me through graduate school many years ago.

If I am to be remembered among the members of the Conference on Faith and History I hope it will be for my part in creating what our current President, Doug Sweeney, in a Books and Culture essay, called “the Calvin school of historiography,” and for encouraging younger scholars. Yet, I now accept that I am known for something else too. If some future CFH biennial meeting finds me unable to attend because of age or infirmity, please picture me sitting on my deck in my Tennessee rocker, looking out at the Smoky Mountains, wondering who is hosting "Reformed Fellowship" that night. Long may it be so.

From Shirley Mullen
In Transition: Westmont College to President, Houghton College

I really cannot separate my own journey as a historian over the past 30 years from the Conference on Faith and History. I first remember hearing of the CFH from my mentor at Houghton College, Dr. Katherine Lindsey. Dr. Lindsey thought I was going to graduate school in history long before I did. As a way of encouraging me in this direction, I distinctly remember her telling me back in the mid-1970's that there was a newly formed group of Christian historians who would be a great support to young historians like myself.

After an M.A. at the University of Toronto, I decided that I was not cut out for graduate school—at least not for a Ph.D.—and I took a position in Student Life at Bethel College, thinking that my life in history was over. In my second year at Bethel, when my love for history was again coming to life, I had the good fortune to come into contact with Jim Johnson—a member of the Conference on Faith and History. Jim invited me to join the Bethel faculty and students on their trip to the bi-annual meeting in Terre Haute, Indiana. I remember very little about the meeting, except a sense that there were people there who cared that I, as a young Christian academic, survived in graduate school. Dick Pierard and Bob Clouse knew almost nothing about me, but because I had come with Jim, there was entrée and hospitality.

It was in the context of the CFH annual meetings in Chicago that I did my first academic paper, something on Hannah More. Besides providing me a friendly context for doing the paper, I have to thank the CFH for encouraging me to extend my interests into women's history—ever so slightly. My real interests were in the impact of the Enlightenment more generally, but the program planners wanted papers on women's history. And so I went back and followed up on a quote that had captured my attention in passing while preparing for a seminar at Toronto. And that paper began an ongoing interest in Hannah More, which I have pursued over the years—sometimes in her connections with William Wilberforce, sometimes with Mary Wollstonecraft. So, somebody, even back in the early 1860's, was trying to help the CFH branch out into new fields of inquiry—and I was fortunate enough to benefit from that vision.

It is that encouragement—and empowering—that I most associate with CFH. At a time when I had few models for what it meant to be a Christian in the academy, I could see at first hand such people as Russ Blesch, Tom Askew, Mark Noll, George Marsden, Dick Pierard, Joel Carpenter, and Ron Walla. These were the people who, in various ways, and at crucial times, helped me to know that I could do this work of being a Christian historian.

I suppose I also owe the CFH not only for what it gave me, but also for what it did not give me, for that has also been part of what I am grateful for. It seemed very clear to me that what counted as “important work for the Christian historian” was religious history—or church history of some sort—and most often in the United States. And since that was not at all my field of interest or expertise, I felt quite outside of the mainstream of the CFH at the intellectual level—even while feeling supported at the personal level. While I must confess to some frustration at certain points in my journey, overall, I look back on this as one of the best gifts that CFH gave to me, for I had to go back and think for myself what it meant to do “Christian” history that was not linked to a distinctive subject matter. I am still working on that question, and just recently shared some of my thoughts to new faculty at Westmont.

In conclusion, I would be remiss in my reflections on the CFH not to mention, with special gratitude, the work of Ron Wall in moving CFH forward in recent years—primarily through his fine work of editing the Fides et Historia. While Ron has certainly recognized the important and ongoing "mid-wifing” and mentoring role of the CFH, he has been a constant voice for sharpening the intellectual vision and professional standards of the organization and all that is associated with it.

I am grateful beyond words for the fellowship and encouragement of this organization during my journey.
From Rick Kennedy
Point Loma Nazarene University

I joined CFH for the simple reason that I was a historian and a Christian and this was the professional organization for people in both categories. I was hooked into the organization at by the people I met.

