

# Uniting Church History and Heritage

Uniting Church National History Society: Vol. 5 No. 2 June 2023



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## FROM THE CHAIR

**Rev. Professor Glen O'Brien**

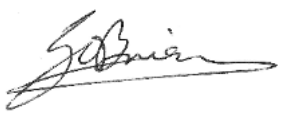
Some people think of historical study as focused on musty newspapers clippings and boring old men with beards in fading, sepia-toned photographs. The Uniting Church National History Society thinks differently. Formed in 2017 on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia, the UCNHS has focused its work on the *relevance* of historical study to the present witness and mission of the Church, as well as matters of wide public interest, such as the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the Church's response, through Uniting Redress, to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to the Abuse of Children.

In July 2022, we drew 163 registrations for a webinar on *History, Truth Telling and the Uluru Statement from the Heart*, the recording of which has so far attracted over 1,800 views on YouTube <https://youtu.be/L4UemSpCyEE>. In association with the University of Divinity and its School of Indigenous Studies, the Society brought together an expert panel to engage in a respectful and robust discussion around the Statement and explored the place of history and truth telling in working toward a more just and self-determined future for First Nations people. The theme of the webinar was an appropriate extension of the Uniting Church 16th Assembly's renewing, in May 2022, of the Covenant between the Uniting Church in Australia and the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress. You can download a free copy of a booklet containing each of the talks here: <https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/253301627>. It is already being used by individuals and church groups as a resource for the upcoming referendum on constitutional amendment and the Voice to Parliament.

Our Fourth Biennial UCNHS Conference will be on the theme of *Truth Telling: From Colonising to Covenanting* and will be held on Larrakia country, in Darwin, from 24–27 August 2023. It will include 150th anniversary celebrations at Darwin Memorial Church as well as commemorating the Centenary of Milngimbi Methodist Mission. The Conference is hosted by the Northern Synod and is generously supported by the financial support of The Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation. You can register for the Conference here: <https://uniting.church/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Event-flyer-UCNHS-CONFERENCE-2023.pdf>

The UCNHS remains committed to historical work, not merely out of antiquarian interest, but because it understands that the Church's present mission both flows out of history and makes history. It seeks to empower and equip the people of today's Uniting Church to engage meaningfully in historical study, and to recognise the power of memory, as well as both the pitfalls and value of commemoration. You are invited to renew your membership of the Society for only \$25 per year by visiting its page on the Assembly website, where there is a payment link. <https://uniting.church/uca-national-history-society/>. Come and yarn with us in Darwin to help shape the present and future Church.

Yours,



(Rev. Professor) Glen O'Brien

Chair, Uniting Church National History Society

## Celebrating histories in Darwin

Towards the end of August this year, a number of celebrations of historical milestones will be celebrated in Darwin.

First, on Saturday 19 August, Nungalinga College is celebrating its Jubilee year. From the advertising brochure: "Leviticus 25:10 says: 'Consecrate the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you...' In 2023, Nungalinga will do our best to fulfil this command!"

In May 1973, the Anglican Diocese of the Northern Territory, the Church Missionary Society, the United Church of North Australia and Methodist Overseas Missions combined to form the Joint Training Centre for Indigenous Christians in Darwin. The name was changed, after discussion with local Larrakia Elders, to Nungalinga College. Nungalinga, or 'Old Man Rock', is a reef lying off Casuarina Beach near the College. It can be seen at low tide. Traditionally, Nungalinga was a source of wisdom and leaning for the Larrakia. The reef was a place of learning for the young Larrakia.

The Catholic Diocese of Darwin joined the Anglican and, soon to be, Uniting churches to formally constitute the college. Building commenced in 1974 and the first students attended. After a major disruption from Cyclone Tracy in December 1974, the college has grown in its capacity to train Indigenous Christian leaders for their churches across Australia.

In the following week this year, the National History Conference for the Uniting Church will be held in Darwin. The conference opens on the evening of Thursday 24 August with a welcome to country and smoking ceremony by Larrakia Elders and a keynote address by the Honourable Yinjiya Mark Guyula, MLA for the Mulka Electorate in East Arnhem Land. Yinjiya is a Yolŋu man of the Djambarrpuyŋu clan and the Liya-Dhalinyimirr people. He is in his second term as member for Mulka. Yinjiya previously worked with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress as a Support Worker in East Arnhem. He lives on his wife's country at Milingimbi.

The conference will hear papers on various topics on the theme: ***Truth Telling: From Colonising to Covenanting***. The focus on Saturday 26 August will be on the community of Milingimbi which is celebrating its centenary this year. The day's proceedings will be held at Nungalinga College.

James Watson had worked for the Methodist Overseas Missions at Goulburn Island since 1916, establishing a mission station. In 1923, after a failed attempt to establish a station on Elcho Island to the east, Watson explored the Crocodile Islands and chose a site on Milingimbi (also known as Yurrwi) to establish a second mission station. Thus, the community of Milingimbi was born. Papers to be delivered at the history conference will explore aspects of Milingimbi's history in the light of the theme.

The Milingimbi community itself will be celebrating its centenary in early September.

Celebrations in Darwin will centre on the beginning of the Darwin congregation. In 1869, colonisers from South Australia arrived in Port Darwin to establish a settlement on Larrakia land. The Christian Churches soon followed and began their work. The first were the Wesleyans. Malaria thwarted an earlier attempt by a Congregationalist, Alexander Gore, from Adelaide.

On 24 August 1873, the Rev. Archibald Bogle, supported by the Wesleyan Mission Society of South Australia, preached his first sermon in the open air. But, by the end of that year, a Chapel had been erected with a manse beside. The first Christian congregation in what became known as Darwin commenced.

On Sunday 27 August, a service of worship in the Darwin Memorial Uniting Church will celebrate 150 years of the congregation's worship, witness and service. The President of the Uniting Church in Australia, the Rev. Sharon Hollis, will be the guest preacher.

As well as from periodic cyclones, life in Darwin was severely disrupted by the Second World War. The city was bombed a number of times between February 1942 and the end of 1943. Most of the civilian population had evacuated before the first raid. The city was a military base.



The current church building opened in 1960 as a memorial church.

After the war, Darwin had begun to grow again. By the early 1960s the city was expanding into newly forming suburbs to the north. In 1963, a new congregation was established in Nightcliff sharing ministry with the Darwin congregation.

So, on the first weekend in September this year, the Nightcliff congregation will celebrate 60 years of its existence.

The work of the Christian churches in North Australia, as in many other places, began in the age of European colonisation. Exploring our histories through the lens of the impact and interaction with the traditional owners and occupiers of the lands on which churches and missions were established is a necessary part of knowing the truth that will set us free to grow as the people of God in these lands we now call Australia.

Visit the conference webpage: <https://ucnhs2023.my.canva.site/> for information and register for the conference here: <https://www.trybooking.com/CGJUQ>

## The Geoff Barnes Memorial Prize Award Guidelines

Nominations are invited for the best essay in history (not limited to but including church history) undertaken by an undergraduate student in any Uniting Church theological college.

The lecturer who graded the essay(s), identifies suitable essay(s) and notifies the Academic Dean or Principal of their college. The Academic Dean or Principal sends nomination(s) to the UCNHS. More than one essay may be nominated per college but only one winner will be awarded per calendar year. Nominations are to come only with the consent of the student, but direct nominations from students will not be accepted.

