



The Herald

Presbyterian Heritage Center at Montreat

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PHC Dedicates the Richard A. Ray Library

On July 14, 2024, in a surprise announcement at the reception recognizing the significant accomplishments of Dick Ray, the library at the Presbyterian Heritage Center (PHC) in Montreat was named the Richard A. Ray Library.

Dr. Richard Archibald Ray and Dr. James Cogswell were active in the Friends of the Historical Foundation group that was formed to save the organization in Montreat from being closed. Despite their efforts, the Historical Foundation was closed and its extensive collections

and artifacts became part of the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia. In 2007, Dick became the Chairman of the new Presbyterian Heritage Center in Montreat.

Dick served as PHC's only chairman until his passing on April 10, 2024. He was exceedingly articulate in expressing his commitment to preserving church heritage, including the Christians and theologians who risked torture and death to spread the word about Jesus Christ and his message of love and salvation.



Richard A. Ray

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Dr. Crystal Downing Now Headlining 2024 Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation



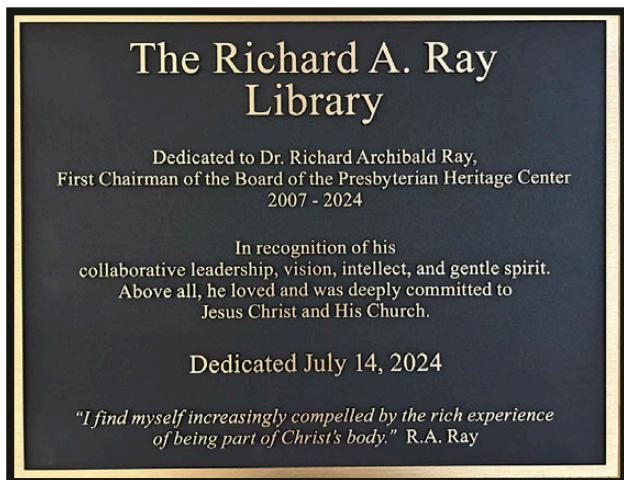
Dr. Crystal Downing

Dr. Crystal Downing is the featured speaker for the 2024 Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation, which will be held Friday, October 25 at 7:00pm in Upper Anderson. The title for Dr. Downing's lecture is "From Wittenberg to Oxford: The Re-formation of C.S. Lewis and Dorothy L. Sayers."

Many will remember Dr. Downing's presentation at the International Symposium on C.S. Lewis: Influence & Relevance Today, sponsored by the PHC in Nov. 2019.

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Richard A. Ray Library, continued



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Dick's immense love of books led him to read extensively about such theologians as Origen, Augustine, Athanasius, Julian of Norwich, and Gregory of Nyssa. His curiosity about early Christian writers who influenced the reformers led him to encourage and promote the study and discussion of these writers.

Dick was widely respected for his interest and expertise on Reformation studies. This influenced the PHC to establish the annual Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation, held in Montreat each October with noted speakers, such as the 2024 speaker, Dr. Crystal Downing. This year's event will be held in Montreat at 7:00pm on Friday, October 25. Admission is free.

Dick was a gifted pastor, speaker, professor, editor of John Knox Press and Kerygma Bible Studies, board member of numerous significant and worthy efforts, President of King University, writer, reader, listener, conversationalist, teacher, mentor, philosopher, historian, and so much more.

Dick often spoke about being part of the body of Christ, and the dedication on the PHC library plaque quotes Dick, "I find myself increasingly compelled by the rich experience of being part of Christ's body."

Upon Dick's death, Dr. Martin Dotterweich of King University wrote

that Dick loved to be the connecting tissue of the body of Christ, bringing people together where Dick "could command a room with such a quiet voice and unassuming presence."

Dr. Richard Burnett, Executive Director and Managing Editor of *Theology Matters*, said, "Dick was, above all, a dedicated minister of the Word of God. His love and commitment to Jesus Christ and his church were manifest throughout his life."

