

# WOODBIDGE METHODIST CHURCH

## THE HISTORY EARLIEST DAYS TO 1991



Compiled by Audrey Robertson  
June 2010

Cover picture taken May 2010 © Brian Crowe

## Foreword

This brief history has been reproduced in the form of a booklet by the expertise and willing help of Brian & Sandra Crowe, and for their help I am deeply grateful. The original articles covering the earliest history up to 1991 were written several years ago and have been slightly amended here and there. Some of the photographs included were taken by Brian Crowe especially for this booklet.

Audrey Robertson

June 2010

## Part 1

### It All Began With A Drummer Boy

During the wars with France in the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte, British troops were billeted in Woodbridge, hence the name of Barrack Road and the Barrack Corner.

In 1812, soldiers of the Lincolnshire Regiment were stationed at the Woodbridge Barracks and one of the soldiers was not only a drummer but, more importantly, a Methodist Local Preacher. Our Local Preacher, for sadly we do not know his name, sought permission from the Barracks Master to hold services of worship and these were attended not just by soldiers but also by people from the town. Methodism had arrived in Woodbridge.

Following the defeat of Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the soldiers left and the services appear to have ceased for a while until, in 1818, the Wesleyan Methodists in Ipswich decided it was high time to restore the Methodist witness in Woodbridge and rooms were rented for the purpose, probably in Cumberland Street and in Thoroughfare. As time went by, the Methodists were on the move again and what is described in the history of the Ipswich Circuit as "a place" was in use in Woodbridge in 1822. This "place" was located in a sand pit and it is possible that it was in the area of the old Deben Mill. After about seven years the congregation felt the need for a more fitting place of worship and land in Brook Street was purchased at a cost of £54 and a Chapel built for about £700. If you care to walk along Brook Street it is not difficult to spot the building which differs from all others, with just the "shadow" of the porch which once covered the door. It is now a dwelling house called "The Old Warehouse" but it also served as a small factory.

The Estate Agents who handled the sale in earlier years did not know its story, otherwise it might be named "The Old Chapel".

The work flourished in Brook Street and the congregation and the

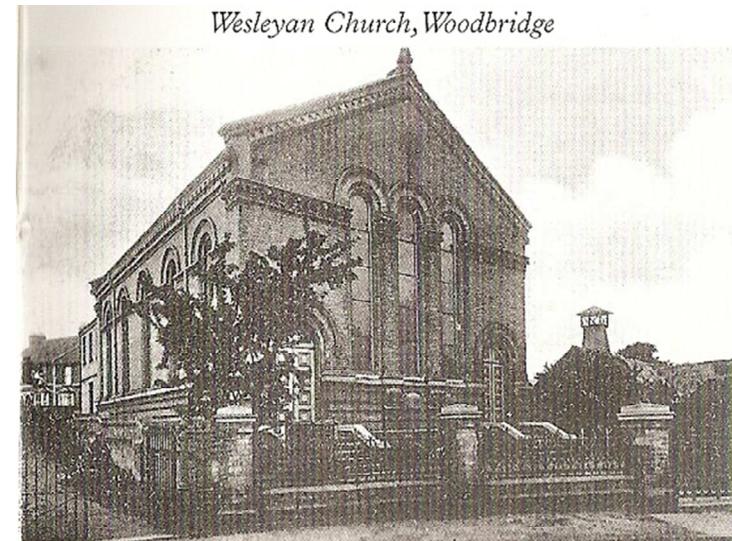
Sunday school outgrew the premises. It was also felt that the approach was difficult and even in the days of horses and carts one can see why. The fundraising started, donations were made by prominent Methodists of the town, together with a grant of £25 from the Chapel Building Committee in Manchester and a loan of £75.

The Building Committee sought tenders and accepted the lowest - for £1,383.

