

# HISTORICAL BULLETIN

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## from our PRESIDENT

**Dr. Ulrike Schuler**

This year was richly filled with meaningful events and anniversaries that forced Methodists of an ecumenical spirit to deeper reflections about being church and to live and act according to Scripture. In all these connections historical aspects were needed, bringing Scripture, tradition, reason and experience into a vital dialogue.

Here is a report about events that I was personally involved in as a representative of The United Methodist Church in Europe and brought visibility to the World Methodist Historical Society:

1. In February the **International Theological Dialogue of The World Methodist Council (WMC) and The Baptist World Alliance (BWA) 2014 to 2018** was opened at the Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. According to the overall theme of the dialogue, *faith working through love*, the opening round of conversations focused on “Faith active in love: sung & preached, confessed & remembered, lived & learned.” The participants (six in each team—inclusively mixed from different continents) discussed presentations on the history, theology, and contemporary global situation of Methodists and Baptists. The dialogue is co-chaired by Rev. Dr. Tim Macquiban, Minister at Ponte Saint Angelo Methodist Church and Director of the Methodist Ecumenical Office in Rome, Italy and Rev. Dr. Curtis Freeman, Research Professor and Director of the Baptist House of Studies at Duke University Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina. Rev. Dr. Paul Chilcote, Professor and Dean of Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio, and Rev. Dr. Fausto Vasconcelos, BWA director of Mission, Evangelism, and Theological Reflection, serve as co-secretaries. Other members of the Methodist delegation present were Rev. Malcolm Tan, Pastor of Barker Road Methodist Church in Singapore; Rev. Lauren Matthews, Minister, Umngeni Circuit, Natal Coastal District, Methodist Church of Southern Africa; and the Rev. Christine Gooden-Benguche, Secretary, Jamaica District Conference, Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas and me, Professor at the Reutlingen School of Theology in Germany. While the first dialogue showed a lot of common understanding of Christian life and faith as well as the approach to different theological emphasis the hope grew to progress to a deeper mutual understanding that also demonstrably emerged in

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## from our GENERAL SECRETARY

**Dr. Robert Williams**

It has been a year since I have been able to prepare a newsletter for our Society and for that I apologize. I retired as General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church (GCAH) effective August 1, so I have been working to act like I am retired and working on transition with my successor. The new General Secretary of GCAH is the Rev. Alfred T. Day, III, who everyone calls Fred. I will remain as General Secretary of the WMHS until the World Methodist Conference in Houston in September, 2016. Fred was formerly pastor of Historic St. George’s United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and had served other pastorates in the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference as well as district superintendent.

The next World Methodist Conference will be in Houston, August 31- September 4, 2016. The WMHS will have a time slot for its program. I am working with leaders in Texas to organize a bus tour to historic sites in the Houston area. The bus tour we organized in South Africa in 2011 was the best attended gathering we have had at a Conference so I thought we should do that again. Also, we will need to start working on nominations for our officers. Please be thinking of persons to be regional vice-presidents. We always face the difficulty that those who receive the newsletter are frequently not those who attend the conference and those who attend the conference do not necessarily have an ongoing interest in the Society. Future newsletters will have the details for the bus trip as the plans develop. I hope to prepare issues of the *Historical Bulletin* for June and December. I appreciate those who provide material from various regions and earnestly solicit material from any of you highlighting our care for the heritage of the Wesleyan tradition. The timely publication of this newsletter depends on these wide-ranging contributions.

For those receiving the printed copy of the *Historical Bulletin*, I would like to remind you that we can send this to you by email at no cost. You can be a member without paying any dues with an email subscription. Just email Michelle Merkel-Brunskill at [mmerkel@gcah.org](mailto:mmerkel@gcah.org) to be on the list. Please note that my email address is now [rwrjw@hotmail.com](mailto:rwrjw@hotmail.com). I welcome contact from you as well. The support of the Society comes from a designated gift of the Ruck Foundation, administered by the General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church.

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**WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING  
AND LECTURE  
ENGLESEA BROOK MUSEUM  
SATURDAY, JULY 4, 2015**

*“Prims in Print: The Changing Character of Primitive  
Methodism as Seen Through its Literature”  
by the Rev. Dr. Stephen Hatcher*

The Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 4, 2015, will focus upon the history and influence of Primitive Methodism with opportunities to explore its historic origins and legacy through the Englesea Brook Chapel Museum and its environs. Parking will be available at Englesea Brook and refreshments served from 10:00 a.m. for a modest charge. At 10:30 a.m. there will be a welcome by the Chair of the Chester and Stoke District, the Rev. Peter Barber, followed by a guided tour of Englesea Brook Museum led by Dr. Jill Barber, Vice-President of the Methodist Church 2015-2016 and Director of Englesea Brook, concluding at 12:00 p.m. During the lunch break (bring a packed lunch to eat in the picnic areas around the Museum or under cover if the weather is inclement) bibliophiles will have an opportunity to visit the large second-hand bookshop at the Hassall Road Methodist Church Alsager (10 minutes by car). Others may wish to travel further to visit the evocative site at Mow Cop (20-30 minutes by car). The Wesley Historical Society AGM, to which all are invited, will be held at Englesea Brook from 1:15 to 2:15 p.m. There are good public transport links from Crewe, Manchester and Birmingham to Alsager and car share possibilities for access to Hassall Road and Mow Cop.

