

2018 Events

The remaining meeting for 2018 will be on:

- **Sunday 28 October**

On this day, beginning at 2.30pm, we will be holding our final public event for 2018, and look forward to a big turnout of members and others interested in South Australian church history.

28 October:

The history of the involvement of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities with the Uniting Church in SA.

Led by a team from the UCSAHS Council.

Payneham Road Uniting Church, 341-343 Payneham Road, Marden



2019 Program

The UCSAHS Council is planning the program of events for 2019.

If you have ideas about topics for our meetings, or are engaged in history projects that warrant a wider audience, please let us know.

We are always looking for ways to involve more of our membership in Historical Society activities, and to plan events that resonate with your interests.

Making History 2018 Reimagining the Past

Registrations are now open for these two and a half days of participatory workshops and activities hosted by the History Trust of SA.

“**Making History 2018** will be a stimulating weekend, in which people are encouraged to immerse themselves in the task at hand, exploring different ways to presenting history and museums. Participants might find themselves planning a new pop-up display, developing an education resource, designing a digital program or project, creating an event plan, designing a tour, or something else.”

WHEN: 1pm Friday 2 November—4pm Sunday 4 November

WHERE: History Trust of South Australia, Torrens Parade Ground, Victoria Drive, Adelaide.

COST: Early bird waged: \$100 / unwaged: \$90

More details (including how to register) can be found at the event website:

<https://history.sa.gov.au/events/making-history-2018-reimagining-the-past/>

Free Publication for All Members

All members of the UCSAHS are entitled to a free copy of *A Pilgrim People 40 years On*, which is the proceedings of the inaugural Uniting Church National History conference held in June 2017.

Please collect your copy of this historic document from the History Centre soon.



Can you help?



Here at the History Centre, we have many photos that have been generously donated to the collection. Some of them are not labelled with who they are, where they are, or when they were taken.

This photo is one of these. There is nothing on this photo (printed as a postcard) to indicate where or when the photo was taken.

Do you know where this little Methodist Church is? Or when it might have been taken?

If so, we would love to hear from you so we can give a name and place to this little church, and record some information about it.



Uniting History SA September 2018

Guest Editor: David Houston

About CALD Ministries

The next meeting of the Historical Society will be held in the **Payneham Road Uniting Church at 2.30pm on Sunday, 28 October 2018**. We will hear the stories of **culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)** faith communities developing within our Presbytery and Synod. It is an inspiring story of Spirit led multi-cultural church planting.

In 1988, the first Korean congregation within the Uniting Church in South Australia was inaugurated, and the former Parkside West Church became their home. They are now located at St Morris. In 2001, Chinese and Sudanese faith communities found their initial home for worship and community building through the missional interest of Rev. Dr Brian Phillips and the congregation of Maughan Church, and the Sudanese at Elizabeth. These are three CALD groups who were able to establish their own new communities through the welcome and friendship extended to them by local Uniting churches.

The importance of enabling Christians from diverse cultures to worship together in their own language is a ministry in love and fellowship on our part. Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Dinka Bor, Indonesian, Fijian, Persian, Azeri, Arabic, Farsi and Tamil are some of the languages we would hear.

The CALD website describes its purpose...

In the ministry of the church among its **culturally and linguistically diverse communities**, following Jesus and his example, we work to build genuine relationship, to give and receive love and ministry one to another. We believe in the ministry of all believers, that God gives us all unique gifts, perspectives and contributions to grow and bless His work. Find out more about the UCA Assembly's Multicultural and Cross Cultural ministry work at <https://assembly.uca.org.au/mcm>

As many South Australian communities are composed of around half of people from CALD backgrounds, we know that we need these gifts, perspectives and contributions from CALD believers to effectively bless our church, our communities and country.

CALD ministry in SA works with a network of CALD ministers, pastors and lay leaders, with leaders from mainstream cultural backgrounds, and with diverse communities. This includes monocultural communities (who worship in languages like Korean, Fijian and Dinka Bor) intentionally intercultural churches who have significant CALD participation and leadership and a growing number of mainstream churches who are

increasing their capacity to engage with CALD peoples.