While essays about the Uniting Church or its precedent bodies are welcomed, the prize is not limited to those themes, but may be on any historical period or aspect of historical study.

The essay should already have been assessed by the college through its normal processes and received a grade result of 75% or higher.

Nominations should be received by the end of each calendar year (regardless of the semester in which the essay was written) and the prize will be awarded in February of the following year.

The essays will be evaluated by a judging panel of the UCNHS, preferably made up of those holding doctoral qualifications in history, as such are readily available.

The amount of the prize is currently \$250 and is subject to increase as the fund grows.

The Board reserves the right not to make an award in any given year if no essay of appropriate standard, as determined by its judging panel, is received.

*Contributions of any amount to the Geoff Barnes Memorial Fund are invited to ensure that the fund grows into the future and to increase the size of the prize. Contributions can be deposited into the following account: UCA Assembly Limited BSB: 032-828. Account number: 301985 Please indicate 'Geoff Barnes Memorial Fund' with your deposit (and your own name unless you wish your gift to remain anonymous).*

Did you get your copy of our latest book - the printed version of the 2022 webinar on the Statement from the Heart?

### HISTORY, TRUTH-TELLING AND THE ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART



Uniting Church National History Society Webinar  
21 July 2022

Papers presented by Emily Hayes, Tim Matron-Johnson, Laura Rademaker, and Nathan Tyson

## Envisioning our future: building on the strong foundations and legacy of justice left by Brady and Harris

### Professor Anne Patel-Gray PhD, DD

The Legacy Left by two Inspirational Aboriginal leaders Pastor Don Brady and the Rev. Charles Harris have left us a solid foundation and a legacy of justice in which to build our future upon. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian Congress must consider and reflect on our history. As our history is not our past it is our present, and we carry our history as we look to the Creator Spirit for guidance and inspiration, we must first look at the legacy that has already been achieved to envision our future.

So let's reflect on the legacy left to us by Brady and Harris. These two men whose courage was steadfast, and their prophetic stance and voice was admired by all First Nations peoples. Both Brady and Harris responded to God's call to be Christ's ambassadors for justice and reconciliation. <sup>[1]</sup>

### The Pastor Don Brady<sup>[2]</sup>

The Pastor Don Brady was a pivotal figure in Aboriginal religious, social and political movements. Indeed, Aboriginal people recognised that his life and ministry were pivotal to the development of an Aboriginal theology.<sup>[3]</sup> He was the first Aboriginal church leader to lead political marches, calling for the abolition of the notorious Queensland Aborigines Act, which subjected Aboriginal people to inhumane social, economic and health conditions. His ministry was to influence many generations that followed.

Pastor Brady was from Palm Island, the former prison compound in far north Queensland, which was used to contain and control Aboriginal people. He came to the Lord there, and eventually was amongst the first of the male Aboriginal students to receive training through the Aborigines Inland Mission (A.I.M.). He married fellow student Darlene Willis, of Cherbourg, another Aboriginal mission in Southern Queensland. They ministered together within the A.I.M. for several years.<sup>[4]</sup>

Pastor Brady was a gifted man, who was able to see through the lack of effectiveness of mission

practice, programs and policy. In the early 1960s, he began a further two years of theological training in the Methodist College at Kangaroo Point. He began his ministry with the Methodist Church in the heart of Brisbane, at Spring Hill. It was enormously popular, particularly amongst his own Aboriginal people, because it was (w)holistic. Don was concerned, not only about the spiritual side, but also the physical and emotional sides of his people. He had a way of connecting with people—of seeing brokenness and being able to heal it. The appeal of his ministry extended far beyond the bounds of his own Aboriginal community, as many non-Aboriginal people were also drawn to his charisma.

Pastor Brady's prophetic stance grew out of his experiences overseas. He had won a Churchill Fellowship and had travelled to several communities in the United States and begun to sense a new direction. In his own words, "In Chicago I heard a call, 'Don arise, you are going to do a new thing'".<sup>[5]</sup>

### Uniting Church National History Society Newsletter

Contributions to this newsletter are welcome, but please send them via email and in MS Word or Apple Pages format only.

Editor: Robert Renton  
([robert.renton@bigpond.com](mailto:robert.renton@bigpond.com))

### Subscriptions now due for 2023

You can pay your \$25 subscription for 2023 to the Uniting Church National History Society by direct deposit. The account details are:

Westpac BSB 032-828 Account 301985

**Direct deposit is very much preferred** - but please remember to include your name if you are making the deposit online. At a bank you will need to inform the teller of your name to be included with the deposit or email your name and address and the date and place of the deposit to [robert.renton@bigpond.com](mailto:robert.renton@bigpond.com).

Cheques can be sent to the Treasurer, C/- 28 Bindaree Court, Mernda, Vic. 3754.

There he had begun to see the links between gospel and culture, and to see what the missions had done to him in Australia: they had robbed him of any semblance of cultural expression in terms of worship and theology. He began to reject the influence of Western mission upon him. This meant, of course, that he had to struggle to find a new identity all by himself. There were no Aboriginal theologians, there was not the emphasis that there is today on culture and gospel, there were no schools of missiology in the 1960s in Australia, and Brady had no colleagues.

He believed that without culture, Aboriginal people could not identify with Christianity. He believed that it was God that gave the Aboriginal people culture, and God in Aboriginal culture made our Aboriginality that much more authentic. He was trying to put across the idea that to be Christian did not necessarily mean to be white, an idea which was not at all apparent or clear at the time, because it was all part of Brady's journey.

The driving force behind Brady's convictions—that which made him get up and challenge and lead his people—was the incarnation of Christ into Aboriginal culture. Whereas when the missionaries came, they could not separate Christianising from Westernising, it was Brady who tried to incorporate the incarnation of Christ into Aboriginal culture. This is the source of his radical voice, in challenging white people and churches in their ineffectiveness and inability to incarnate Christ into Aboriginal culture.

Brady was the first Aboriginal pastor and leader to combine the application of the Gospel with Aboriginal cultural practice. There were two things for which he stood out: one was that he was right at the cutting edge of 'gospel and culture', and two was his emphasis on social justice issues. His ministry demonstrated the priority of Christ for the poor—Christ's identification with the poor. It was Brady's particular ministry in relation to these two factors that worked so well: he tried to bring culture into the church, and this was something that enormously affirmed Aboriginal people. One of today's Aboriginal church leaders, the Rev. Graham Paulson, remembers Brady's influence, and states, "Brady was right at the cutting edge of

Methodist ministry with urban Aboriginal people".<sup>[6]</sup>

Pastor Brady saw the poverty of his people; he heard their cries. He made the connection with God being on the side of the oppressed and leading his people out of bondage. He raised the question of how he could minister to the spiritual needs of Aboriginal people, when they were enslaved by Australian legislation that oppressed them and literally denied them their human dignity and rights. He recognised that, "God is present in the sufferings of [hu]man[ity]. Christ was born in a stable, in humility, in suffering".<sup>[7]</sup> Brady was passionately committed to the 'down and outs'. In fact, he earned himself the title, "The Punching Parson", by simply going around and picking up those of his homeless people in the parks and other places who were vulnerable to arrest and further abuse by the system. These he would pick up and take back to a refuge—sometimes he would first have to "knock them out", but they always thanked him the next morning. That sort of work, so far as the church was concerned, had never been done before in the history of mission amongst our people.<sup>[8]</sup>

Don was a catalyst, in the sense that he created a Black church, challenged the institutions and began a Black movement—one which was to be felt right across Australia. He lit the fire in people; he lit the spark, the will to fight, the need for them to struggle for justice. He instilled in people the hope and the will to live. Revealing to Aboriginal Christians that the God of justice, who freed the Israelites from the bondage of Egyptian rule, also was with the Aboriginal people as they struggled for freedom from Western oppression, racist laws and imperialism. Together with other secular Aboriginal movements throughout the country, Brady brought the force of his Black church with him, led by the conviction of equality and freedom for all. Black people started to share in the hope that God was on their side, and that God would send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to be their strength, hope and courage in the face of the racist, oppressive evil inflicted upon them by the white Australian society. He raised the consciousness of his people—that Christ



## Membership Officer

The Uniting Church National History Society is seeking a Membership Officer.

