



INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

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Our June Meeting Professor David Hilliard: Early Methodism

What an excellent talk we had from Prof David Hilliard last meeting!

David began by describing the beginnings of Methodism in England in the late 1720s, when John Wesley led a “Holy Club” at university. This club was dedicated to a godly life, including acts of mercy, the shunning of worldly pastimes and regular church attendance. The term “Methodist” began as a disparaging title bestowed by fellow students who had little interest in holiness.

Methodism began as a group within the Anglican Church and remained so until after John Wesley’s death in 1791. John, his brother Charles and their friend, George Whitefield were the early prominent figures in the Methodist movement. They aimed to practise the purest form of Christianity, and all members joined a “class” to assist them in retaining this purity of faith and practice. These classes were important in the early years but eventually faded out. The Wesley brothers and George Whitefield went their separate ways over Whitefield’s belief in predestination. One of the hallmarks of Wesleyan Methodism was that salvation was open to all.

Over time there were several Methodist groups, including Wesleyans, Bible Christians and Primitive Methodists. All groups came to South Australia in the early days, mostly miners from Northern Devon and Cornwall. By the middle of the 19th century they made up ¼ of South Australia’s population. The first Methodist service was held on the second Sunday after the arrival at Holdfast Bay. Although the

various groups had different buildings and hymn books, etc, they shared the same theology, and towards the end of the 19th century the groups began to merge.

The first Methodist Church in S.A. was in Hindley St, with the second on Pirie St being built before the first was paid for. Many congregations sprang up in the South – at Brighton, Happy Valley and Clarendon, to name a few, which had only one minister between them. This wasn’t a problem, as lay preachers were often used.

The Church at Marion was built in 1861 on land sold by G. W. Chinner to the church trustees. There were 27 families in Marion associated with the Methodist Church, and a “Sabbath Day School” was opened. Pupils met for 2 or 3 hours on a Sunday afternoon, and there was also a lending library available. A Bible Christian Church was also built at the top of Marion Road. Franklin donated stone to build the Church at Sturt. As it still cost 400 pounds to build, a huge banquet was held to help pay off the debt. Between them, Methodists and Bible Christians were the largest congregations in Marion.

The sermon was central to the Methodist service, and the hymns and Bible readings very important parts. The social features of Methodism were temperance, regular church attendance, the strict keeping of the Sabbath, non-participation in dancing or theatre and the responsibility to vote for only upright men. The pastimes encouraged were music, reading and sport, and church celebrations included Harvest Thanksgivings and Anniversaries for which music and suppers were enjoyed.

There was much more to the talk, of course, but no more room to tell it. It was a great meeting enjoyed by about 15 members.

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From the newspaper 100 years ago

Today we are aware the war was would shortly be over but this excerpt from the paper gives no indication of any expectation of peace.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Thursday 18 July 1918, page 5

THE AUSTRALIANS ON THE AMIENS FRONT.

The following, on "the Lagnlcourt stunt,"(sic) is from a South Australian soldier's letter:-"I would not worry over the conscription and eligible (?) issue, if I were you. What good would men like them be over here? One voluntary man is worth a hundred such. It takes men to stand up to the rain of shot and shell they pour into you in France. The Australian army is again in the thick of it, and is adding fresh laurels to its name every day. Every survivor of the 4th Division is entitled to wear the Croix de Guerre for stopping the German rush on Amiens at Delnicourt (sic), when they fought against overwhelming odds for 9½ hours, and could not be shifted. The thin khaki Australian lines were held to the death by our boys against the full weight of the flower of the German army - not a foot back. Our men are now called the 'saviours of Amiens,' which practically means France. It was a wonderful feat for a few Australian divisions. It is claimed as the most notable achievement of all the wonderful fights they have put up during the war.

The English 5th Army were being driven back. All seemed lost, until General Foch threw the Australians into the fight. They drove the Germans back, held the line, and are still holding it, forging ahead, but never a foot to the rear."

Program for the second half of the year

The speakers for the second half of the year have been finalised and, as you probably have noticed, the focus is on local history.

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Annie Doolan's Cottage

It was sad to see in the local Messenger newspaper (July 4, 2018) that the volunteers are to pack up the memorabilia at the property as the Catholic Church will be renting St Ann's Church and the cottage to Brighton based Farrell & O'Neill Funerals for its services.

The chapel's Sunday services will continue.

The final open day for the cottage was planned for Tuesday the 10th of July.

News from the Marion Heritage Research Centre

July & August

On The Home Front

A 5-banner display from the SA History Trust, about life at home during WW1. View in hallway & rooms of the MHRC.

Dates for your diary

Talk by State Records:

Unsettled - Finding SA's Soldier Settlement Records

Monday 20th August, 2 – 4pm

Talk by Major Chris Roe:

Peace 1918

Tuesday 16th October, 2 – 4pm

Bookings essential.

No cost. Tea/coffee provided.

Phone: **7420 6455**

Email: heritage@marion.sa.gov.au

Marion Historical Society

Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday 15th August 2018

Felicity-ann Lewis

Book Launch

"The Colin Phelps Story"

Author - Ian Morphet

Cheese and wine provided No cost.
Please advise Judy if you intend to be present for catering purposes. 8298 5585