The site in St Johns Street was given by Mr Charles Andrews of Ipswich, the Architects were Cattermole & Eade, and J Fosdike of Woodbridge was the Builder. The new Wesleyan Methodist Chapel was opened on Whit-Monday, 20th May 1872, and it was a great day in the lives of many people. We cannot do better than repeat the description of the building which is to be found in the Centenary Booklet dating from 1972:

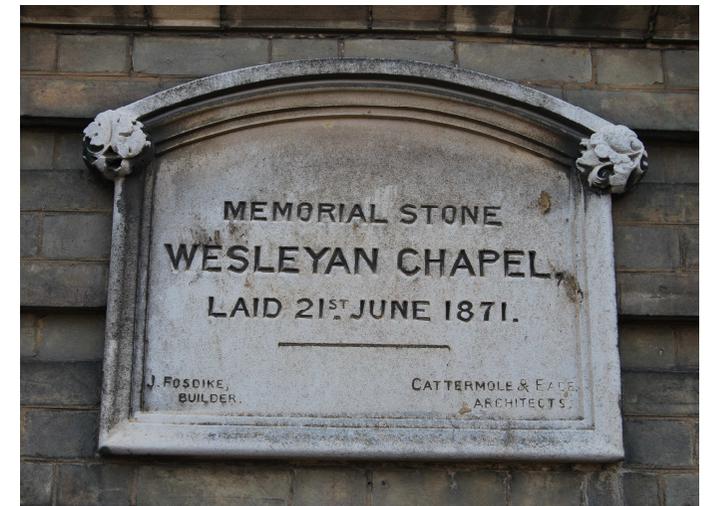
**Built in the semi-Italianate style, 60ft x 37ft, the Church contained "good fir benches stained and varnished, for the accommodation of 350 persons" and was supplied "with gas and hot air apparatus".**

The outstanding debt was soon paid off but not until January 1897 was a new organ installed and ready for use - at a cost of £250.



*Wesleyan Church, Woodbridge*

Picture taken from "The Story of Ninety Years - Methodism in the Ipswich Circuit 1909-98" by Elizabeth Watthews & Janet Lumley



The Memorial Stone - Picture taken May 2010 © Brian Crowe

## Part 2

From the history of the Circuit, we glean that Woodbridge was the principal Church of the section in the early days and Local Preachers were "brought" as far as Woodbridge where horses were changed before they continued their journey to the district known as The Sands. At Boyton Corner, preachers were set down and made their own way to the smaller Chapels at Bawdsey, Butley and Hollesley, where they conducted morning services. These rituals were repeated, in reverse, later in the day. Is it any wonder that Methodism has always valued its Local Preachers. The absence from the early Circuit History of the lovely Chapel at Orford arises from its Primitive Methodist origins; although it would also have been in a different circuit. The Circuit History printed in the early 1900s covers only Wesleyan Chapels and not until union came about in 1932 did the Woodbridge Church cease to be "Wesleyan Methodist" and become simply "Methodist".

Prior to 1950, the Woodbridge Church was head of a section consisting of the Churches already mentioned, together with the Chapel at Ufford and, until it left the circuit in 1947, the Chapel at Melton. The section was enlarged in 1950 to include Framlingham, Dennington and Great Glemham. Orford was transferred from the East Suffolk Circuit in 1962. At the same time, Woodbridge left the section and became part of a two-church section with its Minister based at the Landseer Road Church in Ipswich. In 1969 we were back in the Framlingham/Woodbridge fold again, with the Minister living at Framlingham. In the early 1970s, the Minister came back to live in Woodbridge at the Manse in Grundisburgh Road, however, back now to the days when the Minister resided in the large detached house next to the Church!

Fifty years of the new Church were celebrated in 1922. The Church was specially redecorated and small improvements were made to the facilities. Old pictures of the building reveal a wall in the front of the forecourt, complete with piers and iron railings. Like most metal railings, these were no doubt taken away sometime after 1939; old records of Trustees meetings would perhaps reveal when and what happened to

the wall. Very few members of the present Church family will remember the days when the Church's annual fetes were large and outstanding events in Woodbridge, held at various locations - Melton Grange, "Riverland" in Deben Road, "Elmhurst" in Thoroughfare and "Highfields" in Ipswich Road. The old schoolroom would be brightly decorated when "Fruit Banquets" were held, and there were sewing meetings followed by delicious teas. The Band of Hope flourished and, for a number of years, there was a Church Lawn Tennis Club, with courts in Warren Hill Road. Until 1939, the Wesley Guild played an important part in Church life, with weekly meetings. During less happy times, when soldiers were once again billeted in the Woodbridge area, members of the Church provided canteen facilities and, particularly in the 1939-45 war, many letters of appreciation were received from servicemen.

