The

SUN

Sydney Unitarian News

The Unitarian Church in NSW
PO Box 355, Darlinghurst NSW 1300
15 Francis Street, East Sydney
(near Museum Station)
Tel: (02) 9360 2038

www.sydneyunitarianchurch.org

Editor: M.R. McPhee

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ROLLO AND THE REDOUBTABLE RUSSELLS

Everyone has heard of the great philosopher and mathematician, Bertrand Russell, but how many of us know that he was a member of a Unitarian family that spanned three generations? The Russells were prominent in reform politics throughout that time and Bertrand's uncle, Francis Albert Rollo Russell, died a century ago on 30 March 1914. While he was not the most famous member of that dynasty, this is a suitable occasion to tell their story.

It begins with Lord John Russell (1792–1878), who was a younger son of the Duke of Bedford. He attended the University of Edinburgh and joined the House of Commons in 1813. After his Whig (later to be called Liberal) Party came to power in 1830, he became Home Minister and was instrumental in passing the 1832 Reform Act, which abolished 'rotten boroughs' and replaced them with urban electorates, thereby extending the franchise to an additional 300,000 men.

Lord Russell became Prime Minister in 1846–52, during which time the Factory Act of 1847 reduced the daily working hours of women and children; also, the Public Health Act of 1848 initiated a great improvement in urban sanitation. This was a period of unstable minority governments and he was appointed Foreign Secretary twice even while he was Leader of the Opposition. He became Prime Minister again in 1865–66 but again could not get most of his progressive measures through the Parliament. By that time, he had been made Earl Russell and moved to the House of Lords.

While he was always a 'broad Anglican', Lord Russell had promoted religious tolerance bills from early in his political career. He spearheaded the repeal of the Test Acts in 1828 and again in 1863, which removed restrictions on Unitarians and other Protestant Dissenters; also the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 and the Jewish Relief Act of 1858, which took him ten years of proposals to get through. Of particular importance was the Dissenter's Chapel Bill of 1844, which enabled Unitarians to establish their title to chapels and trust funds, long in their possession, against the claims of more orthodox Dissenters.

Lord Russell's first wife died three years after they were married, leaving him with two young daughters. His second wife was Lady Frances Elliot Russell (1814–98), whose children were John, George Gilbert William, the aforementioned Francis Albert Rollo and Mary Augusta. She was more radical than her husband, in that she opposed Britain's imperialist wars, supported Irish Home Rule, advocated the abolition of the House of

Lords and believed that religion should not be taught in tax-supported schools. She read the works of James Martineau and his American successor, William Ellery Channing, and was a friend of the Unitarian writers, Charles Dickens, James Russell Lowell and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and became a Unitarian in 1884. Although her husband was never a Unitarian, he regularly attended Martineau's services in London between 1859 and 1873. In 1878, a delegation of Dissenters, including two Unitarians, presented him with an address commemorating "his life long advocacy of religious freedom".

Their eldest son, John (1842–76), became Viscount Amberley when Lord Russell was made an Earl. He attended the University of Edinburgh and Trinity College, Cambridge, and declared himself a Deist in 1863. The next year, he began work on a book entitled *An Analysis of Religious Belief*, and married Katharine Louisa Stanley, the daughter of Lord Stanley of Alderley. Their three children were John Francis, Rachel Lucretia and Bertrand Arthur William. A protégé of John Stuart Mill, he was elected to Parliament in 1866 but only lasted two years due to his radical views on women's suffrage and birth control. He returned to researching and writing his book, which came out in instalments over ten years. After his early death, his mother edited and published the finished product. His wife died in 1874, so the older Russells took custody of their children.

Now we come to Rollo Russell (1849–1914), who had the distinction of being the last child born to a ruling prime minister in office until 2000. He graduated from Oxford in 1873 and worked in the Foreign Office for a number of years. He then wrote a meteorological paper on the global effects of the 1883 explosion of Krakatoa, in which work he involved his young nephew, Bertrand, also introducing him to many eminent scientists and philosophers. Rollo and his mother sat on the committee that founded the Unitarian Christian Church in Richmond, Surrey, in 1888. He later wrote hymns and modern psalms with a scientific flavour that were used in both British and American hymnals, and a tract entitled *Religion and Life*.

Bertrand Russell (1872–1970) was brought up as a Unitarian and his grandmother hoped he would become a minister. However, he abandoned even liberal Christianity at the age of fifteen and ceased attending church three years later. He studied mathematics and philosophy at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1890–93 and, after a brief period of teaching and writing on economics, returned to Trinity for post-graduate study. He wrote *The Principles of Mathematics* in 1903, became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1908, and then produced the three-volume *Principia Mathematica* with Alfred North Whitehead in 1910–13. During that time, he had been lecturing at Cambridge, where he had as his PhD student the Austrian logician, Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose famous *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* was published in 1922.

