
News from Epworth Old Rectory



Methodist
Heritage



From the Chair of Trustees

Much has happened behind the scenes over the winter months and we are excited to share with you that we have been given two significant financial awards. Firstly Epworth Old Rectory has been chosen as one of thirty-six small museums across the UK to be awarded funding of up to £3,500 by the Royal Society in the latest round of its Places of Science scheme to engage communities with their local science stories.

As we know, John Wesley was passionate about improving the wellbeing of everyday people and wrote a book called *Primitive Physick* (1747) which contains 800 'tried and tested cures' that could be made at home using herbs/plants from the garden. The Old Rectory has a Physick Garden containing herbs and plants from *Primitive Physick*. Working in partnership with the community the project will uncover 'hidden' stories about everyday people's health and the cures available to them in the 18th century. We will work with a local artist and volunteers to create engaging and accessible signage, with an accompanying trail in the Physick Garden. The interpretation will help bring the stories of everyday people in the 18th century to life and highlight the similarities and differences to health and medicine experienced by people today.

Secondly, thanks to the efforts of the Strategic Manager, we are able to give you advance notification that we have been awarded a grant from the Heritage Fund. The official announcement of this award is not until May, when full details will be released. This is an amazing step forward for the Old Rectory and the grant will enable us to improve our Collections storage significantly, alongside an exciting events programme under the project title of 'Out of the Box – unlocking collections at Epworth Old Rectory'.

This means a lot of hard work for the staff and volunteers, but we look forward to an increased number of visitors engaging with new and diverse activities and events.

Keep an eye on our website and social media channels for news of these developments and do join us at one of these events in 2024.

Sarah Aswell



twitter.com/EpworthOld/



[@homeofthewesleys](https://www.instagram.com/homeofthewesleys)



[@epworth.old.lector](https://www.tiktok.com/@epworth.old.lector)



www.facebook.com/homeofthewesleys

Collections Update

We are embarking on a very exciting collections project! Olivia Threlkeld, Methodist Heritage and Collections Officer, is supporting us to digitise our whole collection. Our collection is made up of over 5000 objects which includes items belonging to John, Charles, Susanna and Samuel and other members including letters, furniture and personal possessions, even John Wesley's glasses and horse whip. The collection also holds objects relating to the history of Methodism such as ceramics, books and costume. The Old Rectory also looks after the Methodist Women's Collection which illustrates how women and women's groups from the 17th century to the present day have driven the Methodist movement - the collection include photographs, souvenirs, paper based ephemera, personal testimonies and even locks of hair belonging to prominent women in the Methodist Society. Digitisation of the collection means that our entire collection will be searchable online on our website – using a search engine users will be able to view photos of objects, learn more about their history and composition. This service will be free and available to users globally. Take a look at the image below to get an idea of what our online collection will look like. We are hoping to complete the project later this year.



brass lantern clock in deal case

Brass lantern clock decorated with 4 winged cherubs around the dial. The dial has quarterly hour engravings but no minute markings. This suggests that the clock was originally a one handed clock. There is an added brass cog wheel to make the clock show the minutes as well as the hours. The chapter ring is in Roman numerals and this would originally have been silvered. There is an iron hour and minute hands.

Category: [clock](#)

Production Date: 1675-1685

Location: [Parlour](#)

Material Part: brass face, walnut surround and deal lower case

Produced by: Marmick, James James Marwick Clockmakers Company

Measurements:

to top of hood
height 1957mm

base width
width 368mm

base front to
back
length 242mm

Object Number: 2000-001



Anya Johnson (Visits and Collections Manager)

The World Methodist Conference

The World Methodist Conference is a global gathering of the Methodist-Wesleyan family which is held every five years in a different part of the world. The 22nd World Methodist Conference will be held in Gothenburg, Sweden, from 13-18 August this year and Epworth Old Rectory will be represented there. The theme of the Conference is 'On The Move', with a rich and exciting programme revolving around the three themes Migration, Pilgrimage and Guiding lights. The Conference brings together Methodists from all over the world to share together in fellowship, learning and worship.