The Society exists to draw attention nationally to significant events, people and history of the Uniting Church and its predecessor churches. It encourages study, research, publishing and events, to promote church heritage. The Society is open to members and non-members of the church.

Functions of the role include to:

- Maintain the database of members
- Liaise with the Treasurer regarding membership renewals
- Assist with promoting the Society and the online use of the Membership Form
- Report to the Committee

The role is voluntary and part-time.

Please submit an Expression Of Interest addressed to the Chairperson, Professor Glen O'Brien, by email: [glenaobrien@gmail.com](mailto:glenaobrien@gmail.com).

## Board Members

The majority of the current Board members were appointed at the inauguration of the Society in 2017 and may retire at the next Annual General Meeting on 14 September; hence we are keen to receive expressions of interest or nominations for membership of the Board. The Board meets by Zoom only about every six weeks. Please consider this!

### Treasurer

We have an interim treasurer until the next AGM, and we're hoping there will be someone prepared to take up this role then. The only main requirement will be knowledge of Microsoft Excel which is used for records.

## Vale Bob Coote

We were saddened to hear very recently of the death of Bob Coote who was the treasurer of the Society almost from the beginning of the Society until the end of 2022. We convey our condolences to Bob's wife and family.

came and died for them, and they too were free, and inheritors of the Kingdom.<sup>[9]</sup>

Pastor Brady affirmed pride in Aboriginal heritage. This belief was so strong that he supported his children being initiated into traditional Aboriginal culture. It is important to stop here for a moment, and to put this action into context. During the mid-1960s, most Aboriginal ministers had themselves absorbed and adopted a white, Western colonial Christianity—one which viewed Aboriginal culture, religion and identity and judged it as evil and pagan. Where other church leaders were denying their Aboriginal identity and culture, Brady affirmed that these were God-given.

For Brady to support the initiation of his own children into Aboriginal culture was a bold and radical move. This coupled with his theological challenges and confrontations of the white churches led to white Christian leaders distancing themselves from Brady's more progressive stance, urging other conservative Aboriginal Christian leaders to separate themselves from him and, indeed, seeking to influence Aboriginal pastors' growing feeling of the day that "Aboriginal culture is evil".

The pressures on Don were absolutely enormous, because he was the lone voice in the Methodist Church at that time; there was just absolutely no one else with him. Brady was saying things that Aboriginal People had never heard before. "No one else had a voice like his".<sup>[10]</sup> In his own words,

"Go forth in the struggle of God, in the power of God. Fight for freedom, for the cause of humanity, for God loves all . . .".<sup>[11]</sup>

Brady's commitment to social justice took him into areas which questioned the political system (such as the Department of Native Affairs in Brisbane), and other policies needed to be questioned and his concern for the people raised a number of social justice questions. This meant that the Methodist Church, the conservative ones, began to distance themselves from him. He found himself being more and more isolated by the system that had affirmed him right from the very beginning—that is until he began to raise questions of justice in terms of social issues. Then the white church began to distance itself from him and, increasingly, Brady found himself a lonely and deserted leader. Not only that, but also, from his conservative beginnings in the Aborigines Inland Mission, there were those of his former

colleagues who were sniping at him as well, because of the fact that they could not understand his political leanings and so on; they were trying to spiritualise away all the political, social and economic issues.<sup>[12]</sup>

Brady's belief in doing and bringing the gospel through Christ's action led to severe repercussions. He was spiritually and emotionally shattered and lost all the drive. It is because the church pulled back and 'defrocked' him, that his status and the basis for his drive in the community—that which gave him the basis for justice and morality and integrity—was pulled away from him. The church pulled back and took from him the very platform on which he was able to stand in order to be the prophet. The church pulled the platform from under him, and then he was a man in the desert by himself, a voice crying in the wilderness. He had no platform, no status, no standing from which to launch his drive into those particular issues.

In the late 1960s, the Rev. Don Brady worked with the Methodist Church in Queensland. Overcoming tremendous hardships in his own life, he dedicated many years to helping the Aboriginal people of south Brisbane. He was a gifted and passionate preacher, and a tireless campaigner for Aboriginal rights. He was always to be found leading Aboriginal land rights marches. His strong theological stance, combined with his persistent efforts at direct action for justice, eventually led the church to "remove him" from the ministry—which "broke" him.

The Rev. Mr Paulson states of Brady, "He reminds me of John the Baptist, particularly after he was defrocked—trying to maintain that energy, trying to maintain the drive, without a basis and without support. He lost his economic, emotional, spiritual, personal support. When you pull all of those in one fell swoop, as the church did, then you have a man who is just a shell".<sup>[13]</sup> But still Brady tried to minister among his own, continuing to carry the cross in the hope of securing liberation for his people.

Brady was the Gandhi, the Martin Luther King Jr., the Malcolm X of the Aboriginal church; but unlike these leaders, who died the quick death of

the bullet, Brady was made to suffer the slow death of exclusion and humiliation. Those for whom Brady had given his life and for whom he had struggled, in the hope of breaking the shackles of bondage and oppression, themselves came under the influence of the white church—and also turned their back on him. This was all he could bear, and it became the final nail on his own cross. Don Brady died a broken man: the church, along with his own people, had successfully crushed his fighting spirit and will to live.

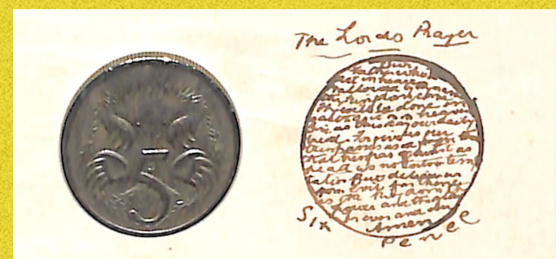
Brady gave his life for what he believed, and in obedience to what God called him to do. And even though the church turned against him and tried to silence and discredit him, the legacy of his ministry was to be continued and made visible in the lives and ministries of those that were to follow. Brady's efforts were not wasted; on the contrary, his influence lives on in those who have the courage and the conviction to carry the cross today. David Thompson, a lifelong friend of Pastor Brady, describes him as "a man ahead of his time", and "a man of strength, character and vision, who laid the foundations for the future".<sup>[14]</sup>

### The Rev. Charles Harris<sup>[15]</sup>

The Rev. Charles Harris would be greatly influenced by Brady and he would take up the mantle where Brady left off and he would be the next pivotal figure—the founder of the Uniting

#### LORD'S PRAYER ON A SIXPENCE

Found on the end paper of the Virginia Bible Christian Sabbath School Roll book (for 1884—1902), what looked like at first glance, a dirt smudge or coffee stain. A magnifying glass revealed the Lord's Prayer writing inside a circle the six of a sixpence (the five cent piece in the photo is to give it some scale).





Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress, and the visionary behind the 1988 March for Justice, Freedom and Hope.

Charles Harris was born in Ingham, in north Queensland, during the Depression. He grew up on the fringes of white towns during the time of the *Queensland Aborigines Act* and the "White Australia Policy". It was at school that Harris first realised the power of racism to create the hunger and poverty he and his family were experiencing.<sup>[16]</sup>

In time, during the 1970s and 80s, Harris did nearly four years 'of study in a conservative, white, Western theological colleges (including Nungalinga, Wontulp-Bi-Buya and the College in Brisbane), where he remained unaware of the issues of justice and struggle.

In the 1970s, the Rev. Charles Harris followed Brady at the ministry in Brisbane, taking up the mantle of direct ministry with the Aboriginal people at Musgrave Park. His work continued the prophetic stands for justice, eventually culminating in his vision of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in 1985.<sup>[17]</sup> His subsequent writings reveal a true passion and "thirst" for justice.<sup>[18]</sup>

When he came to work with Pastor Don Brady in the inner-city suburbs of Brisbane and the centre at Paddington, however, he encountered a reality which shocked and changed him. Sitting with the alcoholics in Musgrave Park, God gave him a vision of his own people "crushed beyond hopelessness, just drinking themselves to death, having no hope for the future"<sup>[19]</sup>—and he felt the pain and suffering of the Aboriginal people. There he met not the imported God, but the Aboriginal God—the One that called him to a radical new vision of a gospel which liberates, one which could "break through any barrier and bridge any gap that existed not only in the Aboriginal community, but also in the world".<sup>[20]</sup> He was made aware that the Bible could address current issues, those which affected his people. "Unless the gospel does address and can address the [current] situation . . . the current issues, then it's not the gospel to me. It's definitely not the gospel, it's something that man has imposed upon his fellow man".<sup>[21]</sup>



Early Bird Registration closes 30th April 2023

For information go to our Conference webpage

<https://ucnhs2023.my.canva.site/>

To register go to

<https://www.trybooking.com/CGJUQ>

**Book your airfares and accommodation NOW!**

In 1980, Harris was ordained to the Christian ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia. During this period, Harris had a vision of an Aboriginal, autonomous church, with its own leadership and ministry—a place for Aboriginal people to gather and to share their hopes, faith and ministry. A ministry for Aboriginal people, led by Aboriginal ministers, for Aboriginal people and with Aboriginal people.

In 1985, as the visionary behind this initiative and under his direction, Harris founded the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress (UAICC), under the umbrella of the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA).<sup>[22]</sup> Harris' achievements included not only separate organisational structures, but also securing the economics to sustain a national and various state entities throughout Australia. No longer would Aboriginal ministry be in the hands of the West; now, it would be secured firmly in the hands of

Aboriginal people—fulfilling the goal of self-determination so sought by Harris. He believed that self-determination meant that the ministry for Indigenous people should be by the people, for the people, with the people. His accomplishments became the impetus behind the Aboriginal Christian movement within the church for a separate Aboriginal ecclesiastical structure, yet with an equal place in the life of the whole church.

During his time of leadership as President of the UAICC, Harris had yet another vision of a March for Justice, Freedom and Hope, which would be a protest against the white Australian bicentennial celebration. This march was to go down in history as the largest protest ever seen. On 26 January 1988—Invasion Day—despite government and general community insensitivity towards the Aboriginal call for a Year of Mourning, most of Australia marked a "year of celebrations". For whites, this date (Australia Day) commemorated the claiming of Australia for the "English Crown" by the first British governor of New South Wales. Nevertheless, Aboriginal people managed to draw national and international attention to the hypocrisy of the bicentenary with the March. On Invasion Day—and for the first time—thousands of Aboriginals from across the nation met in Sydney and marched to mourn past and present injustices against Aboriginal people and to celebrate the survival of the Aboriginal race. As a popular song by an Aboriginal rock band said: "*We Have Survived!*" On that day 20,000 Aboriginals marched for justice, and another 30,000 non-Aboriginals came to march in solidarity with us.

During and after the march, the Aboriginal and white leadership turned against him as a result of his radical leadership—if not at times confronting—led to a conservative backlash among his peers (both Aboriginal and white) led to his colleagues feeling threatened by such radicalism. Moves were made to oust Harris from his position. This, of course, placed a great deal of pressure on Harris, as he truly felt compelled in his prophetic obedience to God and service to his people. In defence of himself, and in critical response to those who would compromise and condemn his leadership, he stated,

"My vision for my people is that we need to be unified first and foremost. We need to stand in unity and in solidarity in the struggle and stop the backstabbing and the mudslinging, the innuendo that go about in relation to the people in leadership positions and to our people who are involved in the struggle. They must become a unified nation . . .".<sup>[23]</sup>

In the closing months of 1988, while attending a church conference in Taiwan, the Rev. Charles Harris suffered a severe heart attack. Complications led to his being ill for several years afterwards, and in 1993 he passed away. In one of his last interviews, Harris stated,

" . . . the ultimate vision is that once again my people, Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal & Islander Nation, will walk tall and again find their dignity that they had before 1788. As they are able to do that, they can make a contribution to any world community, any nation throughout the world, any society".<sup>[24]</sup>

Brady and Harris were pivotal in facilitating the significant developments that were to follow. Both walked the narrow road, and both paid a high price for their radical stance on justice and their challenges to those oppressive Western colonial racist institutions. Their vision, obedience and leadership pioneered a new way of understanding Christianity which still is evolving (alongside and in tension with other, more conservative ways).

### **A Theology of Power, Liberation and Freedom**

The leadership of Congress must be paved with courage, justice and God's righteousness....Our leaders are called to be bold, ....It is imperative for Christians to understand that the Bible has been read, translated, and interpreted from a colonial perspective whether this is from a conscious or non-conscious awareness. The Bible has been used by the colonisers and missionaries as a tool to justify invasion, conquest, theft of land, massacres, cultural genocide, racism, hatred, prejudice, exclusion, forced assimilation and the ongoing social and political injustices that Aboriginal people face every day. The history of our country can be summarised as 'colonial terrorism'.

There is an important and critical need for academic scholars to examine how colonisation

holds both white and black Australians in bondage. We must be aware that the very structures that we participate and function in each and every day are founded on colonial racist values to maintain colonial power, wealth and privilege. An individual who participates in these structures may not be racist but the structure itself can be and we work in these structure that maintain a racist and exclusionary systems to benefit the dominant culture. We need to be able to name this if we are ever to be free and liberated from this colonial mindset that holds us in bondage. While this worldview, structure and value remain in place we – both black and white Australians will never be liberated or freed from a life of division, and Aboriginal people will be forever confined to a life of inequality, subjugation, racism and perpetual poverty. If ever there was a time to transform our theological education the time is now.

Therefore, we Aboriginal church leaders and theologians must encourage the academic theological institutions to question themselves as to how the church has literally whitewashed biblical narratives and to examine the racist overtones found in the western cultural biases and racist exegetical and hermeneutical practices of western scholars. Where do we begin to develop a theological truth that names western racist treatment inflicted upon Aboriginal people in order to deconstruct our racist western domination of white Australia and to recognise the integrity of our people, our strength and our resilience to survive.