(*Continued on p. 11*.)

SERVICE DIARY

Meetings every Sunday from 10.30 – 11.30 a.m.
(followed by coffee, tea and food)

Date	Presenter	Topic
3rd August	John Spraggon	The Religious Music of Sir Arthur Sullivan
10th August	Peter Crawford	How International Law Threatens National Sovereignty
17th August	Kaine Hayward	Masters of the Baroque**
24th August	Patrick Bernard	Natalia Brassova: The Last Tsaritsa
31st August	Peter Crawford	England's Decline
7th September	Peter Crawford	Is Scotland Part of Britain?
14th September	Michael Spicer	Religions of Malaysia*
21st September	Peter Crawford	Conflicting Identities in the Middle East
28th September	Mike McPhee	Strange Ways of Looking at Things

* These will be video presentations.

** This will be a Music Service

[Please check the church website (www.sydneyunitarianchurch.org) for updates. The program for the month of October will be available from the beginning of September.]

Chalice Lighting

Life is an art, it requires practice to achieve greatness, but greatness is always waiting, ready to be attained.
May the light of this chalice remind us of the possibility for everyone to achieve truth and goodness in our lives, if we only seek it.

Submitted by the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations; words written by Beth Bullmer of the People's Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Al encender este cáliz, invocamos la presencia del Amor en nuestros corazones para compartirlo hoy entre nosotros y propagarlo después al mundo. Así pues, que nadie se sienta extraño en este círculo y que todos sean bienvenidos.

Lighting this chalice, we invoke the presence of Love in our hearts, to share it today among us and then spread it to the world. Therefore, let nobody feel a stranger in this circle and may all feel welcome.

Submitted by the *Sociedad Unitaria Universalista de España*; author not identified.

[These are the Chalice Lightings from the International Council of Unitarians and Universalists for the months of July and August.]

Beth Bullmer is a poet who lives in the twin cities of Kalamazoo-Portage in southwestern Michigan, roughly midway between Detroit and Chicago. The former minister of the People's Church was Rev. Jill McAllister, the Program Director of the ICUU who co-conducted the ANZUUA Growth Workshop in 2010.

The People's Church was founded in 1863 by a congregation that formed in 1855, though it didn't take that name until its second building was constructed in 1892. It must have been one of the first churches in the US to have a female minister, Caroline Bartlett, who served from 1889 to 1898. During her term, the church was addressed by the famous atheist, Col. Robert Ingersoll, in 1896, who later said: "If all churches were like this, I would never say one word against them or religion. If I lived here, I would join this church…."

The UU Society of Spain was founded in 2000 by Jaume de Marcos of Barcelona, where its only surviving congregation is located. (However, it has some members-at-large elsewhere in the country and abroad.) He most likely wrote both the Spanish and English words for the above Chalice Lighting, as it also comes with a Catalan version. Jaume was a member of the ICUU Executive Council and has written a book on Erasmus' influence on the works of Michael Servetus.

The UUSS was granted Provisional Membership in the ICUU in 2001 and later became a Full Member. At one stage, it also had congregations in Madrid and La Coruña. Unfortunately, those groups did not last and now its Spanish-language website has been replaced by one in Catalan.

ICUU NEWS

The ICUU will conduct a European Leadership School over 03–08 September at the headquarters of the Hungarian Unitarian Church in Kolozsvár, Romania. Intended for lay ministers and leaders, the program will include Unitarian theology, history and practice, conducting worship and sustaining a local faith community. The tutors will be: Rev. Scott Prinster, UU minister and historian of science; Rev. Botond Koppándi, theologian and professor at the Hungarian Unitarian Seminary; and Rev. Petr Samojský, minister of the Czech Unitarian Society in Prague.

The School will include a mixture of lectures and small group work. As personal spiritual development is a vital part of leadership, participants will also meet in 'credo groups' similar to the Chalice Circles at ICUU conferences. A tour of Kolozsvár and a gathering with local Unitarians will also be provided.

WHERE LIES THE HEART OF SCOTLAND?

By Peter Crawford

The feisty left-wing Australian journalist, Alex Mitchell, recently composed an article where he declaimed for Scottish independence. He made clear that his Scottish antecedents ensured support for independence for the northern land. Yet, as a person of essentially Scottish ancestry, I have always seen myself as being British in ancestry. My heart was always in British traditions and my countless relatives in Australia with names like McKinnon, Robertson, McMillan and, of course, Crawford essentially felt the same.

