



# Friends of the Wade

The Marion E. Wade Center      Wheaton College

## Twenty Years at the Wade

Nineteen years ago, Christopher Mitchell became director of the Wade Center. This summer he closed the door to his office on the second floor of the Wade for the last time, retiring from his directorship. However, Chris will continue his academic pursuits as he moves on to the work of a new season as a faculty



Christopher Mitchell

member at Biola University's Torrey Honors Institute. Nineteen years is a substantial tenure, and a benchmark that merits a retrospective of significant moments in the Wade's history over the last two decades.

The most pivotal event during that time was the building of a facility specifically designed for the Wade Center. The Wade collection moved from the third floor of the college's Buswell Memorial Library to our present location on the edge of Wheaton's campus in 2001. This dedicated-use, 11,000 square-foot building constructed in the style of an English manor house allowed for a major expansion of the Wade's staffing, programming, and storage capacity. The Wade's first full-time trained librarian was hired. A spacious Reading Room was built to give researchers, pleasure readers, and students a quiet study environment and ready access to primary and secondary works, manuscripts, letters, and audio-visual materials related to the authors. Classroom and museum space opened the opportunity for regular reading groups and lectures from

visiting scholars such as Barbara Reynolds, George Marsden, Diana Pavlac Glycer, and Dale Ahlquist.

Increased storage space and state-of-the-art preservation capacities, along with the generous support of donors, allowed for the Wade to add key acquisitions to its collection during this time. The following is a sampling of these acquisitions: In 2000 the Wade purchased an extensive collection of Dorothy L. Sayers's manuscripts from Sotheby's. In

2005 Walter Hooper gifted the Wade with C.S. Lewis's academic robe and hood, which he wore while at Oxford.

In 2012, the Wade acquired the Williams Family Papers,

containing correspondence, photos, vital records, publications, business documents, typescripts, and other materials. Our journal *SEVEN* continues to publish key scholarship on the Wade authors; it is now in its 30<sup>th</sup> year of publication.

The number of visitors and researchers coming to the Wade has certainly increased since the collection's move to its current location. An initial boost to the Wade



Schoolchildren enjoy the museum's C.S. Lewis exhibit.

*"The only  
Christian work  
is good work  
well done."*

— Dorothy L. Sayers



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Nineteen years ago, I sat in an old conference room of Wheaton College's Buswell Library before a distinguished group of people who were to assess whether I was to be the next director of the Wade Center. The fact that I wasn't at the time absolutely convinced myself that I was the person for the position made it impossible for me to envision that as director my tenure would amount to nearly two decades. As I now look over that significant period of time, many things stand out. Building on the foundation laid by my predecessors, Clyde Kilby and Lyle Dorsett, I have had the privilege of helping to grow the Wade's collection and expand its reach and influence locally, nationally, and internationally. But what stands out most as I consider these years are the people I have worked with, and none more than the Wade staff members I have had the honor to labor alongside. They have been my mainstay in more ways than I can count. They kept me humble and happy—they argued with me, teased me, and laughed at me; but even more they laughed with me, loved me beyond my deserts, and consistently supported and helped me. Whatever I have accomplished for good for the Wade was done with this fun, hardworking, God-loving group. I love each one of them. I am grateful to them for the shared experiences of the past nineteen years, and I am grateful for and humbled by the support of all of you who have partnered with us as *Friends of the Wade* and made this work possible.

GRACE AND PEACE,

### Did You Know?

November 22, 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the death of C.S. Lewis. On this day, Westminster Abbey will unveil a memorial stone dedicated to Lewis in its famed Poets' Corner. A two-day conference and a thanksgiving service will be part of the memorial event, including lectures by Alister McGrath, Malcolm Guite, and Wade Steering Committee member Michael Ward. For more information, visit: <http://lewisinpoetscorner.com/conference.php>. **W**



### "Twenty Years at the Wade"

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Center's public profile came from the production of movie versions of two of its authors' books. Chris Mitchell and Marjorie Mead were interviewed about J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, visitors to the museum were treated to a glimpse of actual props from Walden Media's *Narnia* films, and the Wade was given the tremendous opportunity to expose hundreds of thousands of people to the rich, imaginative, and innovative thinking not only of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, but of all the Wade authors.

We are grateful that the influence of these authors' writing, and thus the Wade's opportunity to share their literary thought and work through preservation and education, continues today. Here are a few glimpses of what may lie ahead:

- Co-sponsorship of "C.S. Lewis & American Culture," a conference to take place November 1, 2013, on Wheaton College's campus.
- The complete cataloging of the collection in order to make it searchable online.
- A more robust Internet presence and community for both the Wade and *SEVEN*.
- Expanding our educational programs and enhancing our physical space in order to better accommodate visitors and special programs.
- Raising funds to establish research fellowships in order to allow more scholars access to the collection.

