

# THE NEW ROOM

John Wesley's Chapel  
and  
Charles Wesley's House  
BRISTOL



With news and reports for Friends and Supporters of the world's first Methodist Chapel; reporting an important journey to the USA; completing a new look for the Broadmead Courtyard; and daring to hope for change in the Horsefair Courtyard.

**NEWSLETTER : SPRING 2011**

# Greetings from Bristol!

No sooner have we sent a Newsletter round our friends than we realise what we should have included, and think forward to what ought to be in the next one.

This time there is much to report, and we are grateful to be able to report progress on various fronts.

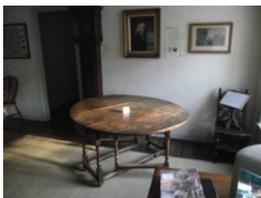
Readers of this Newsletter who are not workers 'on site' may not realise the amazing dedication of those who do the stewarding and administration at the New Room. Not only is it a joy and inspiration to meet such a variety of people, and to tell them about a place which strikes visitors as unique and even wonderful, it also takes dedication and can be tiring and stressful.

In particular, the past few years have seen some of us feel more and more our advancing age, but also several new obstacles being put in the way of us all -especially the cutting back of access, and an increasingly busy passage of people around the New Room, a few of whom are inconsiderate, demanding and even obstructive.

Even the promises that we would be compensated for losing access to the Broadmead Courtyard have proved unconvincing, even though it has given way to a new green space for the city. It has only increased our resolve to serve the present Mission of the Church.

So please give three cheers for the everyone, Manager, Stewards, floral arrangers and Saturday caterers for being such patient and cheerful people!

**The printed Newsletter contains an introduction from the Warden to the hoped-for changes in the Horsefair Courtyard. Those wishing for more information such as floor plans of the proposed development can find this as a separate extended on the New Room website ([www.newroombristol.org.uk](http://www.newroombristol.org.uk))**



# OUR FRIENDS IN AMERICA

David Worthington reports .....



Whilst I may not be able to claim the title of 'Prophet of the Long Road', as engraved on the Francis Asbury statue in Washington DC, I travelled 3000 miles and had 15 speaking engagements during my 20 days in the United States in October and November.

In this process about 500 pieces of promotional material were distributed in 10 different cities to help raise awareness of the importance of the New Room and its role in the establishment of the American Methodist Church. I also highlighted the long-term future development plans for the ongoing work at the New Room and illustrated how we use the heritage and history of this building in our ministry today.



I preached at three of the most significant American Methodist historic churches (Lovely Lane in Baltimore, St George's in Philadelphia and John Street in New York) as well as Barratt's Chapel, the cradle of American Methodism, in Delaware. I also spoke at four of the UMC seminaries (The Theological School at Drew University in New Jersey, Boston University

School of Theology, Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington DC and Garrett-Evangelical in Chicago) plus the UMC General Board of Church and Society offices opposite the Capitol building in Washington DC. The remainder of the engagements were at midweek church services and specially arranged events.



The feedback that I received after the talks was very positive with many commenting on how they had not previously known of the Wesleys' links with Bristol or the significant journeys that began from this city, including those of Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke.

I kept a daily log of my visit on the New Room Facebook page and the photos that I took are available to view by clicking on the link

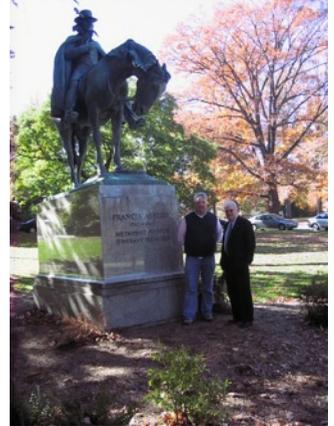
on the homepage of the New Room website. ([www.newroombristol.org.uk](http://www.newroombristol.org.uk))

I saw engraved on a plinth outside the National Archives building in Washington DC the following phrase attributed to Wendell Phillips, a 19<sup>th</sup> century American advocator of human rights:

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

I hope that my trip has sown some seeds that fell on good ground and will bring forth a harvest.

All those involved with American Methodist heritage certainly hope that there should be a greater dialogue and exchange of ideas between ourselves and that we should seek to increase our profiles within our respective churches and the communities in which we serve. And Bob Williams, General Secretary for the General Commission on Archives & History based at Drew University, has expressed his willingness to play a role in developing more links between the United Methodists in the USA and British Methodists.



