



***A Brief History of  
Pewsey Methodist Chapel  
1873 - 2023***



## John Wesley, Founder of Methodism, Visits Pewsey 1764

The founder of Methodism ventured to Pewsey in 1764. He left Bristol on Monday October 1<sup>st</sup> preaching that evening at Bradford on Avon. His Journal records:



*Tues. 2. I breakfasted at the Devizes, with Mr B-----, a black swan, an honest lawyer! Hence we rode through a most intricate road to Pewsey. I found a neighbouring gentleman had been there, moving every stone, to prevent my preaching. I was informed, his first design was to raise a mob; then he would have had the Churchwardens*

*interpose: whether they intended it or no, I cannot tell; but they neither did or said anything. The congregation filled a great part of the church, and were all deeply attentive. Surely good will be done in this place, if it be not prevented by a mixture of various doctrines.*

John Wesley preached in St John's Church by invitation of Rev. Joseph Townsend, Rector of Pewsey from 1764 until about 1816. It was in Rev. Townsend's very first year as Rector that he invited John Wesley to preach in the Parish church, and this aroused some local resentment as Wesley records in his Journal. However any objections were overcome because John Wesley was, after all, an ordained Church of England clergyman.

It seems it was a large congregation that heard John Wesley, for his fame had travelled before him and people often walked long distances to hear him. It is reasonable to suppose that among their number there were sympathisers who had come to hear for the first time a new-style preacher with an unorthodox presentation of the message of the Gospel. Others perhaps were just inquisitive to see and hear this unusual man.

John Wesley may have spent the night in Pewsey, probably as the guest of the Rector, possibly using the guest bedroom overlooking the main lawn at the rear of the Old Rectory (which is now the home of the Barnabas Fund).

### The Reverend Joseph Townsend

Rev. Joseph Townsend, was Rector of Pewsey from 1764 until about 1816. He had an unusually wide educational background for his time, having studied Geology and Medicine before taking Holy Orders. It is often forgotten that John Wesley remained an ordained Anglican clergyman until his death and it was never his intention to found a new denomination, so in 1764 when John Wesley preached in Pewsey, the Methodist movement was still within the Anglican orbit, and Townsend was a member of it.

Sadly Rev. Townsend's continued sympathy with the Methodists subsequently led to further disturbance in the parish. In about 1785, he admitted to his pulpit a Methodist preacher who was not an Anglican ordained clergyman. Mr. Wroughton, a Justice of the Peace residing in Pewsey, strenuously objected and persuaded the Bishop of Salisbury to issue an "inhibition" against the Rector, at the same time directing Mr. Wroughton to "take care that no unlearned person preach in Pewsey Church".

A disorderly scene followed, in which, it was later alleged, Mr. Wroughton struck the Rector. The Rector went to law, the case being heard before Lord Mansfield, assisted by Justices Aston, Wilcot and Yates, Mr. Wroughton being charged with obstructing Divine Service in Pewsey Church and grossly insulting the Rector

After hearing all the evidence, the Court ruled against the Rector, with costs. They held that, in instigating legal proceedings, he had suppressed relevant information. He had not disclosed that he had departed from the usual procedure for celebrating, Divine Services and had not mentioned the Bishop's "inhibition". He had also preached against Mr. Wroughton in his sermon. As for the

alleged striking of the Rector, this was viewed as a mere “accidental brushing with the fingers”.

These events were lampooned by Richard Graves in a ‘ballad’ circulated around the time of the final breach of Methodism with the established Church in 1784 and following on from his novel ‘The Spiritual Quixote’, written in 1772, which was a satire on John Wesley, George Whitefield, and Methodism in general. (*A copy of the ‘ballad’ is currently hung on the wall of the resources area*).

Despite all the furore Rev. Joseph Townsend remained as Rector of Pewsey for a further 31 years!

## **Pewsey’s First Methodist Chapel**

Early Methodists in Pewsey would have gathered their friends and neighbours together in their own homes. These cottage meetings laid the foundation of many Methodist societies and it is highly probable the first Pewsey Methodist Society began in this way following John Wesley’s visit to Pewsey.

It was not until 1834 that the Methodists had a chapel of their own. On 15th May of that year, ten local men, headed by Joseph Phelps, Ironmonger, of Marlborough agreed each to pay a sum of five shillings to secure the lease of 5 lugs of land (about 150 sq. yds.) on which to erect a chapel. The land was leased from William Allen, Carpenter, of Pewsey and situated “in Pewsey aforesaid, bounded on the east by a certain footpath leading from Pewsey High Street towards Kings Corner and on the south west and north by property belonging to William Allen”-

In the Wiltshire Records Office is a pro forma letter dated September 1834 addressed to the Bishop of Salisbury, as follows:-

*I, William Pollard, of Hungerford, Berkshire, Wesleyan Preacher, do hereby certify that a certain newly erected building called the Wesleyan Chapel, situate in the Parish of Pewsey in the County of Wilts. and in your Lordship’s diocese, is intended forthwith to be used as a place of worship by an Assembly or Congregation of Protestants; and I do hereby require you to register and record the same according to the provision of the Act.....and hereby request a Certificate thereof.*

*Witness by hand this ninth day of September 1834*

*William Pollard.*

The Certificate was issued on 13th September 1834.