The Wesley Historical Society Annual Lecture chaired by the Rev. Dr. Henry Rack will take place at Englesea Brook Chapel from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It will be preceded by a short act of worship during which a collection will be taken to cover expenses and followed by refreshments. For his lecture, the Rev. Dr. Stephen Hatcher will draw upon a major revision and considerable expansion which he has been undertaking of the Primitive Methodist bibliography that he originally prepared in 1980. An integral part of this process of revision has been to identify through consideration of title, author, publisher, and content, exactly what characterises a publication of significance to the history of Primitive Methodism. His lecture will summarize his key findings and examine the changes in the literature that is being printed across time and place zones and what this reveals about the character of the Primitive Methodist reading public and the theological, spiritual, social, educational, cultural and political environment in which Primitive Methodists lived. In viewing Primitive Methodism through the perspective of its books he will illuminate the changing character of this most “chameleon of denominations.”

The Rev. Stephen Hatcher is a Methodist Minister who served in Circuit, 1968-1996. He was given permission to develop the Englesea Brook project during the years 1996-2008, and is now retired from the stipendiary ministry. He is currently a member of the Methodist Heritage Committee, and Chair the

Methodist Heritage Sites Network Forum. He was previously a member of the Archives and History Committee, representing the Primitive Methodist interest. He holds the degree of Ph.D. from the University of Manchester for a thesis entitled, “The Origin and Early Expansion of Primitive Methodism in the Hull Circuit 1819-1851,” presented in 1993. He believes that an understanding of our Methodist Heritage can lead to much greater effectiveness in the contemporary mission of the Church today. For further information contact Dr. John A. Hargreaves, General Secretary Wesley Historical Society; e-mail: johnahargreaves@blueyonder.co.uk.

**-WMHS-**

**NEWS FROM THE WMHS AUSTRALIAN RESOURCE  
CENTRE – DECEMBER 2014**

Greetings to the WMHS family world-wide from Australia as we come to the close of another year of service at the Eunice Hunter Memorial Library (Australian WMHS Resource Centre) in Sydney, NSW.

Much of our work since the last Newsletter has focused on assisting members of the former Methodist Church of Australasia (since 1977 a part of the Uniting Church of Australia) with researching their church and personal histories in the wider social and historical settings in which the early Wesleyan class meetings, later followed by the traditional circuit and district structures of Methodism, emerged from their earliest beginnings over 200 years ago. It has also been a year in which financial and other constraints have made it increasingly difficult to access primary research material in official church, State and National archival and library repositories, as clearly illustrated by our contribution to this Newsletter on the NSW Methodist “Victory Tree Project” of 1920.

As with much of world-wide Methodism, our church history in Australia reflects the early divisions in British Methodism. The backgrounds of our early free settlers in particular have markedly impacted on our history in this country both prior to and since the unions which saw the emergence of the Methodist Church of Australasia in 1902. (This legal title reflects the fact that New Zealand was a part of the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Conference at that time. The title was retained over the following 75 years despite the New Zealand Conference becoming autonomous in 1913.)

In the context of the unions of the various branches of Methodism in Australia prior to and including 1902, Wesleyan Methodism was numerically dominant, especially in the eastern States. It is an unfortunate fact that in these States in particular the early records, and hence the histories, of the so-called “minor branches” of Methodism have not been preserved as fully as those of the early Wesleyan congregations and circuits. Herein lies a very real challenge to Australian church

historians, archivists, and librarians to ensure that those records and histories of the Primitive Methodist, Bible Christian, United Methodist Free Church, and other numerically smaller Methodist bodies which do survive are identified and organized in ways in which they are both accessible and “user friendly.”

The real enemy, in human terms at least, in this context is what has been described as “denominational aggrandizement,” and this has continued to be both a challenge and a significant frustration to staff and volunteers associated with the Eunice Hunter Memorial Library over recent times. From its inception in 1988, the Eunice Hunter Memorial Library has had as a significant objective the identification of the contribution not only of the various branches of Methodism in Australia and the Pacific to John Wesley’s “world parish,” but also the contribution of other evangelical and reformed churches and agencies to the unique history of Methodism “down under.”

To this end, the Eunice Hunter Library has a second specific role at this time as the primary “disaster welfare recovery” facility for the Ferguson Memorial Library and Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in NSW, holding duplicate copies of church papers, journals, and many local church histories, together with formal minutes of State and national Assemblies and related bodies of that denomination. Administrative arrangements are such moreover, that although neither of these facilities are resourced for full time operation, it is possible for materials held in either facility to be transported to the other for the convenience of researchers. These arrangements also enable enhanced access for researchers, many of whom are located either interstate or overseas.