As there is a critical need to eradicate those aspects that hold us in bondage and begin a process to deconstruct and decolonise our Christian beliefs, Bible interpretation and theology to be able to speak with integrity into the world in which we live.

From our perspective, this blatant colonial tradition which confirms the original harsh mandate to dominate the land and all living creatures of the land (Gen. 1.26–28), also reflects the colonial worldview and colonial actions of the Europeans peoples who invaded and colonised the land of Australia. Our response is to discern the falsity of this biblical tradition, recall the truths of our First Nations relationship with the land and the creation of our Country and to endorse the alternate interpretation. As First Nations theologians, we are not only free to take this stand because of our rich

spiritual relationship with the land and the Creator Spirit in the Land; because we believe that Christ has liberated us from the sin of colonial control and freed us to correct ancient biblical narratives and retrieve the underlying spirit of the Gospel that is colonial-free.

Today, we challenge the colonial inheritors who continue to benefit from the colonial structures, laws, and systems as the descendants of the colonisers—who have inherited great power, wealth and privilege, resulting from the barbaric acts of their forebears upon Australia's First Nations people; that saw the theft of our lands through legal fiction, massacres of literally thousands of our people, and the multiple generations of stolen children and the 235 years of oppression and subjugation.

It is important that Aboriginal people move beyond western imperialism, colonisation and missionisation and advocate by seeking guidance from our Creator Spirit 'made known among us in Jesus, who is Christ'.<sup>[25]</sup> Aboriginal spiritual leaders ask if 2023 is the year of the "Lord's favour" to bring 'Good News' to the poor and downtrodden Aboriginal people of this land and "liberation is seen here through the lens of God's covenant with the poor through Jesus Christ, which is seen as unique to biblical tradition."<sup>[26]</sup> Therefore, I state, if we are to have any hope of reconciliation and restoring wholeness in creation then we First Nations people must first begin by challenging the colonial inheritors as to how do they do theology on stolen land, and what does it mean for them to be seen as colonial inheritors? Because it is time for 'Truth Telling' and exposing the lies, the brutality and the power, privilege and wealth colonial inheritors have gained at the injustices committed against First Nations people. And the truth shall set you free<sup>[27]</sup>.

Hence, it is necessary for Aboriginal people to decolonize themselves especially to realise that the Bible is still being used by some to colonise us and we must break free of the colonial shackles in order to be free from the colonial might. It is encouraging to know that Aboriginal people since the 1960s have begun to define their own theology through their cultural lens drawing on our cosmology, epistemology and ontology to interpret biblical narratives. We want to shape our theological thoughts and expressions by



embracing our own language that gives meaning to who we are as a people. Our theology is born from this land, founded on our relationship with the Creator since time began and it's with this deep ancient wisdom, that sustains and provides our resilience to survive.

In saying that it is important to note that it is only together can we Black and white Australians make a difference as we wrestle with these challenging questions and to recognised how colonised we are and to begin the process of decolonizing ourselves in the endeavour to liberating our theology from the bondage of colonialism.

[1] 2 Corinthians 5:

[2] This section is based upon personal knowledge as well as on interviews with several persons who knew and/or worked with Pastor Brady: Marceil Lawrence, David Thompson, the Rev. Charles Harris, and the Rev. Graham A. Paulson; interviews by the author, Sydney, N.S.W., 1987-97.

[3] OT: Harris, Sydney, N.S.W., 1988.

[4] OT: Cecil Grant, Sydney, N.S.W., November 1995.

[5] Don Brady, "Sermon Quotes", in *Racism in Australia: Tasks for General and Christian Education: Report of Southport Conference, November 19-24, 1971* (Melbourne: Australian Council of Churches, Division of Christian Education, 1971), p. 39.

[6] OT: Graham Paulson, Sydney, N.S.W., November 1995.

[7] Brady, "Sermon Quotes", *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[8] Courier-Mail, "Pastor Burns and Spits on Aboriginal Act", *Courier-Mail*, 10 January 1970, p. 1.

[9] OT: The Rev. Charles Harris, Lismore, N.S.W., 1991.

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] Brady, "Sermon Quotes", *op. cit.*, p. 39.

[12] OT: Harris, *op. cit.*

[13] OT: Paulson, Sydney, N.S.W., November 1995.

[14] OT: David Thompson, Sydney, N.S.W., 1995.

[15] This section is drawn from personal knowledge of the Rev. Charles Harris as a friend and colleague, as well as interviews with several persons who knew and/or worked with him: Dorothy Harris, Jean Pattel, the Rev. Jack Thomas, the Rev. Bernard Clarke, and the Rev. Dr John Brown; interviews by the author, Sydney, N.S.W., 1987-94.

[16] Pattel-Gray, *Through Aboriginal Eyes: The Cry from the Wilderness* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1991), 120-122.

[17] OT: The Rev. Charles Harris, Ashfield, Lismore, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, 1987-93.

[18] See, various articles by the Rev. Charles Harris: "Reconciliation or Whitewash", *Koori Mail*, No. 15, 06 November 1991, p. 15; "Indigenisation Key to Our Survival-Rev Harris", *Koori Mail*, No. 16, 18 December 1991, p. 11; "Thinking for Ourselves: Rev Harris", *Koori Mail*, No. 17, 15 January 1992, pp. 18, 20; "Western Christianity a Curse to Indigenous Spirituality", *Koori Mail*, No. 20, 26 February 1992, p. 19.

[19] The Rev. Charles Harris, writing in Pattel-Gray, *Through Aboriginal Eyes...*, *op. cit.*, p. 122.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Uniting Church in Australia, Commission for Mission, "God's Startling New Initiative: The Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress", *Mission Probe* 25 (1984).

[23] Pattel-Gray, *Through Aboriginal Eyes...*, *op. cit.*, 120-122.

[24] *Ibid.*; cf., John Reid, "Only the Truth Will Make Us Free [Interview with the Rev. Charles Harris]", *Journey* (August 1988):19-21.

[25] Twiss, Richard *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2015), 46.

[26] Lal Fernando, Jude "People, Land and Empire in Asia: Geopolitics, Theological Imaginations and Islands of Peace", Edited by Joine Havea in *People and Land: Decolonizing Theologies* (Lexington Books/Fortress Academic 2019), 131.

[27] John 8:31 (NIV)

## **FAILURE TO PRODUCE ANY NATIVE-BORN PRESBYTERIAN MINISTER PRIOR TO SEPARATION FROM SCOTTISH CHURCHES**

### **Dr Barry Bridges**

In the whole of the period to the attainment of substantial Presbyterian Church unity in 1865 no native-born man was added to the immigrant ministry. There was only one near exception. The Rev. James Smith White arrived from Scotland as a ten-year old boy. His education was taken in hand by the Rev. John Dunmore Lang.

Lang was motivated to found his Australian College in 1831 by an expressed major concern to educate young native-born males to become members of the colonial ministry or missionaries for the Pacific islands. Periodically, Lang expressed a belief that a supply of candidates would be forthcoming if only means could be found for their support while studying. There is, however, nothing in the sources to suggest that this was more than wishful thinking.

After an unsuccessful minister recruiting tour of Free Church Scotland in 1854–5, the Rev. William McIntyre concluded that the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia needed to produce native ministers. He founded the very substantial Maitland High School. Before it succumbed to financial difficulties in the few years observers rated it the best secondary school in the colony. However, as with Lang's Australia College, the hope of attracting aspirants for the ministry was not fulfilled.