Since Dick's passing, various people have spoken of Dick's great capacity for friendship with people of all walks of life as well as with theologians of varied perspectives and political views. Dick led the effort at the PHC to encourage participation by all branches of Presbyterians under the PHC umbrella.

As a result of Dick's outreach, leaders of Presbyterian denominations developed respectful relationships that focused on their common beliefs rather than their differences.

The International Symposium on C.S. Lewis, held in Montreat in November 2019, was an outgrowth of discussions among several different denominations initiated by Dick Ray. This gathering of over 600 participants brought together many esteemed C.S. Lewis experts and scholars for an inspirational presentation that included C.S. Lewis' only living relative who resided in Malta.

The PHC thrived under the strong intellectual leadership of Dick Ray in concert with the creative genius of Executive Director Ron Vinson. Hundreds of people have traveled to Montreat to strengthen their knowledge and faith from the programs so carefully crafted to preserve our Christian heritage. Dick Ray's intellectual pursuit of ancient writers and church leaders throughout Christian history had a lasting effect on the many who listened so intently to Dick's eloquent presentations peppered with humorous observations. Dick's impact on the PHC will continue as its new leadership is committed to the intellectual path he charted.

At the Grand Opening of the PHC in May 2008, Dick said, "History is the elixir of awareness that deepens our knowledge of who we are. It's a window through which we envision God's work in the world." The PHC seeks to effectively live into Dick Ray's vision to cherish and preserve our Christian heritage.



Dr. R.C. Anderson's Vision: Montreat's Stonework

Excerpted from Mari Gramling, Dale Slusser, and Nancy Thomas' work, *"If These Stones Could Talk: A History of Montreat through its Stone Architecture."*

The tradition of using "river rock" masonry construction on Montreat's buildings, cottages, and landscape features began in the early 1920s. In 1911, Dr. Robert C. Anderson, who had been instrumental in carrying out the plan to erase Montreat's debt and put the conference center on a solid financial footing, was elected President. Anderson's vision was to build a beautiful site for spiritual study and renewal to accommodate a growing number of conferees and visitors. An adroit fundraiser, Dr. Anderson was able to find donors, sometimes wealthy individuals and sometimes groups, to bankroll his various projects.

Around 1919, Architect Richard Sharp Smith, who first came to Asheville c1895 to work on the Biltmore Estate, was hired by Dr. Anderson to take Anderson's sketches for a new auditorium and turn them into working drawings. The two most notable features of the new auditorium, the round columns and the use of cobblestones, were not part of the original design of the auditorium; yet both features would become a standard pattern and tradition for Montreat buildings and landscape features.

According to Anderson, "Mr. Smith first thought it best to have the building erected with Montreat stone blocks and to have the pillars designed in square form, but this

type of stone work at the time was too expensive. I employed local men and tested out the round column, instead of the square, to be erected with small cobblestones taken from the bed of the creek. The square columns with the large stones were estimated to cost about \$35 a square yard. By actual tests, it was found that the round pillar could be built by using a round form and the small cobblestone at a cost of about \$10 per square yard, so we decided to use this form for the structure of the columns which now stand in the auditorium."

The auditorium, named Anderson Auditorium, was completed by the summer conference season of 1922 and is possibly the oldest cobblestone building in Buncombe County.

In 1923, the Women's Auxiliary contributed \$2,000 for the construction of a new gate and gatehouse. The gate and gatehouse were constructed using cobblestones, and round cobblestone-clad columns, designed by Anderson for use on Anderson Auditorium, were used on the four corners of the double-arched gate.

In 1916, Montreat's "old wooden dam" was severely damaged. After being patched, it had been limping along for a number of years. In 1924, it was replaced by a new and enlarged dam. At the request of one of the new dam's major donors, Mrs. C.E. Graham, the Montreat lake was named "Lake Susan." As Dr. Anderson recalls, "Mrs. Graham's name was Susan, her

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Construction of Anderson Auditorium, c1921

Montreat's Stonework, continued

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daughter's name was Susan, her mother's name was Susan, and her granddaughter's name was Susan."