Although I love most things Irish, I could never relate to the IRA or anti-British sentiments in Ireland. I am an Australian but my cultural origins are proudly Scottish-British Australian. In short, I never saw the need for Scotland to go down the distinctive Irish path to independence. I was always puzzled by this contradiction: Why were Scots so pro-British and yet the Irish so intensely anti-English and nationalistic? The answer, pure and simple, lies in one word – religion.

Throughout the Middle Ages, Scotland was an intensely, and often primitively Catholic country. Its educated and ruling elites maintained a close connection with France – the 'Auld Alliance'. When France went to war with England, Scotland invariably joined in on the French side. The Battle of Flodden Field, fought in 1533 against England on behalf of French amity, turned into the bloodiest and most costly battle ever fought on British soil. Many words from French entered the Scots language, which is not to be confused with Gaelic. Although closely related to English, it is not the same, not comprehensible to English speakers and along with Friesian, Dutch, German and English, one of the five distinctive West Germanic languages.

While the Stuart royal house of ScotIand, as late as the first half of the 16th Century, still promoted the Auld Alliance with France and the Catholic religion, things were changing. Even then, Scotland was assuming a new identity. The Scots spearheaded a Protestant Reformation and characters like George Buchanan and, particularly, John Knox introduced a highly literate and strict Calvinism to Scotland. Unlike Ireland, where an inchoate, belated and ham-fisted attempt to impose the Church of England led to a vigorous Catholic resurgence, Scotland saw a steady home-grown and very militant Calvinism emerge over time as the national religion. But it took a full two centuries for this issue to be sorted. As Lord Macaulay was later to write, England and Scotland were driven by one spirit; meanwhile, Ireland was driven by a very different spirit.

As early as 1521, eminent late medieval historian, John Major, who taught at Glasgow and St Andrew's Universities, composed an influential masterpiece titled *History of Greater Britain*. This work was a passionate plea for the unity of Britain and Major described himself as a 'Scottish Briton'. Most Scottish Protestants quickly accepted Major's thesis and strongly supported a union of the two regions, which would resist the tyranny of the Catholic powers of Europe. Many, like Andrew Melville, the founder of the Presbyterian Church settlement, called themselves Scotto-Britons and advocated the full union of Scotland and England following the accession of James VI of Scotland to the English throne as King James I.

Another leading scholar and polemicist who enthused over the 'union of the crowns' of 1603, and its potential for a united Britain was David Hume (no relation to the philosopher). In a seminal work entitled *Unione Insulae Britannicae*, written in 1605, Hume argued that a new state should be founded incorporating the whole of Britain, whose centre would be in Westminster but regional assemblies would autonomously rule in Lancaster, York and Edinburgh. These local assemblies would draw members from both sides of the old English-Scottish border.

In addition, Hume advocated that Englishmen and Lowland Scots form colonies in places like the Western Isles (Hebrides) and Lochaber (in the Highlands). He also recommended the encouragement of mixed marriages between Scots from the more outlying areas and people from more central areas of England. Fines and other penalties were to be instituted against those who resisted the process, especially those who asserted a strictly Scottish identity against the greater British identity.

We must remember that this is a Scotsman, not an Englishman, writing and speaking – and all this as early as 1605. Hume's ethical and legal values were interesting: he advocated a government and a legal system which was a mixture of the Hebraic values of the Old Testament and the more enlightened civic values of the Roman Republic. These would combine with the ideals of Cromwell's Commonwealth and rule a nation forged by the Protestant reformers.

During the 18th Century, the sense of being Scotto-British moved on apace. The *Edinburgh Review* became one of the most esteemed publications of Europe, particularly in the areas of history, literary criticism and moral philosophy. The famed critic and contributor, Alexander Wedderburn, coined the term 'North British' to cover the residents and location of Scotland. As any person of Protestant conservative heritage from Scotland would know, none of this diluted the sense of being Scottish.

Rather, it became a hyphenated or hybrid identity as strong as any single identity in Europe. In his work, *The Devolving of English Literature*, Robert Crawford has argued that the whole academic discipline of English literature was essentially an 18th Century Scottish invention. Scottish writing was to enter its most British phase with the seminal and majestic works of Sir Walter Scott.

The song 'Rule Britannia' was, surprising to many, written by a Scotsman, James Thomson, in 1740. A son of the manse, Thomson had considered entering the Presbyterian ministry as his father had, but chose instead for a literary career. His numerous poems and song lyrics made him England's most famous, if not most esteemed, poet of his day. In one letter to a friend, he wrote: "The English are a little vain in themselves, and their country. Britannia too includes our native country, Scotland." In Tobias Smollet's famous novel, *Roderick Random* (1748), the opening line, "I was born in the northern part of this United Kingdom", provides a further example of this dual Scottish-British identity.

