

Visiting METHODIST HERITAGE

Jo Hibbard
Methodist Connexional
Heritage Officer

Church Tourism Association
4 November 2009

Methodist Heritage & Contemporary Mission

- Report commissioned by Methodist Conference in 2000
- No further work undertaken until 2007 Council reference group investigation
- 2008 Conference paper proposed: bring into one body [the Methodist Heritage Committee] the Church's responsibility for preserving its heritage and for using it for mission... appoint a 'Connexional Heritage Officer' on a salaried basis.

Epworth Old Rectory

Home of the Wesleys

- Built in 1709, after the previous house burned down.
- Home of the Wesley family: Revd Samuel Wesley and his wife, Susanna, and their 10 (of 19) children.
- Features Georgian style 'physic garden' with plants mentioned in John Wesley's book of 1747: *Primitive Physic or An Easy and Natural Way of Curing Most Diseases*.



The New Room, Bristol



- John Wesley's first 'preaching house' founded on 12 May 1739 – the world's first Methodist building
- Upstairs period rooms show the life and work of 18th C itinerant preachers
- Extensive development project underway: Greening the Broadmead



John Wesley's House, City Road, London & Museum of Methodism

- John Wesley's winter London base from 1779
- Built on courtyard of Wesley's London Chapel of 1778 – the 'cathedral' of Methodism
- John Wesley's grave also on site; with his mother, Susanna, buried in Bunhill Cemetery opposite
- Museum of Methodism in chapel crypt traces the history of Methodism from the 18th C to the present



Wesley's Cottage, Trewint



- Wesley travelled 250,000 miles around Britain
- Many trips into 'wild west' mining areas of mid and south Wales and Cornwall
- After his wife offered hospitality to Wesley, Digory Isbell extended his cottage with a 'prophet's chamber'

Gwennap Pit, Cornwall



- A natural amphitheatre, enlarged and terraced in 1806 in memory of John Wesley
- Originally caused by mining subsidence
- Size and capacity much exaggerated by Wesley, who preached here 18 times between 1776 and 1789

Pentre Llifior Chapel on the Wesley Way, Welshpool

- The oldest Methodist chapel in north Wales, built in 1798
- Founded by 'Revd James' Buckley – brewery owner
- On 'Wesley Way' – a new way-marked walking trail in development



Winchelsea Chapel & tree



- For John Wesley's last ever outdoor preaching engagement in 1790 he sat under tree behind chapel
- Should have been in chapel (1785), but congregation too big and excluded from parish church



Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum of Primitive Methodism, & Mow Cop

- Burial place of founder of Primitive Methodist denomination
- Focuses on development and influence of Methodism in Victorian period, esp. with schools
- Mow Cop castle (an 18th C folly) sits on top of hillside location of Bourne's import, 'Camp meetings'



Owned by others



Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire – an English Heritage property

In care of Sandwell Museums Service, childhood home of Francis Asbury, first bishop of United Methodist Church of USA



Bringing Methodist Heritage together

- Branding and promotion
- Policy development
 - Theology
 - Organisational structure
 - Funding and grant-making: reducing competition
 - Interpretation strategy
- Supporting the site managers and volunteers

John 20: 30 & 31

³⁰Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

