

**Transplanting Tradition:
The History of Kingswood College**

Geoffrey M Smith

BA (Hons) *Murd.*, GradDipLibStud *W.Aust.I.T.*, GradDipEd *Murd.*,
PostGradDipEdStud *Melb.*

This thesis is presented for the degree of Master of Philosophy of Murdoch
University.

2009

This thesis is an account of research conducted by myself prior to and during my candidature as a research student for the degree of Master of Philosophy at Murdoch University. It consists wholly of my own research, except where other sources are used. These sources are acknowledged by footnotes and referencing.

An unpublished manuscript by the Reverend Alfred Crookes Hull was an important record of the events leading up to the establishment of Kingswood College. The manuscript, *Birth of a College*, consists of Mr Crookes Hull's personal account of the establishment. The manuscript and the work carried out by its author are acknowledged and appreciated in the research and writing of this thesis.

The contents of this thesis have not been previously been submitted for a degree at any university or tertiary institution.

Geoffrey M Smith
2009

Abstract

Kingwood College was one of the residential colleges affiliated with the University of Western Australia. Originally established by the Methodist Church, the College had in recent years been run by the Uniting Church. Kingswood amalgamated with St Columba College (another Uniting Church college) in 2000, to form Trinity Residential College. Kingswood experienced nearly forty years of existence prior to its amalgamation. However its history began as far back as 1913, when the concept of a Methodist College at the infant University of Western Australia was raised at the annual Western Australian Conference of the Methodist Church.

This thesis examines the history of Kingswood College, including the events leading up to its foundation and the years until amalgamation with St Columba College. It follows the development of Kingswood College in terms of the impact of massification, managerialism and marketing, along with the endeavour to establish a sense of commensality, or belonging, among its members. These factors help explain the ability of the College as an institution to adapt to social, academic and economic changes throughout a period of almost 40 years. Further, it will be seen that these changes often challenged the traditions brought to the College as a result of its background within the Methodist Church and the approach taken by the church to the provision of services to university students.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	P. 12
Chapter 1: The Beginning.....	P. 40
Chapter 2: 1963: The First Year.....	P. 82
Chapter 3: 1964 and Beyond.....	P. 95
Chapter 4: The 1970s.....	P. 117
Chapter 5: The 1980s.....	P. 146
Chapter 6: The 1990s.....	P. 187
Conclusion.....	P. 222
Bibliography.....	P. 231

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the many people who have been involved in the production and publication of this thesis. In particular, I would like to thank my supervisor, Associate Professor Michael Sturma of Murdoch University, for the support, guidance and enthusiasm that he extended to me during the period of my MPhil candidature. I would also like to acknowledge the Reverend Colin Honey and Mr. Alec O'Connell for their valuable assistance during the time spent on research and writing. Thanks also go to the Reverend Michael Owen, the Reverend James Cain, the Reverend Geoffrey Blyth and Bill Chambers for their assistance and suggestions during the research process. I would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Jenny Timms, Archivist at Methodist Ladies College, Perth, Western Australia and Sheena Hesse of the Uniting Church (WA) Archives. The assistance given by Mike Shearer and the administrative staff of Trinity Residential College is also acknowledged.

Much of the background material for the first two chapters came from an unpublished manuscript, "The Birth of a College", written as a record of the early years of Kingswood College, by the Reverend A. Crookes Hull in (I believe) 1973. The manuscript exists as a document in the Kingswood College and (now) Trinity College archives. Without this manuscript, research into the early years of the College's development would have been so much harder. Mr Crookes Hull had the foresight to commit to paper his recollections of those years, and I hope that *Transplanting Tradition* will give the reader an appreciation of the

drive and dedication shown by Mr Crookes Hull to ensure that Kingswood became a reality.

I would also like to thank my wife, Lyn, who also gave me support and encouragement to finish this thesis. One of our favourite topics of conversation is the setting and achieving of life goals. The submission of this thesis marks the achievement of one such life goal and for this, I know she is pleased and to her, I express my thanks and my love.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Josephine and John Smith, who, back in the 1960s and 1970s, never wavered in their belief that a deaf child could be educated in a mainstream school environment. This thesis is dedicated to them.

They also sent me to Kingswood College in the first place!

A note on methodology.

Due to the subject matter of this thesis and the fact that some controversial events are still fairly recent and the principal players are still alive, there was anecdotal evidence from various sources to suggest that ill-feelings, grievances and disagreements are part of the Kingswood College experience. Because the writer has good relationships with many of those involved with Kingswood College, it was felt that a very neutral and tactful approach needed to be taken while compiling this history out of fairness and respect to these individuals. Legal agreements also prevented on-the-record discussion of some aspects of the college history, especially concerning events that were to occur in the mid 1990s. Therefore, when undertaking this study, a conscious decision was made to make use of material which was either published or available in some written format which would be available to be verified and referred to if necessary by other individuals, such as researchers, members of the Uniting Church and members of the Kingswood College (and Trinity Residential College) community. In doing so, if any disagreements or objections to any of the contents of this thesis did arise, the source of the disputed material can be traced back to documents available in the public domain, thereby allowing the consultation of such material by those who may wish to disagree with the interpretation of that material as presented within this thesis.

On a couple of occasions however, oral information has been referred to. The Reverend Michael Owen was very helpful in providing details on theological

training and this information has been used and in many cases also supported by written documentation covering the establishment of the Uniting Church. Personal communication with the Reverend Colin Honey was also used on a couple of minor occasions and without compromising the empirical approach to the structure of the thesis.

Such an empirical approach does have implications for the direction in which research can go and such is the case in the current thesis. Apart from the annual student magazine *Casey*, most of the written and/or published documentation relating to Kingswood College focuses on the administrative side of college life rather than the social side. Therefore the thesis looks primarily at the administrative development of the college, using as a theoretical basis, the work of Tapper and Palfreyman. That is not to say that the social history of the college has been ignored totally. Where possible and within the limits of available written material, reference is made to the social aspects of the college, but the reader is to be made aware that this is not the primary focus of this thesis.

Having chosen to follow an empiricist approach to the history of Kingswood College, the challenge was to locate and examine as much written and/or published material concerned with Kingswood College. Two sources provided a valuable summary of the early years leading up to the establishment of the college. These have been frequently referred to in the early parts of the thesis. Similarly, the minutes of the Kingswood College Council and associated college committees such as the Executive/Finance Committee, provided an extensive and chronological written record of the administrative work of the

college and were chosen on this basis. This information was supplemented by published material such as newspaper reports, references to the college in other manuscripts and the annual editions of *Casey*. In all such cases, the material obtained from these sources was judged to be a neutral record of college activities or has been discussed within the thesis without criticism of the personalities involved.