The Scripture that guides its work is - *Purposefully celebrating the God-given gifts of our cultural distinctiveness and diversity, as we follow Christ together in the ministry of all believers* (Rev. 7:9)

CALD communities and intercultural ministries have been, or are, active in the following Uniting Church congregations: Adelaide Korean, Ascot, Coromandel Valley, Clayton Wesley, Enfield, Hare Street, Heaven's Spring Korean, Maughan, Modbury, Northern Suburbs Dinka-speaking Faith Community, Payneham Road, Pilgrim Church, Plympton (All Saints), Salisbury, Vermont, and The Grove at Woodville Gardens. The relationship these congregations have with their 'adopted' faith communities is an increasingly rich one. They learn and receive from each other in an important 'body of Christ' way.

In 2005, I recall observing the language classes and cultural exchange events that were part of the Ascot Community Church's program. Both were very engaging activities. The language classes had Indonesian, Chinese, and African adult students participating at the same time. Meryl Gemo had coordinated a team of teacher/support people able to tutor the diverse groups that attended. The cultural exchange events too, brought history, customs and story-telling into a fellowship and learning experience for the local members.

The Payneham Road Uniting Church event will be a valuable opportunity for congregations and other interested people to meet members from these various CALD Communities.

Rev. David Houston



UCA SA Korean Congregation at St Morris

Contact the Rev. Dr Dean Eland for more information.

The Legacy of an early Congregational Missionary Teacher—George Taplin

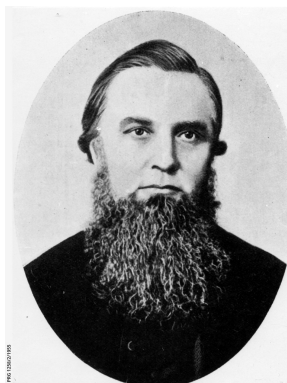
Rev. David Houston

Much can be learned from the work of George Taplin (1831-1879), a Congregational missionary and teacher who worked among and with the Ngarrindjeri people around the lakes of the lower Murray. He established the Point Mcleay Mission, now known as Raukkan situated on the shores of Lake Alexandrina.

It is a very early story of intentional engagement with some of our First Australians so soon after settlement. A summary of Taplin's life follows, as recorded by Graham Jenkin in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 6, (MUP), 1976. Jenkin authored a significant work on contact between the Ngarrindjeri and European settlers, including Taplin, *Conquest of the Ngarrindjeri*, published by Rigby in 1979, and was the Winner of the 1978 SA Biennial Literature Prize and the 1979 Wilke Award for Australian non-fiction.

Taplin accomplished much in his short life. He was 18 years old when he arrived in South Australia and he died at the age of 48. In the space of a little more than twenty years he achieved an enormous amount as a teacher, missionary, anthropologist and linguist.

He was born on 24 August 1831 at Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey, England. A committed Congregationalist, from the age of 15 he had desired to become an overseas missionary. He arrived in Adelaide in the *Anna Maria* on 12 October 1849 and worked as a labourer and as a lawyer's clerk. In 1851, he was recruited by Stow for the ordained ministry, but it was first as a layman that his work as a teacher and missionary became noteworthy. In 1859, the Aborigines' Friends' Association appointed him as their first missionary-teacher at a salary of £200 to work in the lower Murray districts.



Rev. George Taplin
(SLSA PRG 1258/2/1956)

The site he chose for a settlement on the shores of Lake Alexandrina was a traditional camping ground called Raukkan (The Ancient Way), known to Europeans as Point McLeay. On 4 April 1859 Taplin began his mission to the Narrinyeri (Ngarrindjeri), the confederacy of eighteen tribes that had previously owned the

country around the lower Murray lakes... Taplin weathered Government inquiry and worked on vigorously, teaching, building, proselytising, establishing farming, dispensing government rations and acting as a mechanic and district physician. Later he acquired a teaching assistant.