But it was the success of Scots in both the Royal Navy and the merchant marine, the extraordinary success of Scots throughout the British Empire in areas like politics, farming and grazing, industry and colonial administration that gave the Scots of just a few decades ago their great sense of pride and achievement. Eight out of twenty-six Australian prime ministers have been essentially Scottish in background and all but one of these would have been proud to call himself Scottish-British in heritage.

When one looks at the litany of great figures of the Empire, a large number have stated Scottish heritage. Scottish-British have been at least as prominent as any nationality in Europe in terms of contributions to science –James Clerk Maxwell, the greatest of all electromagnetic theoreticians; Alfred Russel Wallace, who pioneered evolution contemporaneously with Charles Darwin; Alexander Fleming, who discovered penicillin; just to name a few.

Why then has this Scottish-British pride and identity declined in recent years? I believe there are three essential answers to this question. First, there is the general liberalization and decline of Protestant culture. The once strong religion of Calvin has given way to scepticism and secularism and, inside the church, to bleeding-heart political correctness. Like everywhere else, Protestant identity has simply faded and failed. No more do names like Buchanan and Knox resonate in the hearts of Scotsmen.

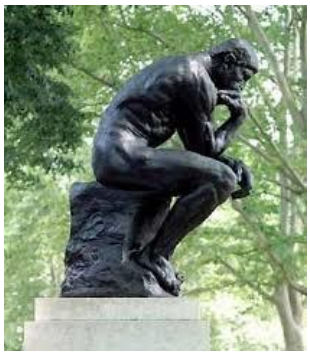
Secondly, the British Empire has disappeared and that Empire was the proving ground for Scottish sustainability and triumph. It was a place where Scotsmen did so well and now it is no more. Finally, there is the sad case of Scotland itself. Changing technologies, poor industrial relations and Thatcherite subjection of Scotland to free market economics has seen a major decline of Scottish industry and its position relative to England and the rest of Northern Europe.

And there is probably another reason which people say little about, which is the continuing strength of Irish Catholicism in places like Glasgow, where they make up a majority of the population. Surveys show that 70% of Scots will vote 'No' to disunion (not because they consider themselves British) but these figures will be reversed within the Glasgow city area, particularly where the combative young males of the Catholic Celtic football team predominate.

Yes, the world is a changing place and Scotland is no exception. The vast majority of Scots no longer consider themselves British, probably less than 30%, and, while they probably will vote 'No' in this referendum, who knows what the future holds in these isles of increasingly fragmented identities between English, Scots, Welsh and Irish?

[Peter will be telling us more about these matters in his service on 10 September. While it is true that the Scots language was largely derived from the Anglo-Saxon spoken in Northumbria in the 7th Century, it was later influenced by Middle English, Norman and Parisian French, Dutch and Low German. David Hume's suggestion of regional parliaments in York and Lancaster, as well as Edinburgh, may have been prompted by the fact that those northern parts of England had dialects that might also be regarded as distinct languages.]

WORKERS SO FAIR TO SEE



Workers so fair to see
Driving our Industry,
Glorious the earth for their enterprise.
Thinkers instead are we,
Spending our energy
Projecting plans for paradise.

Fair those who work the land,
Fair is their strength of hand,
Fair the production of all their days.
Fairer our Ph.D.'s,
Shining Phi Beta keys,*
Fairer our studies and surveys.

Day after day our hours
Lived locked in iv'ry towers
Far from the rest of humanity.
We people God did choose
Just for our high I.Q.'s
To tell God what the world should be.

* The Phi Beta Kappa Society is the oldest honours society in the US, founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The letters are the initials of a Greek expression that can be translated as 'The Love of Learning is the Guide of Life'.

A MIGHTY FORTRESS

A mighty fortress, twenty-five,*
The bulwark of our failings;
Our fragile faith it keeps alive
By means of many mailings.
A packet ev'ry day
Keeps troubles all away;
All strain, stress, strife and storm
Are faced with letters form-
The printed page prevailing!

It stands amidst the earthly powers
On Beacon Street, unbending.
Its spirit and its strength are ours,
If money we keep sending.
Let goods and gifts all flow
To Boston for the show;
If pledges we all pay,
Long live the UUA –
An empire never ending!

Christopher Raible

* The headquarters of the Unitarian Universalist Association was at 25 Beacon Street in Boston until May this year. It was built by the American Unitarian Association in 1927 next to the State House of Massachusetts.