The location of the Chapel is in some doubt. The 1839 tithe map of Pewsey shows a footpath running from High Street to Kings Corner and following the line of the present footpath behind 2,4 and 8 Easterton Lane. Probably the Chapel was to the right of this path. It may have served until 1873 when the Wesleyans moved to the present site in North Street.

## **Our Present Chapel**

In 1871 a number of Methodists formed themselves into a trust in order to purchase a plot of land on which to erect a new place of worship. Nine men under the guidance of Rev. Edward Barber of Marlborough, the Superintendent Minister, formed the trust. They were:

Frederick Lewis of Wilton (a Yeoman);  
Thomas Smith of Easton (a Shopkeeper)  
John Wagstaff Fisher of Pewsey (a Grocer)  
George Hunt of Pewsey (a Watchmaker)  
Crosby Hold of Pewsey (a Chimney Sweep)  
Jacob Crook of Marlborough (a Grocer)  
David Goddard of Wilton (a Yeoman)  
Edward Pye of Savernake Park (a Yeoman)  
John Barnes of Wilton (a Yeoman)

The site on which the Chapel now stands was purchased on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1871 from the trustees of William Mills Edmonds, a warehouseman, of Gutter Lane, Cheapside in the City of London for the sum of £85. Two extracts from the Indenture of that date make interesting reading:

*NOW THIS INDENTURE WITNESSETH that in pursuance of the said Contract and in consideration of the sum of £85 sterling by the said parties hereto of the fourth part to the said William Mills Edmonds, John Sheppard Edmonds and John Edwin Corben well and truly paid at the execution of these presents the receipt whereof the said William Mills Edmonds etc. etc. do hereby acknowledge.....*

*All that piece or parcel of ground ..... situate in North Street in the Parish of Pewsey and having frontage of 54 ft to the said street and a depth of 225 ft from east to west in the several occupations of George Charles Banning, Joseph Belcher and John Kimber bounded on the north by the premises of the New Inn on the east by North Street on the south by a dwellinghouse and garden in the occupation of Henry Howse and on the west by a Meadow in the occupation of the said George Charles Banning, together with the Blacksmith's Shop erected thereon in the occupation of the said John Kimber ....*

The Contract for the building of the Chapel was signed two years later on 3rd June 1873. The builder was Thomas Barratt of Newport Street, Swindon; the cost of the work was £624; and the Chapel had to be completed on or before the 31st October 1873.

*Here are a few extracts from this interesting old building contract:*

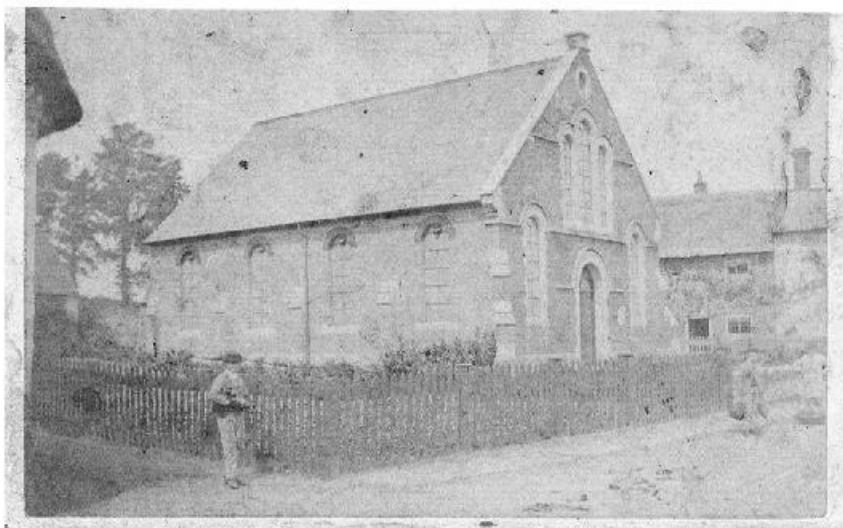
*THE CONTRACT WITNESSETH that the said contractor...will... at his own proper costs and charges erect build and completely cover in and finish upon land belonging to the said Trustees ..... a chapel buildings walls and all other necessary works connected therewith and execute such works in a good substantial and workmanlike manner .....and limited and confirmably to the plans drawings elevations and admeasurements .....hereunto annexed and identified by the signatures of the said Contractor and Trustees or of Messieurs Lansdown and Shopland their Architects and Surveyors.*

*That the said Contractor shall find and provide at his own costs and charges water for the use of the Works and Workmen and good and sufficient materials of all kinds and the best of their respective kinds and all tools tackle scaffolding cartage labour and everything necessary for the execution and completion of the said works and shall pay the wages of all Artificers Labourers and workmen employed in the said Works.*

*That the Works shall be carried on so that the whole shall be complete and fit for use and occupation and Divine Service on or before 31st day of October 1873 under a penalty of Three Pounds for every week during which the said buildings and works remain incomplete.*