Although the dam was primarily built of casted reinforced concrete, cobblestones were used to line the ends of the wing-wall buttresses which supported it. Cobblestones were also used extensively for the stone walls which were built to enclose the edges of the enlarged lake. A new dam has since been built to replace the 1924 dam, which was damaged during the Flood of 1940. The new dam used flat field stones, but remnants of the cobblestone walls surrounding the lake remain.

When the Montreat Hotel burned in 1924, Dr. Anderson immediately began envisioning a new hotel.

Building the new hotel, which would be named Assembly Inn, was a larger undertaking even than building the auditorium due to its location on the side of the mountain.

The construction was so monumental that it required an "immense" amount of concrete and stone. The cobblestone was especially troublesome as the amount needed to clad the exterior was so great that soon "all the cobblestones in the grounds [onsite] seemed to be exhausted."

Anderson quickly solved the problem. As he later recalled, "the valves in the dam forming the lake were opened and the water rushed down the stream for a mile to the lower boundary of the grounds, and the rushing current of the water washed up as much of the cobblestone as

we had in the beginning. This process was repeated whenever the supply...was exhausted."

Construction of Assembly Inn took just over three years. On May 15, 1929, the Inn was officially opened to a full house.

Although Anderson continued to construct more buildings at Montreat until his retirement in 1947, Assembly Inn was the last building to solely use cobblestones for its exterior cladding.



Scan the QR code to listen to Dale Slusser's talk on Montreat's Stonework.

Distinguished Lecturer Dr. Crystal Downing, continued

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Dr. Downing was formerly Co-Director of the Marion E. Wade Center at Wheaton College. The Wade Center is the world's foremost archive for published and unpublished materials by and about C.S. Lewis and many of his colleagues. She also was co-holder of the Marion E. Wade Chair of Christian Thought and Professor of English at Wheaton. Prior to teaching at Wheaton, she was the Distinguished Professor of English and Film Studies at Messiah College in PA.

Dr. Downing is an award winning author. Her books include *Writing Performances: The Stages of Dorothy L. Sayers*, which received an international award from the Dorothy L. Sayers

Society, *How Postmodernism Serves (My) Faith*, *Changing Signs of Truth*, *Salvation from Cinema: The Medium Is the Message*, and *Subversive: Christ, Culture, and the Shocking Dorothy L. Sayers*, which received a starred review from Publishers Weekly.

In addition to her books, Dr. Downing has published more than 90 essays on a wide variety of topics exploring the relationship between Christianity and culture, has delivered nearly 50 juried papers at professional conferences, and has been invited to serve as a keynote speaker at more than 30 conferences in N. America and Europe. She received her PhD in English from the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Please make plans to attend the 2024 Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation and hear Dr. Downing.

The Distinguished Lecture will be held Friday, October 25th at 7:00 pm in Upper Anderson in Montreat.

Dr. Adam Neder, who was originally scheduled to deliver the 2024 Distinguished Lecture, had to withdraw due to unforeseen circumstances. Dr. Downing, who was originally scheduled to deliver the 2025 Distinguished Lecture, agreed to move up her appearance to 2024.

Collection Spotlight: Montreat Swimwear

For the most part, women's and men's swimsuits in the 1920s were almost identical—a wool tank top over a snug fitting pair of shorts that were sewn in at the waistline. By the 1920s, the “skirt” portion of the suit had risen from the knees to the mid-thigh. Men's suits were generally bright colors, with orange being the most popular.