The objectives identified above are reflected in other holdings at the Eunice Hunter Memorial Library (and are also paralleled in the Ferguson Memorial Library and Presbyterian Archives pursuant to the policies laid down by Sir John Ferguson, for whom this repository is named). Minutes, year books, and histories of the former Congregational Unions of Australasia and NSW also form part of the Eunice Hunter collections. The Ferguson Memorial Library holds a growing collection of records of inter-denominational bodies including the Bush Missionary Society, the Christian Endeavour Movement, the Open Air Campaigners, and the official records of the Women’s World Day of Prayer, in addition to a complete microfilmed set of “The Methodist” and its antecedents being the official Methodist journal for NSW for the period 1858-1977.

In these and other ways, the staff and volunteers of the Eunice Hunter Memorial Library in association with the Ferguson Memorial Library seek to remain true to John Wesley’s emphasis on ecumenism and the “unity in diversity” of the people of God in this land, and earnestly seek the prayers of our WMHS family for all our undertakings.

It is appropriate in the light of this background to note some references which significantly enhance the resources available through the Eunice Hunter and Ferguson Memorial Libraries with particular reference to the “minor branches” of

Methodism, and also some of the research with which we have been associated over the past year.

Nearly 30 years ago, the late NSW Methodist historian and archivist Rev. Eric Clancy completed his thesis on the history of the Primitive Methodist Church in this State under the title “Ranters’ Church.” This extensive research was subsequently reproduced and indexed in a form making it far more user-friendly to church and family historians, of which excerpts were also published in the Uniting Church historical journal *Church Heritage*.

Articles by Eric Clancy on the United Methodist Free Church (UMFC) in NSW and also on a small Methodist body which functioned until the 1950s only in the Hunter Valley region of NSW as the Lay Methodist Church have also appeared in this journal. In his article on the UMFC, Clancy noted that the full records of only one UMFC circuit appeared to have survived in NSW.

In Victoria, historians Aubrey Quick and Travis McHarg produced *Captives of Freedom*, the story of the UMFC in that State, which includes a most helpful “family tree” of Australian Methodism up to 1902. More recently, Travis McHarg has produced a *History of the Bible Christian Church in Victoria*. Still more recently, we have been in close contact with Churches of Christ historians who in the course of their research have established clear links with the Australian Methodist Church, a very small breakaway body of Methodists in NSW, of whom the best known is perhaps the pioneer Sydney city missionary Nathaniel Pidgeon, who arrived in NSW in 1841.

The ongoing development of biographical data bases on ministers and home missionaries etc. of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches in Australia over the past few years at both the Eunice Hunter and Ferguson Memorial Libraries has highlighted the significance of the numbers of these servants of the churches who crossed the various denominational “great divides” to serve in two (and in some cases all three) of these denominations, and also of movements from these churches into other Christian bodies.

This has served as a necessary corrective to the non-recognition of many lay preachers, theological students, home missionaries, and ordained ministers of the Methodist Churches in particular in Conference Minutes, Ministerial Indexes etc. of those who having begun their faith journey in Methodism later rendered significant service to Christ through other denominations.

Economic and other factors impacting on emigration can be seen in the influx of Welsh miners to various parts of Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales figures prominently in Welsh church history, with its close connections with the theological colleges at Bala and Trevecca. (John Wesley, George Whitefield, Howell Harris, and Lady Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, were all closely associated with the Trevecca College at some time.)

A copy of the 1929 Calvinistic Methodist Book of Rules held in the Ferguson Library shows a system of governance combining both Methodist and Presbyterian structures. Acting on the recommendation of the Reception of Ministers Committee, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Australia determined in 1909 to automatically receive Welsh Calvinistic Methodist ministers into the Presbyterian ministry in Australia. Two Trevecca trained Calvinistic Methodist ministers serving the Presbyterian Church served as Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in NSW, and in order to resolve any legal problems arising from the growing use of both designations, an Act of the British Parliament - The Calvinistic Methodist or Presbyterian Church of Wales Act, 1933, declared that the Welsh Church legally existed under either or both names!

With the centenary of the landing of Australian and New Zealand forces at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915, during the Great War taking place next year, many specific research projects on that War and those involved in it are being undertaken. Wider studies of Australian Christians at war are also being undertaken, including research on chaplains and other non-combatants.

The staff of the Eunice Hunter and Ferguson Memorial Libraries are building on earlier research on Methodist and Presbyterian chaplains and others who served on Gallipoli. This earlier research was published in a monograph entitled *O Valiant Hearts* in association with Professor Robert Linder of Kansas State University and the archives of the Baptist Union of NSW to mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World War I Armistice in 2008. A further publication is envisaged in 2015.

The Annual General Meeting of the Uniting Church Historical Society (successor to the Australasian Methodist Historical Society) took place in Sydney on September 6, and included an address by historian Dr. Geoff Treloar on "Evangelicals in the First World War: The Global Scene."