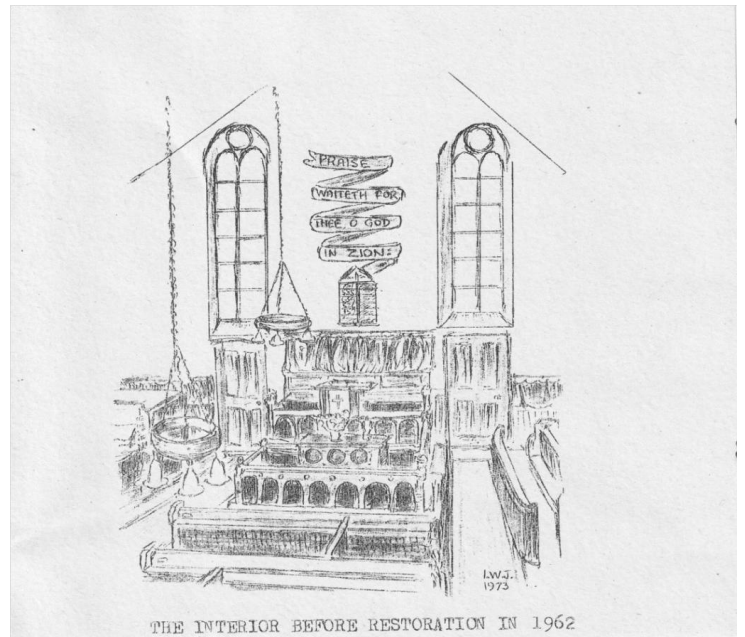
As far as can be ascertained the work was completed on time and no penalty was paid, so it can be deduced that our Chapel was built in less than 5 months!

*Few pictures of the Chapel at that time exist and the earliest we have is this one:*

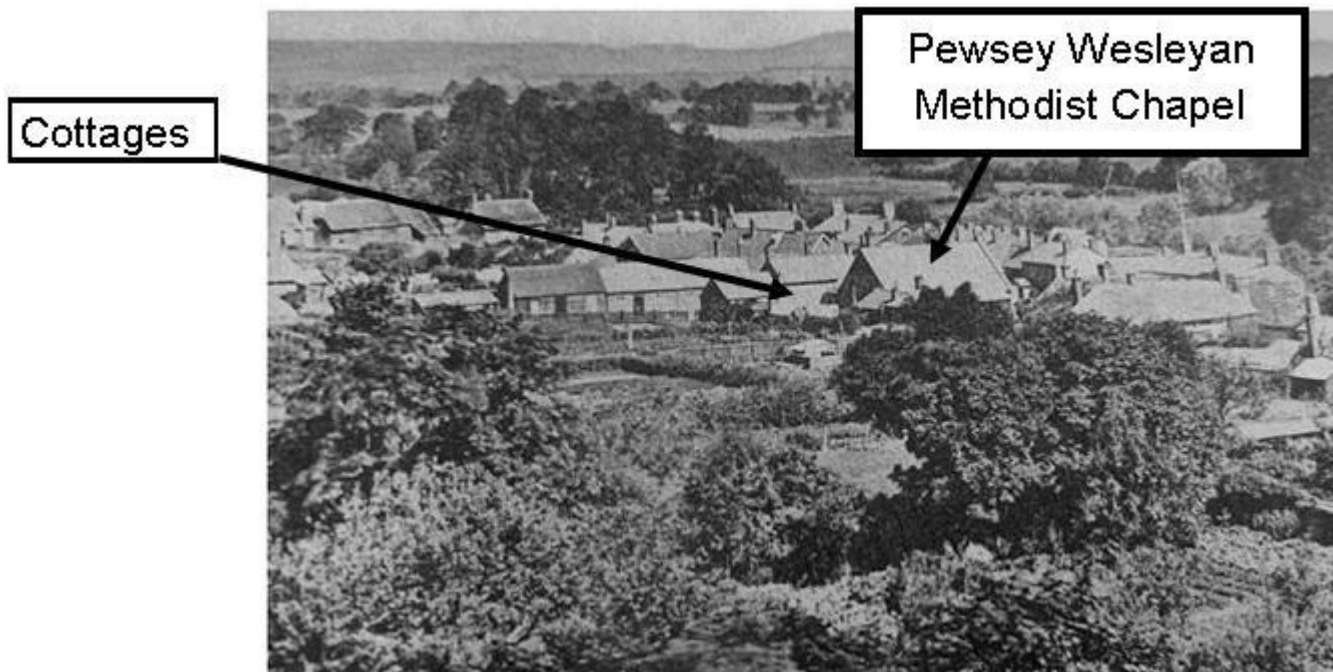


The new Chapel was little more than a shell, and it was not until about 1908 that the gallery was added, which increased the seating to accommodate about 250 worshippers.  
(Sadly access to the gallery is by a very narrow staircase from out of the Vestry which under modern Health and Safety Legislation mean it can no longer be used to seat worshippers).

A sketch (reproduced here) was included in the Centenary Booklet which gives an idea of how the front interior of the Chapel looked before a major renovation took place in 1962:



We have one other photograph that was taken before the Wesley Hall was added:



The two adjacent cottages were given to the trustees in August 1914 by Mrs Hunt to ensure there was always a home for a chapel caretaker.