John Dunmore Lang periodically complained that Scots clergy were given to decrying any minister or licentiate who headed for a colony as conceding that he saw himself as a "weak brother" who could not succeed at home. Too often the description was well-founded. On occasion Lang himself was scathing in his assessment of some of his colleagues. Immigrant Scots in particular were very reluctant to accept as their minister those whose pulpit abilities fell short of Scottish standards. Several congregations preferred to remain without a settled minister

when they could not secure a man of acceptable talent. Sometimes a short-term contract would be made with a minister a congregation did not wish to secure for an ongoing association. On the other hand, there were several ministers resident in New South Wales for decades who were unable to attract calls. The Rev. William Wales, widely acknowledged to be one of the best educated men in the colony and much respected for his virtues, was never settled because of being considered inadequate in a pulpit.

Denominational multiplicity in Australia made it more difficult to have particularist doctrines accepted as truth rather than just one opinion. At least one member of the clergy of each of the four favoured denominations—Church of England, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Wesleyan—was a known enthusiastic and successful accumulator of worldly wealth. Colonists found it difficult to think of clergy as a class as unworldly. Convicts and ex-convicts were notably antagonistic and public derision was unlikely to be provoked by the appearance of anyone in clerical garb. Medical practitioners in dark clothes were sometimes mistaken for clergy and subjected to the same treatment.

Seen as a career, rather than as a vocation, the colonial ministry was unattractive, especially for any man not possessed independently of employable capital. With very few exceptions congregations were small. Stipends apparently rarely exceeded £100 per annum. A competent tradesman could earn much more.

The children of Scottish and Ulster immigrants were growing up to be young Australians. Linguists tell us that the distinctive Australian accent was well established before doubling of the population in the 1840s and the population explosion of the gold rush era. Adopting this accent was part of assimilating to what was their national environment. The ministers to whom young native-born Presbyterians were exposed all spoke with alien Scots or Irish accents.

Immigrant Scottish clergy manifested the traditional Scottish concern not to intrude upon or offend in any way the clergy of the much more powerful Church of England. Scotland is a much poorer country than England, and it was a primary concern not to risk provoking any English attack on the Established status of the Church of Scotland. Incoming ministers raised to maturity in

the 'old country' addressed themselves only to immigrants from Scotland or Ulster and their families. There was little concern about church extension or gathering in the 'unchurched'. The clergy took a sectarian rather than a Church approach to their role.

It is significant that at the end of the 19th century each issue of the Presbyterian Church of New South Wales newspaper was half filled with Scottish church news. This was keeping alive a perception of the local Church as a Scottish extension rather than an indigenous institution.

As the 19th century progressed Scotland advanced considerably economically. Desirable occupations diversified, and there was no longer a glut of ministry aspirants. One of the reasons that the Scottish Churches either promoted or agreed to union in New South Wales was that they could no longer provide more than an occasional new minister.

The Rev. John McGarvie (died 1853) had always argued that the colonial Church needed to retain as close an association with the great Scottish Establishment as possible. Without that the New South Wales Church could only be a small, little regarded voluntary association. To a considerable degree this occurred. After union, the 'home' Churches felt no obligation to continue trying to provide new ministers. #



*Welcome to Nungalinga  
College*

*Are you coming to Darwin in  
August? Still time to register  
for the conference!*



## AN INVITATION...

The Uniting Church Historical Society of Victoria and Tasmania invites you to join our 2023 programs via Zoom or in person, if you happen to live in Victoria.

### Sunday 6 August: 2pm "Victorian Methodism"

Professor Graeme Davison will talk about his most recent book which explores more of his family history and its close involvement in Methodism. This is a follow-on to his book 'Lost Relations' and explores the other side of his family. This will be held in North Essendon Uniting Church, 132 Keilor Road, and we hope it will also be available via Zoom.

### Tuesday 19 September: 10am Church tour in Geelong (In-person activity)

Led by Geoff Paterson (RSVP is essential — 0447 320 398). The three churches being visited are Christ Church (Anglican); St Mary's Roman Catholic; Wesley Uniting Church. More details will be available later but please plan a BYO lunch with beverages provided. Transport will be available from Geelong Station.

You will need to contact Robert Renton to receive the login details.

Robert Renton ([robert.renton@bigpond.com](mailto:robert.renton@bigpond.com)).



## The Geoff Barnes Memorial Prize and Fund

### Professor Glen O'Brien

The Geoff Barnes Memorial Fund (originally the 'Congregational History Fund') was established to offer a monetary prize for the best church history essay by a First-Year student at United Theological College, Sydney (the terms have now been broadened – see below).

The Rev Dr Geoffrey Barnes (1926–2005) was born and educated in Melbourne and ordained a Congregational minister in 1951. In 1967 he moved to Sydney, to serve as Principal of Camden Theological College and later as Lecturer in Church History at United Theological College from 1975–1993. He was Moderator of the NSW Synod from 1987–1988. He earned a master's degree in theology from Hartford Seminary Foundation, USA, and a doctorate in history from Macquarie University, NSW. The Prize was renamed in recognition of Geoff's significant contribution to the study and teaching of church history.

Originally managed by the now defunct Historical Reference Committee of the Uniting Church Assembly, the fund and prize are now managed by the Uniting Church National History Society (UCNHS) which replaced the earlier Committee in 2017. The History Society, in dialogue with UTC, has now broadened the prize reflecting the more national focus of its activities. We are now seeking to promote the fund in two ways:

1. Nominations are invited for the best essay in history undertaken by an undergraduate student in any Uniting Church theological college. While essays about the Uniting Church or its precedent bodies are welcomed, the prize is not limited to those themes, but may be on any historical period or aspect of historical study. The essay should already have been assessed by the college and received a grade result of 75% or higher. Nominations are to come from any member of

academic staff, with the consent of the student, and should be received by the end of each calendar year for evaluation and awarding in February of the following year. The essays will be evaluated by a judging panel of the UCNHS. The amount of the prize is currently \$250 subject to increase as the fund grows. The Board reserves the right not to make an award in any given year if no essay of appropriate standard, as determined by its judging panel, is received.

*Contributions of any amount to the Geoff Barnes Memorial Fund are invited to ensure that the fund grows into the future and to increase the size of the prize. Contributions can be deposited into the following account: UCA Assembly Limited BSB: 032-828. Account number: 301985 Please indicate 'Geoff Barnes Memorial Fund' with your deposit (and your own name unless you wish your gift to remain anonymous).*

### Annual General Meeting

*The Annual General Meeting of the Uniting Church National History Society will be held via Zoom only on Thursday 14 September at 4.30pm.*

*An important part of the AGM will be the election of new Board members, and we are seeking nominations for the Board now, as several current Board members' terms expire this year.*

*Please contact the Secretary, Dr Judith Raftery on [judith.raftery@gmail.com](mailto:judith.raftery@gmail.com). All members of the Society are eligible for Board membership, and self-nominations are welcome!*

**A REMINDER... 2023 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE — \$25:  
You can pay directly at Westpac BSB 032-828 Account 301985  
or by sending a cheque to 28 Bindaree Court, Mernda, Vic. 3754  
(INCLUDE YOUR NAME PLEASE)**

## Charles Duguid “Tjilpi - Old Man Father” (1894–1996)

### Aboriginal Rights Campaigner

David Houston, Vice President of the Uniting Church Historical Society in South Australia, has written the lead article in their journal, *Uniting History SA* for June 2023, on Charles Duguid. The following is an extract from that article.