Former Methodists in NSW are celebrating several significant anniversaries over coming months, including the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of the pioneer Wesleyan Missionary to NSW, Rev. Samuel Leigh, and the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of Wesleyan beginnings at Singleton and Raymond Terrace in the NSW Hunter Valley, north of Sydney. The former Wesleyan congregations in these centers formed part of the Maitland District of the NSW Conference, which in 1863 extended north from Newcastle to what is now the Queensland State border. The historic 1883 Singleton Wesleyan Church is currently home to a Presbyterian congregation, and staff of the Eunice Hunter and Ferguson Memorial Libraries regularly lead worship and support this congregation in other ways. The first recorded Wesleyan services at Raymond Terrace were held in the home of the widowed Mary Gilbert, whose husband John, a class leader and lay preacher in the Rye (Sussex) circuit, died en route to NSW in 1839 on the emigrant ship *Roxburgh Castle*. (The Eunice Hunter Memorial Library is named after a direct descendant of Mary and John Gilbert.)

Our regular quarterly seminars at the Eunice Hunter Library continue and by arrangement with the Association of Confessing Congregations in the Uniting Church (ACC) and the Booragul Uniting Church (an ACC member congregation) in the Newcastle/Lake Macquarie area, have been repeated in an experimental joint initiative titled "Hymns and History in the Hunter." Our 2014 Seminars to date have featured the Evangelistic Missions and Hymns of Wilbur Chapman and Charles Alexander in Australia and the Methodist "Victory Tree Project," both of which had special links to the Hunter.

Earlier this year, the Eunice Hunter and Ferguson Memorial Libraries were involved in arranging the 10<sup>th</sup> annual thanksgiving service for the shared heritage of the Uniting and Presbyterian Churches in NSW as represented in the archives of these churches. A feature of the 2014 service, in which other churches and related historical bodies share, was an address by Emeritus Professor Kim Oates AM, pediatrician and internationally-recognized expert on child abuse and neglect. Professor Oates, who appropriately has a strong Methodist heritage but today is actively involved with the Anglican Church and has a son in the Presbyterian ministry in NSW, gave a much appreciated address on "Child Protection - Outside And Inside The Church," which contained a wealth of practical information for all called upon to address this significant social issue in the life of the Churches.

With prayerful best wishes to all readers of the *Bulletin*.

-Daryl Lightfoot and Sue Pacey

-WMHS-

**LIVING WORLD WAR I MEMORIALS  
IN NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA  
THE METHODIST "VICTORY TREE PROJECT"**

**by Daryl Lightfoot and Sue Pacey**

In June, 2013, a Sydney historian sought assistance in identifying the location and species of 200 or more "Victory Trees" planted as a unique WWI memorial project in 1920 on Methodist Church property in New South Wales. The trees had been donated by arrangement between the Methodist Young People's Department (YPD) and the NSW Government Botanist, Joseph H. Maiden. Mr. Maiden had been involved in various patriotic initiatives both during and following the Great War, including the distribution of 1.8 kgs of poppy seeds collected by school children in Flanders to families of Australian and New Zealand servicemen ("Anzacs") who had fallen in France.

Conditions of the gift were that trees be planted on church property, and that on the Sunday nearest to Anzac Day (April 25) in following years, youth organizations meet around the

tree to hold a service of remembrance and thanksgiving for the WWI victory.

Incomplete correspondence in the Methodist records at the NSW State Library and a search in newspaper files by the researcher concerned had identified the Circuits receiving only about 20 of these trees. The Sydney Botanical Gardens “seedling registers” and related papers were apparently missing and the Australian National War Memorial had no knowledge of this significant Project.

The majority of church records relevant to the “Victory Tree Project” are circuit records held in off-site storage by the NSW Archives of the Uniting Church (UCA). Retrieval arrangements (and costs) to access these records, together with property redevelopments and sales of church property since inauguration of the UCA in 1977, made it impossible for essential research to be undertaken in the Archives. The research reported here has thus relied primarily on *The Methodist* and other newspapers. We have to date identified 200+ “Victory Trees” planted in NSW over the years 1920/22. This report focuses on the Maitland Synod District as the forerunner of the Project and because of the comparative ease of access to local newspapers.

The Great War came to an end in 1918, which also coincided with the centenary of Methodism in the Maitland Synod District, comprising the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie areas and the Hunter River valley to the north of Sydney. This centenary was marked by a series of extensively reported events throughout the District held during September, 1918.

Ministers associated with the then NSW Conference Sunday School Department (SSD) included Rev. W. Henry Howard, Superintendent of the West Maitland Circuit from 1914-1916. Mr. Howard’s son had enlisted with the Australian forces during this Maitland term. Henry Howard was transferred to the Ryde (Sydney) circuit in 1917, and the earliest relevant link to the “Victory Tree Project” between the SSD and the Sydney Botanic Gardens is found in correspondence from Rev. Henry Howard in August, 1918, seeking “plants” (*sic*) for planting on the Ryde circuit property.

