



Uniting History SA February 2018

Guest Editor: Dr Judith Raftery

Getting the past sorted—and the Future

Anyone interested in reflecting on, learning from and preserving church history will understand the importance of archives. Members and friends of the UCSAHS will be aware that we are the custodians of a substantial historical and archival collection, which is housed at our History Centre at Black Forest. Some of you visit it regularly, to contribute to the maintenance of the collection through your volunteer help, to deposit items that are then assessed for possible inclusion in the collection, or to make use of the collection's contents as you pursue your own or your congregation's research.

Maintaining our archival collection is just one aspect of the work that the UCSAHS does on behalf of the Uniting Church in SA. By browsing through this edition of *Uniting History SA* you will see that we also run a regular program of meetings that stimulate interest in various aspects of UC history, provide support to individuals and congregations undertaking research, review books, participate in national UC history activities, answer queries, and more. It's a big workload and with an aging membership we have to think about its sustainability. As one of our responses to this situation, we are currently in the process of trying to employ an Historical Records Officer. The job of this person would be to work with the existing volunteer staff, and especially the Centre Managers, to further develop the good work that we are already doing in relation to our historical and archival collection, and to enhance the role of the History Centre as an accessible and efficient hub for all the work of the UCSAHS.

Given all this, we thought a recent article about how Adelaide Anglicans approach the business of archiving, and what they have to say about its importance to the church, was valuable to us and worth sharing with our readers. The complete article, based on an interview conducted by *The Guardian* (Adelaide Anglican magazine) with Anglican Archivist Dr Sarah Black can be accessed at <https://adelaideanglicans.com/stories/2018/1/from-breeches-to-tobruk-a-conversation-with-the-diocesan-archivist>. We quote excerpts from it here, with permission.

Dr Judith Raftery

Q. What does the job involve?

A. Archiving is a wonderfully rich role. You may think it's all about paper, but really, it's all about people and their stories.

It starts with identifying records that should be preserved for posterity. This means those records that document the life, work, organisation and history of the Anglican Church in South Australia. I work with parishes, church office and various organisations and bodies within the church, to help identify and deal with records of archival merit. I am sometimes approached by members of the church or the broader public who have items that they wish to donate. Sometimes it might be a picture, or a set of letters, or some other record that relates to the history of the Anglican church in South Australia. There are some treasures out there.

Then comes the task of managing and caring for those records. You have to be careful always to preserve the known history and provenance of the record – who made it, when, what the context was, and so on. Respecting the original order of records is another important principle of archiving. The science of archival management is quite a big subject.

There is always plenty of listing, indexing and organising to be done. Records often need physical preservation work, whether it's removing metal

(continued on page 2)

History Grants Programme 2018

Got a history project in mind? Need some support?

The Society's History Grants programme provides grants of up to \$1000 to assist local churches and groups to meet the costs of producing printed or audio-visual histories, mounting historical displays, preserving heritage items, etc.

If you would like more information about these grants or an application form, please contact us at ucasahist@chariot.net.au

The deadline for applications is 6 April 2018.

The UCA History Centre

Open Wednesdays 1 - 4pm

44A East Ave

Black Forest

Website:

historicalsociety.unitingchurch.org.au

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/UCAHistoricalSocietySA

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COUNCIL MEMBERS

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Ken Hayes

Don Hopgood

Norah Norris

You can receive this newsletter via email. Send your email address to admin@historicalsociety.unitingchurch.org.au and we will send you our up-to-date news and other items of interest.

Membership of the Society

Individual—1 year	\$20
Individual—5 years	\$80
Individual—Life	\$250
Congregational—Life	\$250

Contact the Centre for more information.

(From Page 1)

paperclips (tedious but necessary), polishing brass and silver, or preparing photographs for scanning. And then there's the higher-order work of making sense of a pile of old papers, in order to transform them into a series that has a clear provenance and relationship to the organisational structure and history of the church...

...Archiving involves being able to retrieve records as required for reference and research. The diocesan archives office receives many research requests each year, and we aim to provide people with appropriate information as well as we can.

