



# Friends of the Wade

The Marion E. Wade Center

Wheaton College

## The Inaugural Hansen Lectures: Ways the Literary Imagination Opens Us to New Understandings

The Ken and Jean Hansen Lectureship was launched this past academic year in 2015-2016 by President Philip G. Ryken with a three part series on *The Messiah Comes to Middle-earth: Images of Christ's Threefold Office in The Lord of the Rings*.

The Hansen Lectureship is an annual faculty lecture series named in honor of former Wheaton College Trustee Ken Hansen and his wife Jean, and

endowed in their memory by Walter and Darlene Hansen. This lectureship features three talks per academic year by a Wheaton College faculty member on one or more of the Wade Center authors. The lectures are held in the Bakke Auditorium and are free and open to the public. The Hansen Lectures provide a wonderful new avenue to encourage Wheaton students and faculty to look into the literary treasures housed at the Wade.

In his opening remarks, Walter Hansen, a current Wade Board member and longtime Friend of the Wade, shared the love his parents had for the Wade authors. When his father Ken retired from working at ServiceMaster with Marion Wade, the Hansens moved to Santa Barbara, California in 1977 and named their home Rivendell. They displayed this quote from *The Hobbit* in their new home:

"And so at last they came to the Last Homely House, and found its doors flung wide. ... The house was perfect whether you liked food, or sleep, or work, or story-

telling, or singing, or just sitting and thinking best, or a pleasant mixture of them all. ...

Their clothes were mended as well as their bruises, their tempers and their hopes. ... Their plans were improved with

the best advice."

Walter Hansen also explained that the intent of the Hansen Lectureship is to help us to "escape." This concept, as explained by J.R.R. Tolkien in "On Fairy-Stories," is a means of providing a refreshed vision of the true transcendent reality that is often screened from our view in this fallen world. "The purpose of the Hansen Lectureship is to enjoy the great literature of the seven so that we can escape from the prison of our self-centeredness and our narrow, parochial perspective in order to see with other eyes, to feel with other hearts and be equipped for practical deeds in real life," explained Hansen.

Dr. Ryken shares Walter Hansen's view that one of the purposes of fantasy is to aid



Dr. Philip Ryken speaking on images of Christ in Tolkien.

*"Good and ill have not changed since yesteryear.... It is a man's part to discern them."*

— J.R.R. Tolkien



EDITING & DESIGN: Beatrice Schoenrock

**The Marion E. Wade Center**  
Wheaton College  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

Phone: 630-752-5908  
Fax: 630-752-5459  
E-mail: [wade@wheaton.edu](mailto:wade@wheaton.edu)  
[www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter](http://www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter)

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the reader to live more wisely in reality. Dr. Ryken's examination of *The Lord of the Rings* encouraged us that "every Christian is called to be a prophet, priest, and king. According to our various callings, we all have some responsibility to speak true words, offer sacrificial service, to show empowered leadership."

Dr. Ryken also noted that there is no one complete Christ figure in *The Lord of the Rings*. Nonetheless, Gandalf, Frodo, and Aragorn exemplify the Old Testament, three-fold, messianic symbolism of prophet, priest, and king as they undergo different forms of death and resurrection—and through self-sacrifice help save Middle-earth. Tolkien confirms these themes in his epic work in a letter he wrote to Wade founder Dr. Clyde Kilby. However, Tolkien didn't have this schema in his conscious mind before or during the writing. According to Ryken, "If Gandalf, Frodo, and Aragorn remind us in various ways of Jesus Christ, it's

not because the novelist had this explicitly in mind. But rather because the biblical worldview so thoroughly penetrated his imagination that inevitably it pervaded his literary art."

Each talk was accompanied by a response from a Wheaton College faculty member. The first lecture was entitled "The Prophetic Ministry of Gandalf the Grey," with a response by Dr. Sandra Richter, Professor of Old Testament. The second lecture, "Frodo, Sam, and the Priesthood of All Believers," was

responded to by Dr. Jennifer Powell McNutt, Associate Professor of Theology and History of Christianity. The final lecture was "The Coronation of Aragorn Son of Arathorn" with a response by Dr. William Struthers, Professor of Psychology.

The 2016-2017 Hansen Lectureship will feature Dr. Timothy Larsen, McManis Professor of Christian Thought, presenting three lectures on George MacDonald, entitled: *The Rose Fire: George MacDonald in the Age of Miracles*. Respondents include Dr. James Beitler, Assistant Professor of English; Dr. Richard Gibson, Associate Professor of English; and Dr. Jill Peláez Baumgaertner, Professor of English and Dean of Humanities and Theological Studies.

Dr. Christine Colón, Associate Professor of English, will be presenting three lectures on Dorothy L. Sayers for the 2017-2018 series. Dr. Jerry Root, Associate Professor and Director of Wheaton Evangelism Initiative at the Billy Graham Center for Evangelism, will be presenting three lectures on C.S. Lewis for the 2018-2019 Hansen Lectureship.