As the first full-time Secretary of the SSD, Rev. Harold Wheen (with Rev. Henry Howard) was highly visible in the Maitland Methodist Centenary celebrations involving the Sunday Schools and other youth organizations in the District, which included Christian Endeavour and also the emerging Methodist Order of Knights (OKs) and Girls’ Comradeship (MGC).

The clearest link between the circuits of the Maitland District Synod and the “Victory Tree Project” emerges in Harold Wheen’s address to the final rally of youth organizations in the 1918 centenary celebrations. Here he spoke of “the old wishing tree planted in the Sydney Botanical Gardens 102 years ago by Lady Macquarie,” and compared this to the “100 years old tree of Methodism” in the Hunter valley. It is thus evident that the two ministers most directly involved at Conference

level in youth work at this time had considerable knowledge of the history and the workings of the Botanical Gardens and recognized the opportunities for involvement of the Botanical Gardens in a joint initiative such as the “Victory Tree Project.” Also around the time of the Maitland District Centenary celebrations, a meeting of the national General Conference Sunday Schools Committee took place to address resolutions of the 1917 General Conference. This Melbourne meeting had as its theme “The Land of Tomorrow”, anticipated the coming Armistice and post-war issues for the Church, and was attended by Rev. Harold Wheen of the SSD. The meeting remitted to the 1919 State Conferences various proposals concerning youth work, to be funded by a proposed “Peace Thanksgiving Fund.”

On the NSW Methodist calendar, the annual District Synods met around November, preparatory to the State Conference meeting in Sydney during the following February. Following the WWI Armistice on November 11, 1918, the SSD Council framed proposals for the 1919 NSW Conference including a change of name for the SSD to the Young Peoples Department (YPD), and a 5 year development plan for the YPD on the theme “Seeking For Big Things,” to be funded through the proposed “Peace Thanksgiving Fund.”

In the early post-war euphoria, the 1919 NSW Conference adopted these proposals, but varied the name of the proposed special fund to the “Victory Thanksgiving Fund.” (This change highlighted tensions between those favoring a celebration of peace and those who were perhaps more nationalistic and favored thanksgiving for victory in war. At least some congregations continued to demonstrate a firm preference for the former, as shown by subsequent initiatives and a limited participation in the “Victory Trees Project” overall. The disproportionately larger participation of smaller rural congregations across the State in the Project was also significant, perhaps highlighting the greater impact of the war on these close-knit communities and congregations.<sup>1</sup>)

The 1919 Conference also adopted a proposed remit to all District Synods in virtually identical words to a further resolution of the 1918 Maitland District Synod commending “The formation of similar District Councils in connection with the YPD to that in existence in the Newcastle District.” (This Newcastle development was apparently a response to the 1917 General Conference remit.)

<sup>1</sup> While the Singleton circuit in the Maitland District participated in this project, the one tree known to have been planted in the circuit was planted on the site of the small chapel on the Warrena grazing property, and not on the Singleton church site *per se*. The Singleton church itself celebrated peace with the debt-free Peace Memorial pipe organ being dedicated in August, 1919.

Further north, the Muswellbrook circuit, whose Superintendent minister (Rev. B. Linden Webb) was known for his strong pacifist views, applied for a tree but the application appears to have been withdrawn later. At Raymond Terrace, where WWI Chaplain Rev. C. J. Macaulay was Superintendent minister, no tree was planted and minister and people rejoiced in their new Peace Memorial Church, opened and dedicated in July, 1921, by Rev. Henry Howard, by this time President of the NSW Methodist Conference. A tree was however planted elsewhere in the Raymond Terrace circuit in the grounds of the small church at Nelson Bay.

An unsuccessful request was made to the 1919 Conference for the appointment of an additional minister to the YPD, but Rev. W. Mills Robson was seconded to the YPD in September, 1919, on return from wartime Chaplaincy duties. (This appointment was highly significant to the Maitland District, where the Cessnock circuit had experienced a revival during Mr. Robson's term in that circuit from 1911-1914. Mr. Robson was also brother-in-law to Rev. Alfred E. Walker, who had served as Conference Evangelist and was now President of the Newcastle District YPD Council.)

About the same time, the constitution for the Methodist YPD Girls Comradeship (MGC) was formalized. The first MGC "group muster" was held in November, 1919, and both the venue and program for this gathering highlight the developing association between the YPD and Government Botanist Joseph H. Maiden in the context of the "Victory Tree" Project.

The venue was the Sydney Botanical Gardens, and a report on this gathering in *The Methodist* notes that afternoon tea was shared "close by the tree planted by King George." The report also notes the presence of the YPD Secretary Rev. Harold Wheen, and the fact that Mr. Wheen "addressed the gathering despite the 'taboo' on public speaking in the Gardens."

Circuits in the Maitland Synod District maintained a high profile in the work of the YPD throughout 1919, as did the Newcastle District YPD Council based on its heightened profile following the 1919 NSW Conference resolution. Rev. Henry Howard returned to his former circuit to conduct the 1919 Sunday School Anniversary, and new Sunday School halls were approved for erection in two Newcastle suburbs. An extensive itinerary in Newcastle and the Hunter by the YPD Sunday Schools Co-ordinator was begun during November.