Keenly interested in Ngarrindjeri culture and society, he learned their language, used it in preaching, and translated and published Bible tracts. He published invaluable anthropological studies which were much superior to contemporary work on South Australian Aborigines. His papers on philology and ethnology were acclaimed in Australia and

abroad. His most important books were: *The Narrinyeri* (Adelaide, 1874), with a second, enlarged edition in 1878 and included next year in *Native Tribes of South Australia*, edited by J. D. Woods; and *The Folklore, Manners, Customs, and Languages of the South Australian Aborigines* (1879), which he edited. It is this interest and respect for the people and their culture, to learn and use the language that was to make a significant contribution. However, for all this, his plan was to completely Europeanise them.

Taplin was ordained by the Congregational Church in 1868 so that he could administer the sacraments and solemnise marriages; the next year (1869) the chapel, still in regular use, was completed and opened.

Despite his sympathy with the people and their traditions, Taplin adhered to the contemporary view that Christianity and Europeanisation should bring about assimilation and the Ngarrindjeri civilisation abandoned; as a result he contributed to undermining their government and social structure, further weakened traditional discipline and morale within the confederacy, and provoked strong opposition from conservative tribal members.

However, they had been dispossessed and persecuted before his arrival, and by helping them become literate and numerate and to acquire trades, he enabled them to survive and flourish briefly in European society. Today hundreds of their descendants remain in various districts of Australia; their durability can largely be attributed to George Taplin. (G. Jenkin, 1979) [1]

If we come forward to our own time we know the Ngarrindjeri people of Raukkan have maintained their commitment to education, culture, industry and Christian community. Trevorrow, Rankine, Rigney and Sumner are just some of the names that have given leadership in these areas. And within the Uniting Church, Rev. Ken Sumner is well known for his contribution to U.A.I.C.C. and Covenanting activities. It seems possible to say that, in spite of Taplin's approach to his work (reflecting the philosophy of the Church and the State at that time), there was something innately Christian about his respect for the Ngarrindjeri people, their language, culture and enterprise. For this he is favourably remembered by many in today's Ngarrindjeri people. He left both our Church and Society an important legacy in his call for respect for, and recognition of our First Australian peoples and their communities.

The life and work of David Unaipon illustrates the positive influence of Taplin's work on many Ngarrindjeri people. His smiling face greets us every time we use a \$50 note. He was a very gifted person and the David Unaipon College of Indigenous Education and Research at the University of South Australia was recognition of his extraordinary achievements. But we leave his story for another time.

[1] Cited in Houston, David J., *By Word and by Deed – A history of Lay Education and Lay Ministry in the Uniting Church of South Australia and our preceding denominations*. MediaCom Education Unit, Adelaide, 2017, pp.35-37.

You're invited to share in a discussion on

The history of the involvement of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Communities with the Uniting Church in SA.

The discussion will be led by a team from the
UCSA Historical Society Council

Sunday 28 October, 2018
2:30pm

Payneham Road Uniting Church,
341-343 Payneham Road, Marden

Afternoon tea will follow the discussion.

News from the Uniting Church National History Society (UCNHS)

The UCNHS has recently celebrated its first birthday and is in good health. We look forward to further growth and development in our second year.

The UCNHS held its AGM in Melbourne on 7 July, on the eve of the National Assembly, and 21 members attended. Discussion at the AGM included

1. Information about the second biennial conference being planned for the June long weekend in 2019. The conference will to be held at Pilgrim Theological College, Parkville (Melbourne), with the Church of all Nations, Carlton as the partner congregation. Please plan to be at the conference and check the UCSAHS and UCNHS websites for further details as they become available.
2. An opportunity for members to reflect on what they would like to see the UCNHS do in future. Ideas included:

- encouraging ministers and lay people to 'mine' history for a vision that is relevant to the present and future.
- encouraging exploration of the ethos of the three antecedent denominations of the UCA and the similarities and differences in the ethos of various states arising from their distinctive religious profiles.
- encouraging exploration of the similarities and differences between 'historical' and 'theological' topics.
- encouraging the cultivation of 'memory' including what it means to be a 'pilgrim people' and to be on 'pilgrimage' in terms of our history and our future.