Sadly, in the early 1960s the building underwent major modifications. Dry rot was discovered in the two-storey section which stood roughly in the area of the present cloakrooms, offices, Wesley Room, etc, and the decision was made to demolish the upper room leaving, at ground floor, a vestry, two schoolrooms, a small kitchen and a toilet. The Sanctuary itself was partitioned in order to provide a smaller worship area with a lower ceiling and a new meeting room was formed at the "road" end of the Church. The main entrance to the building was via the left hand front door which opened into a vestibule leading into the Sanctuary. At this time, the organ was relocated to the back of the Sanctuary. Church life continued to flourish in the altered premises, new families arrived, new needs were identified, new groups were formed.

### Part 3

The last three decades of the Twentieth Century were among the most significant in the Church's history. Following the Centenary celebrations in 1972, the congregation continued to grow steadily, as new families settled in Woodbridge and the surrounding villages, brought here, primarily, by large companies. Insurance companies made their headquarters in Ipswich and the British Telecom Research Laboratories were established at Martlesham. Increased leisure time meant increasing numbers of visitors to the town and, as more people discovered its attractions, more people chose to live here in retirement. The Church family was also blessed with the presence of a number of American families who were stationed at the nearby Air Force bases and by members of the smaller local chapels which, sadly, were closed during this time.

The Woodbridge congregation embraced the Stewardship Scheme as long ago as 1967 during the ministry of Rev Brian Goss, when Pastoral, Social and Finance Committees came into being, to ensure not just good husbandry but to demonstrate the caring mission of the Church towards its wider family and the community.

The Church catered for the growing numbers according to need during the 1970s and early 80s. The Women's Fellowship already held an afternoon devotional meeting and now a Young Wives Group was started, meeting in the evening: A playgroup, which had begun in a small way eventually was kept busy five mornings each-week. The first House Groups came about and voluntary leaders held Youth Clubs. The choir continued to serve the Church well and its Christmas concert was held then, as now, on a Saturday in December, when the programme included a Nativity Play performed by the children. The young people also took part in a conventional anniversary service on a Sunday during the summer months and went on a summer outing, sometimes no

further than the forest for a picnic, but often to Felixstowe, where the beach, the amusement arcade and then a special tea at a cafe all formed part of the fun. On a more serious note, many of the children sat an annual scripture examination. The wider work of the Church was supported then, as now, with special Overseas and Home Missions events, the children collected for the Junior Missionary Association, as it was then called and the National Children's Home (now Action for Children) benefitted each year from the children's enthusiastic selling of "Sunny Smiles". For a number of years, the congregation welcomed groups of young men from Hollesley Bay each Sunday morning and they were served tea and biscuits after the service.

Our Ministers during all of this time acted as free Church Chaplain to both the Hollesley Bay Colony and St Audry's Hospital. Under the leadership of Rev Michael Begg and that of Rev Leonard Oliver in the 1970s and early 1980s, the Church family grew steadily and it became apparent that the premises were less than ideal for its needs.

The Sunday School needed separate rooms for different age groups and at one stage the teenagers decorated the detached brick outhouse, which once stood at the back right hand corner of the church, in order to have their "own place". Previously, this small room had housed the Sunday morning creche. The playgroup, now a Monday to Friday event, met, as did most other groups, in the larger schoolroom at the "road end" of the Church, while the small and inadequate kitchen and the toilet, were at the other end of the building, necessitating long treks through the Sanctuary. Improvements were made when a water supply was laid on in the large school room and a sink and water heater were installed, all of which could be screened off.

Ideas for change were mooted from time to time. Taking out the pews and turning the Sanctuary into a multi-purpose room was way ahead of its time and replacing the "upper room" was another

suggestion. Occasionally, time seems to move very slowly, particularly for the impatient ones amongst us, but on reflection, the period of steady growth and consolidation provided the springboard for the major changes which were to come when the time was right.



The Wesley Room - Picture taken May 2010 © Brian Crowe

#### Part 4

The increasing strength of the Church and the expansion of its

activities continued after the arrival of a new Minister, Reverend David Marshall. David had much experience of Youth Work prior to becoming a minister and, very soon, leaders were being trained and a Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme was launched, attracting young people from both the Church and the community. Existing groups continued, more housegroups were formed, young adults met on Sunday evenings and a "Shell Group" catered for the younger age range during the week.