Ultimately, archives are about memory and about communication. People come to the archives when they have a puzzle they need to solve. My job involves finding pieces of puzzles for people, and helping them put the pieces together.

...

Q. Why is this job / the preservation of history important?

A. *One of our core challenges as human beings is to make sense and meaning out of the past. From our knowledge of our history, we build narratives that give us insight into our present times, and that help us to move forward in life. This is a foundational human activity that enables us to understand ourselves and others, and to chart our course through the present and into the future.*

If we don't, it's like we are walking around with one eye closed. Try that, and you'll see what I mean. With only one eye open, we see the same things but we lack depth perception. That makes it harder to move confidently, and we are more likely to stumble. Memory of the past is essential to our functioning. That's true for individuals, and also for communities and institutions.

For an institution such as the church, archives are important for all those same reasons about memory, self-understanding and orienting yourself in the present and for the future. In addition, well-managed archives are essential for good governance, efficient administration, operational integrity, and for ensuring accountability both now and in the future.

Sir Ninian Stephen, former High Court Justice and Governor-General, said in 1984, "without archives there would be no verifiable past and mankind would be left with no more than the fleeting present and the unknowable future."

Archives preserve the verifiable evidence of the past, and that what makes them so important. Every time I am able to give a former resident of our church homes information about their time in care, every time I can give somebody information that they need to do their job, or write their parish history, or run their school, or whatever it may be, I know how important the church archives are.

Primitive Methodists **Sunday 4 March 2018, 2:30pm**

Church of the Trinity
(318 Goodwood Road, Clarence Park)

Guest Speaker: Rosemary Mitchell

Who were they? Why did they come to SA? What has been their legacy? What were your family's links with the Primitives?

Come along and find out some answers and join in the discussion

This will be a work-in-progress discussion of this neglected aspect of church history, led by Rosemary Mitchell and a team of discussants.

(Background image: Wallaroo Mines Primitive Methodist Church (State Library of south Australia B29303. Used with permission)

What's happening with the Uniting Church National History Society

Readers will recall that the Uniting Church National History Society (CNHS) was launched at the inaugural Uniting Church National History Conference in Adelaide in June 2017. On that occasion, a draft constitution was discussed and referred for further development to the newly elected national board, and decisions were made about the directions and priorities of the new society.

What's happened since then?

- **Your national board has been meeting by telephone link-up.** The board members are as follows: William Emilsen, President (NSW), Wendy Beresford-Maning (NT), Patricia Curthoys (co-opted, NSW), Alison Longworth (WA), Glen O'Brien (VIC), Julia Pitman (QLD), Judith Raftery, Secretary (SA), Robert Renton (VIC)
- **The constitution has been completed** and approved by UCA National Assembly
- **The UCNHS has opened a bank account** and was grateful to receive a healthy injection of funds from the profit generated by the Adelaide conference.
- **Membership issues are being considered.** The likelihood is that all members of state Uniting Church historical societies will automatically become members of the UCNHS and that membership will also be available to congregations and individuals in state or territories where no UCA historical society exists
- **Robert Renton has been editing the papers from the Adelaide conference** and these are almost ready for publication. Embers of UCSAHS will receive a copy of the *Proceedings* as part of their membership package .
- **Plans are taking shape for the next biennial conference** of the UCNHS to be held in Melbourne, on the Queen's birthday weekend in June 2019.
- **The next major event will be our AGM and Public Lecture**, scheduled for Saturday 7 July, 2018 on the eve of the National Assembly, which will be held in Melbourne, 8-14 July. Members of the UCSAHS who will be at Assembly are strongly encouraged to be present for this event. We are hoping that those who can't be there in person will be able to help us achieve a quorum for the AGM and a good audience for the speaker. We are hoping that those who can't be there in person will be able to help us achieve a quorum for the AGM and a good audience for the speaker by 'skyping in'.
- **UCNHS members will be staffing a table at Assembly** to promote the society, recruit members and sell copies of the *Proceedings*. More details later.
- **Achieving a web presence.** William Emilsen has been working with Assembly staff to establish a UCNHS page on the Assembly website. We hope you will make use of this, as well as the UCSAHS website (www.historicalsociety.unitingchurch.org.au) to keep abreast of news and ensure that you are part of our ongoing program of events.