The Old Rectory is very much part of the World Methodist family. In fact it was financial support from the World Methodist Council which enabled the Old Rectory to be purchased from the Church of England in 1954. We are delighted that, to this day, we have representatives, including the General Secretary of the World Methodist Council, on the Epworth Old Rectory Trust. At this year's Conference, we will have a stand so that we can meet Conference delegates and tell them about the work of the Old Rectory. A report will also be given at the Council meeting and new trustees appointed to serve for the next five years.

It is an exciting opportunity to put our work on the world map and we look forward to reporting back in the Autumn newsletter.

*Sarah Friswell
Chair of Trustees*



Introducing Lois



My name is Lois Albans, and I am the newly appointed Outreach, Learning and Engagement Manager at Epworth Old Rectory. I have lived on the Isle of Axholme all my life, and I am familiar with the history of Epworth Old Rectory, and now I feel privileged to work here. For ten years, I was a learning and development assistant within the education team at North Lincolnshire Museum. This involved working with schools, community groups, and families. Following on from the museum, I worked in a local primary school for four years. In the role of teaching assistant, I worked with children from nursery up to year 6, supporting with their classroom learning and running Forest School sessions every week.

Both posts have given me the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil the post of outreach, learning and engagement manager at the Old Rectory. Part of my job is to increase the number of school visitors to the Old Rectory. I am currently developing, in consultation with local schools, a series of school workshops covering the history, science and R.E areas of the national curriculum. I have refreshed the local history workshop that is currently offered and will be trailing this with two local schools in June. The new workshops will be ready to trail in the new school year. As well as working with schools I am also working with groups within the local community. Following on from a meeting with a local dementia steering group, I have set up a series of reminiscence sessions which will begin at the end of April.

As new projects are being launched following the successful Heritage Fund application. One project is the creation of 6 Discovery History loans boxes for use by local community groups and schools. The boxes will be themed and contain historical items to provoke conversation and learning. The boxes are currently under development and will be available for loan in autumn. Starting in October I will be launching a Chatty Collections café. These sessions are an opportunity to view our collections and like-minded members of the community to come together. During the Easter holidays I ran a series of successful family bug hunting workshops. The feedback was incredibly positive, and several requests were made for similar activities to take place though the year. I have taken the comments onboard, and a series of workshops will run during the school holidays throughout the year.

It is an exciting time for Epworth Old Rectory and I am grateful to be part of it.

*Lois Albans
Outreach, Learning and Engagement Manager*

Methodist Women in Britain Event



Methodist Women
in Britain



Invite you to a Garden Party on Saturday 18th May 2024
hosted by MWiB in the garden of Epworth Old Rectory

Programme for the afternoon

- 1pm onwards parking on site available
- 2pm Gathering and Welcome
- 2.15pm Dr Ruth Slatter & Dr Hannah Worthen speak about their research work using the Methodist Women's Collection
- 2.45pm onwards:

Opportunity to visit the Women's Collection exhibition and take a tour of the Old Rectory itself.

Opportunity to talk with Dr Ruth & Dr Hannah and to share stories of Methodist life in relation to the Methodist Women's collection.

Opportunity to accession items and stories for the collection with Anya Johnson, Epworth Old Rectory collections & visitor manager.

Afternoon Tea – time to share in conversation with friends old & new.

- 4.30pm Closing worship led by Rev Angy Long, Chair of the Lincolnshire District.
- 4.50pm Farewells & depart

Cost for the afternoon £5 plus the donation of sanitary items for local foodbanks/women's refuge as part of MWiB's period poverty campaign. **Tickets must be booked in advance of the event through the MWiB website: www.mwib.org.uk**

Booking will be open from 28th March to 13th May

Queries: communications.mwib@gmail.com or 0300 030 9873

Why be a volunteer at Epworth Old Rectory?

W - Welcoming and friendly small museum

E - Every volunteer has something to offer in supporting the museum

S - Special and varied events to take part in

L - Learning new stories about the life of the Wesley Family

E - Enthusiastic leadership introducing new ideas

Y - You always feel valued

By Ros Whittaker (Volunteer Guide)



A note from the Treasurer

2024 has opened for business on 1 April in a healthy position financially. There is strong evidence that Epworth Old Rectory is recovering from the impact of the Covid pandemic. Support from the various government help schemes made it possible to reach 2022 in a safe situation.

