

A new Heritage Museum

'Some of the Wesley brothers' passion and energy infuse the bare wooden interior.'

Nick Mayhew-Smith: 'Britain's Holiest Places'

Currently visitors can access a small museum housed in some of the Preachers' Rooms that Wesley had built above the Chapel. By moving our current offices, meeting rooms, and library into the new building, the Horsefair project releases the entire upstairs of the 1748 building for use as a new Heritage Museum. The additional space will provide an exciting opportunity to radically improve our displays and tell the story of the Wesleys far more powerfully through nine themed rooms. The new building will also provide a lift to the Preachers' Rooms that will, for the first time, enable disabled access to the upstairs Museum.

What better place to tell the story of John and Charles Wesley than in the rooms they created for their use and that of other preachers?



'The best of all is that God is with us'

1. The historic John Wesley's Rooms where he stayed will contain his bed and important artefacts and pictures.

2. The Preachers' Room will focus on the important role played by lay preachers in the Methodist revival, including information on the very first lay preacher, John Cennick, who was originally based in Bristol.

3. The Transatlantic Rooms Exhibition will display Bristol's role in the Transatlantic trade and how this encouraged Methodist links with America. This will include information on four key figures: Captain Webb, George Whitefield, Thomas Coke, and Francis Asbury. An inner room will focus not only on American Methodism today but also the wider outreach of Methodism worldwide, especially in Africa and Asia.

4. Charles Wesley's Rooms will display information on Charles's role as a preacher and pastor and his links with Bristol. The inner room 'Born In Song' will have a display on his hymnody.

5. An Anti-Slavery Exhibition will focus on the important role that John Wesley played in the anti-slavery movement and enable young people in particular to appreciate the horrors of slavery past and present.

6. The Wesleys and Education Exhibition will display the Wesley brothers' interest in both adult and child education, including a section on Kingswood School which was created in 1748. It will also provide information on Methodist education worldwide today.

7. A Bristol and the Wesleys Exhibition will set the New Room within its local context, providing an insight into the nature of eighteenth century Bristol (then the second largest city in the country) and give information on the key sites used by Wesley in his early preaching, such as Kingswood and Hanham Mount.

8. A Changing Exhibition Room will house temporary exhibitions on a variety of themes, such as the Wesleys and medicine, the Kingswood miners, and the role of women. Sometimes it will contain a special display on a significant Methodist linked to the New Room, such as George Whitefield, Adam Clarke and John William Fletcher.

9. A Social Justice Exhibition will focus on the social outreach of the Wesleys and its influence. It will include the New Room's role as the first free medical dispensary, and the Wesleys' role in visiting prisons (and the links to prison reform movements), encouraging self-help (and how this led to Methodism playing a key role in the development of trade unions), and demanding a fairer society (and how this led to Methodist involvement in creating movements for political reform, such as Chartism and the Labour Party).



A new Heritage Museum

JOHN WESLEY'S CHAPEL
THE NEW ROOM
BRISTOL



Born in Song:
telling the story of
two brothers



**THE HYMNODY EXHIBITION
EXTENSION TO THE NEW ROOM
HERITAGE MUSEUM**

John Wesley's pre-eminent role in the creation of Methodism is undisputed but the important role of his younger brother, Charles is often neglected. Unlike any other museum, the New Room Heritage Museum will also tell the story of Charles Wesley.

'Heritage is part of our mission because it is in our roots.'

Reverend Dr Martyn Atkins,
General Secretary of the Methodist Church in Britain.

Charles Wesley wrote 9,000 hymns and is regarded as the world's greatest ever hymn writer. His contribution was almost as vital as his brother's to the growth of Methodism. His work was also hugely instrumental in hymn singing becoming an accepted part of Christian worship among all Christian denominations.

There will also be an extensive library on hymnody within the resources area of the new building in the Horsefair Courtyard.

The new Museum at the New Room will be complemented by the creation of a new Museum of Hymnody within Charles Wesley's House, which is near to the New Room.

'The heritage of the past is the seed that brings forth the harvest of the future.'

**Wendell Phillips, 19th century
American abolitionist.**