- exploring the relationship with Congress with regard to the ongoing legacy of Aboriginal/Indigenous church history, with a view to presenting an occasional paper about this.

The inaugural UCNHS Public Lecture followed the AGM. The audience increased to about 30 to hear Rev. Professor Stuart Gill speak on the state of Church History in Australia. Please keep your eyes open for printed and electronic versions of this valuable lecture, in due course.

The proceedings of the 2017 conference, published with a handsome red cover and under the title **A Pilgrim People: 40 Years On**, was on sale at Assembly, and is now generally available. Here in SA, the UCSAHS is making a free copy available to all members. Please plan to collect yours – and perhaps copies for other members in your congregation or local area – from the History Centre at Black Forest as soon as you can. In future years, publications of conference proceedings will be available to all members of the UCNHS, as part of their membership package.

To join the UCNHS for the remainder of 2018, go to our website (see below) for details – or take out annual membership of the national society (simply by ticking a box and paying an extra \$20) when you renew your SA membership in January 2019.

UCNHS: [https:// assembly.uca.org.au/history](https://assembly.uca.org.au/history)

THE UCNHS IS YOUR SOCIETY AND NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT.

Dr Judith Raftery, Secretary, Board of UCNHS

A Sunday Morning Service at Chalmers Presbyterian Church, 1894

David Hilliard

For fourteen months in 1894–1895 Henry Evans (‘Quiz’), editor of *Quiz and the Lantern*, Adelaide’s irreverent weekly journal of opinion and comment, wrote a series of articles called ‘Round the Churches’ in which he reported on a service he had attended on the previous Sunday at a city or suburban church. These articles, with their sharp observations and astringent assessments of sermons, provide us with vivid descriptions of a wide variety of Christian worship. In early December 1894 ‘Quiz’ attended a morning service at Chalmers Presbyterian Church in North Terrace to hear a sermon by its minister Dr David Paton.

Chalmers Church was founded in 1850 as a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland. In 1865 the Free Church united with the other two branches of the Presbyterian Church in South Australia to form the Presbytery of South Australia. Dr David Paton was minister of Chalmers Church from 1877 until his death in 1907. Chalmers Church amalgamated with Flinders Street Presbyterian Church in 1929 and the new parish took the name Scots Church.

Paton was born in Scotland, at Dunfermline in Fifeshire, on 19 March 1841. He entered the University of Glasgow in 1860 where he studied classics, philosophy, mathematics and physics and graduated MA in 1864. He was proud of the fact that one of his teachers was William Thomson (later Lord Kelvin) who was one of the founders of the modern discipline of physics. Paton then studied theology at the Free Church College in Glasgow and was one of the first students of the Free Church to take the BD degree of the University of Glasgow. In 1886 he was awarded a DD degree from Glasgow for a thesis on ‘The relation between the Old and the New Testaments’. In 1873 he was ordained at Dalton Free Church in Dumfriesshire where he was minister until 1877 when he was invited to the pastorate of Chalmers Church. In June 1877, before sailing to South Australia, at Kirkudbright he married Isabella Robson, a governess. They had four children. Associate Professor David Paton AM of the University of Adelaide, a prominent conservationist and ecologist, is a great grandson.

The Presbyterian Church in South Australia, as in Scotland, placed a high value on a well-educated ministry. In the Reformed tradition, the ideal was a scholar-pastor, which usually meant a minister with a university degree. In the Australian colonies, however, where the demand for ministers always outran the supply, this was often not possible. In Adelaide the principal Presbyterian churches usually called men with solid intellectual credentials to be their ministers and many of them played a prominent role in the city’s intellectual and public life. One of them was Dr John Davidson, minister of Chalmers Church from 1870 to 1877, and, from 1874, the first Hughes Professor of English Language and Literature and of Mental and Moral Philosophy at the infant University of Adelaide.