We recognize that few of the Wade's past successes or future plans would be possible without the faithful support of the *Friends of the Wade*, and we want to thank you for your commitment. Looking forward to the future, we are excited to continue in this rich partnership with you and to see how the Wade Center will grow and what we will accomplish with our *Friends* in the next twenty years. **W**

## Up Close

### C.S. Lewis & American Culture: An Upcoming Conference



On Friday, November 1, the Wade Center, in partnership with Wheaton College's Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals and the Faith and Learning program, will host a one-day seminar in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of C.S. Lewis's death. Titled "C.S. Lewis & American Culture," the conference will explore Lewis's surprising, enduring influence on North American religion and culture through talks by George Marsden, Mark Noll, Alan Jacobs, and Trevor Hart.

In the past fifty years, Lewis has exercised an arguably greater influence on American culture than on that of his native United Kingdom. These scholars will discuss why this has been so and explore what qualities of Lewis's work resonate well with Americans. Although the fact of Lewis's influence in the United States has been recognized by Britons and Americans alike, this conference intends to be the first substantial step toward a more historically and culturally informed explanation for that influence.

Mark Noll will open the conference with a look at "what the American reception of Lewis tells us about the history of American religion before, during, and immediately after the Second World War." George Marsden will then present on "'Mere Christianity' and American Culture." A response from Alan Jacobs will follow, and the day will conclude with Trevor Hart's talk, "C.S. Lewis and America: From the Other Side of the Pond."

We hope many of you will be able to join us for this exciting event. The conference will begin at 9:30 a.m. and conclude at 9:00 p.m. on Friday, November 1. All sessions will take place in Barrows Auditorium on Wheaton College's campus. *Friends of the Wade* can register for free by visiting the registration page at <http://lewisandamericanculture.eventbrite.com> and entering the promotional code WadeLAC2013. **W**

### Update: Wade Director Search

The profile for a new director of the Wade Center is now posted. For further information, please refer any potential candidates to: <http://www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/welcome/staff/Wade-Director-Recruitment> **W**

## Spotlight on: Wade Lectures

This past season was busy with wonderful offerings at the Wade. The New Year began with Chris Mitchell's talk, "The Gospel and Fairy-Story: The Literary Art of J.R.R. Tolkien," investigating the Christian themes behind Tolkien's works. This lecture was offered twice in one day to accommodate the number of people in attendance.

Valentine's Day at the Wade welcomed lecturer John Granger's talk, "The Lords of the Ring? Inkleing Writers, Chiasmus, and Ring Composition." Granger's theory demonstrated how many of the Inklings' writings contain circular plot structures. Classicist Jonathan Kirkpatrick, Director of Studies in Classics and History of Art for the CCCU's study abroad programs in Oxford, rounded off the month of February with his lecture "Bacchus in Narnia? C.S. Lewis and the Classics of Greece and Rome," on how Lewis's educational background in classical literature influenced his thought and writing.

In April, David McNutt, Visiting Assistant Professor of Theology in the Biblical & Theological Studies Department at Wheaton College, presented his findings on little-known correspondence between Dorothy L. Sayers and Swiss theologian Karl Barth, comparing their views on the theology of creativity.

For those who missed these opportunities, Wade lectures and other recorded offerings are available at: <http://www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/News-and-Events/Audio-Downloads> **W**

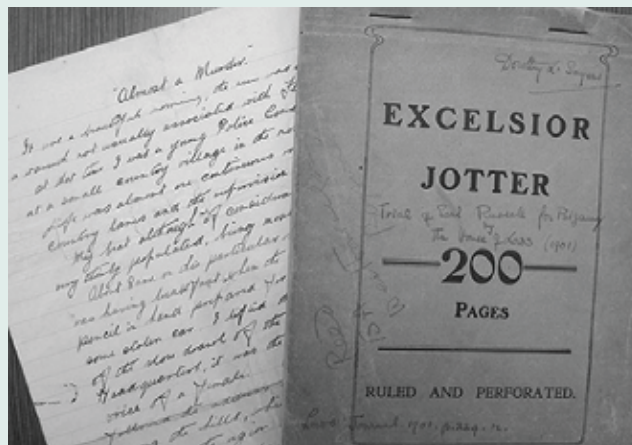
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## Highlights

Dorothy L. Sayers's mysteries have been continuously in print since they were first published in the 1920s and 30s, and they are now considered detective fiction classics. Last July an important collection of Sayers's detection manuscript drafts and research notes were up for auction at Sotheby's in London. These materials arrived at the Wade Center in September after they were generously

purchased and donated by several *Friends of the Wade*. The collection included typescripts from

*Strong Poison*, *Murder Must Advertise*, and *Busman's Honeymoon*; drafts of short stories; research notes on detection and criminal trial proceedings; and hundreds of fan letters and ticket sales records from the staged version of *Busman's Honeymoon* (1936-38). These materials are available for research; we invite you to view them in the Reading Room during your next visit to the Wade Center. **W**



A portion of the Wade's latest Dorothy L. Sayers acquisition.