The 1980 meeting was at Cedarville College on a beautiful Ohio weekend. I was beginning my fourth year as an assistant professor at Indiana University Southeast. I got my name tag, fell in with a crowd my own age range, and drifted through sessions. I remember liking the people and enjoying an easy sense of professional camaraderie. I liked fact that we prayed at the banquet. The plenary speaker was Ron Nesh, a philosophy and religion professor from Western Kentucky University. I am not sure why he was there or what he actually said, but he had a Republican economic bent to his lecture. I sat next to Barry Hanks who was fidgeting. Afterwards Ron Wells swept through a bunch of us milling about and led us to his motel room with the stated purpose of discussing Nesh’s lecture. I remember maybe eight or ten people slumped on beds, sitting on dressers, hunkered down on the floor while Ron Wells led a discussion that reminded me of great times in grad school.

I drove home thinking I had hit upon something golden. I had dug into a vein of quirky academics in which it would be good for me to be a part. Dick Pierard looked like he slept in his suit. Bob Clause made Dick look good. Ron Wells had his suave C.S. Lewis thing. Tom Askew scooped up people like he was everybody’s grandfather. The Calvin and Wheaton folk seemed regal. Barry Hanks, like his mentor, Bob Lindor, were cowboys. Like me they were historians and Christians who took both seriously.

In the following years I looked forward to every CFH conference. Mark Noll and George Marsden hit their stride. Nobody wanted to miss what they had to say. I had used Keith Sprunger’s work for my dissertation and subsequent research and did not know he was a member until I saw his name tag attached to a soft-spoken guy eating one of Dick Pierard’s underground donuts. Small evangelical colleges were increasingly taking research and publication more seriously. In 1992, at Westmont, I sat with Darryl Hart and Allen Guzzo. Those two are amazing for the work they have produced. Mike Hamilton was there. At that time he was with The Pew Foundation which was the financial engine pushing revived up history of Christianity. The 1996 meeting at Calvin ramped up expectations. Darryl wanted to take us all behind the woodshed. Shirley Mullen wanted to make us more open minded. Peggy Bendroth told us to get on board with feminism and gender. I met John Warwick Montgomery, a sparkplug who is infectiously uncontrollable. His 1990s book History & Christianity got many in my generation started. Warwick saw the two inseparable. His 1970s book on Noah’s Ark embarrassed some but in an honest, informative investigation. If I remember correctly, Jim Cameron and Don Yanco were sitting together listening to Montgomery. Jim had been a CFH charter member, and Don is now integral to The Historical Society’s reform movement. Paul Mitchell and Dwight Brautigam from Huntington College were at Calvin and would soon begin bringing second-generation bureaucratic stability to CFH.

I joined because it was the appropriate thing for a historian-Christian to do. I was hooked in because CFH cynicism holds no ground. Quirky professionalisms mix with love and hope in a way that encourages work. We are a fellowship of readers, thinkers, writers, and prayer. Academic organizations encourage once-a-year weekend friendships, conference buddies who know nothing more deep about each other than what can be learned at a dinner and two lunches. CFH friendships have some of the characteristic superficialities of normal conference friendships; however, our bond is deep in the communion of the saints. Bob Clause, after his heart transplant, showed up at a meeting wearing a mask and certifying oxygen. I like being a part of such a fellowship.

From Doug Sweeney
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

I am a relative late-comer to the CFH, at least by the standards of pioneers like Dick Pierard. I published a mediocre article in Fides et Historia in 1992 (with a lot of generous aid from Frank Roberts at Calvin College). But I did not become involved as an active Conference member until the mid-90s.

In 1996, while a Junior scholar at Yale, I was asked to succeed Darryl Hart as the Book Review Editor of Fides. This sounded like fun to me, so I accepted the assignment. Little did I know that the journal was in trouble. Without airing dirty laundry, let me say that shortly after the journal left Grand Rapids it struggled for lack of support promised by key administrators at its new host institution. Through no fault of Conference members, it was limping along badly. Our Executive Board quickly returned to Calvin for needed help. I am delighted to say that Ron Wells and Joel Carpenter promptly came to the rescue.