[Above is the new UUA logo – please see 'Footnotes' on p. 12 for more information.]

LAST NIGHT I HAD THE STRANGEST DREAM

Last night I had the strangest dream
I'd ever dreamed before
I dreamed the world had all agreed
To put an end to war

I dreamed I saw a mighty room
Filled with women and men
And the paper they were signing said
They'd never fight again

And when the paper was all signed
And a million copies made
They all joined hands and bowed their heads
And grateful pray'rs were prayed

And the people in the streets below
Were dancing 'round and 'round
While swords and guns and uniforms
Were scattered on the ground

Last night I had the strangest dream
I'd ever dreamed before
I dreamed the world had all agreed
To put an end to war.

Ed McCurdy (1950)

We hope everyone remembers this anti-war classic, which will be our commemoration of Hiroshima Day (06 August) and the International Day of Peace (21 September). Anyone who doesn't know the tune only needs to search the title on YouTube (www.youtube.com), as the song has been recorded in seventy-six languages and sung by such artists as Simon & Garfunkel (1964), Johnny Cash (2002), Garth Brooks (2005) and Serena Ryder (2006). It was even sung by schoolchildren in East Berlin as they watched the Wall being dismantled in 1989.

Ed McCurdy was a folk singer, songwriter and television actor who produced some 25 record albums, mostly with Elektra Records and Tradition Records. Born in Franklin, Pennsylvania, he began his career with a gospel radio station in Oklahoma before moving on to nightclubs and vaudeville. In 1948, he moved to Canada and hosted shows on CBC Radio in Vancouver and, later, in Toronto. Guests on his shows included Pete Seeger, Lena Horne, Josh White, Oscar Peterson and Oscar Brand, with whom he developed lifelong friendships.

McCurdy released his first folk album in 1949 and moved to New York City with his Canadian wife and their children in 1950. He performed many times at the Newport Folk Festival and was an international folk star in the '60s and '70s – even touring Europe in 1976 – until he had to retire due to severe health problems. In 1980, 'Last Night I had the Strangest Dream' was made the official theme song of the US Peace Corps while another of his compositions, 'King's Highway', became that of their domestic counterpart, Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA). In the mid-1980s, he moved to Nova Scotia and had a second career on Canadian television.

McCurdy was a man of many talents, as he had both a morning children's program and one for adults in the evening when he was in Toronto. In New York, he was the star performer of the children's TV show, *Freddie the Fireman*, in 1956. In the same year, he produced three albums of risqué Elizabethan ballads entitled *When Dalliance was in Flower (and Maidens Lost Their Heads*) in conjunction with the actor, Alan Arkin. Other compositions of his include *Badmen, Heroes and Pirate Songs* (1955), *Sin Songs* (1955), *Bar Room Ballads* (1956), *Children's Songs* (1958), *Bawdy Ballads of Shakespeare's Time* (1971) and *Cowboy Songs* (1996). He died in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 2000.

SUSTAINABLE EMPATHY

By Lyanne Mitchell

'Tragedy', 'injustice', 'assault', 'devastation'. These words get worn thin through repetition – they have less and less impact each time we hear them and I think for many of us they have virtually no impact at all any more. We can't possibly hold it all. We can't possibly walk around all the time, exposed, vulnerable, acutely aware of our dependence on others; and we can't walk around all the time, seeing vulnerability in our midst and extending ourselves intimately to help. We simply can't sustain a level of emotion and action which measures up to the horrors of our time.

And yet we don't want to get inured to it all either. We don't want to go numb. We don't want what is sometimes called "empathy fatigue". As religious people, we want sustainable empathy. A supply that flows through us without depleting us. We want to plug into the Source of Compassion itself that some of us call God – compassion that flows evenly to all creatures and never gets used up. And I think this is the right metaphor – plugging into something larger than ourselves instead of trying to generate it all from within.

One of the best ways to plug in like this spiritually is actually to unplug a little from everything else! This place allows us to do that. We all need peaceful times and places in our lives to think, to reflect, to meditate, to pray.

As Unitarians, we have faith that there is a source of boundless compassion in the universe. We experience it in our vulnerability and our intimacy and we realise it in our action. We don't know whether everything happens for a reason but we do know that, as human beings, we have a stake in what happens. We have a responsibility to preserve our own capacity to care about it.

And though we may not always be able to express our own vulnerability, and may not always be able to rescue the vulnerable in our midst, we know deep down that we are interconnected with all of existence.

The fate of the world is the fate of each one of us. We reject violence and war, when we remember the suffering and loss that they bring.

