

54. Managing Trustees of John Wesley's Chapel, the New Room, Bristol, and 4 & 5 Charles Street, Bristol

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John Wesley still rides his horse in the Broadmead Courtyard, but Charles Wesley is undergoing some restoration work while in temporary storage during the construction phase of the Horsefair Project. We look forward to his return.

We are immensely grateful to the Bristol District for the generous grant which provided the bulk of the match funding for our Heritage Lottery Fund award, and to the trusts, Local Churches and individuals who have given financial support. Work on the new building commenced at the start of January 2016 with the removal of the old, ugly outbuildings and the driving in of 28 nine metre deep piles. This is a much more robust physical foundation than that of the adjoining Grade I listed building, but the spiritual roots of the New Room remains the real foundation for all we are seeking to do. Whilst it is exciting to see the progress of the new building - and we are on track for a grand opening in June 2017 - what is even better is seeing the growth in outreach that is already taking place as a result of the Project.

As part of our growing educational programme, we had contact with just under 1,700 pupils during the academic year 2015/16 who visited the New Room or took part in a workshop or assembly at their school. A group of six creative media production students are using photography and video to make a record of the construction project on a weekly basis. Half-term "Where's Wesley" family days successfully road-tested our new family activity guidebook. Education Officer Mandy Briggs has also worked with five primary schools, museum design company 'Cod Steaks' and Biggerhouse Film to create an animated/live action film based on 'John Wesley's Manifesto', written by Warden Gary Best. This has been a really exciting project! After a school choir records the soundtrack at the end of June, the film will be ready to show to the public.

In October 2015 the New Room was closed to the public for a week while an episode of "Poldark" was filmed in the chapel. Charles Wesley's House was used as a filming location for a BBC documentary about Thomas Chatterton that featured the Queen guitarist, Brian May, and in April 2016, the chapel hosted a Bristol Old Vic Theatre School production of 'Frankenstein'.

Visitor numbers are slightly down. This can be attributed to the cessation of the Saturday coffee mornings and, since January, the closure of access from the Horsefair. We again hosted "Cards for Good Causes" in the run up to Christmas and a new initiative was an extensive Fair Trade 'pop up' shop in the chapel during Fair Trade Fortnight. Christmas in the Courtyard and Carols by Candlelight were again featured. A number of exhibitions have taken place within the Chapel - one of the most notable being a display of drawing by Syrian children refugees. The central location of the New Room makes the building ideal for that kind of event.

The latest recruit to the staff is Lucie Connors, our Community Engagement Officer. She is networking with a wide range of organisations across the city, with the aim of developing a wider range of visiting groups and of volunteers. Experienced teams of people are already working on the museum collection, the archives, and the library in preparation for the move into the new building.

The Warden, Gary Best, is channeling his historical and educational expertise into the development with Bristol-based Cod Steaks of a dynamic and interactive new museum that will engage people of

all ages and backgrounds in the story of the Wesleys and their relevance for today. He is also writing a range of new studies, including biographies of John Cennick and Grace Murray and the first ever History of the New Room.

We are delighted that, despite the disruption caused by building work, we have managed to keep the Chapel and Preachers' Rooms open to visitors, relying on our faithful band of stewards. Friday lunchtime Communion Services have continued to attract a loyal attendance, and the fortnightly half-hour concerts following on often feature the Snetzler organ. Samuel Wesley, son of Charles, nicknamed "the English Mozart" is being featured this year as 2016 is the 250th anniversary of his birth. We are re-publishing Samuel Wesley's book of 38 hymn-tunes, with suggestions as to which words they might be sung to. The New Room also has a special interest in Francis Asbury. The Stewards enjoyed their outing to the Black Country Living Museum in April and there will be a "Pilgrimage to Pill" from the New Room in September marking Asbury's departure to America. This is part of a wider programme of events planned over a weekend with local circuits in Bristol to commemorate Asbury 200.

This year **Clare Champion-Smith** resigns as a trustee. A faithful Methodist, she has also been our advocate on the City Council. **Constance Gould**, who has performed the tricky task of making the Stewards' Rota for many years is also resigning, and will be greatly missed.

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2015

Incoming Resources		Resources Expended	
Grants, Donations & Tax recovered	£82,716	Salaries, Tax etc	£71,726
Investment Income & Interest	£6,331	Repairs & Maintenance	£37,818
Tours & other fund raising	£5,909	Utilities & Insurance	£16,713
Shop sales	£15,816	Shop costs	£9,017
No5 Charles St rent & New Room hire	£25,230	Administration	£5,921
From Bristol District	£142,647	Horsefair Project Costs	£197,344
From Heritage Lottery Fund	£55,665	New Room Museum development	£0
Other Income	£1,787	Other Expenditure	£12,554
TOTAL	£336,101	TOTAL	£351,094

At the year end the breakdown of the Trust's total funds of £426,390 is as follows :

Unrestricted Funds & Trusts	£71,919		
Restricted Funds & Trusts	£235,467		
Permanent Endowments	£119,004		

(For 2014/15 the accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis.)

*****RESOLUTIONS**

- 55/1. The Conference adopted the Report.**
- 55/2. In accordance with Standing Order 220, the Conference appointed the following as the Managing Trustees of the New Room for 2016-17:**

The Revd A Ward Jones (Chair); the Revd Dr Jonathan H Pye (Bristol District Chair, ex officio); the Revd David R Alderman (Superintendent of Bristol and South Gloucestershire Circuit, ex officio); Mr Gary Best (Warden) ex officio; Ms Jane Allin; Mr T David Bainbridge; Mrs Jennifer Carpenter (Hon Sec); Mr Philip Carter (Musical Director); Mr Michael M. Culshaw (Deputy Warden); Mr Stephen Duckworth; Mr Geoffrey Gollop; Mr John Hirst; Mr Martin R Hunt; Mrs Linda Jones; Mr Peter Knowles (Hon Treasurer); the Revd Jongsin Lee; the Revd Andrew Pratt; Mr Michael Rose; Mrs Aroona Smith; the Revd David G Weeks (Hon Chaplain); Mr Stephen Williams; Mr Robert Wood.

Reasoned Statements

Mr Geoffrey Gollop, a Methodist, was Deputy Mayor of Bristol in 2015/16 and is a former Lord Mayor. He has shown a keen interest in the development of the New Room over a number of years.

Mr John Hirst was formerly responsible for co-ordinating the upgrading of the Broadmead shopping area and is now Director of "Destination Bristol", the city's tourist body. His tourism expertise will be especially valuable.

Mr Stephen Williams, is the former MP for Bristol West constituency, was previously a City Councillor, and is a history graduate of Bristol University.