Despite the difficulties presented by the Church premises, the changing needs of the community became one of the Church's primary concerns. The playgroup was no longer needed, once free nursery places were provided in state schools and the real need within the town was to be found among the elderly, rather than the very young. In 1987, in partnership with Social Services, a Day-care Centre was started, initially on one day each week and then twice per week. Lunch came ready cooked from the kitchens at St Audry's Hospital. Most, but not all, of the helpers were drawn from the Church but volunteers from the community helped with transport. Eventually, it became possible to cook meals on the premises and all cooks were required to take the Local Authority's hygiene examination.

Later, in partnership with both the Local Health Authority and Social Services, a Drop-in Centre was held every Tuesday. This group was chiefly for people with mental health problems, some of whom were learning to cope with living in the community after years of living in a more sheltered environment. For some of them, as well as others in the town, weekdays were tolerable but Sundays proved difficult, hence the opening of the Share & Care group which met fortnightly on a Sunday afternoon.

The Woodbridge Project, later to be known as the Resource Centre, met on three days each week. Social Services provided two members of paid staff for this group of adults with learning difficulties and volunteers came from the Church and also, from

time to time, from the sixth form at Farlingaye School and elsewhere. The Church also provided a home for the Volunteer Stroke Service Club, again funded partly by the local Health Authority and other counselling groups held meetings in the evenings.

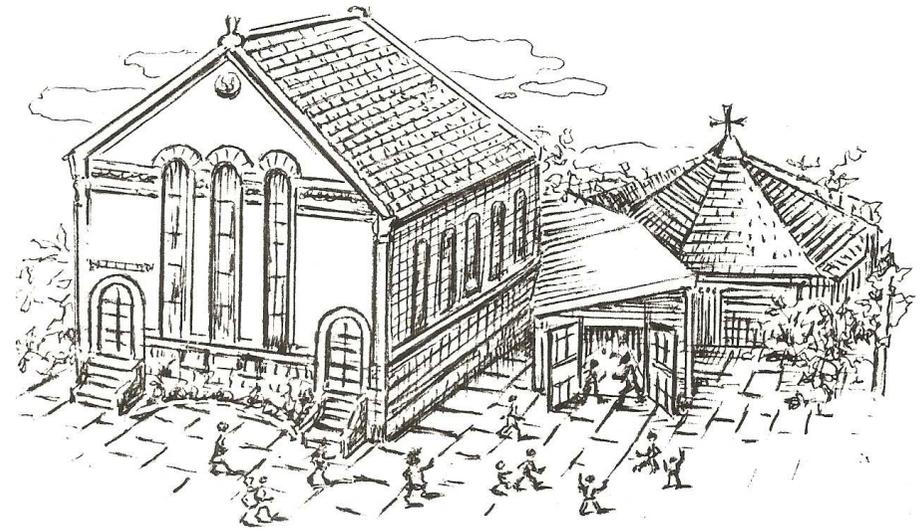
The Church stayed closely involved with all of these groups and was represented on their committee or management team. The aim was to provide the loving care of the Church for the community in areas of need and, although the different groups held services of worship from time to time, evangelism was not the purpose. The marvellous result has been the many people, with no connection to this or any Church, who have found the Methodist Church to be a home-from-home and found great comfort here.

The premises, as they were before the development were woefully inadequate for these increasing activities. At Sunday worship, spare chairs were often needed in the aisles to cope with the congregation and, out of necessity, a goodly part of the Sunday School set out each Sunday morning, come rain or shine, for what was then the National Hall in Sun Lane, which provided us with lots of space and allowed noise unlimited!

Something clearly needed to be done and, in situations such as this, a decision needs to be made, either to go for the "big one" or alter bit by bit, in a piecemeal fashion, as finances allow. Endless discussions were held, much praying took place and eventually the majority decided to step out in faith and support an ambitious scheme which would result in premises, purpose built for the work in hand and which would meet, as far as possible, our needs in the future. Thankfully, within its membership and adherents, the Church was blessed with many extremely able individuals, whose range of talents and professional expertise were to prove a great boon in the days ahead. The vision, ability to plan long term, management skills

and infectious enthusiasm were the gifts brought by the Minister Reverend David Marshall.