Dr David Paton was in the same mould. Two years after arriving in Adelaide he was appointed as Professor of Hebrew, Old Testament History and Theology at Union College, a small interdenominational theological college (founded in 1872) that prepared candidates for the

ministry in the Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational and Bible Christian churches. The college dissolved in 1886. From 1886 Paton was a member of the council of the University of Adelaide and he was a co-examiner in Mental and Moral Philosophy. He was also a member of the board of governors of the Public Library, Museum and Art Gallery of South Australia and of the committees of several philanthropic bodies. In 1888–89 and 1902–3 he was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of South Australia and in 1896 he was Moderator of the Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches of Australia and Tasmania.

In theology Paton appears to have taught a moderate liberal evangelicalism, accepting of biblical criticism and abandoning the Calvinist doctrine of eternal punishment for unbelievers. His obituary in the *Advertiser* described him as having a ‘particularly genial disposition’ with many friends, ‘a man of wide sympathies, as well as of great culture’, always willing to cooperate with Christians of other traditions. When ‘Quiz’, a self-described religious sceptic, died prematurely in January 1899 it was Paton who conducted his funeral.

Here is the article published in *Quiz and the Lantern*, 13 December 1894.

THE REV. DR PATON AT CHALMERS CHURCH

When Dr Paton, in his gown, ascends the pulpit in Chalmers Church you are first struck by his baldness, which is colossal, and secondly, by the intellectual pallor of his face, which is most marked. If you want to make an original observation thereon you are prevented from so doing by a line which forces itself upon your memory and refuses to be banished. It is ‘sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought’. That is just how Dr Paton impresses you, and his beard, which seems to have an auburn tint, does not remove the impression.

Dr Paton is a man of perhaps 50 years of age, and his attainments are many. QUIZ had heard him speak in various capacities, seriously and humorously (the latter in a Scotch brand), but he had never heard him preach. His congregation on this particular Sunday was not large, but it included representatives of both sexes in nearly equal proportions. One, a male, QUIZ is not likely to forget soon. This misguided individual had become beset with the notion that a Merciful Providence had sent him into the world to sing seconds. And he evidently thought he was doing so. Well, you have read of the howling of the Banshee –

The minister peers at his congregation through spectacles, for his vision is weak, and there appears to be a lack of animation about him. He seems a calm, reflective man, who would be most at his ease in a well-stocked library, seated in a comfortable armchair, reading the latest thoughts of the most celebrated men of the age. He doesn’t seem like a parson at all. He might be a University professor, you say to yourself, but he is not the sort of man to hold forth Sunday after Sunday on theological subjects. That placid face is incapable of displaying many emotions. The head is the head of an analyst, rather than

of an expounder of generally accepted doctrines.

You can imagine him, pipe in mouth (QUIZ is not aware whether Dr Paton smokes or not) arguing out with some scientist the theory of the creation, calmly, philosophically. Anger would never enter into his utterance. Passion he would regard as undignified. If two men could not meet for discussion without losing their tempers then it would not be worthwhile meeting at all. And as such fancies as these are flashing through your mind Dr Paton commences to speak.

Have you ever on a hot summer day gone into the hills, and, lying in the grateful shade cast by a giant gum, listening to the purling of the brook as it ripples onwards to the sea? It seems to soften your whole nature. It stills all the other senses, and presently you find your eyes closing, and you lose yourself in a refreshing sleep. This was somewhat the effect produced by Dr Paton in the earlier portion of his last Sunday morning service, though QUIZ hastens to place it on record that he did not close his eyes during the hour and a quarter that he was in Chalmers Church.

The voice is low, so low that it can scarcely be heard at the back of the church. More particularly is this noticed in the reading of the Scriptures. There is an absence of expression and an absence of punctuation. Dr Paton reads on as if there were no such thing as verses, and as though a full stop was only created to mark the conclusion of a lesson. He does not become animated, and yet he cannot be said to be listless. Probably his style is intended to be regarded as reverential. Many people do consider that when they drop their voices or speak in a monotone they are being as reverent as the most exigent circumstances require.