With the forthcoming Referendum on the Voice and recognition of Indigenous Australians in the Constitution, we have much to learn from this pioneer campaigner toward such a goal.

Charles Duguid worked to establish the Ernabella mission in 1937 with it being widely regarded as one of the progressive and most culturally sensitive Church (or State) missions ever established in Australia. Following his death in 1996, aged 102, Duguid was buried there at the request of the Pitjantjatjara people. By them he is remembered as “the man who came in the very beginning”, and “the greatest fighter for Aboriginal welfare Australia has ever known—even the world”.

Beginning in 1930 Charles Duguid began campaigning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the status and place they should have in their own country. When we consider the five elements to the forthcoming Voice proposals alongside the approach that Duguid took we can see he was pursuing the essence of these proposals 90 years ago.

In short form, his four proposals were based on the following principles.

- Respecting the Aborigine’s identity and culture, with no compulsion or imposition of the European way of life, or interference with tribal customs.
- The best medical assistance should be available and the staff should learn the language.
- As the economy of the mission developed, leadership should be passed to the Aborigines as soon as possible. Locally managed programs would work best.
- All teaching in the first five years at school should be in the Pitjantjatjara tongue.

His approach was to recognise the status of Aboriginal people as the first peoples of this land; to enable them to have greater control over their own lives and communities; to genuinely consult and collaborate with them to fully appreciate their gifts and abilities; and to respect their different cultural practices, beliefs and values.

### Who was Charles Duguid?

Houston provides a detailed history of Charles Duguid’s life which I’ve summarised here. Born in Scotland, he became a doctor and practised initially in four mining villages where his observations of poverty and suffering were to influence his later career.

He was a leading Presbyterian layman, who in 1935 was elected the first lay Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in S.A.

In July 1934, on an early visit to the north, while in Alice Springs he was appalled by the treatment he saw meted out to Aborigines. While visiting a patient in the A.I.M. Hostel (a white person) he was introduced to the A.I.M. padre. Early in the conversation the padres said to Duguid, “I believe you are interested in the niggers.” To hear this from the local leader of the mission maintained by his own church was staggering, yet his response was simply, “Do you mean the Aborigines?” The padre continued, “You can call them what you like. They’ve never been any good and never will be. These they’ve any right to expect is a decent funeral.”

Houston recommends that readers should benefit from reading Duguid’s books: *No Dying Race* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1963) and *Doctor and the Aborigines* (Adelaide: Rigby, 1972). These books provide an informed background story to issues that seriously affected the life and wellbeing of our Aboriginal Australians experienced across the years from 1930 to 1970. His goal was to grow the principles of respect, recognition and inclusion. *No Dying Race* provides notes and commentary on photographs of the neglect, oppression and racism experienced by Aboriginal Australians.

Houston’s final question is **How should we be thinking in 2023?** The Uniting Church has made it abundantly clear that the answer is **YES** to the referendum, **YES** to recognition of Aboriginal Australians in our Constitution. (RR Editor)

## Tales from the West Coast

In the same edition of *Uniting History SA* for June 2023 there are amusing snippets from a handwritten journal written in 1915 by a John Henry Peters (later, the Rev. John Peters). Here is one.

\*

Visit to a Batchelor's [sic] Camp—Mr C had only two days before arrived after an absence of two years. We were greeted with "Please excuse the wet look about the place—I have been throwing boiling water over everything to get ride of the occupants I don't want." We were invited to stop to lunch and soon the billy was boiling, and great preparations made. A newspaper sufficed for a tablecloth and boxes for chairs. There were not enough mugs to go around so two had to use one. We were assured that everything was clean, but the forks looked rusty—he explained that this must have been owing to not drying them after the scalding which he had given them the previous day. There was plenty of 'tucker' because his good wife had not sent him away empty. But he assured us he would be visiting his neighbours (nearest four miles away) soon to replenish his stock. In the oven was some meat which was left there two years before when he was in a hurry the family cleared out on account of the drought. He had to apply plenty of kerosene to get the oven open, and I should imagine plenty of carbolic would have been good also. We sat down to dinner—not the meat out of the oven, but all the way from home 400 miles away. Knives were short—but a pocket knife was found to be equal to the work, and our hosts unearthed another another from the rubbish saying, "This one has mixed plenty of poison—but poison won't hurt me," and so the visitors enjoyed "paying a call" in a lovely way. We washed up the dishes and assured our friend when he came our way he would be welcome to replenish his larder. This man was one of the jolliest persons on the Coast. He had struggled hard and never met any prosperity. Always seeking new pastures further and further back and so making way for others to come. A good Xian [sic] too and often took services in our churches.

### BESIDE THE RAILWAY LINE

Tourists off the bus, we stand  
Beside the railway line,  
Our tourist guide indicates:  
The fettlers' houses over there.  
The railway station master,  
He lived here.  
The pub just down the road.

All gone; not even a chimney stack.  
Mother earth devours the lot.

No Ozymandias monument  
Remains, bears witness,  
To settlers, railway fettlers,  
Or the station master.

Just a single peppermint tree,  
A stranger in the midst,  
Of this vast wide dry plain  
Of Transience.  
Just salt bush, red earth  
To the far horizon.

*Ian Higgins*





## Using Illuminate

*Illuminate* is a resource which has been developed at Camden Theological Library at North Parramatta, NSW.

The repository has been created to provide a gateway to a range of digitized resources. These have been curated in 'Tiles' which can be explored via the *illuminate* home page:

<https://illuminate.recollect.net.au/>

Both Official Records and Publications of the organization which originally created the documents can be accessed via the Tiles.

From the same home page, it is also possible to search the Metadata for each record using the Search Box and to search for certain topics which are accessed via the 'Topic Cloud'.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the *illuminate* website. The header includes a search bar and a 'Go' button. Below the header, there is a section titled 'Quick search for most relevant records' with a grid of tiles showing record counts for various categories:

Audiovisual	Biographies	Church Union	Congregational
119	56	336	1,827
Frontier Services	Images	Index	Methodist
452	1,205	56	8,484
Parish Histories	Presbyterian	Registers	Theses
869	671	1,254	441
UCA 4,259			

Below the grid, there is a 'Topic Cloud' section with various topics listed, including Baptism, Basis of Union, Children and Families, Christian Unity, Church, Membership, Code of Ethics, Communion, Confirmation, Covenanting, Discipleship, Doctrine, Elders, Environment, First Assembly Sydney 1977, First Peoples, Governance, Home Missions, Human Rights, Industrial, Relations, Inland Missions, Language Resources, Lay Ministry, Liturgy, Marriage, Migration, Minister of the Word, Ministries, Ministry of Deacon, Ministry of Pastor, Ministry Standards, Mission, Multicultural, and Nuclear Weapons.