My thanks to our American friends for all their generous hospitality.

*David Worthington – Manager, The New Room/John Wesley’s Chapel  
November 2010*

## **STEWARDS MEETING:**

Readers may be interested to know that we try and put the vast experience and ideas of the stewards to good use, and have arranged a morning with them in April. Mrs Constance Gould has invited them to the next meeting in these words:

**The next Stewards Meeting will be held on Tuesday April 12th at 10.30 am. As arranged previously the New Room will open later on that day.**

We hope that as many as possible will be able to attend because we want to seek your views about what should be included in an Induction Pack for new Stewards that we are in the process of preparing in order for people to feel confident when they join the rota. We also want to get your thoughts about what additional support and development you would like to receive and would value your expertise in deciding what needs to be included. Finally, we would like to discuss if there are any new ways of trying to get new stewards.

If you are not able to join us on that date please send any suggestions or comments on these three issues by letter or e-mail -but we should prefer to have you there to join in the discussion because we value your contributions, both on a regular basis and on this occasion.

# CONNEXIONAL SUPPORT

Since its creation in 2008 the new Methodist Heritage Committee has been strongly engaged in bringing before the Methodist Connexion the value of the Church's historic sites as a source of outreach and mission. In that process it has also highlighted the running issues facing the sites and, in particular, the need for the Church to provide some financial support towards the costs of the three main heritage sites, of which, of course, the New Room is one. The other two are the Epworth Rectory and Wesley's Chapel in London.

As a consequence Methodist Conference agreed that in 2010-11 it would grant some financial help to the three sites and the New Room received a grant of £25,000. We would like to express our great appreciation to the Church for this money, which recognizes the important role the New Room plays. As you know, we are heavily reliant on donations and fund-raising to fund what we do and this year, without this substantial grant, we would certainly not have been able to sustain our current operations.

It is our hope that we will be able to persuade the Church to make such a grant in future years. If we can – and if we can sustain our fund-raising from other sources – then we can continue to fulfil our aims to preserve this wonderful place both for its heritage and its continued Christian outreach.

## FUND-RAISING IDEAS

If **YOU** have any suggestions on **New events** that might help our annual fund-raising to cover running and maintenance costs at the New Room please speak with either the **Warden** or the **Manager**.

## MLA SUPPORT

As a national Museum the New Room is also grateful for support from various sources.



A Recent MLA (Museums and Libraries Association) grant\* has enabled us to begin a process of providing stands on which we can explain more of the story of the New Room. These allow us to remove labels from the historic walls, and they are also light enough to be moved on those many occasions when pictures and films are Made.

We thank the MLA for its support.

# THE GREENING PROCEEDS



In the autumn work began to transform the 'Broadmead Courtyard' into a green and welcoming space. Those who queried the cost of the scheme can now see the huge amount of heavy work that is necessary to bring the changes about, and as the spring approaches, so does the time when the outlook will be very different, welcoming and a fitting approach to our historic New Room.

Despite the extreme poor weather conditions, those who are working on the scheme have persisted through the winter weather, so that we confidently look forward to the official opening of the new Courtyard on May 24th.



We are grateful for the patience, dedication and generosity of those who have supported this scheme, truly to God's glory.

Up till now it has not been very clear to visitors who the man on the horse is.

Part of the new look to the Broadmead Courtyard is the carving of explanatory words on the paving stones, sculpted by our good friend, the distinguished stone-cutter, David Brown.



# Looking for a Coffee, refreshments, fellowship and a warm welcome ?

On Saturday mornings you will find all these at John Wesley's Chapel in Broadmead.

32 churches give their time to help serve and provide refreshments ! These are :  
Badminton Road, Bedminster, Bishopston, Bridgwater, Clevedon, Congresbury, Eastville Park, Frampton Cotterell, Hanham, Horfield, Keynsham, Kingswood, Knowle, Made for Ever, Nailsea, Olvington and Tockington, Pilning, Portishead, Potters Wood, St Andrews, St Chads, St Peters, Staplehill, Summerhill, Totterdown, Unity Oldland, Victoria, Watleys End, Wesley Memorial, Westbury on Trym, Winterbourne Down, Yate, and Kingswood Guides ( at Staple Hill).



Our thanks to all those who so willingly support us in this way!