Let's take a deep breath, open our hearts once again, and raise our voices for a future world of permanent peace and try our best to cultivate, within ourselves, 'sustainable empathy'.

[Abstracted from an Address delivered at the Glasgow Unitarian Church on 29 June 2014. Lyanne Mitchell is co-editor of her church's monthly *News & Views* publication.]

THE GLASGOW UNITARIANS

The Glasgow congregation formed in 1810, the same year that Unitarianism was legalised in Scotland. They built their first church in 1812 and then a larger one in 1865. In 1984, they bought an office building and refitted its interior to suit their needs. Like us, the GUC is lay-led, though it has had ministers in the past – one of those was Rev. John Clifford, who led our Christmas service in 2006.

The GUC has many distinctions, not least that our *SUN* magazine is reprinted there. They recently had to cancel the service on 03 August because the Commonwealth Games Cycling Road Races went right past their door and the whole street and its access roads were closed to traffic.

Also of note is the sad loss of their longest-standing member, Harry Wylie, who died last month at the age of 103. Harry was born in 1911 and brought up in the Glasgow church. He received an MA from the University of Glasgow and became a mathematics teacher, helped to write a textbook that changed the way the subject was taught, and went on to become a principal and a teachers' college lecturer. After retiring from educational work, he managed a block of flats until he was 101 in additional to pursuing a wide range of interests.

REDOUBTABLE RUSSELLS

(*Continued from p.2.*)

During World War I, Russell's active pacifism resulted in a charge under the Defence of the Realm Act, for which he was dismissed from Cambridge. In 1918, he was actually sentenced to six months' imprisonment for speaking publicly against the war, during which time he wrote *Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy*. In the 1920s, he toured Russia and China, founded an experimental school with his second wife, Dora Black, and supported his family by writing popular books on physics, ethics and education. In 1931, he became the third Earl Russell when his older brother died.

In the late 1930s, Russell taught at the University of Chicago and UCLA before being appointed to the City College of New York in 1940. That posting was annulled by a court judgement that he was 'morally unfit', based on his 1929 book, *Marriage and Morals*. This was protested by the Unitarian professor, John Dewey, Albert Einstein and other intellectuals, but to no avail. He then joined the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, at which he gave a series of public lectures on philosophy. He returned to Cambridge in 1944 and collated his lectures in his most famous book, *A History of Western Philosophy* (1945). He was awarded a royal Order of Merit in 1949 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950.

Russell was active in anti-war movements for the rest of his life, serving another term in Brixton Prison (only a week, for 'breach of the peace') at the age of 89, after an anti-nuclear demonstration in London in 1961. He published his autobiography in three parts during 1967–69 and, when he died a year later, his body was cremated with no religious ceremony. While he never called himself a Unitarian as an adult, his involvement with the British Humanist Association made him an exemplar for modern Unitarians in the UK and elsewhere. Further, his conceptions of mathematics and philosophy kept changing during the course of his life.

[Just with the conversion of Lady Russell, there have been articles in previous *SUN*s on William Ellery Channing (Jun/July 2008), Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (Apr/May 2009), Charles Dickens (Feb/Mar 2012) and James Martineau (Aug/Sept 2013). All of these issues are archived on the church website.]

WHAT I HAVE LIVED FOR

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds, have blown me hither and thither, in a wayward course, over a great ocean of anguish, reaching to the very verge of despair.

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy – ecstasy so great that I would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy. I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness--that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable lifeless abyss. I have sought it finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring vision of the heaven that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and though it might seem too good for human life, this is what – at last – I have found.

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. And I have tried to apprehend the Pythagorean power by which number holds sway above the flux. A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Love and knowledge, so far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppressors, helpless old people a burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate this evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my life. I have found it worth living, and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.

[Preface to The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell.]

THE WAR WE HAD TO HAVE

By Mike McPhee

As we commemorate the centenary of the outbreak of World War I on 28 July 1914, it seems difficult to write anything original about that disastrous conflagration. We all know about the 9 million combatants who lost their lives in the first mechanised war in history and we often say it was all for nothing, though it did re-shape the map of Europe and the world in some profound ways.

Not for nothing did the Soviet annals call this global carnage 'the Great Imperialist War', for it involved all of the world's empires and destroyed four of them. By 1900, almost the entire world that could be colonised had been, so conflicts between imperial states were inevitable. In the lead-up to 1914, Japan had won a war with Russia and Germany was involved in a few tense 'incidents' in Africa that could easily have led to hostilities with Britain and France. Over that time, a series of interlocking alliances were formed that ensured the 'domino effect' that engulfed the European powers after the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir apparent by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo.