The Singleton Court of the Order of Knights was featured in *The Methodist* in December, when a visit to Maitland by Rev. P. J. Stephen to promote the appeal for funds for the Methodist War Memorial Hospital at Waverley was also reported. During this visit, Mr. Stephen also promoted the claims of the Victory Thanksgiving Fund, stressing the inter-relationship between these two initiatives as tributes to all who had served. Another initiative of the YPD as part of its post-war expansion program was the provision of hostels for young people from rural areas proceeding to the cities for further education, and while in Maitland, Mr. Stephen announced that the first hostel under this initiative would be established in Newcastle.

The impetus from these initiatives continued into 1920. Following consultations with the Newcastle YPD Council, and clearly with an eye to a high visibility for the YPD at the February, 1920, NSW Conference, a planning meeting for various special Newcastle initiatives was arranged for February 7, involving YPD Secretary Rev. Harold Wheen. These plans included a special Young Peoples Rally including "a march and presentation of VICTORY TREES to each Sunday School in the District."

The 1920 NSW Conference took place later in February, but the published YPD reports made no detailed reference to the initiatives planned for Newcastle. There was some barely concealed frustration in the reports at the limited time on the Conference agenda devoted to YPD matters. Harold Wheen's clear intention to "show-case" the planned Newcastle initiatives had evidently been frustrated by other business, and it seems that he now planned to feature these initiatives at the 1920 national General Conference in Sydney in May.

The special programs planned for March, including the "Victory Tree" presentations at the young peoples' rally on March 22, proceeded as planned, and *The Newcastle Herald* gave a glowing account of this rally. A march of young people carrying the colors of various military units was conducted by Rev. Harold Wheen, and the "Victory Trees" were presented by a former local minister known for his work among young people. Unfortunately this report did not name the congregations receiving the first "Victory Trees."

Clearly gratified by the success of the Newcastle program, Harold Wheen then wrote to the Botanical Gardens in early April, 1920, requesting "young trees" for the YPD. The request was viewed favorably and further correspondence seeking "assistance with the dispatch of trees" was received. Urgent negotiations followed and further correspondence later in April referred to the provision of "cardboard pots and also the supply of "dungaree suits." It thus seems that the trees provided by the Botanical Gardens, were packed and dispatched by YPD staff and/or volunteers.

Plans for the General Conference Young Peoples' Demonstration under the theme "Victory and Vision" included "Presentation of the Victory Tree," and proceeded as announced.

The Project attracted favorable attention by local and regional papers, and it was announced that the first trees provided under the Project would be ready for dispatch early in June to country centers. During a visit to Tenterfield in the far north of the State on June 1, Rev. Harold Wheen planted a "Victory Tree" in that town. At the time of the planting of a tree at Oberon in the central west of NSW on August 23, it was reported that "over 200 trees are now planted in north, south, east and west."

Of all the trees planted state-wide in 1920/22 under the Project, only a handful appears to have survived. Ongoing research in the Newcastle and Hunter valley areas has to date identified only one surviving tree likely to have been planted as a living memorial under this unique Project. This is a tall native eucalypt standing on land adjacent to the present Wye Union Church on Lake Macquarie, to the south of Newcastle, and having close associations with the former Bethshan Holiness Mission which featured in an earlier WMHS *Bulletin*.

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EUROPEAN HISTORICAL CONFERENCE  
SEPTEMBER 9-12, 2015

*“Who Evangelized Europe?  
Mission Empowered by Methodist Women”*

From September 9-12, 2015, a European Historical Conference will take place in Ruse, Bulgaria. The European Section of the World Methodist Historical Society is supported by the European Methodist Council in preparation of this event. The main topic—a bit provoking but challenging—will be “Who Evangelized Europe? Mission Empowered by Methodist Women.”

The conference will feature lectures that give an overview of the role and contribution of women in the Methodist missions to European countries. Furthermore, reports from different countries hopefully including basic research results, Bible meditations, a Bulgarian cultural night and a visit to the Ivanovo Rocky Monastery, a World Heritage site in Bulgaria will augment and enhance the program.

Each participant has the opportunity and is kindly asked to give a report on his or her own investigations concerning the conference topic. These reports should not exceed a time frame of twenty minutes.

The costs for the conference are € 300.00 per person, which covers the conference fee, accommodation in a simple standard hotel (double room), all meals, and a bus tour to Ivanovo.

Please register no later than January 31, 2015 by contacting: Dr. Judit Lakatos, E-mail: lakatos.judit@methodista.hu; Mailing Address: Vizakna utca 38/B, 1141 Budapest, Hungary.

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noteworthy regional European dialogues and statements that were reflected, too. As a fruit of the new connections between the dialogue partners, Prof. Dr. Curtis Freeman presented his newly published work on baptism, “Contesting Catholicity. Theology for other Baptists,” at symposium at the Reutlingen School of Theology in Germany in October. He brought his thesis up for discussion describing baptism as God’s mission that can begin in an infant dedication or baptism, has to be followed by catechetical instructions and at all means a process including “a rich and robust account in which Christian baptism is not reduced to a singular act, but rather traces a journey through which participants are made disciples.” The meeting next year is scheduled in February in Singapore where we will take up the conversations on the nature of the church with special attention to justification and sanctification.