We are also hoping for help from churches in the Bath area. Over the last year or two, some smaller churches have had to withdraw from the rota, several bigger churches have joined us, and some churches nobly help twice a year !

It is not always appreciated by everybody, but these Coffee Mornings are a very significant factor in raising some of the money required to meet the costs of running and maintaining the New Room. We cannot do without them.

Moreover, having the Coffee mornings happen every week helps boost the attendance (and therefore the money raised.)

If your church is not on the rota, could you possibly raise a team ? We still have a dozen vacant Saturdays to fill. If you are keen to help, but cannot raise a team, let me know and we might be able to get a mixed team together.

For information, comments and offers of help, please contact David Worthington (0117 9264740) or myself, Ruth Carter (0117 9659429).

The work of making the SHOP more accessible and better stocked is slowly progressing: the lack of visitors over the winter did not help at all.

Please look out for the new range of goods being introduced: more important still, if anybody could volunteer to help manage the shop it too would be a great help.





## MARRIED IN THE NEW ROOM

Among recent visitors to the New Room were a couple married there in September 1961.

Congratulations and best wishes to Mr and Mrs Ray Kelly!

*Not everyone realises that the New Room is Registered for Marriages, and that babies are brought for Baptism. The Chaplain, the Deputy Warden and those authorised in Bristol are able to conduct weddings at the New Room.*

Until now the welcome we are able to give to visitors at the New Room has been limited usually to hoping that English is understood.

Mr Philip Revill, one of our Stewards, found expert linguists willing to translate our 'welcome leaflet' into several other languages. These will be printed as soon as possible, but the translators have challenged us to make them more informative about our history and purpose, and we feel it needs attention. The work is in hand, and we will keep you informed.



You have only to walk around the Preachers' Rooms at the New Room to realise that John and Charles Wesley gave shape to a Christian concern for the good of the world, but that there were many other people involved.

The Wesley Historical Society (WHS) has several branches, including one in our District, which preserves the whole Methodist story.

There is a Meeting of the WHS at 2.30 pm on Saturday, 12th March in the Epworth Room at Wesley College, when the Annual Lecture will take the form of a Dramatic Presentation by Mrs Rachel Newton, featuring Susanna Wesley. Her involvement was central to our history.

We are informed that Non-members will be very welcome.



Above: The famous portrait of Susanna Wesley which hangs in the College at Westbury-on-Trym. The New Room has published, and sells, a postcard produced from it.

# What's On?

Here are just some of the events which make the New Room and Methodist Heritage alive for many visitors. Details on the Website are always updated.

It is supported because so many work to make it a place where people pray and wonder at what God did, and still can do, if we are methodically faithful!

## LENT LECTURES

Following the success of last year's series of talks by the Warden, he has arranged for a series of 15-minute talks in which speakers from various denominations of the Church will speak about Lent from their own perspective, immediately after the regular Communion Service at 1.00 pm.

FRIDAY, 18th March at 1.20 -Rev John Hoseago will speak as a Baptist

FRIDAY, 25th March -Rev. Tom Higgins will speak as an Anglican

FRIDAY, 1st April -Rev A Ward Jones will speak as a Methodist

FRIDAY, 8th April -Father Robert King will speak as a Roman Catholic

FRIDAY, 15th April -Graham Davey will speak as a Quaker



The New Room's Director of Music, Philip Carter, has already arranged the following events for the first part of the year: please watch out for others which are announced by poster, our website, and the website of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit:

TUESDAY, 22nd March at 1.00 pm

Marking the 250th Birthday of the Snetzler Organ  
there will be a Lunchtime Concert by Diego Cannizzaro (Sicily)

FRIDAY, 13th May : LUNCHTIME CONCERTS start

SUNDAY, 22nd May at 3.00 pm **POSTPONED** because there's a big  
The Beckford Singers in Concert **BIBLEFRESH** event at the Cathedral that  
afternoon



Perspective view from Horsefair to John Wesley's Chapel

## The New Room

'John Wesley's Chapel'

36 The Horsefair

Bristol BS1 3JE

Telephone: 0117 9264740

Website: [www.newroombristol.org.uk](http://www.newroombristol.org.uk)

Email: [info@newroombristol.org.uk](mailto:info@newroombristol.org.uk)

Warden: Mr Gary Best

Manager: Mr David Worthington

Incorporating

## The Charles Wesley Heritage Centre

4 Charles Street

BRISTOL BS1 3NN

REGISTERED CHARITY No. 1137957