“New occasions teach new duties”?

The church press is a good gauge of the culture and priorities of the church at particular points in time. These excerpts from the *Australian Christian Commonwealth* (the South Australian Methodist newspaper) from one hundred years ago reveal how some things change—or don't. How might the issues they deal with be reported today?

11 January 1918, p.637—Easy prayer?

From ‘Current topics’: “Sunday last, as appointed by the King, was observed more or less throughout the Empire as a day of national prayer. Not a few people would approve of this subject being forced upon public attention on a Sunday. There was no time lost that way. We cannot but think it would have been more seemly if a working day had been chosen, and if the nation had said to its gains and pleasures and conveniences, ‘Stay ye here while we go yonder and worship’. A preliminary cleaning up of such pollutions as the drink traffic, at least as a war device, would have been proof of national sincerity, and supplications from a reforming people would have meant something in the ear of God. Nothing of that sort was done. The church-going people went to church in perhaps greater numbers than commonly, and for the rest they were probably [not much] concerned...”

25 January 1918, p.666—Competing visions, moral quandaries

From a news item on the Conscription Referendum in South Australia (where the ‘No’ vote prevailed). Rev. Tom Allen, a recruiting advocate, reported that “in the farming districts — which really dominate the position in South Australia — the national crisis was quite a subsidiary factor, and that the business of farming was of more absorbing importance. Farming there has become prosperous beyond the wildest dream of the men who formerly were struggling on the land . . . [and this] together with a restricted outlook, combined to make the farmers, for the most part, quite satisfied that the deliverance of the Empire would come apart from his contributions — particularly from his family...”

...Viewing the prospects of recruiting in South Australia one can scarcely look forward to any change taking place for the better, seeing that selfishness, cowardice and political prejudices, obscure the vision. Consequently I think that the suggestion to reinforce our heroic soldiers at the front by means of voluntary recruiting, in South Australia at any rate, is reducing a serious national necessity to the level of a farce.

1 February 1918, p.679—noble work?

From Rev. S. Carroll Myers’ tribute to the work of the Central Methodist Mission:

“... unique among the churches is the Mission in Franklin Street. The magnificent premises are better adapted than many of our mission churches at home [i.e. in Britain]. And it is a truly great work. Everything that the spiritual passion of a man can conceive and organize for the salvation of the people is in operation. The extensive premises are one expression of that passion. The sanctuary is built around with rooms and halls that make it a home and refuge for the people, and hither the

wearry, the lost and the broken find help. On any morning the minister or his wife and the sisters may be found feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and ministering to all manner of distress. The place is alive. . . the Mission [is] a living thing, radiating love and light and joy. It ministers to many who are not touched by other Churches and this justifies its appeal for generous help.

1 February 1918, p.685—Anyone for dogmatism?

From ‘Current Topics’: “Our mission as a Church to-day is to control men until they can control themselves. We give to them our doctrines not as millstones for the neck but as milestones for the feet. We must be dogmatic. We have no right to be anything else. But it must be the dogmatism, not of mildewed creeds, but of personal experience. This shall we control their minds and hearts until they fit on ‘the yoke that is easy and the burden that is light’ — the control of Christ.”

15 February 1918, p.711—Too much screen time?

From ‘Current topic’: “The [New York] *Christian Advocate* says ‘Count us among those who refuse to accept the pictured screen as a substitute for the printed page. The fascination of the photo play has for the time being ensnared the public. More people, old and young, sit in the darkened playhouses every week-night than occupy the pews of all churches put together on the brightest Sunday of the year. But for the most part, those who sit in the darkness miss all the bright lights of the world... Wise parents will see to it that reading does not become a lost art. They will set themselves resolutely against the current delusion that the screen can really take the place of the book.”