The Church moved in the only direction open to a growing Christian community - forward.



Artists impression of how the new extension was envisaged.

## Part 5

Space precludes the recounting here of the day-to-day events involved in the planning and execution of the ambitious scheme undertaken in the 1980s. Working parties had been meeting within the Church in order to identify the needs and,

this done and draft ideas formulated, the advice of the Methodist Church Property Division was sought.

The scheme envisaged was to include a new multi-purpose hall, linked to the existing building by a communal entrance hall, a new kitchen, minister's vestry, an office, a small meeting room, toilets and, at second floor, a suite of rooms which would lend itself to a number of different uses, both for the Church and the community. An entrance ramp and a lift to the first floor would allow disabled people access to all parts of the building. The Sanctuary itself would be "turned around" and when the organ and partition wall were removed (part of an earlier modification of the premises), the Sanctuary would almost be restored to its original size. A balcony would be provided at the West end to house a new, smaller organ and seating for the choir and, beyond the wall at the other end of the refurbished Sanctuary, there would be facilities for storage on several levels. There were mixed feelings about the loss of the mahogany pulpit, the fixed pews and other furniture and, especially, the pipe organ, but the advantages and possibilities presented by the prospect of the refurbished Sanctuary outweighed any lingering sadness.

At national level the Church, initially doubtful, became impressed by the determination to cut costs by utilizing as much volunteer help as possible and the necessary funds were raised from within our own membership and friends, from well-wishers in the community, from the Circuit and the Church at national level and from other "Methodist" sources such as the Rank Trust. Plans for the project had been drawn up by a firm of local architects, but there were many arduous tasks ahead before any work could begin on site.

The scheme was to be undertaken in a number of stages, in order to leave as much as possible of the premises available for everyday use. First, we needed to acquire the necessary piece of land to the side of the existing Church, on which to build the

new hall and this involved protracted negotiations with an adjoining owner and an exchange of land (we were blessed at the time with a large car park). Once agreement had been reached, a new, substantial boundary wall needed to be built. Countless hours were spent by the Minister on fund raising issues, in discussions with the architects (Mullins, Dowse & Partners) and engineers (G C Robertson & Associates) and, needless to say, with the Local Authority Planning Department. Eventually most of the necessary preliminaries were completed and permission was granted. The interior of the building could be altered, the proposed extensions were approved but the facade of the original Church (Grade II Listed) must be preserved.

Wesley Property (Woodbridge) Ltd was the company set up to run the project, with Rev David Marshall as the Managing Director and in the running of the company, once again, the wide variety of talents to be found within the Church were to prove an enormous asset.

A cutting from a local newspaper in August 1989 states that about 100 volunteers, from teenagers to the "silver-haired brigade", were carrying out the work on site with tremendous enthusiasm. The workforce who carried out the initial setting out, digging and laying of foundations for the new hall was split into two groups. Retired members and friends formed the day shift; in the evening, younger (some only slightly younger) folk gave their time after a normal day's work. Floodlighting was provided when needed in order to take advantage of as much of every day as possible.

Such was the care that the workforce applied to the task, that they received commendation from the local Building Control Officer on the way in which the site was maintained. They also gained the admiration and interest of onlookers, with the result that when scaffolding was needed, it came free of charge by courtesy of a local builder. The outstanding instance of the skill

and precision exercised came when the glulam portal frames for the new building, now known as The Octagon, were delivered and placed. The necessary footings were accurate to within a few millimetres.

The Octagon is testimony to the skills not just of the designer but to that of the bricklayers, carpenters, electricians and all who contributed; the final touch being the curtains so professionally made by our own, in-house, talented seamstress, with fabric donated and delivered by a very well-known national company.

The plaque on the wall of the Octagon records the dedication of the new hall by the then Chairman of the District, Rev Richard



Construction of the Octagon Picture supplied by Audrey Robertson

Jones on 29 September 1990. The support and encouragement

given by both Dick Jones and his wife Kathleen, who accompanied him on all of his visits to Woodbridge, never wavered and was of immense value to the Church throughout the entire development.