Our colleagues at Calvin deserve a great deal of gratitude from us. They have helped to solidify the Conference on Faith and History like no one else among us. Calvin has produced Conference leaders such as Roberts, Wells, and Carpenter (not to mention Calvin faculty such as George Marsden, Jim Bratt, Peggy Bendroth and, most recently, Will Katerberg—among others). They have also kept our journal on track, improving its quality dramatically. I hope we will not forget this as our Conference carries on. I know that I will not.
PART TWO:

Bits From the Archives

=================================================================

Billy Graham Center Archives

Collection 82 [January 31, 2001]
The Conference on Faith and History; 1967-
Records; 1966-1978, u.d.
2 Boxes (2 DCS; 1.8 cubic feet)

Historical Background

In the mid 1960s, evangelical Christian historians began to feel a need for some kind of
professional association or regular meetings, which would give them an opportunity for
fellowship and the exchange of ideas. Professor Eisele E. Caunts Howard Riemer and others
helped to organized luncheons or breakfasts for evangelicals during the regular December
conventions of the American Historical Association (AHA). These meetings were known as the
Association of Evangelical Historians (AEH). Some schools planned conferences on topics of
interest, such as the 1966 Malco Seminar on Christianity and History, and the 1967 Greenville
College Conference on the Historical Heritage of American Protestantism.

In November of 1966, Professors Richard Millet of Southern Illinois University, Richard
Pierard of Indiana State University and Robert Clouse of Indiana State University met, after
sounding out other schools by mail and through conversations, to discuss plans for a permanent
organization. In December of the same year, a larger meeting was held in New York during the
AHA convention. The name Conference on Faith and History (CFH) was suggested and a draft
of a statement of purpose prepared. This statement of purpose was virtually identical with the
one finally incorporated in CFH's constitution in 1968. The final statement of purpose read:

"The purpose of this organization is:

1. To encourage evangelical Christian scholars to explore the relationship of their faith to
   historical studies.
2. To provide a forum for discussion of philosophies of history and to survey current
   scholarship and foster research in the general area of faith and history.

3. To establish more effective means of interaction between historians associated with
   religiously oriented and non-sectarian institutions of higher learning."

Also at the December 1966 meeting, Richard Pierard was appointed temporary secretary-
treasurer. He was later elected to the office and held it continuously from 1967. In April of 1967,
a second group of overlapping membership with the December group met at the Palmer House
in Chicago, during the convention of the Organization of American Historians (OAH).
Committees were established, plans made to publish a bulletin, dues agreed on, and an
announcement on the organization prepared. At the 1967 Greenville Conference, which the
CFH co-sponsored, the CFH was publicly launched and people were invited to join. Provisional
officers were appointed and Robert Linder of Kansas State University was designated as
editor of the Conference's Bulletin, Fides et Historia, which at first was published by
Loyola University Chicago. In 1968, officers were elected and a constitution adopted.

The CFH held an annual meeting in the autumn on some topic of interest to Christian
historians. It also sponsored an annual breakfast of luncheon meeting during the AHA
convention. Besides Fides et Historia, which published scholarly articles, a newsletter was also
published, starting in February 1973. This newsletter contained announcements of meetings,
lists of new members, personnel changes, positions available, news notes, etc. Another
publication of the CFH was God and Caesar: Case Studies in the Relationship Between

Scope and Content

[NOTE: In the Scope & Content section, the notation "folder 2-5" means box 2, folder 5.]

The records in this collection consist mainly of the correspondence on the Secretary-Treasurer,
with a few other items such as the CFH's newsletter, some of the minutes of the executive
committee, a few mailings and membership lists, brochures, reports, the constitution and by-
laws, and a miscellaneous of records from various meetings held by the Conference.