The irony of that event was that Archduke Franz Ferdinand was committed to a federalist structure for the minorities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Attempts to defuse the crisis diplomatically collapsed in confusion due to the many 'players' – Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia; Russia on Austria-Hungary; Germany on Russia and then on France. All of this happened in a week, with the UK (and, therefore, the whole British Empire) entering the war on 04 August.

Soon, it was on for all and sundry, with even Japan joining in to occupy the German colonies in the Pacific. Ironic as that might seem when we think of World War II, Italy also joined the Allied side with the hope of gaining the northeastern territories of Trentino and Trieste from Austria-Hungary, though that was not until 1915. Near the end of 1914, the Allies declared war on the Ottoman Empire after it closed the Dardanelles to shipping. The last country to join the Central Powers was Bulgaria in 1915, strangely siding with its former oppressor, Turkey, against its liberator, Russia.

Getting back to the Western Front, by October 1914 there were trenches running from the English Channel to Switzerland and the subsequent stalemate saw hundreds of thousands of casualties due to cannon and machinegun fire. We all know of the Battles of the Marne and the Somme, Ypres and Passchendaele, but few have heard of Isonzo, the scene of twelve battles between Italy and Austria-Hungary in 1915–17 which took the lives of 300,000 troops. On the Eastern Front, Russia made some initial advances against Germany and Austria-Hungary but, by mid-1915, its armies were in retreat.

Turning briefly to Australia, there was considerable support for the war effort but equally committed opposition to conscription. As with other countries in the Empire, the British declaration of war was accepted as being on their behalf, as well. People here were aware of the German colonies in New Guinea and the Pacific Islands, so isolation was not a viable option. Yet, the legendary action at Gallipolli was launched at Russia's behest at a time when the Ottoman Empire had not taken military action against anyone.

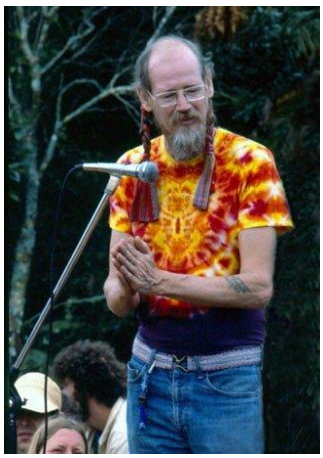
The carnage went on in theatres as various as the Carpathian and Caucasus Mountains, Africa, the Middle East and the high seas, but by 1917 many of the participants were looking for a way out. The US, which had not yet entered the war, proposed a 'Peace Without Victory' whereunder all parties would return to the *status quo ante*, a prospect which greatly interested Austria-Hungary after Emperor Franz Josef died. In Germany, however, the peace-inclined Reichstag was simply overruled by the Kaiser and the military. So, the US came in with two million men and the war went on.

The long-stagnant Eastern Front collapsed as a result of the two revolutions in Russia in 1917 and Lenin signed a separate peace treaty with Germany. However, no German troops were redeployed to the Western Front, as British, French and American troops occupied Archangelsk in March 1918 in an attempt to support the 'White' contingents. (Similarly, Vladivostok was taken over by Germany then launched a series of 'last-ditch' assaults in France, whose failure led to the proposal of an armistice under Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' plan. During October 1918, the Central Powers sued for peace one after another, with only Germany holding out till 11 November.

A series of peace treaties were negotiated in various parts of Paris in 1919: Versailles (Germany), Saint-Germain (Austria), Trianon (Hungary), Sèvres (Turkey) and Neuilly (Bulgaria). The nations of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia came into being; Poland was recreated; and Transylvania was ceded to Romania. Elsewhere, German colonies and Ottoman provinces were mandated, largely to Britain and France, though South Africa got what is now Namibia, Japan took the islands in the North Pacific, Australia received New Guinea (including British Papua) and Nauru, and New Zealand was given Western Samoa.

Germany was treated very harshly as the arch-aggressor and subjected to demilitarisation and crippling reparations. Its industrial Rhineland was occupied by Allied forces until 1929 and its entire merchant fleet was expropriated and auctioned off. The ineffectual League of Nations was established at Geneva in 1920 and the Bolsheviks eventually consolidated the USSR. World War I was over, all right, but the stage was already set for the even more ruinous World War II.

CELEBRATION OF A LIFE WELL LIVED



On 01 July this year, the world lost Stephen Gaskin, a Hippie countercultural icon and leader of the Green Party in the US. Born in Denver, Colorado, in 1935, he served in the US Marine Corps in 1952–55. In the 1960s, he taught English, creative writing and general semantics at San Francisco State College under the legendary semanticist, Samuel Hayakawa.