## Final Stages

As far as an historical account of a living and vibrant society is concerned, by the time it appears in print it is already out-of-date. This series of articles on the history of the Woodbridge Church ends, therefore, with the changes to the buildings which



The new entrance - Picture taken May 2010 © Brian Crowe

took place in the 1980s and 90s.

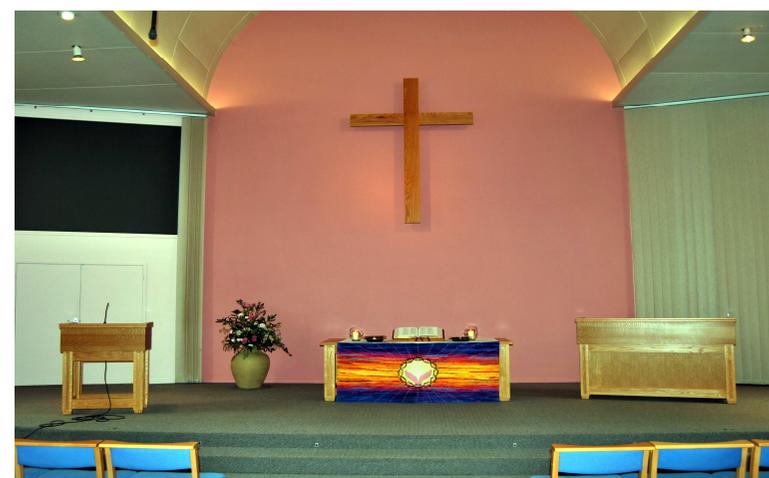
Any family choosing to occupy its home whilst making major structural alterations must expect to be greatly inconvenienced in its day-to-day activities. It may seem strange but this did not happen at Woodbridge, thanks to the foresight of the Minister, Rev David Marshall on the planning front and the supporting advice and expertise to be found among the membership, together with the never-failing guidance of God. Minor inconveniences there may have been but the life of the Church family continued as before and it cannot be over-emphasised that the pastoral care of the Church did not suffer whilst all the building work was going on.

Problems with wall-spread in the existing building had been detected earlier by our own in-house Engineer and local Consulting Engineers were brought in to investigate and recommend appropriate remedial work. Given that the Sanctuary would be out-of-action whilst this work was carried out, other work which formed part of the longer term project was undertaken at the same time. The organ was carefully dismantled and transported for re-erection in the Parish Church at Bildeston and, as a temporary measure, doors were made in the partition wall which separated the Sanctuary from the large schoolroom at the road end of the Church, to allow for the growing congregation attending services. The pews were removed and replaced with new chairs and a temporary electronic organ was installed.

Contemplating the calmness of the Sanctuary as it is now, it is hard to recall the scene which followed when all the fittings had been removed and the floor had great gaping voids to allow for underfloor cables, etc, to be installed. Ceilings had to be altered (not work for the faint-hearted) and doors were open much of the time. Looking back, we cannot but be filled with admiration for all who worked in draughty inhospitable conditions in order to create the lovely place of worship which is ours to enjoy.

The planning of the new Sanctuary had been carried out with great care and sensitivity, and with the help of more than one friend experienced in interior design. The worship area, now located at the "road" end of the Church, would be dominated by a large, simple wooden cross placed high on the wall and formed from the same pale wood as the communion table, the pulpit and the font. All were specially designed and, with the carefully chosen chairs and carpeting, an ambience lending itself to worship and many other activities was created. A much researched and carefully selected new organ was sited on the balcony created at the opposite end of the room. The acoustics in the Sanctuary are held to be very good.

New



The Sanctuary - Picture taken May 2010 © Brian Crowe

technology was not overlooked and an up-dated sound system was installed which would allow for the control of volume within the Church and the recording of services for those unable to attend Sunday worship. A large screen on the left side of the worship area would be used for the screening of films and allow helpful scenes, pictures and words to be shown during services. All would be managed from a bank of controls on the balcony.

All of the facilities which would allow for housing a day-time centre, for people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, were formed at first floor level at the rear of the building, with the necessary lift, sitting room, kitchen, bathroom and office. These rooms were, of course, for the use of the Church at all other times. At ground floor, a Minister's vestry, office and a small room for quiet times and small meetings, were formed along with cloakrooms for women, men and those in wheelchairs.