Considerable progress has been made since then:

- footfall has returned to pre-covid levels.
- Grants awarded during 2023 have enabled maintenance work on the property and infrastructure to be progressed, and community engagement, visitor experience and collection care work to be developed.
- Successful grant applications have been made (you will read about these elsewhere). This funding is committed to further development of the property and to outreach beyond the community.

This progress has been made through the diligence of the staff and the generosity and enthusiasm of the volunteers and the Directors look backward in gratitude and forwards with optimism.

The number of Friends has remains steady. The subscription has also remained steady (at £16) for the last ten years. However you, the Friends, seem to treat this as a minimum donation and are showing a generous disregard for this figure! At a future meeting the Directors will be reviewing this subscription/donation and will be advising a revised figure in the Autumn newsletter.

In the meantime (ie the rest of 2024) do make a visit and see the changes that you are supporting.



Stuart Gunson

News from the Rectory Garden

The next 18 month period promises to be a very exciting one for the Rectory garden.

We have been fortunate enough to secure a grant of £3,488 from the Royal Society as part of their Places of Science Scheme, the idea of which is to bring stories of science to local communities.

Our project, entitled Cures from the Garden: eighteenth century medicine at home will effectively be a revamp of the current Physic Garden which, now in its eighteenth year without any major changes, is now looking a little tired.

The current layout of the garden was well conceived and has served the Rectory well for many years but life moves on and we need to move with it. So the current signage which is difficult to see and only carries a limited amount of information will be replaced with new and much more eye catching information panels being prepared with the help of local artist Helen Stark. These panels will marry up information about the plants, John Wesley's cures from The Primitive Physic and the stories of 18th century people and the illnesses they suffered. The panels will incorporate QR codes to allow us to offer deeper insights into the stories and cures, and also allow us to update the information as time progresses.

The garden will be replanted using some of the existing plants and some new ones, which will be themed according to illnesses and cures rather than the more random planting scheme we have at present.

Significant numbers of the original plants have overgrown their allotted space or not survived, and the revamp will give us opportunities to use them to better effect, or, if they are not earning their keep, to relocate them to the wider Rectory garden.

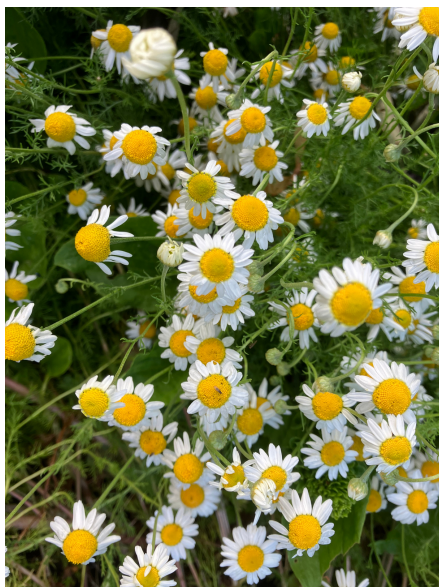
News from the Rectory Garden

The original garden had noticeable geometric features and some of these will be reintroduced. The vegetables, currently grown together in one bed, will hopefully be dispersed so they are grown annually with other plants linked by specific cures. There will inevitably be an element of compromise once the final plans are drawn up as our master plan will need to incorporate aspect, size and aesthetics but we are looking forward to the challenge and are confident that the end result will be both faithful to the original concept and planners while bringing new ideas and vigour to the space.



Stinking hellebore: one of the plants that will be staying

Chamomile: has earned a place in the new garden plan



Future Events

What?	When?
Music Recital	Saturday 11 May 7pm - 8.30pm
Half Term Family Crafts	Saturday 25 May to Saturday 1 June 10.30am - 3pm
Jane Austen Recital performed by Susan Hollingworth	Saturday 8 June Time TBC
Epworth Music Day	Saturday 22 June 10.30am - 3.30pm
Summer Craft Fayre	Saturday 6 July Time TBC
Summer Family Crafts	Wednesdays 7, 14, 21 & 28 August Times TBC
Heritage Open Day	Saturday 7 September
Christmas Craft Fayre	Saturday 16 November
Christmas Wreath Marking Workshops	December - date TBC

Please contact Anya (Visits and Collections Manager)
on vcm@epwortholdrectory.org.uk if you would like
any further information on these events