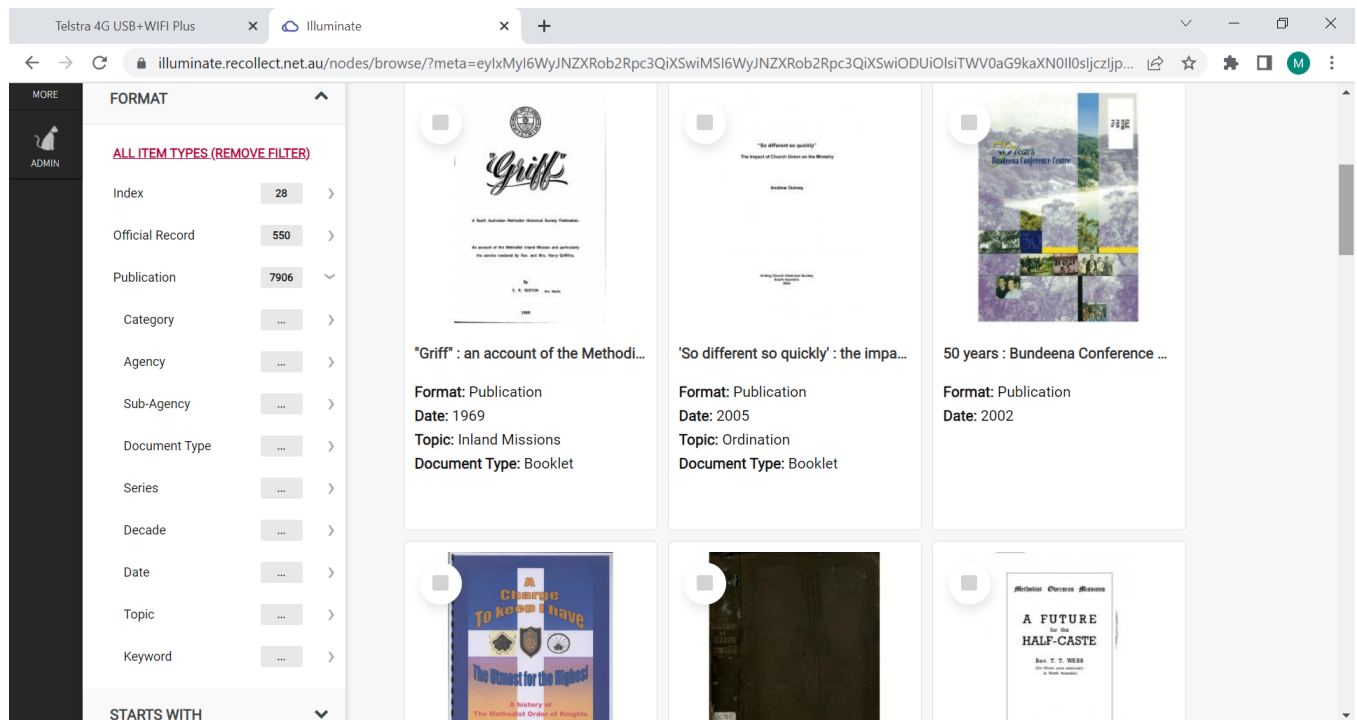
Originally, *illuminate* was created to provide easy access to resources which reflected, to varying degrees, the history of the pre-Uniting Church denominations, the discussions relating to the formation of the UCA and post union documents of the NSW/ACT Synod.

It has since included a wide range of Assembly resources and a selection of material which has been provided by the South Australian Methodist Historical Society and most recently, the Vic/Tas Historical Society.

*Illuminate* now holds over 20,000 documents.

## A brief description of how to Search *illuminate*.

Once a Tile has been selected, the LH column of the results screen allows the filtering by 'Document type' (e.g. Official Record or Publication') and then to further filter by a number of relevant categories (e.g. Agency, Sub-Agency, Document type, Series or Decade).



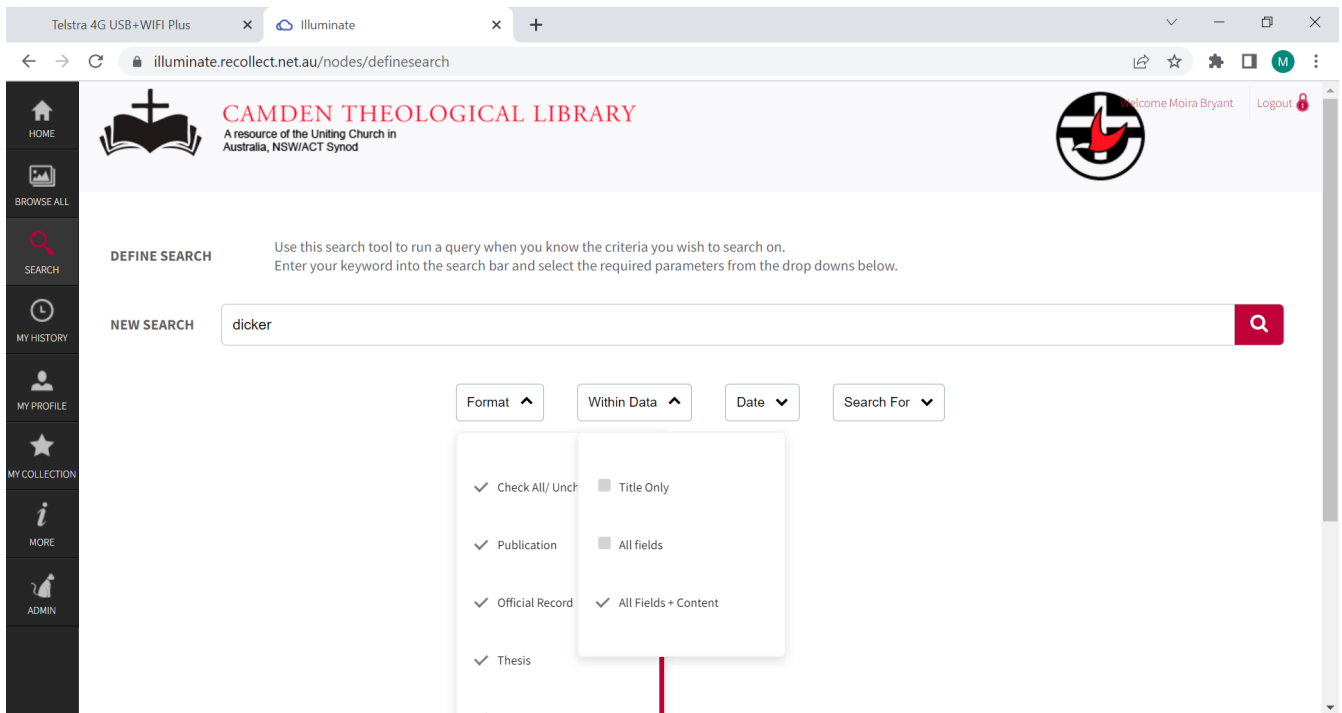
Searches via the **Search box, Tile or Theme** are accessing the metadata for each record.

It is also possible to carry out a **full text search**, though this will take longer to retrieve the results.

To carry out a search within the text of the documents, select the 'Magnifying glass' in the LH column on the home page.

This will take you to a page with various options which can be selected from drop-down menus.

(Go to next page)



To carry out a full-text search, select 'All Fields + Content' and decide if you wish to limit to specific types of records.

Because illuminate was originally created using an earlier version of the software, it has not been possible to retrospectively edit all the records to support the new 'To-From' date metadata, so it is to better filter once relevant records have been retrieved.

I hope that you will find *illuminate* a rewarding resource to use.

Please make contact at [library@nswact.uca.org.au](mailto:library@nswact.uca.org.au) if you wish for further information.

Moiria Bryant, Library Manager

Camden Theological Library, June 2023