Several files contain letters dealing with the beginning of the organization. Thus, folder 2-7 and
2-8 have the minutes of early planning sessions, while folder 2-9 has the letter sent out
announcing the formation of CFH and a list of its first members. Folder 2-11 contains a brief
article by Pierard on the origins of the Conference. Folder 1-1 contains some of the early
brochures describing the Conference. Other types of descriptions are in folder 1-2, which
contains clippings from various journals and newsletters. Most of these clippings deal with the
formation of CFH. Folder 1-4 contains a great deal of correspondence and informal comments
on what the goals and activities of CFH should be.

The Secretary-Treasurer's correspondence, apart from the very early material on the formation
of CFH in folder 1-4, is concerned mainly with persons wanting to join or renew their
membership, arrangements for the editing and publishing of the Fides et Historia and the
newsletter, arrangements for the annual meetings, announcements of various members
activities, persons seeking jobs or seeking persons, and selection of candidates for CFH
officers. The file contains dozens of letters from correspondents at history departments all over

14
the nation. Often the letterwriter includes brief vignettes describing interesting events on his or her campus. Thus, for example, a letter in folder 1-6 describes the visit of then President Richard M. Nixon to a university. Other letters contain brief comments on national events, such as Watergate. Several letters in folders 1-7 and 1-8 are concerned with the question of whether it was possible and desirable for the CFH to acquire some kind of official affiliation with the AHA. Various officers and members of CFH wrote each other describing their feelings and Paul Ward, ex-secretary of the AHA, exchanged comments with Robert Linder. Similar correspondence in folder 1-8 is concerned with affiliation with the Christian Scholar's Review. Folder 2-2 contains some material from the Public Education Religion Studies Center (PERSC), which describes its archives. Among the most common or interesting correspondents are: Diane B. Blake, George E. Brushaber, Earle R. Cairns, Robert G. Clausen, Robert E. Evans, Robert E. Frykenberg, James Leo Garrett, W. Ward Gasque, George Glazebrook, Jr., David W. Gill, L. Douglas Good, Joseph J. Grabill, Hans Grob, Charles Haffert, Karl-Helmut Heller, Carl F. H. Henry, Charles Herzen, J. John Hesselink, Samuel Riehly Kamm, Arno W. R. Kolb, Irving Luscombe, Heiden Merkl, Richard L. Milleit, Lee M. Nash, Joel H. Nederhoud, Edward Nolte, Mark A. Noll, Donald R. Pitzer, W. Stanford Reid, M. Howard Riemann, Harry Rosenblatt, Richard C. Rupp, Robert H. Selby, John W. Snyder, Robert P. Swierenga, Paul Ward, Ronald A. Wells, Georgie B. Wilcox, Carlton O. Wittinger, Edwin M. Yamauchi, Marvin R. Zahniser, and Ruth Zemer.

Several files contain records from meetings held by the CFH. Most just have a few items, such as programs or lists of registrants. Folder 2-12 contains a transcript of an interesting session held during the 1969 annual meeting on "How 'Christians' Were the Founding Fathers". Panels included Earle Cairns, John Warwick Montgomery, J. Murray Murdock, Edward M. Panoian, and W. Richard Stephens.

The newsletters in folder 2-22 include reports on bivings and promotions, books published, events of interest to historians, financial reports of the organization, minutes of the executive board, and editorials. Folder 2-3 also contains a partial list of executive board minutes. Also in that folder is a letter explaining the executive board's decision to hold its annual meetings in different regions of the country.

CFH Office Archives, Huntington College
1978-present
Contact: Paul Michelson, CFH Secretary

CONFERENCE on FAITH and HISTORY FALL CONFERENCE MEETINGS

First Meeting: November 4, 1967
Greenville College IL
"The Historical Heritage of American Protestantism"

Second Meeting, October 3-4, 1969
Concordia Teachers College IL
"Themes of God and Country in Western History"

These papers were published as Robert D. Linder, ed., God and Caesar: Case Studies in the Relationship Between Christianity and the State (Longview TX: The Conference on Faith and History, 1971), vi, 140 pp.