Videos of the Ryken lectures on Tolkien are available for viewing on the Wade website at: [www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/News-and-Events/Hansen-Lectures/Ryken-Tolkien](http://www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/News-and-Events/Hansen-Lectures/Ryken-Tolkien) **W**



Dr. Sandra Richter, Dr. Philip Ryken, and Walter Hansen

## New Acquisition

In January 2016, the Wade acquired an ornate wooden chest that had belonged to Charles Williams. The acquisition was put into motion about a year before in the spring of 2015 when an anonymous donor contacted the Wade Center. The carved wooden chest had been passed down from Williams to his son Michael who had used it to store various editions of Charles's books. The donor was a close friend of the Williams family who inherited it after the death of Williams's son. Shipping issues delayed the arrival of the piece, but it is now part of the Wade museum along with the Lewis family Wardrobe, and Lewis's and Tolkien's writing desks. **W**



Charles Williams's chest was donated to the Wade and is now located in the museum.

# Up Close

## The Magician's Nephew: A Staycation Play

The Wade Center and the Wheaton College Tolkien Society presented an adaptation of C.S. Lewis's *The Magician's Nephew* as part of Wheaton College's Staycation, a week of free activities during the local school district's spring break for families. The short 45 minute drama was performed twice and drew more than 400 children and adults.

The Tolkien Society decided on adapting this play because last year's Staycation performance of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* was so successful. Five writers from the Society were assigned different scenes, and Laura Schmidt, Wade Center Archivist and staff advisor for the Tolkien Society, edited and formatted the 45 page script which was targeted to children ages 5-12.

At both performances, the Bakke Auditorium was filled to capacity and overflow was provided in the Wade Center classroom. The crew used the multimedia screen and the sound system to set the scene. The scenery used on the screen enhanced the production by keeping the audience rooted in the story. The sound effects were used strategically and creatively, such as the *Jaws* theme music being played when Uncle Andrew offered Polly the ring. The auditorium also provided comfortable seating for guests, in contrast to previous years when the audience was packed into the museum and sat on the floor.

The cast and crew, consisting of Tolkien Society members, friends, and honorary members, numbered 17 total. The youngest cast members were two local homeschooled girls who have joined the Society as honorary members. Digory, one of the main characters, was played by Melody David who had been a member of the Tolkien Society as a student and is now on staff

at the college in the chemistry department. Polly, the other main character and the 2015-2016 president of the Society, was played by Taylor Schaible who was accidentally called Lucy multiple times during rehearsal because of her role in last year's play. Jadis (Lindsey Befus), the evil queen and the 2015-2016 vice president, also reprised

her role as the antagonist since she was such a success as the White Witch in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. J.R.R. Tolkien himself (played by Megan Wilburn) also made an honorary appearance since it is his namesake society that performed the play.

The play was a great success and the auditorium enabled the performance to rise to a new level. Children and adults were enchanted and, more importantly, left with renewed interest in reading *The*

*Chronicles* and other works by the Wade authors. **W**



A performance of *The Magician's Nephew* by the Wheaton College Tolkien Society during Staycation.

## 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gift

At the Wade's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in October 2015, poet Luci Shaw read her poem "The Space Inside." This poem, commissioned for the anniversary, depicts the spirit of the Wade Center and the seven authors. Commemorative copies were given to the evening's guests. We would be happy to send our Friends of the Wade a commemorative copy as long as supplies last. Please send an email to [wade@wheaton.edu](mailto:wade@wheaton.edu) with "Poem" in the subject line to request your copy. **W**





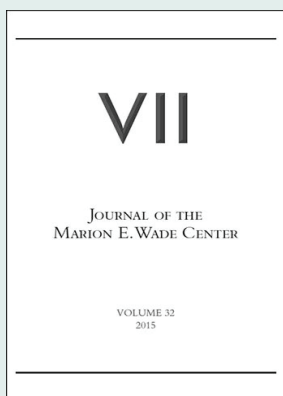
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Wheaton College  
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

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## Spotlight on VII

This issue of *VII* highlights the ways scholarship on the seven Wade authors has grown and deepened over the past 50 years. This increased interest in the works of these authors worldwide is reflected in the new subtitle for our journal. When *VII* was founded in 1980, the majority of work being done on these authors was coming from Great Britain and the United States—hence the name, *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review*. However, now with an increasingly international readership in mind, the subtitle no longer applies; thus, as of this volume of *VII*, we are changing our name to *VII: Journal of the Marion E. Wade Center* in order to more adequately reflect the truly global interest and scholarship on these seven authors.



This volume features articles on C.S. Lewis, George MacDonald, Dorothy L. Sayers, and Charles Williams, including two never-before-published pieces. Four remembrances are also included in this issue: for Barbara Reynolds, a co-founder of *VII*, Managing Editor for the first 20 volumes and Consulting Editor beginning in 2004; for David Gresham, Lewis's oldest stepson; for Dr. Bruce Edwards, Lewis scholar and mentor to many; and for Dr. David Neuhouser, a gracious scholar who founded the Center for the Study of C.S. Lewis and Friends at Taylor University.

For more details and ordering information, please visit [www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/Journal-VII](http://www.wheaton.edu/wadecenter/Journal-VII) **W**