This gives an indication of the size of the original plot owned by the Chapel.  
 In 1921 the trust was renewed and the new trustees were:

- Andrew Waylen of High Street (Grocer)
- Walter James Absalom of Southcott Road (Carpenter)
- William Bennett of George Lane, Marlborough (Grocer)
- Arthur John Henry Vile of Marlborough College (Steward)
- Charles Whitbread of High Street (Sadler)
- William Frank White of Milton (Decorator)
- William Henry White of Milton (Smallholder)
- Alfred William Amor of Southcott Road (Tailor)
- George Frank Perry of Milton (Watercress Grower)
- Howard Lampard of Pewsey (Motor Engineer)
- William Thomas Bailey of Verandah Cottage (Bootmaker)

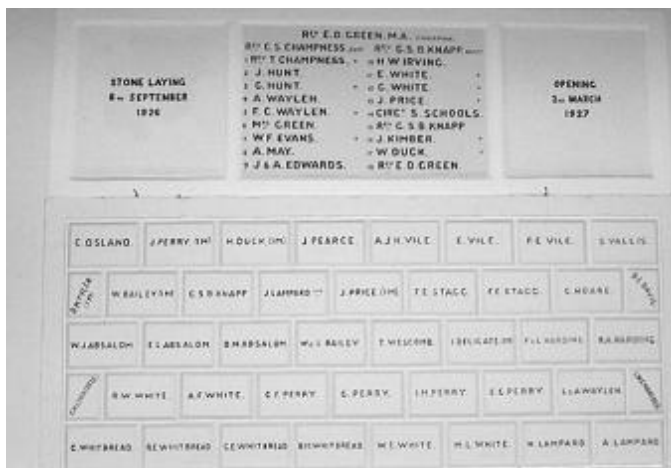
In 1921 they decided to attend to the 'greatly needed repairs and renovation of their chapel – inside and out'. This work cost nearly £140 and the appeal for financial support said: 'Finding that as in 'the Early Church' not many mighty in riches amongst us, we are forced to extend our appeal further afield to the Friends and Acquaintances of our People'.

No doubt this major renovation scheme was intended as a prelude to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 1923. Unfortunately, no records are available of these celebrations.

In 1925 plans were put in hand for the building of a hall for the use of the Sunday School and other church organisations, and 2 years and 8 months later the **Wesley Hall** was opened free of debt, having cost £1,400 to build.

There was a great Thanksgiving Day on 11<sup>th</sup> July 1928. At the two services on that day five ministers were present: Rev. G.S.B. Knapp (the resident minister), Rev. A.A. Thomas, Rev. F.W. Knapp (R.A.F.), Rev. E.D. Green M.A., and Rev. A.H. Bestall.

*A list of some of the Fund-raising contributors to this work can still be found in the Wesley Hall today.*



The Diamond Jubilee was celebrated in 1933 with the Chapel being renovated and redecorated at a cost of £96.3s.6d! A 're-opening' celebration service was held followed by a fellowship tea, where a cake donated by Mrs Marshall and inscribed 'Pewsey Methodist Church Diamond Jubilee 1873 - 1933' was shared.

A further renovation of the Chapel and Wesley Hall was carried out in 1948 at the cost of £300.

Following the sale of a piece of land at the rear of the Wesley Hall to Pewsey Rural District Council, (to enable an extension of their car park), the sale of the two cottages (whose repair and upkeep were becoming quite a burden) and the sale of 10 foot of the frontage land to Wiltshire County Council, (for the purpose of a bus pull-in), permission was sought to embark on a

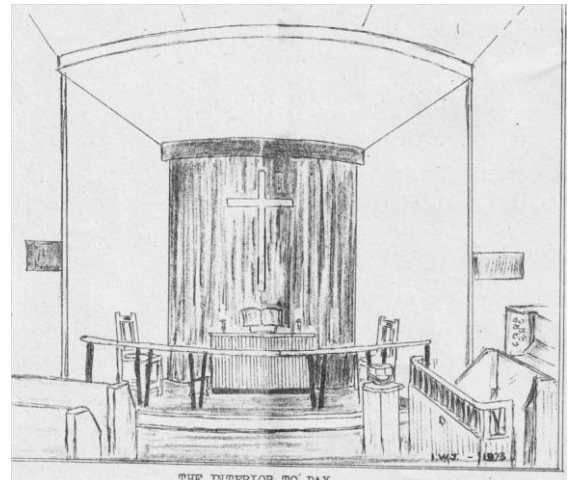
modernisation scheme for the Church.

The permission was given and in 1962 Mr W.H.Cripps, Chartered Architect of Oxford, who specialised in church building, was engaged to prepare an improvement scheme. In due course four schemes were submitted for the trustees to consider. The chosen scheme after tenders had been received, was expected to cost in the region of £1,050. Work started on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1962 and was completed in time for a re-opening and re-dedication service on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July 1962.

During those ten weeks trustees and members of the church worked like Trojans. In addition to organising jumble sales, talent schemes, an envelope scheme and a gift day; the able-bodied members undertook the decoration of the vestibule, gallery and gallery front, thereby reducing the amount and cost of work to be done by the contractors, Messrs. F. Dewey Ltd.

The 'new look' interior did away with the Victorian preaching rostrum and with it went all the woodwork in front and around it. In its place an architrave forming a small sanctuary was made, and the centre of attention focused on the communion table with an illuminated cross suspended invisibly in front of a blue velvet curtain. Around the foot of the architrave was a communion rail. New choir stalls were brought forward more into the body of the chapel.