Again, the workforce was largely made up of the familiar brigade who were, for the most part, retired members, although some help was brought in, to avoid a too lengthy finishing stage. Anyone who knows even a little about building renovation work on this scale will know that it is often the myriad details needed to complete the refurbishment that seem to be interminable and the extra help meant that this did not happen. Mention must also be made of the American friends from the Air force Base who helped on site and the young man from the Resource Centre who was to be seen lending a hand quite often. Other friends from inside and beyond our own Church gave assistance in a variety of other ways, among them our own Stan Wigg, who lived then in St John's Street and allowed a group of our young people to meet in his house on Sunday mornings and, in the same way, we had invaluable help from Father Peter Wynecus of St Thomas's RC Church, who made his home available. Those who worked among the bricks and dust and paint pots will always remember Margot Walter's unflinching supply of homemade

biscuits, which brightened their tea breaks.

The glorious climax to all the amazing effort which had taken place came when, in the presence of Rev Ronald Hoar, President of the Conference, Rev Richard Jones, Chairman of the District, Rev Malcolm Clark, Superintendent Minister Ipswich Circuit, together with the local Member of Parliament, representatives of the Woodbridge Christian Council, the District and Town Councils, and many other invited guests, including Rev Leonard & Mrs. Phyllis Oliver, the congregation gathered to praise God and rejoice in a task well accomplished with His help and in His name.

The service held on 5th October 1991 entitled "Dedication and Opening of the Church and new extensions" began with words spoken by our Minister, Rev David Marshall and addressed to the President of the Conference. These words seem to me most appropriate for the ending of this account.

**"This suite of buildings has been created, and the Sanctuary refurbished by the vision and toil of the Members and Friends of this Church, to enhance and extend the Work of God in our neighbourhood. We invite you to enter and offer this House of God to Him as we rededicate ourselves to His Service."**

Postscript

It would have been difficult to mention the names of all the people who gave of their time and talents in the last refurbishment of the Church;

there were so many. As has already been acknowledged without the dedication, talents and enthusiasm of the Minister, Rev David Marshall, it is extremely unlikely that work on the scale carried out would ever have been achieved. There is, however, one other name associated with the Church at Woodbridge whose efforts have become legendary and no one will mind my making this exception. John Wheldon, retired Civil Engineer, has given his professional expertise and exercised his other considerable skills (carpenter, mason, painter ... you name it and the chances are he has done it) for the benefit of this Church throughout the many years he served as Property Steward. His advice was invaluable because he spotted defects and knew the causes when less expert eyes did not and his meticulous listing of work required and tasks carried out on the property, raised the standard of records to a level not seen before. He has carried out thousands of hours of work on the Woodbridge Church, before, during and after the development, and his advice to me in connection with the recent history of the Church has been very welcome and his written records most valuable. We owe John a great debt of gratitude

Audrey Robertson

June 2010

## Appendix

### **WOODBIDGE METHODIST CHURCH - JUNE 2011**

It is now twenty years since the major refurbishment and extension of Woodbridge Methodist Church was completed in 1991. Shortly afterwards, in 1993, Rev David Marshall, during whose ministry the work had been planned and accomplished, left to continue his ministry as a Circuit Superintendent in Kent. When David and Judith left to live in Whitstable, we welcomed Rev Stephen Yelland, his wife Claire and their two young sons to the Manse in Grundisburgh Road. When Stephen's ministry in the Ipswich Circuit came to an end in 2001, he and his family moved to the Bury St Edmunds Circuit where he became the Superintendent Minister. At that time, there seemed to be some doubt whether or not we would be allocated our own minister for the three churches in the Woodbridge Section of the Ipswich Circuit, because of the shortage of clergy available in the United Kingdom. We were, however, greatly blessed and the World Church came to the rescue. For one year we were pleased to welcome Rev Jeremy Hajdu -Paulen, a young American Intern, and his wife Allison. Inevitably, Jeremy was called back to the USA after twelve months, where he was fully ordained shortly afterwards. In 2002 the Methodist Church in Germany graciously allowed us to have the services of Rev Frank Aichele, who arrived with Gabi his wife, and they made their home here until they were recalled to Germany in 2010. Frank now has an important role in the world mission of the United Methodist Church. We are now back to UK Methodism and our current minister, Rev Martin Dawes and his wife Pam took up residence at the Manse in the summer of 2010. Thus, the Methodist system, which never allows anyone to become complacent or stay anywhere too long, still pertains after a great many years. A complete list of all the Ministers who have served in Woodbridge appears at the end of this short appendix to the history booklet.