Beside the dialogue sessions, the team made a pilgrimage to the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church to meet with Rev. Carolyn McKinstry, author of the book, “While the World Watched” based on her experience as a survivor of the 1963 bombing of the Baptist church (a black people congregation). We also visited the Civil Rights Institute just across the street of this Baptist church and particularly noted the participation of local churches in the struggle for racial justice. Bewildering was the insight that Baptist and Methodist members were in the group of oppressors, discriminating against black people and also gave orders to be violent to those who demonstrated even for equality of status—a fundamental right in a society that calls itself democratic. The involvement of Christians in the Ku Klux Klan needs to be researched to progress a healing of memories.

2. In February and September, 2014, the third and the fourth session of the **Bilateral Dialogue between the United Methodist Church and the Moravian Church Northern and Southern Provinces in the United States of America** took place in New York and Winston-Salem, North Carolina, one of the main and historically oldest Moravian settlements in the US with also one of the eldest colleges for women (Salem College, founded 1772). Previously, the dialogue had explored questions relating to the history, doctrine, polity, and church life in the Northern and Southern Provinces of the Moravian Church and the United Methodist Church. Not finding any church-dividing issues, the dialogue team finished its work with a statement with recommendations to their respective churches for a declaration and affirmation of a full communion relationship. The hope is that this will be adopted by the Moravian Provincial Synods and the United Methodist General Conference. The statement also quotes a letter that church leaders of the Moravians and of The United Methodist Church in Germany sent to all official church leaders in their denominations to make them realize that “we have not only historic connections with each other. The current day character and spirituality also very much bind us together: the centrality of Christ in our theology and piety, the significance of singing in our churches, and, not least the missional challenge in Germany in the twenty-first century.” So they determined that no formal agreement is necessary because the full communion already persists. Interesting is now the process of acceptance in the United Methodist Church. It is due to the historical growth development of the church that the structure outside the USA allows regional inter-church agreements that are not of official importance for the whole world-wide church. Currently that is not the case for the United States for there, official statements and recommendations are decided by the General Conference and therefore become of official meaning for the world-wide UMC. The dialogue was co-chaired by Bishop Sudarshana Devadhar, of The United Methodist Church the Rev. Gary Harke of the Moravian Church. Other members of the team included Prof. Dr. Jason Vickers (first session), the Rev. Dr. Robert Williams and me representing The Unit-

ed Methodist Church, and the Rev. Dr. M. Lynnette Delbridge, and the Rt. Rev. Christian Giesler representing the Moravian Church (Northern and Southern Provinces). The committee has received staff assistance from Dr. Glen Alton Messer, II from the Office of Christian Unity and Interreligious Relationships of the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church.