Men's Wool Bathing Suit, Rev. James C. Grier, Montreat, 1920s

In August 1914, Montreat's Managing Committee voted that bathing suits “must have sleeves extending at least half way from the shoulder to the elbow, and skirts or pants extending below the knees. Any person or persons violating this ordinance shall be fined from (\$1.00) dollar to five (\$5.00) dollars and cost of the action.”

The ordinance seems to have mostly been ignored (see 1915 picture at left) though the issue of “immodest” swimwear continued to be a topic of discussion throughout the 1920s.



*Swimmers on the Diving Tower,
Montreat Lake, 1915*

Do you have unique Montreat memorabilia in your attic? Let us know. We'd love to add your Montreat memories to our collection!

**info@phcmontreat.org
828-669-6556**

Trivia Time!

Which United States Founding Father purchased 20,000 acres in eastern Buncombe County, NC, adjacent to land that would one day become Montreat?

This founding father was also a lawyer, statesman, early abolitionist, women's rights advocate, and devout Presbyterian. In 1797, he purchased the Buncombe County acreage for taxes due.

In 1800, he gave the land—described as extending up to Tomahik (Tomahawk) Branch and the North Fork of the Swannanoa River—to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. He stipulated that any money made from the lands should be “appropriated exclusively to the purpose of promoting learning, civilization, and religion among the American Indians.”

In 1817, he sponsored a Cherokee young man, Buck Watie, to attend the Foreign Mission School in Connecticut. This young man changed his name to that of his sponsor, and when he returned south, he became the first editor of the *Cherokee Phoenix*, the first American newspaper to be published in Cherokee and English.

Email your answer to info@phcmontreat.org. Those with the correct answer will be entered into a drawing for a prize!



The Rockhoppers entertain at the PHC's Ice Cream Social on Saturday, July 20, 2024.

Get to Know PHC's Heritage Council

What do you do when you really need to get something done and done right? Ask the PHC's Heritage Council to do it!

The Heritage Council was formed in 2021, and since that time, the 23 members have brought significant awareness to the PHC through various activities. Although the PHC has been in Montreat for 16 years, it has not been a well-known entity. To change this, the Heritage Council is letting the community know about the unique and fun opportunities centered around the PHC.

In 2022 and 2023, the Council sponsored a Tour of Homes, opening doors of classic Montreat cottages and houses to the outside world. More than 80 volunteers were recruited to be docents for last year's tour, providing information and handing out a program with detailed descriptions of each home—all focused on the rich history of Montreat.

Knowing that ice cream is a favorite summer food, the Heritage Council has hosted the PHC Ice

Cream Social for the past several years. Volunteers made gallons of homemade ice cream for guests—the most popular flavor being peach! Tours of the PHC, music by The Rockhoppers, and a historical “scavenger hunt” were highlights of the affair (besides the ice cream!).

The Heritage Council has also been involved in Neighborhood Meet and Greets for neighbors to get to know each other and the PHC. They host the dessert reception for the PHC's donors held just prior to the Distinguished Reformation Lecture. And, just this year, they published a “Tour of Stones” booklet focusing on all the stonework in Montreat and the history behind it. (See page 3 for more about this project and Montreat's stonework.)

But, most importantly, the Heritage Council brings an expanded sense of community to Montreat as well as an increased understanding of the PHC's work and mission. We can't thank them enough for their enthusiasm and dedicated efforts on the PHC's behalf.

What's Happening at the PHC

Although summer is the most active time for Montreat and the PHC, fall is busy as well with special events, exhibits, publications, and more.

Here's what's happening this fall at the PHC:

Fall Operating Hours

Wednesday - Friday, 10am - 4pm
Saturdays, 12pm - 4pm
and by appointment

Tuesday, September 24 at 3pm Between Heaven & the High Country

Appalachian State senior Ella Adams will present a program on the cultural and spiritual significance of the Montreat Valley to the Presbyterian communities that have inhabited the landscape.

PHC monthly e-newsletter

debuts on October 15.

To subscribe email info@phcmontreat.org.

