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Faneuil Hall, Boston

EdSymposium 2008—Boston

By Stacy Rowland, SDA/C

SDA members gathered in Boston in May for the 39th Annual Convention / EdSymposium. President Debra Ellis, SDA/C and Convention Coordinators Karen Roman, SDA/C and Betsy Nickless, SDA/C put together an event which lived up to all my expectations. Debra's theme was "Engage in Yourself; Engage in Your Profession; Engage in SDA." The week was packed with tools to help us do all three. Here are my highlights:

Engage in Yourself

Attending national and regional SDA conferences is always an opportunity for personal renewal. I gain strength by talking with colleagues from around the country, both about work and play. I saw many old friends in Boston as well as meeting new ones. One of the most meaningful connections I was able to make in Boston was with my brother, Scott. He flew in for the day and took Sally DiSciullo, SDA/C and me on a driving tour of downtown Boston. The contrast between modern and historical elements was visible everywhere. As we drove through streets that were barely wide enough to fit a horse and carriage, glimpses of the ultra-modern cable-stayed Zakim Bunker Hill Memorial Bridge (completed in 2002) would float into view. We took a spin through the MIT campus and were able to admire the Seussian-style Stata Center, designed by Frank Gehry, nestled amongst the more traditional, collegiate architecture that formerly comprised the campus.

Another day, several SDA friends and I set out on foot to follow some of the more historical spots in Boston's North End. We saw the church where Paul Revere warned of the Red Coats' approach. From there, we followed the "red brick trail" through old streets to Faneuil Hall. The trail—sometimes a painted red stripe on the street and sometimes actual bricks built into the sidewalk—wound its way past churches, shops, restaurants and monuments. Everywhere there was evidence of people living their lives and carving out their own personal space in the city. Tiny gardens thrived on fire escapes, doors opened to reveal mom & pop restaurants and small courtyards were converted into green sanctuaries. Everywhere we went, we were treated not like annoying tourists, but like friends, and people were delighted to share their city with us. I was reminded of the importance of taking what I have and making the most of it to the best of my ability—and not being afraid to inject new, "modern" thoughts and ideas into my previously held beliefs.

Engage in Your Profession

Keynote Speaker, Bill Truby, kicked off EdSymposium by reminding us that to be successful, it's important to understand and work with (rather than against) natural laws. For example, if you are pushing on a door that should be pulled, you will be frustrated. No matter how much effort you use, the door will not open. However, if you simply change your perspective and pull,

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