*This sketch of the 'new' Sanctuary is taken from the Centenary Booklet*



Previously when one entered the Chapel the view was blocked by a wooden screen and curtain and access was by means of two side-aisles. The screen was removed and with a central aisle an uninterrupted view extending from the main door through to the sanctuary was opened up. The unsightly slow-combustion stove was removed. The pews had to be completely re-arranged and when they were taken up it was found that much of the floor had dry rot and had to be renewed.

As an aid to the acoustics and warmth a false ceiling was erected over the main body of the church, and a series of sliding glass panels to open or shut off the balcony were added. Lighting was changed to simple semi-recessed lighting with the centre-piece of the cross being highlighted, along with the creation of the halo of light surrounding the chancel arch.

A careful choice of church furniture took many hours of deliberation and journeys to distant churches. The final decision was for a pulpit, communion table and rail on the lines of those in the then new Methodist Church at Queen's Drive, Swindon; another creation of the architect, Mr Cripps.

The final total cost of the scheme was £1,170. and within eighteen months the treasurer was able to report that the scheme had been paid for thanks to a small grant and the unstinting efforts and generosity of the Congregation.

A further stage in the improvement of the interior was carried out in 1969 when the old dark oak pews were removed and encased in light oak in keeping with the other new woodwork and the floor of the church was carpeted at a total cost of £1,031. (One Church Member who vividly remembers the clad pews remarked: 'Boy were those pews heavy when we had to move them - oak on top of oak!')



*The Front of the Chapel showing the 'clad' pews.*



In 1973 the Centenary celebrations included a series of special events spread over eight days . There were Services on Sunday 18th led in the morning by Rev. F. Warren Davies from Hungerford, and in the evening by Rev. Leslie J. Groves from Andover.

On Monday 19th there was a 'Grand Social Evening', and on Tuesday 20th a concert by the Salvation Army Songsters. Then on Wednesday 20th the Pupils of Devizes School present a production of 'The Large Aggregate' by Peter English. On Thursday 22nd entertainment was provided by The MacDougall Group from Wootton Bassett and on Friday 23rd by the Ramsbury Methodist Band and the Ravensbury Singers. The Sue Swanton Players presented Music and Drama on Saturday 24th.

*(Admission to these Weeknight Events cost 10pence or a Weekly Season Ticket, admitting the holder to all events, was available for 50pence).*

The celebrations concluded on Sunday 25th November when both the morning and evening services were led by the Chair of District, Rev. Leslie M. Wollen.

A Centenary Souvenir Brochure was produced containing memories of years past and including these words which clearly showed the changing attitude of the Parish Church since the days of the events lampooned by Richard Graves in 1772:

*And now we arrive at the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Chapel. It is good to know that the congregation of St. John's will be joining with us in our Service of Thanksgiving. For in recent years our respective Churches have drawn much closer together by sharing in each other's services; we are now in no sense rivals, but rather partners in the work of extending God's Kingdom.*

This changed attitude continues today in the Pewsey Churches Working Together (PCWT) meetings and the shared Christian witness events in the village.



In 1975 the Wesley Hall was extended, with toilets being added, and the Chapel was re-roofed at a total cost of £4,506. (£3,300 of which was met from the Circuit Advance Fund).

The 125th Anniversary of the Chapel in 1998 began with the launch of a 'Methodist Morsels' Cook Book compiled of favourite recipes supplied by Church Members and Friends from the village. Recipes ranged from Stuffed Trout and Anna's Cauliflower Dish to a traditional 125 year old Boiled Fruit Cake recipe and Honey Comb Ice Cream! All the proceeds from the sale of the recipe book went to Chapel funds.

Additionally there was a Lent Lunch, proceeds of which went to the Barnabas Fund for the Sudanese Refugee Project. A Gift Day was held to raise funds for future work in the Chapel. There was a Chapel Open Day with a display of old Pewsey photographs together with historical documents from the 125 years of the Chapel.

The Celebrations culminated in a 10.30am Worship Service led by The Chair of the Bristol District, Rev. Ward Jones which was followed by a Thanksgiving Lunch, and a 3.30pm united Swindon and Marlborough Circuit Service of thanksgiving.

In 1997 it was discovered that work would need to be carried out on the Church floor so, even as the Chapel celebrated the 125th Anniversary in 1998, plans for projects that would improve the kitchen facilities and install much needed disabled access to the Wesley Hall and the Chapel were



under consideration.

Following consultation with the congregation the then leadership team identified the following areas which could be improved and make the premises an attractive venue for community use:

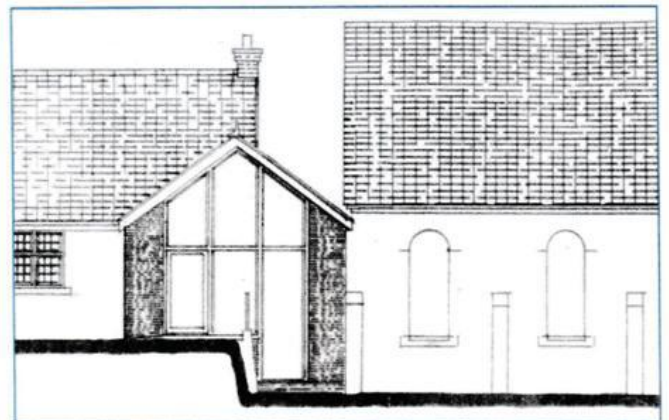
The Church interior -	making it a more flexible worship area and with provision of new PA sound equipment.
Entrance Rooms -	enlarged area for drop in centre and informal gathering.
Wesley Hall and Kitchen -	improve facilities.
Gallery -	to create a meeting room and prayer area.
Exterior -	To make the Chapel more visible and give a sense of welcome to visitors.
Access -	provide much needed easier access for wheelchairs, prams and pushchairs.
Toilets -	provision of a toilet for the disabled

Initial work was carried out as far as the funding would allow with a refurbished kitchen and utility sink area, the installation of a new PA and the creation of a temporary coffee bar (with no plumbing) and a resources area at the front of the church with improved lighting and carpeting.