3. In June, 2014, the **Wesley Historical Society in Great Britain** organized their **Residential Annual Conference** at the High Leigh Conference Centre Hoddesdon Hertfordshire, highlighting the outbreak of World War I (historically dated on July 28, when Austria-Hungary declared the war on Serbia). The organizers asked for the different perspectives of Methodists in Great Britain as well as from different countries on questions around this topic. How did Methodists act in this conflict? How did they realize their Christian and Methodist identity? In which way they were more citizens than church members with Christian responsibilities? The optimistic hope is that people of God learn when reflecting the spectrum of scopes in the past to participate in constructing a peaceful present and future.
4. Between 2012 and 2015 we also remember the **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vatican II**. Last year the Roman Catholic Church celebrated especially the subscription of the constitution about the Holy Liturgy (Sacrosanctum concilium) that among other things allowed have the liturgy not only in Latin but also in the local language, included the church community much more and also let the priests celebrate the liturgy facing the community. This anniversary was celebrated in Germany during a Eucharist Congress in Cologne and invited ecumenical guests. This year the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of **Decree on Ecumenism** (Unitatis redintegratio) was celebrated—in Germany with conferences and ecumenical services—locally and in all federal states in Germany, November 21. A conference on “Vatican II from a multilateral ecumenical perspective” was previously organized in May by the national council of churches in Germany and the Roman Catholic Church. It was highlighted that the decree was an enormous turn in the Roman Catholic thinking on church unity and in its original meaning an ecumenical progress.
5. In Germany—after a long process of working on a common document initiated by the Roman Catholic Church—an official **Mutual Recognition of Baptism** was signed in 2007 by 11 of 18 member churches of the German National Council of Churches in which the Roman Catholic church has also a membership (although not having that in the World Council of Churches)—the **Magdeburg declaration**. That “mutual recognition” is, of course, far from a consensus for all churches or municipalities of congregations who practice adult baptism, or more appropriate believer’s baptism. That is the case, too, with new “Mutual Recognition of Baptism” in Switzerland in April—the **Declaration of Riva San Vitale 2014**. From my perspective a substantial progress was made in the way this recognition is formulated. It is not—as the German statement—mainly focusing on the initiating meaning for the unity of the church but also beside the different practices of baptism more focusing on biblical links and the individual who is baptized, describing what happens in baptism at least in practical implications. It also quotes the Lima Declaration (1982), affirmed by the participating churches that “our one baptism into Christ constitutes a call to the churches to overcome their divisions and visibly manifest their fellowship.” Consistently the declaration adds the “position statements” of those who were not able to sign it because of a different sacramental understanding as the Swiss Baptist Union who “cannot reconcile a sacramental understanding of baptism administered to immature children with their understanding of baptism” and the Salvation Army who “does not use this ritual” for they do not have sacraments. (The full document with comments is available at [http://www.agck.ch/images/communiqués/2014/AGCK\\_Taufe\\_Brosch\\_4-Spr\\_S\\_32.pdf](http://www.agck.ch/images/communiqués/2014/AGCK_Taufe_Brosch_4-Spr_S_32.pdf))
6. Around November 9, we celebrated in Germany the **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fall of the Wall** (1989). That was a very moving event—not only in Germany but also for Europe. Finally it was the end of the Iron Curtain. The rapid progress in 1989 was very much accompanied and supported by the peaceful demonstrations in East Germany, especially in Leipzig. They were mainly organized by churches and also always ended in churches that opened their doors for political discussions. My husband and I joined the service for the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary at November 9 in a church in Leipzig. It was a service with prayers and thanks to God who let this peaceful revolution happen. People told their personal memories on this day—some most dramatic stories, some accompanied by family dividing situations when family members had previously decided to flee and valedictions had meant maybe not ever see each other again. It was a very meaningful experience also to share the stories from a West German and an East German perspective with experiences. My twelve year old granddaughter had started—forced by her history teacher at school—to interview family members about their memories on November 9, 1989.
7. Finally, in the German speaking areas (Germany, Switzerland and Austria) the **500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation** in 2017 is a huge topic. Mainly the Lutheran Churches in Germany started a so-called Reformation decade in 2008—proclaiming for every year in the following decade with a special topic: confession, freedom, music, toleration, politic, image and bible, the one world. All over Germany, the protestant churches organize projects, conferences and work on publications. The so-called “Free Churches” (those who were organized in the nineteenth or twentieth century in addition to or opposite to the mainline churches) as well as the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches are kindly invited to explain their relationship to topics of the reformation. As Methodists we explain and define our roots in the reformation through the reflections of John Wesley who—as his brother Charles—experienced his spiritual conversion initiated by hearing Luther’s preface of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans (respectively Charles, the Luther’s preface Epistle to the Galatians) as well as

through the introductions by German Moravian Pietists. Some interesting publications came out of these reflections on the meaning of the reformation for Methodism. This challenge to explain Methodism in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, all in a minority situation. Up to 2017, Methodists will be continuously challenged to stay involved in the anniversary and try to bring in our special perspective on the main proclaimed topics, too. The anniversary will be followed by the focus on the reformed tradition, mainly Zwingli in Switzerland in 2019. We also take efforts to introduce our own Methodist emphases: mission and evangelism and in that context the question how convincingly to live a Christian life in close connection to God, being transformed in his image and mirroring God's grace into the world.

-WMHS-

(Williams continued from page one)

We are an organization that is limited by having no paid staff and depending on the commitment of volunteers to this "ministry of memory." Relationships and program are difficult to sustain giving that we are scattered around the globe. That is no way diminishes the desirability to do what we can. We do need to work on how the organization should go forward and what we should be doing. Thanks be to God for the privilege I have had to be engaged in this work.

-WMHS-

**TREASURER'S REPORT**  
**August 1, 2011 - July 31, 2016**  
**Fiscal year is August 1 through July 31**

<b>Income</b>	<b>11-12</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>13-14</b>	<b>14-15</b>	<b>15-16</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Membership	105.00	100.00	25.00				1,000.00
Ruck Foundation	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00				10,000.00
Royalties							0.00
Transfer - UMDF				5,000.00			3,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,105.00</b>	<b>2,100.00</b>	<b>2,025.00</b>				<b>14,000.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	<b>11-12</b>	<b>12-13</b>	<b>13-14</b>	<b>14-15</b>	<b>15-16</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Newsletter	105.14						1,000.00
Meetings		5,841.20					3,000.00
World Meth. Conf. 2016	639.48						5,000.00
Letterhead/Misc							1,000.00
Postage		175.18	39.23				
Grants							4,000.00
Restoring Foundery Plaque			500.00				
<b>Total</b>	<b>744.62</b>	<b>6,016.38</b>	<b>539.23</b>				<b>14,000.00</b>

**Check Book Bal.**

Start of FY	6,372.28	7,732.66	3,816.28	5,302.05
As of November 1, 2014				10,302.05

**United Methodist Development Fund**  
 Value as of October 12, 2014=14,337.95  
 Matures 10/12/15; rate of 1.25%

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