Friday, October 25 at 7pm in Upper Anderson Distinguished Lecture on the Reformation by Dr. Crystal Downing

Wed., Dec. 4 at 3pm at PHC Annual Christmas Tea

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“Did You Know” historical articles on Montreat written by PHC Historian Nancy Midgette appear in Town of Montreat's Montreat Minute e-newsletter monthly.

Write info@townofmontreat.org to subscribe.

Announcing The Trillium Circle: The Legacy Society of the Presbyterian Heritage Center

The Presbyterian Heritage Center will soon be forming the Trillium Circle. It is being created to recognize and promote legacy giving to the PHC. Members of the Trillium Circle will be composed of donors who have committed to make a legacy gift (such as a bequest in their will) of \$10,000 or more to the PHC's endowment fund.

The goal is to build the PHC's endowment fund so it will impact the future of the PHC in fundamental and particularly important ways. Growing the PHC's endowment fund will create a significant source of additional annual income for the PHC that is predictable and perpetual. This in turn will help ensure the PHC can weather financial downturns and remain sustainable for the generations that follow.

By joining the Trillium Circle, members pledge to make a legacy gift to the endowment fund either during or after their lifetime.

There are many ways to make legacy gifts, which include: a bequest in a will or trust; a beneficiary designation in a retirement plan, brokerage account, bank account, or life insurance policy; and transferring ownership of a life insurance policy. There are also tax advantaged options such as a beneficiary designation in an IRA and establishing a charitable remainder trust.

Donors decide how their Legacy Gift will be used. Options include an unrestricted gift that the PHC

can direct to the area of greatest need as determined by the Board of Directors (preferred by the PHC because of flexibility) and a restricted gift, which provides resources only for a specific purpose or purposes designated by the donor. (The minimum size of a restricted legacy gift is \$25,000 due to the cost of administration.)

The Trillium Circle will make it possible for the PHC to recognize its members in several ways. An annual gathering and special communications will ensure Trillium Circle members stay connected to the work and accomplishments of the PHC.

The Trillium Circle will also allow the PHC to preserve and honor the names and memory of those who have left legacy gifts.

By highlighting the generosity of its members, the Trillium Circle will hopefully inspire others to consider making a legacy contribution to the PHC.

If you are interested in becoming a founding member of the Trillium Circle, please contact any of the following:

Kitty Fouche, Committee Chair
kkfouche@charter.net
850-529-5366

Anne Chesky, Executive Director
director@phcmontreat.org
828-669-6556

Mason Blake
masonblake@gmail.com
321-720-8989





Presbyterian Heritage Center
PO Box 207
Montreat, NC 28757

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Please Support the 2024 Heritage Fund

The Heritage Fund is the annual giving campaign of the Presbyterian Heritage Center. It provides the financial resources for almost all of the PHC's operating budget.

The PHC's programs and activities, including its museum exhibits, educational activities, library, publications, and archive program, are paid for almost entirely by contributions to the Heritage Fund.

The PHC is independent and does not receive contributions from any Presbyterian denomination. Virtually all the donors to the Heritage Fund are individuals, like you.

If you are not already a Heritage Fund contributor, please consider becoming one. Your contribution to the Heritage Fund at whatever level is comfortable for you is vitally important and greatly appreciated.

To give to the Heritage Fund:

- Mail a check to the PHC at PO Box 207, Montreat, NC 28757
- Make a tax-free Qualified Charitable Deduction from your IRA
- Donate at www.phcmontreat.org/give or scan the QR code:



Thank you for your generosity and for supporting the Presbyterian Heritage Center through your contribution to the Heritage Fund.

Giving Levels

Heritage Society

\$25,000+

Calvin Society

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Knox Society

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Witherspoon Society

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Tartan Circle

\$1,000 - \$2,499

Kirkin Circle

\$500 - \$999

Celtic Circle

\$100 - \$499

Friends of the PHC

\$1 - \$99