Following these initial improvements in 2002 the scheme to realize the complete project was put on hold as the possibility of redeveloping the whole site with flats providing capital to develop a new church and hall in a two story building was explored. Planning permission to demolish the existing buildings, as they are in a conservation area, was not obtained and a new architect was appointed to develop a more acceptable scheme which included the provision of a new side facing main entrance along with all the other areas previously identified for improvement.

In 2006 the pews were replaced with chairs, making the worship area more flexible, and a new organ was purchased.

The aim was to complete the whole project by September 2007 and to be debt free within 3 years. Total estimated cost: £150,000.



*Proposed exterior view of new entrance.*

The project actually took until 2008 to be completed at a total cost of just over £200,000! *(This was without replacing the stairs into the gallery to provide a meeting room and prayer area, which proved not to be viable).*

Thanks to the generosity of Church members and their years of fund-raising efforts, recovery of Gift Aid, grants from Kennet District Council, the Rank Organisation, the Pewsey Carnival Fund, Garfield Weston Foundation, the Leonard Leity Stote Trust, the All Churches Trust, Wiltshire Historical Churches, Methodist Insurance, Connexional Advance Priority Fund (CAPF), Circuit Funds, and Christchurch, Marlborough work finally began on 2nd January 2008. and the opening and re-dedication service was held on 6th September 2008.

Mr Arthur Johnson project managed the re-development for the Church with administration support from Mr Stephen Longson. Rev. Colin Scarrett was the initial fund-raising co-ordinator, a role that was later taken over by Mr Colin Lampard.

A service of re-dedication of the Church and new Wesley Link was held on 6th September 2008 led by Rev. Steve Sankey *(the former minister of the Chapel who began the project)*, Rev. Susan Holden *(the Minister of the Chapel who saw the project through to completion)* and Circuit Superintendent Minister Rev. Derek Collins. The opening ribbon was cut by one time member of

the Chapel Mr Doug Lampard.



*A Vision Achieved!  
The New Side Entrance.*



*The redeveloped Interior of the Chapel showing the wheelchair access ramp and the more flexible use worship area.*

Unfortunately, the Chapel had to be closed again in 2010 when the organ fell through the floor and extensive dry rot was discovered! Sunday Worship continued in the Wesley Hall while treatment was carried out and the floor was replaced - this time with concrete.

In 2014 the dry rot was found to have spread to the Wesley Hall floor which also had to be treated and replaced - again with concrete. Dry rot was also found in the wooden wall cladding in the Wesley Hall. The cladding had to be removed and the whole Hall treated. Thankfully the dry rot did not spread to the wooden cladding on the ceiling.

The total cost of replacing both floors and treating the dry rot came to around £30,000.

The next temporary closure of the Chapel came in March 2020 during the Coronavirus pandemic. Services continued to be shared either via e-mail or by hard-copy and Church members kept in touch with each other. The Chapel briefly opened for worship between October 2020 and January 2021 when Covid restrictions again meant temporary closure, During this time great care was taken to provide a safe worship space. Named plastic chairs replaced the fabric chairs and were well spaced out. Face Masks became common place and hand sanitizers and information signs were installed throughout the Chapel. Many of the more vulnerable members of the congregation

continued to worship at home.

A great deal of work to ensure the safety of those attending the Chapel at this time was undertaken by Pete Whittington (*Senior Steward*), Stephen Longson and Stewart Pearce (*Property Steward*).



Eventually the Chapel was able to re-open on 25th April 2021 for Sunday Worship, although the length of the service was shortened. Great care was taken to continue to comply with Covid restrictions, but eventually with the ending of the restrictions the fabric chairs were returned to the Worship area and Church life began to return to normal.

### Carols by Candlelight

One of the most popular services in the life of the Chapel since 1962 has been the annual 'Carols by Candlelight' Service held just before Christmas.

The service was the brain-child of Mr R.S. Waite, a former Chapel Treasurer and was greatly enhanced with the provision, by Mr D. Lampard, of wrought-iron candelabras and candle stands which are still in use today. On occasion the service has been so popular it was a case of 'standing room only!'



### Looking Outward

At Harvest time each year the Church has support a number of different charities: choosing them on a basis of one year abroad, one year at home.

Among those who have been supported are:

Tools with a Mission  
Water Aid  
Tear Fund  
Air Ambulance

Farming Community Network  
Devizes Foodbank  
Swindon's Women's Refuge  
Shonda Appeal

Perhaps one of the biggest charity Church and Community event over the years was the one for filling boxes for the **Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal**. Mr Stephen Longson was the driving force behind this making contacts far and wide who provided articles to put in the boxes.



