



Church reunions and fellowship to celebrate 200 years

By Andrea Whittaker

Following the creation and dedication of the Susanna Wesley sculpture in their garden, East Finchley Methodist Church celebrated another high point in their 200th anniversary year on Sunday 19 June.

A sumptuously decorated church welcomed around 80 people, past and present, to a special birthday celebration service, led by their minister Rev. Martin Wellings. Guest preacher Rev. Sonia Hicks, President of the Methodist

Rev. Wellings said: "It was an amazing day, the culmination of much creativity and hard work in the planning and preparation and brought real joy to us all."

There were many positive comments about the day



Celebration: Guest preacher Rev. Sonia Hicks, second from right, with members of the East Finchley Methodist Church congregation.

Conference, made a valuable and welcome contribution, both in her address and her fellowship among us afterwards.

In the true Methodist tradition of hospitality, the service was followed by an excellent lunch, complete with three-piece, 200th birthday cake. Then came the dedication of the re-modelled church garden, including the new children's playground, a feature made possible largely through a legacy from the late Rene Bell, a lifelong and much-loved church member.

in general, particularly how wonderful it was to meet up with so many old friends and acquaintances not seen for many years.

Exhibition

The church's celebrations will continue throughout the year, including a substantial exhibition of the church's life, past and present, which will develop further as the year progresses. Everyone is invited to call in at the church, particularly on Sundays or on Thursday mornings to Wesley's Coffee Bar.

The woman who inspired a carving that inspired a poem



In March, we reported on the unveiling of a sculpture of Susanna Wesley in the grounds of East Finchley Methodist Church. Wood artist Simon O'Rourke created the towering tribute to Susanna, often called the Mother of Methodism, from the trunk of a large tree. It is already established as a popular landmark on the High Road, so much so that Archer reader Maggie Eiseman-Renyard was inspired to write this poem in Susanna's honour.

Susanna (an Ode)

By Maggie Eiseman-Renyard

Our urban landscape furniture contains a mystery:
Why do monuments and statues show such partial history?
They're almost always just of blokes when many folk are other.
Well done, East Finchley Methodists, for honouring your mother.
*Oh, Susanna, you are back on the map
Above East Finchley High Road in your foliage and cap.*
There are men we used to think in robes of honour shone
When re-examined in our time, don't deserve bronze or stone.
Sometimes their statues are removed or torn down in righteous rage
Or re-labelled to explain to us the foibles of their age.
*Oh, Susanna, you are back on the map
Above East Finchley High Road in your foliage and cap.*
I went to Wikipedia to see what I could see.
Mrs. Wesley was extraordinary. Did you know? Not me.
So hard, so well, so long ago she raised her family
So numerous! still taught and formed spiritual community.
*Oh, Susanna, you are back on the map
Above East Finchley High Road in your foliage and cap.*
Cast or carved, women you see on plinths in London Town
Are rarely shown with clothing on unless they wear a crown.
Simon O'Rourke, the sculptor, found this image in a tree
That once was sad and dead— now shows who was, and what can be.



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1 Bedford Mews, East Finchley N2 9DF

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