Did you know?

Did you know that *The Australian Christian Commonwealth* can be accessed online?

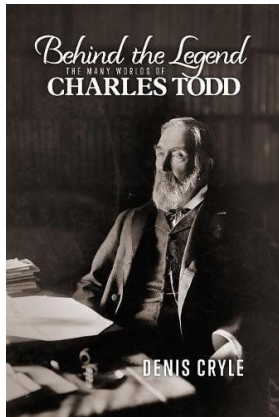
Go to <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/title/1166#> and you will find editions from 1901 to 1940



Holiday Reading

Rev. Dr Dean Eland

Denis Cryle. *Behind the Legend: The Many Worlds of Charles Todd*.
Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing 2017.



This 2017 substantial book of over 300 pages describes the life and work of Charles Todd (1826-1910). Todd and his family arrived in South Australia in November 1855 and as a scientist and public servant was a major contributor to the development of the colony. Living with Alice and his family in the Observatory on West Terrace (now the site of Adelaide High School) he

became a pioneer in three related scientific disciplines: telegraphic communication, postal services and astronomy. His most significant public achievement was his oversight in planning and building the overland telegraph line between Adelaide and Darwin. This project involved a range of organisational and personal skills and many months separated from his family in Adelaide. His many achievements were acknowledged by the conferring of a knighthood in 1893.

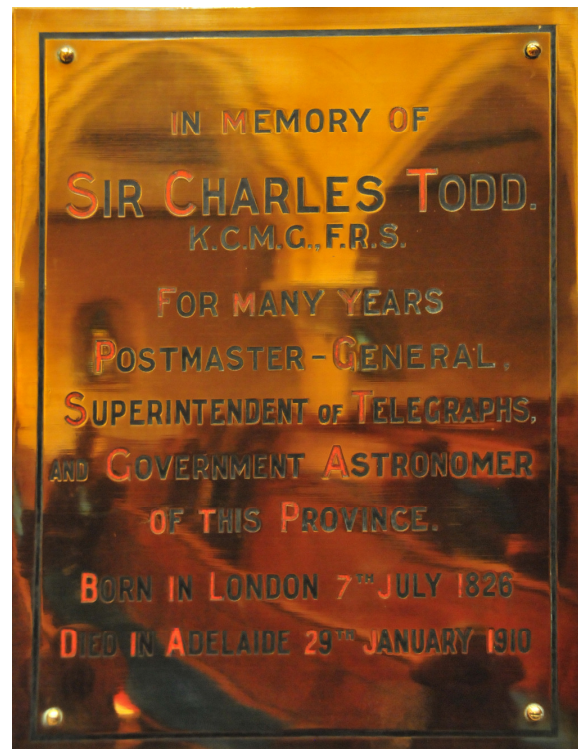
I am left with a number of impressions of Todd by this very thorough and well researched work. Initially I was challenged by the detailed descriptions of the technological and scientific challenges that faced him in South Australia. Further into the story I became intrigued by the colonial politics of the day and the wide range of expectations from many sections of the South Australian community. Expectations included delivering projects on time and within budget across a continent without roads and few transport services.

Todd's character comes through in this chronicle of events and management challenges. He coped with difficult personalities, political differences, inter-colonial rivalry and others working on projects who expected public recognition. As postmaster general he worked from the General Post Office in King William Street for long hours dealing with planning challenges and day to day routine administrative tasks.

Charles, Alice and their children family were members of Stow Memorial Congregational Church in Flinders Street, now Pilgrim Uniting Church. Two memorials in the 150 year-old building are a tribute to their public life and faith. I found myself asking questions about the relationship between Todd's scientific vocation and his religious faith. The author notes the long-term personal influence of Alice as an active church member but when, invited to comment about the relationship between the

bible and science, Todd himself was happy to leave that question to others. It is possible that he compartmentalised the two sides of his life. The minister of North Adelaide Congregational Church, the liberal and progressive Rev James Jefferis, "the prophet of federation" was more adventurous and sought to face up to the intellectual challenges presented by modern science.