By laying out the Chapel with tables covered in 'goodies' to go in the boxes the people of the village joined the congregation on a Saturday in November to fill the carefully Christmas paper covered Shoeboxes. This resulted one year in the number of boxes filled totalling over 700!



Sadly this is one event that for a variety of reasons no longer happens.

The Church hasn't stopped looking outward and in August 2021 the Wesley Hall became the home of the Pewsey Community Action group, now known as the **Positive Community Action** group.

The PCA began during the Coronavirus pandemic and was originally named Pewsey Community Coronavirus Assistance (PCCA). It was established in February 2020 by current director Mr Phil Brady. The PCCA began as a grassroots response to our local community's need for help at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. Initially they worked out of the Little Lunchbox Café, then the Scout Hut, then the Bouverie Hall and when these venues were no longer available we offered them the use of the Wesley Hall.

The PCA is operated by volunteers and aims to help *'people through times of hardship and loneliness in Wiltshire. Delivering positive grassroots solutions, unifying our communities and reducing anxiety, food waste and hunger in isolated rural areas'*.

During the pandemic the volunteers became lifelines for so many, collecting medications, shopping, providing meals and making vital 'Buddy' friendship calls. They even set up a click, collect and doorstep delivery library so people could order books, films, games or puzzles either online or over the phone and have them delivered safely to their door.

This invaluable service hasn't stopped with the ending of the pandemic restrictions. The volunteers continue to work to improve the lives of those who continue to struggle during the current economic crisis. Among the work they do:

- A Food Share initiative run from the Wesley Hall three mornings a week where food from local shops and supermarkets that would otherwise go to waste is available for free or a small donation.
- Nutritious food boxes are distributed to families and individuals who are struggling financially.
- Provision and distribution of hot meals on a Friday.
- 'Buddy' phone calls are on-going.
- Every Saturday morning in the Wesley Hall there is a friendship café for those in the community who need a bit of company. Donation based hot drinks and cake are served and fresh fruit and vegetables are available for patrons to take home afterwards. This is a service we are delighted to support in its aim to combat isolation and loneliness and help

improve mental health.

In 2022 a bi-weekly **Renew Wellbeing Café** began in the Chapel, meeting on a Tuesday morning and co-ordinated by Mr Rob and Mrs Heather Woods. The Café takes place in the Chapel and is a warm place where *'It's OK not to be OK!'* and help and support is on offer.

Now averaging twenty-six attendees including helpers various activities are on offer and it is lovely to see people helping each other to complete jig-saws, helping each other to learn new needlecraft and knitting skills or being busy with colouring pencils. The game 'Rummikub' is very popular as are the homemade cakes and scones! During the school holidays even children and grandchildren come along.

The Café is now accredited to the Renew Wellbeing UK Charity.

In October 2023 the Church obtained an **Eco Church Bronze** award. The Eco Church scheme is for churches of all denominations who care for creation as an integral part of loving their neighbours and following God faithfully.

## Garden Project



For some time although not neglected the garden at the rear of the Wesley Hall has been under used.

In Spring 2022 a small quiet area was fashioned in the back corner of the Garden by Senior Steward Mr Pete Whittington and thoughts turned to ways in which the Garden could be better utilised.

In October 2023 the Church Council gave approval for a major re-vamp of the garden to make it more useable and accessible. Work will begin in November 2023 to:

- make a patio area outside the utility room exit
- enlarge the existing path by the kitchen exit
- construct a ramp to make accessing the lawn and the quiet area easier for all.



In keeping with the Eco Church ethos the currently moss covered and uneven paving slabs forming a path at the rear of the Wesley Hall will be utilised to form the new patio. Where the slabs have been lifted the area will be flattened and covered with shingle.

As part of the Eco Church Scheme bird, bat and bug boxes have already been installed, along with a new water-butt and compost bin.

## WHAT DO THE WINDOWS MEAN?

The 'frosting' on the windows was installed as part of the Re-development project in 2008 by a good friend of the Chapel, Mr Richard Sercombe, and one question frequently asked since then has been 'What do the windows mean?'

If you look up at the windows over the door to the link access (opposite the front entrance) you will see four panes with symbols on them. They are the Greek letters ΙΧΘΥΣ that form the word Ichthus (Greek for fish). This is an acronym, which is a word formed from the initial letters of the several words. ΙΧΘΥΣ in ancient Greek stands for: 'Ιησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ'. Which in English translates to: 'Jesus Christ God's Son is Saviour' or 'Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour'.

There was an early Ichthus (or Ichthys) symbol created by combining the Greek letters into a circular shape to represent bread. However, the fish outline was a logical symbol for the early Christian church to adopt.



The use of the Ichthus symbol appears to date from towards the end of the 1st century AD. It has been speculated that the symbol was adopted by early Christians as a secret symbol; to determine if another was indeed Christian. It is now known colloquially as the 'sign of the fish' or the 'Jesus fish'.

In its modern rendition it is most often seen as a symbol consisting of two intersecting arcs, the ends of the right side extending beyond the meeting point so as to resemble the profile of a fish.



The windows by the church organ depict a Dove of Peace carrying a twig, which is a reminder that God promised Noah he would not send another Great Flood to destroy the world, and Three Crosses reminding us that Jesus was crucified with two others.