Alongside the Minister, a large team of officers, including no fewer than ten Stewards, ensure that an efficient administration is maintained at Woodbridge. There is also a large team of Pastoral Friends who seek to befriend all who worship with us and who keep in touch with those unable to attend church by visiting them in their homes and delivering our monthly magazine The Link. Edited and printed at Woodbridge, The Link also covers news from the Framlingham and Orford churches.

No alterations have been made to the structure of the buildings since the major alterations and extensions were completed in 1991 and the premises have served the church and the community, in the ways

envisaged, extremely well. Redecoration has taken place and furnishings have been renewed and equipment updated as and when required. All of the rooms in the church are used regularly for meetings of our own members or groups from the community; some of the latter have been with us since the 1980s and before the alterations started. The twice weekly Lunch and Leisure Club (formerly the Day Centre) is still popular and is now administered by Age Concern, with the help of volunteers from our own membership and from the community. A Parents & Toddlers morning is held weekly and our regular Saturday Coffee Morning welcomes and makes provision for parents with children. The Guild continues to meet regularly, as does the Ladies' Friendship Group, and we have a fortnightly Walking Group whose guided walks have covered a wide area of the surrounding countryside. Several House Groups provide regular fellowship and, occasionally, their members have conducted morning worship. The Choir continues to flourish, contributes to worship and maintains a long tradition of presenting two concerts each year. A small committed band of members continue to learn alongside the children in Junior Worship on Sundays and a crèche is available for any babies present. On the mission front, besides giving support to Methodist Relief and Development Fund, Action for Children and Christian Aid among others, we support local charities and raise funds for individual projects in a number of African countries.

Along with the town of Woodbridge itself, we are committed to Fair Trade and sell a wide range of goods produced here and in poorer countries. Ecumenically, this church plays an active role in hosting services and co-operating in joint ventures with other denominations via Woodbridge Churches Together. Several of our members are involved with those from other churches in the Town Pastors scheme which operates alongside the police in both Woodbridge and Ipswich. Our printed weekly notice sheet is headed **"Welcome to Woodbridge Methodist Church"** and also bears the words which state in simple terms our continuing purpose:

**"We seek to share the love of God, as seen in Jesus Christ, with everyone through worship, prayer, care and mission".**

## WOODBIDGE MINISTERS

1872-74	Rev William Ainsworth
1874-76	Rev Jonathan Foster
1876-78	Rev John Stembridge
1878-81	Rev Samuel Shrimpton
1881-84	Rev Thomas Tretheway
1884-86	Rev Joseph Crowther
1886-88	Rev Thomas Puddicombe
1888-91	Rev Samuel F Balch
1891-94	Rev Marshall Limon
1894-97	Rev John Stevens
1897-1900	Rev James S Bellman
1900-04	Rev Edward J Simons
1904-07	Rev Edward A Bennett
1907-09	Rev William G Allen
1909-13	Rev W J Penberthy White
1913-19	Rev T Llewellyn Jones
1919-23	Rev Sydney T Hopps
1923-25	Rev Richard E Brown
1925-28	Rev Robert W Green
1928-31	Rev E L Ley Peake
1931-33	Rev Charles W Armstrong
1933-37	Rev Harry Johnson
1937-42	Rev John A Leafe
1942-45	Rev Leonard W Juby
1945-47	Rev Edgar M Ozanne
1947-50	Rev Charles Gimblett
1950-55	Rev W Morley Waite
1955-57	Rev J Frederick Jones
1957-62	Rev Claude W G Thompson
1962-64	Rev Edwin S Nodder
1964-69	Rev Brian W Goss
1969-71	Rev David N Clark
1971-77	Rev Michael B Begg
1977-82	Rev Leonard Oliver
1982-93	Rev David Marshall
1993-2001	Rev Stephen Yelland
2001-02	Rev Jeremy Hajdu-Paulen
2002-10	Rev Frank Aichele
2010-	Rev Martin Dawes