Many lay leaders of Adelaide's city churches in the second half of the 19th century were active in civic life. Todd's commitment to public service was similar to others who understood that their social duty included service to both church and state. Social duty involved the formation of the civic, cultural and educational institutions we enjoy today. At the same time lay members and ministers of the Congregational church were also involved in finding the money to build five



The plaque commemorating the life, work and ministry of Sir Charles Todd at Pilgrim Church, Adelaide

Photo: Dean Eland



Cuttings and Clippings

News from the papers

*Kapunda Herald (SA : 1878 - 1951) Tue 18 May 1880
Page 3 MELROSE.*

.....The newly-appointed Wesleyan minister has arrived after some little delay in getting back from a tour he has been taking for the benefit of his health in the other colonies. The Rev. gentleman certainly looks anything but an invalid, nor will he need to be one to overtake the work he has before him in his new sphere. I notice that one round he has marked out for himself upon his plan necessitates the covering of nearly fifty miles of country, and taking three services. I pity the poor horse as well as the man who does it.

Mr. Carter, who seems fond of securing relaxation from toil in scientific experiments, and also in getting up

social entertainments for the healthy amusement of the people, has announced his intention of giving a series of lecture-entertainments in the Melrose Institute Hall. One is to be an exhibition of, and a series of interesting experiments with, the phonograph, telephone, and microphone, when a concert is to be transmitted seventeen miles off, and listened to by two audiences simultaneously. It is also said that as there happens to be a little church at Wirrabara, which it is difficult to supply with either lay or ministerial services, Mr. Carter is intending to get an improved telephone, so that the services at Melrose shall be transmitted to Wirrabara. The Wirrabarites are I am told delighted at this, but they stipulate that they must sometimes have the parson in person, as they want the living man as well as the voice.....

Open Doors: Built Heritage Weekend

Sunday 29 April, 2:30—4:00pm

SOUTH AUSTRALIA'S
**HISTORY
FESTIVAL**

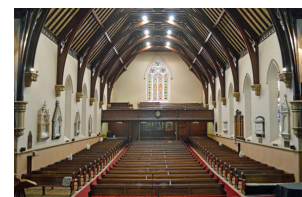
MAY 2018

The Uniting Church South Australia Historical society will host a Built Heritage event at **Wesley Uniting Church, 27 Grenfell St, Kent Town**, in conjunction with members of the Wesley congregation

Churches have been an important part of the built environment since the earliest colonial times, and important centres of community and cultural life This event will include:

- A tour of the church building
- Information about Wesley's pipe organ and about how it has been used to promote church music
- A talk from a local historian, focussing on how Wesley church ash contributed to the life of its community over time, including discussion on how churches negotiate the challenges of having too many buildings (i.e. too many contributions to the built heritage!) as the population, needs and fortunes of their localities change

Afternoon tea included



(Photo source/credit: Wesley Uniting Church, Kent Town website gallery)



In Memoriam Pamela Joy Houston

29 December 1932 –
11 January 2018

On a very host day, Brighton Uniting Church was crowded for the memorial and thanksgiving service for the life of Pam Houston.

Pam was deeply involved in the Methodist and Uniting Churches through her life, from her childhood in Alberton through many years of shared life and ministry with her husband, Rev. David Houston, in country and suburban SA, to 'retirement' at Brighton.

Pam volunteered at Oxford Nursing Home for 10 years and later became a resident there, and finally at Allambi.

The UCSAHA extends its love and sympathy to Pam's family, and especially to David, who is the Vice-President of the society.



A response to "Can you help?"