Third Meeting: October 3, 1970
Dallas Baptist College TX
"Evangelical Christianity, Revolution, and Change"

Fourth Meeting, October 8-9, 1971
Calvin College MI
"The Protestant Ethic in History"

Fifth Meeting, October 6-7, 1972
Wheaton College IL
"Christianity, History, and the Meaning of Life"

Sixth Meeting, October 12-13, 1973
Capital University OH
"Revivalism and Social Change"

Seventh Meeting, October 11-12, 1974
Bethel College and Seminary MN
"Civil Religion and Christianity: An Historical Perspective"
(This was apparently the first to be designated with a number, "Seventh Annual Fall Meeting.")

Eighth Meeting, October 10-11, 1975
Concord College MA
"Christian Perspectives on the American Revolution"

Ninth Meeting, October 8-9, 1976
Biola College CA
"Moral Judgments in History"

Tenth Meeting, October 7-8, 1977
Greenville College IL
"Reflections on the Roles of the Christian Historian"

Eleventh Meeting, November 10-11, 1978
Geneva College PA
"Evidence, News, and the Media in History"
(In 1978, the board decided to go with a biennial meeting.)

Twelfth Meeting, September 25-27, 1980
Interpretation for the Christian Historian

Twenty-fourth Meeting, October 14-16, 2004
Hope College MI
"Christian Faith and the Historian's Vocation"

Twenty-fifth Meeting, September 21-23, 2006
Oklahoma Baptist University OK
"Faithful Historians, Faithful History, & the History of the Faithful"

In 1996, the Southern California CFH conferences began.
In 2002, first student conference added to CFH conferences.
In 2004, first permanent office of the CFH was established at Huntington University in 2004.


Worth checking out: Ringenborg’s "From the President," FEH, Vol. 22 (1990), Nr. 2; and Pierard’s "What is the CFH?", FEH, Vol. 21 (1989), Nr. 1.
PART THREE:

Founding Publication Principles in *Fides et Historia*

EDITORS of *Fides et Historia*

Vol. 1 (1969), Nr. 1-Vol. 10 (1979), Nr. 2: Robert D. Linder, Kansas State University KS

Vol. 11 (1978), Nr. 1-Vol. 15 (1983), Nr. 2: Ronald A. Wells, Calvin College MI

Vol. 16 (1984), Nr. 1-Vol. 20 (1988), Nr. 3: James E. Johnson, Bethel College MN


Vol. 26 (1994), Nr. 2-Vol. 26 (1996), Nr. 3: Paul Gritz, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary TX

Vol. 29 (1997), Nr. 1-Vol. 31 (1998), Nr. 1: Frank C. Roberts and Ronald C. Wells, Calvin College MI

Vol. 31 (1999), Nr. 2-Vol. 36 (2005), Nr. 1: Ronald C. Wells, Calvin College MI

Vol. 39 (2006), Nr. 2-present: William H. Katerberg, Calvin College MI

FEH Book Review Editors


Vol. 18 (1986), Nr. 1-Vol. 21 (1989), Nr. 2: Joel Carpenter, Calvin College MI

Vol. 21 (1989), Nr. 3-Vol. 23 (1991), Nr. 3: Russell Bishop, Gordon College MA

Vol. 24 (1992), Nr. 1-Vol. 27 (1995), Nr. 3: D. G. Hert, Wheaton College IL, Westminster Theological Seminary PA

Vol. 26 (1994), Nr. 1-Vol. 36 (2004), Nr. 1: Douglas A. Sweeney, Yale Divinity School MA/Trinity Evangelical Divinity School IL,

Vol. 36 (2004), Nr. 2-present: Steven Pinter, Trinity International University IL.
family, it seems to me that there are a number of ideas of potential disagreement among us, especially when one keeps in mind the wide variety of evangelical churches represented among us. These ideas are not necessarily those of our own denomination, but they are ideas that we as a whole, as Christians, need to consider seriously and carefully.