There is a Scotch ‘burr’ in the voice, but it is not very marked, and is more pleasant than otherwise. Dr Paton says – ‘It is nort’ for ‘It is not’ and rolls his tongue round ‘world’ until you think that there are least three r’s in the word. But the man who expects to catch the preacher tripping in ordinary matters of pronunciation will be woefully disappointed. The diction is that of a man of high education. He could if he chose preach far and away above the heads of his congregation. He could take them through scientific labyrinths whence they would emerge dazed, and probably little enlightened. But he makes no attempt to air his erudition.

After the Scripture readings the casual visitor has made up his mind on two points. He is going to hear a dry as dust sermon, one of the Calvinistic kind, severely technical and absolutely cheerless; and secondly the preacher will read every word. In both matters he is pleasantly disappointed. There is scarcely a note used throughout. At sermon time Dr Paton appears to shake off some incubus – an old man of the sea in the shape of tradition – which has been weighing him down and depressing his spirits. He becomes a new man, for he expands and grows almost joyous.

The text having been given out, there is an impressive pause lasting for some seconds. This is perhaps intentional. It may mean to the people in the pews, ‘Now sit back and make yourselves comfortable while I show you what sort of people you are.’ It is not a respite for the minister in order that he may collect his thoughts.



Rev. Dr David Paton
(*Presbyterian Banner*, March 1907)

Everything is in readiness. The mine is prepared, and the slow match has been fired.

Yet the result can hardly be termed an explosion. Dr Paton could not be explosive if he tried. He grows animated. If his eyes could be seen it would be found that they were gleaming. He moves first one arm and then the other, and sometimes the two are moved in unison. The voice, invariably pitched in a high key, is encouraged to higher elevations, and become almost harsh. It ascends further and further, and finally sinks into an uncompromising bass.

The subject is the Woman of Samaria, a topic which Dr Paton has apparently touched on before, and to which he means to revert. The sermon is interesting and easily comprehended. There is no straining after effect. The situation is simply placed before the hearers. Word painting is not sought after, yet the language used is so graphic that even a child must understand it. The materialist is incidentally referred to. ‘What has he to offer us in exchange for the Gospel of Jesus Christ?’ asks Dr Paton, with fine scorn, and in perhaps slightly different language. ‘Nothing, absolutely nothing.’

He speaks as one having implicit faith, and thus has all the more effect upon his congregation. He possesses a power of analysis, and he frequently uses it. There is little that is reportable in the sermon, but somehow you feel that, given the faith needed, the discourse would be very comforting. And yet Dr Paton is not at

his best. If he chose he could preach sermons which would make Adelaide resound with his praise. He is afraid to let himself go. He is fearful of the effects of an up-to-date sermon on the old-fashioned Scottish mind.

Dr Paton could be eloquent if he chose, although his voice is not that of an orator. The idea one gets of him is that he is rather Conservative, but it may be, if we could only sound the depths of his nature, he would prove to be Liberal. He has the caution of his country. He sticks to his Church, and does not meddle in politics. If he threw off all restraint he would most likely come as a revelation to his people. But his mission is peace, and the probabilities are that he will go on preaching some such sermons as that of last Sunday until the end of the chapter. He is content, and his congregation is satisfied.

The choir, conducted by Mr T. N. Stephens, sing an anthem well, although the basses are just a trifle too powerful at times. Still, it is a good choir, and with encouragement should greatly improve.

Sources

- *Quiz and the Lantern*, 13 December 1894, p.8
- ‘The late Dr Paton’, *Advertiser*, 15 February 1907, p.6
- ‘The late Rev Dr Paton of Chalmers Church’, *Presbyterian Banner*, March 1907, pp. 8–10
- Website: ecclegen: ministers of the Free Church of Scotland 1843-1900 – <ecclegen.com>, accessed 13 August 2018
- Robert J. Scrimgeour, *Some Scots Were Here: A History of the Presbyterian Church in South Australia 1839–1977* (Adelaide, 1986)