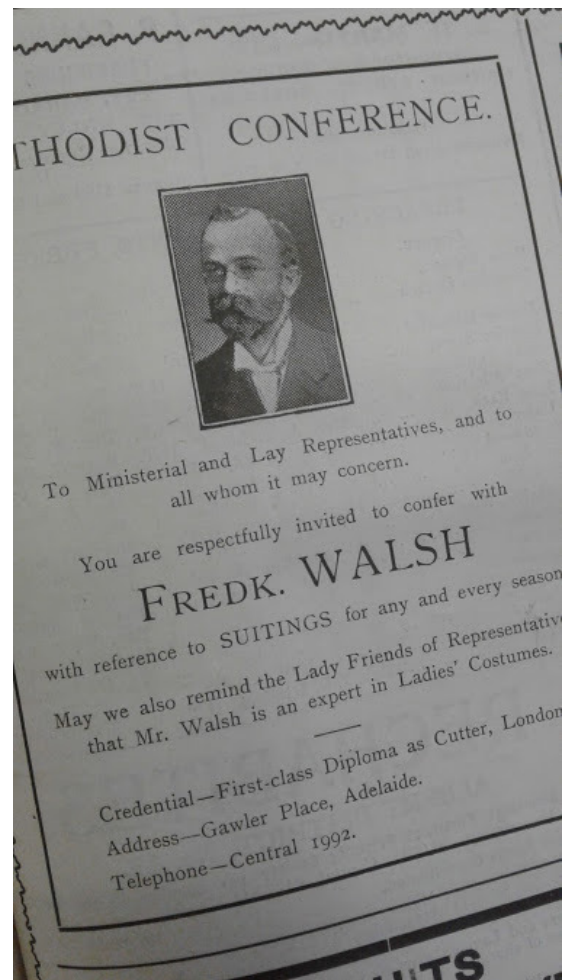
In the previous newsletter, we shared this unidentified photo, and thanks to an eagle-eyed reader, the photo has been identified as being one of the Rev. Thomas Patrick.

Rev. Patrick attended College from 1936-38, and after serving overseas in the military in 1941-42 returned home to be ordained in 1943.

Following his ordination, he served as a military chaplain for the AIF until 1945, and then served in various parishes and congregations around the state until he retired in 1981. He passed away in August 1995.



Cuttings and Clippings From the papers...



From *The Australian Christian Commonwealth*—22 February 1918.

The South Australian Methodist Conference was apparently drawing near. Other articles in this edition of the paper suggest preparations for the conference were well underway. This advertisement on the front page wants to make sure all representatives (ministry and lay) are dressed appropriately for the event.

It is interesting to note that only men attended these events. Also note the four digit phone number!

The full front page of this edition of the paper can be found at <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-page23979388>

The History Centre collections includes a number of photos of groups of attendees at the Methodist Conferences, and all in these photos were impeccably dressed.

2018 Events

Members are urged to enter the following dates in their 2018 diaries now:

- **Sunday 4 March**
- **Sunday 29 April**
- **Sunday 17 June**
- **Sunday 21 October**



On these days, beginning at 2.30pm, we will be holding our public events, and look forward to a big turnout of members and others interested in South Australian church history.

Please note that the 29 April meeting will be part of the official SA History Month program, and the 17 June meeting will be our AGM.

4 March:

Primitive Methodists:

Who were they? Why did they come to SA? What has been their legacy? What were your family's links with the Primitives? This will be a work-in-progress discussion of this neglected aspect of church history, led by Rosemary Mitchell and a team of discussants.

Church of the Trinity, 318 Goodwood Road, Clarence Park

29 April:

The local church as part of the built heritage

This meeting is UCSAHS's contribution to History SA's 'Open Doors: Built Heritage weekend', which is the opening event of the 2018 SA History Festival. It will include a tour of an historic building, and input from the church's organist and its historian.

Wesley Uniting Church, 27 Grenfell Street, Kent Town

17 June:

AGM, followed by special lecture.

Rev. Dr Brian Chalmers, 'Evangelistic Trends within South Australian Methodism 1838-1939: a comparative analysis'.

Rosefield Uniting Church, 2 Carlton Street, Highgate

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 Uniting Church, 341-343 Payneham Road, Marden

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.