In conclusion, I hope that this letter will serve as a call to action for all of us. The purpose of this letter is to encourage all of us to reflect on these issues, to pray about them, and to discuss them with others. We need to be open to each other's ideas and perspectives, and to be willing to listen and learn from each other. Only then can we hope to find a way forward that is true to our Christian faith and to the needs of our world today.
The Publications Committee
Robert F. Linder, Chairman (Kansas State University)
George G. McGinnes, Jr. (California State College of Fullerton)
Joseph L. Greely (Illinois State University)
Harold Madsell (Editor), Department of History
Robert E. Pecky (Colorado College)
Published in issues of the

THE CONFERENCE OF FAITH AND HISTORY

President: John F. Engle (Wayne State College)
Vice-President: Richard L. Hirsh (Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville)
Secretary-Treasurer: Richard V. Pfeffer (Cleveland State University)

HISTORICA

The purpose of the Conference of Faith and History is to provide a forum for the discussion of the relationship of faith to history and to encourage scholars in the field of history and the Christian church to cooperate in the study of history, Christianity and religious history.

In the light of the objectives of the CFB, the Publications Committee has decided to publish articles, reviews and editorials for the Conference of Faith and History. Therefore, the Publications Committee will receive unsolicited manuscripts from persons associated with the Conference of Faith and History. Non-members may submit a prospectus of articles which they would like to have considered. The Chairman of the Publications Committee shall decide upon the basis of the prospectus whether or not the manuscript is to be considered for publication.

Rather, the purpose of this Bulletin will be to publish articles, editorials and reviews on the relationship of faith to history and to encourage scholars in the field of history and the Christian church to cooperate in the study of history, Christianity and religious history.

The "News and Notes" column of "Pipes in History" will carry information about membership developments, special events, new positions, career opportunities, publications, new books, and professors. It is also planned to edit and publish papers on topics related to the subject of "faith and history." Individual members are encouraged to submit short articles, reviews and editorials for the "News and Notes" column of "Pipes in History." The "News and Notes" column will be included in the "Pipes in History" section of the "HISTORICA".


All this means that at this juncture in our history, Fides et Historia is not simply another scholarly journal. In fact, it is a multi-faceted scholarly forum to serve the common good of all those who share in the academic discipline of history. Our aim is to provide a platform for scholarly exchange, to foster collaboration among historians, and to promote the advancement of historical knowledge. We are committed to publishing high-quality research that contributes to the field of history and to the intellectual community of historians and students alike.

In the spirit of this goal, we welcome contributions from all corners of the world, in various forms and disciplines, as long as they contribute to the advancement of historical knowledge and practice. We are proud to present this issue to our readers, and we hope that you will find it informative, thought-provoking, and inspiring. We are grateful for the support of our colleagues, friends, and subscribers, and we look forward to continuing our work in the service of our shared mission.


dated, Nov. 24, 1989

Robert L. Kennedy, Chairman
Publications Committee
Kansas State University

"IS THERE A CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO HISTORY?"

Charles L. Miller

Editor's Note: This is a slightly revised version of a paper presented at the meeting of the Conference on Faith and History held in conjunction with the American Historical Association's annual meeting in Toronto, July 22, 1989. Professor Miller teaches European history at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. His previous publications include "Christianity and the Protestant Reformation." He is also interested in European history of the Middle East and modern history, "Hyde holds the PhD degree in history from Northwestern University."

One of the paradoxes of the craft of history is that few scholars who write good history have been trained in the history department for research in the history department. This is a paradox because the history of how people who write history are not those who write history as a vocation, but rather as a vocation. Some people write history for the love of it, others for the love of their profession. The love of history is a love that is best explored in the classroom, not in the history department.
Chairman, Division of Humanities, Dallas Baptist College, Dallas, Texas 75211

See you in Dallas!

Robert D. Linder, Chairman
Publications Committee
Kansas State University