

The Roots of the Living Spirituality Network (LSN) – a brief chronology

The Farncombe Community and the Fellowship of Prayer for Unity

1920's A house in Farncombe (nr Godalming, Surrey), 5 Wolseley Rd, played a key early role. Belonging to Deaconess Edith Banks, it was rented by Reginald Somerset Ward, an Anglican priest who gave up his living and became a freelance spiritual director.

1964 It then became the home of the Farncombe Community, founded by Sister Carol Graham, inspired by church unity in India, to work for unity of all people and all creation, supported by Companions and by the Fellowship of Prayer for Unity (FPU) through the 70s and 80s. As the members of the Community aged, the house was gifted to the British Council of Churches (BCC) 'for the cause of unity and as a house of prayer & spirituality', as stipulated in Edith Banks' will.

1989 The Farncombe Community came to an end; FPU continued as a dispersed community with Sister Mary Holliday as chaplain.

1993 **Paul Renyard** became chaplain of FPU (then of LSN till 2003).

2000 ESP and FPU merged to form LSN.
2002 Ruth was succeeded by **Eley McAinsh**.

Ecumenical Spirituality Project

1981 **Gwen Cashmore**, working for the World Council of Churches (WCC), and Sister Joan Puls, a Franciscan Roman Catholic sister, met at a Chicago conference on spirituality and worked together at the WCC Assembly in Vancouver in 1983.

1986 Gwen and Joan, based in Norfolk, began working ecumenically across the country. This coincided with the eventual entry of the Roman Catholic Church into the British Council of Churches (BCC).

1989 BCC appointed Gwen and Joan co-directors of the Ecumenical Spirituality Project (ESP), based at 5 Wolseley Rd.

1994 5 Wolseley Rd was sold by the Council of Churches in Britain and Ireland (CCBI - successor to BCC), in a financial crisis; ESP was invited by the Milton Keynes Council of Churches and the Society of Sacred Mission to move to a new home at Willen; its Management Group was chaired by **Hugh Cross**, Ecumenical Moderator in Milton Keynes until he was succeeded by **Murdoch MacKenzie** in 1996.

1996 **Ruth Harvey** succeeded Gwen and Joan as Director of ESP.

1999 Alan Horner retired to MK and worked with ESP and later LSN until his death in 2006.

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Names in bold are present with us today.

More information is available in the market place in the large Conference Room.