His writing class evolved into an open discussion group which involved up to 1500 students. The Monday Night Class, as it became known, was held in 'The Family Dog', an auditorium in the seaside suburb of Ocean Beach. Gaskin spoke about his experiments with psychedelic drugs and paranormal experiences, as well as lecturing on the importance of ecological awareness. This popular weekly gathering was attended by hippies from all over the Bay Area during 1969–70 and he became known as 'San Francisco's acid guru'.

In 1970, Gaskin was part of a caravan of 60 vehicles that crossed the US to settle at Summertown in Tennessee, forming a community called 'The Farm', which the *Wall Street Journal* called "the General Motors of American Communes". This community was "a platform from which to launch efforts to improve the lot of poor and indigenous peoples, whales, and old growth trees"; for example, building 1200 earthquake-resistant homes in Guatemala as well as several public buildings and water lines to five villages, sending independent dosimetry teams to the Three Mile Island nuclear accident and the Chernobyl disaster, and giving Greenpeace's 'Rainbow Warrior' vessel the equipment to escape from a Spanish harbour.

Gaskin went to prison in 1974 for possession of cannabis, as members of the community had, against his recommendation, grown several marijuana plants on the property. He served only one year of a three-year sentence but his voting rights were rescinded on his release. He brought a lawsuit challenging the legality of mass retroactive disenfranchisement under the Tennessee Constitution. After winning in lower courts, the case went to the Tennessee Supreme Court and, in 1981, voting rights were restored to more than a quarter of a million convicts.

In *Volume One: Sunday Morning Services on the Farm* and earlier talks, Gaskin produced a substantial body of spiritual teaching. His ideas are contained in books and tapes produced by The Farm's own publishing house. They speak of magic, energy and life in community, as well as of service to humanity. He was given the first Right Livelihood Award in 1980 and inducted into the Countercultural Hall of Fame in 2004. As the Green Party's presidential candidate in 2000, his platform included campaign finance reform, universal health care and the decriminalization of marijuana.

Gaskin continued to work as an international activist, writer and speaker until a few months before his death from natural causes. His topics ranged from humorous advice on all aspects of communal life and farming to modern communications, the counterculture, spirituality, drug law reform, and social and ecological issues. His last published works were revised and annotated versions of *Monday Night Class* and *The Caravan.*

[Abstracted from *Wikipedia.*]

FOOTNOTES

The 'hymns' on p. 6 were first published in Rev. Christopher Raible's *Hymns for the Cerebration of Strife* (1990) – a play on the UUA's *Hymns for the Celebration of Life*. The first is based on 'Morning, So Fair To See', written by the UU minister, Rev. Vincent B. Silliman (1894–1979), to the tune of the 'Crusader's Hymn'. Despite some folklore affecting the title, that was originally a Silesian folk melody which became the tune of 'Fairest Lord Jesus'. Rev. Silliman wrote a number of hymns that are found in UUA hymnals, the best known of which include 'Faith of the Larger Liberty' and 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

The second item is obviously based on 'A Mighty Fortress is our God', which is surely the most famous of Martin Luther's many hymns. He wrote that one, including the music, in about 1530. Like 'Fairest Lord Jesus', it has had many different musical arrangements, translations and adaptations of words.

COMMITTEE NEWS

As was determined at the AGM, our Secretary has been authorised to investigate more remunerative investment products that the Public Trustee has to offer. Needless to say, any such portfolios will have to involve low-risk investments

We have made another donation to the Nagbinlod congregation in the Philippines, this time to sponsor one of their young women who is in her second year at the State University of East Negros, training to be a primary school teacher. Some of our last donation went toward her tuition and also that of an older student, who has since graduated and is now teaching at the local school.

Mike McPhee gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Brisbane UU Fellowship on Sunday, 06 July, entitled 'Stranger Than We Can Think'.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 16 September.

Membership renewals for 2014 should have been paid before the Annual General Meeting but it is never too late. Those wishing to join our church can use this form by way of application but should not send payment until their membership is accepted.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

I, (name) _____

of (address) _____

_____ Postcode _____

Phone(s): (home) _____ (other) _____

Email: _____

I apply to join/renew membership in (delete one) the Sydney Unitarian Church and agree to abide by the rules as set down by the Constitution and management of the church.

Signature: _____ Fee enclosed: $_____*

Cheques should be made payable to: Treasurer, Sydney Unitarian Church. Membership will be valid for the calendar year 2014.

* Annual membership is $20 and includes the SUN journal; subscription to the SUN only is $15.