The main window behind the wooden cross is a depiction of Sunrise over Martinsell Hill where local believers gather at dawn on Easter morning to celebrate our Risen Lord.

The final window in the Chapel shows a Cross with a smaller version of the Sunrise over Martinsell Hill and the modern rendition of the Ichthus ('Jesus Fish') symbol.

In the Resources Area, to the right of the entrance hall, the side windows depict the Dove of Peace, a Cross with a Flame of the Spirit, and at the front a Stalk of Wheat reminding us of God's provision of our needs and a Dove and Flame, the latter again being symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

On the Front Doors are repeats of the smaller version of the Sunrise over Martinsell Hill

In the Vestry, to the left of the entrance hall, the front windows depict a Cross and Palm Branch, a reminder of how quickly joyous cries of 'Hallelujah' turned to hateful shouts of 'Crucify' and a Star of Bethlehem to remind us of Jesus' humble birth in a stable in Bethlehem.

On the Link Entrance Window -

The words read:

### **PEWSEY METHODIST CHURCH AND COMMUNITY IN PARTNERSHIP**

The silhouettes are of ten Church Members from 2008: (*from left to right viewing from outside*)

Stephen Longson, Colin Lampard, Jackie Lampard, Arthur (Taffy) Norman, Arthur Johnson, Anita Johnson, Pete Whittington, Chrissy Whittington, David Brown and Katherine Pearce.

## MINISTERS THROUGH THE YEARS

In trying to trace the many Ministers who have served at Pewsey Chapel over the past 150 years the following list has been compiled from various sources including signatures in the old Chapel registers.

Some of these may be names of Superintendent Ministers or names of Second Ministers (Probationers) stationed in Pewsey.

1899	D. Gill	1948	C.Montague Ashdown
1900	Herbert J. Birtnistle	1949	John Wesley Woods
1903	W.E. Lank	1949	Ewart Townend Wilson
1904	G.B. Gratton	1951	Frederick E. Mold
1906	E. De Ville	1953	Fred Turner
1910	W. Titcombe Pullen	1953	G. Rowland Owen
1912	Charles L. Tabraham	1954	Raymond Thompson
1915	Thomas H. Kirkness	1957	Ian Young
1916	George Hireson Morris	1957	W. Morley Waite
1919	Thos. Billcliffe	1961	R. John Dimmock
1919	G.Roland Owen	1962	Edwin Maurice Hillier
1922	W.A. Williams	1963	Terence R. Harris
1923	Henry E. Anderson	1964	John Reid Grant
1924	C. Seymour Champness	1966 - 71	Sister Rita Shears (Resident Deaconess)
1926	Gresham B. Knapp		
1930	Leonard R. Jennings	1970	Kenneth Aldrich
1931	Ronald Gardner	1970	N. ? Pitts
1932/36	John Bonny Eade	1974	Noel Richardson
1932	E. Percy Green	1977	Cecil Dawes
1935	W. Erskine Rankin	1979	Geoffrey D. Gordon
1936	Joseph Austin	1991	Paul Clifton
1938	J.B. Chapman	1992	Edna B. Buggiey
1940	E. Geoffrey Tenneson	1993	Kenneth B. Renouf
1943	John Leslie Hall	1996	Stephen M. Sankey
1945	Donald V.P. White	2006	Susan Holden
1947	Brian V. Anderson	2012	Heather Cooper
		2019	Stephen Skinner

### A Quick Peek at the Accounts!

It is always interesting to take a peek at the accounts and below are a few items discovered during a brief perusal of the old account books!

In the early days it seems that the Chapel was heated by a coal stove - which according to one report became too hot to sit beside on occasion - and was initially lit by Gas, the first mention of electric lights being a bill from Whatleys in 1915.

Oct 29, 1887	3 Quarters Gas Bill to Sept	£1 8s 7d	(£1.43)
Dec 2, 1890	5 cwt Coal	5s 10d	(29p)
Feb 11 1897	Scraping stove	9d	(4p)
Feb 8 1894	Paid Mr Hunt for cementing stove pipe into wall	1s 6d	(8p)
Sept 15 1900	Sweeping Stove Mr Baker	1s 0d	(5p)
Feb 1901	Mr Selfes Bill for repairing stove	10s 7½d	(53p)
Dec 1901	Mr Selfes Bill for repairing stove	£1 6s 6d	(£1.33)



Nov 25 1903	Selfe's Bill for Stove	17s 6d	(88p)
June 24 1906	Mr Whites coal and coak	9s 2d	(46p)
	Mantiles and chimleys	4s 2d	(21p)
July 24 1906	Gass Bill	£1 14s 4d	(£1.72)
Dec 10 1906	Cross peace for stove pipe	2s 6d	(13p)
June 27 1907	Sweeping flues	1s 0d	(5p)
Sept 1912	1 doz mantles 3 Globe Burners	8s 6d	(43p)
1915	Whatley Bill for electric lights	9s 3d	(46p)

*(Please note: All spellings are as found in the original account book!)*

A Footnote to the 1893 accounts reads:

*I cannot make the account come right 10/9d (I cannot quite balance it)*

In the Auditor's note for the same year:

*The sum of £4.3s 8½d was paid today Dec 27 1893 to Mr Hunt upon his resigning his office as Chapel Steward by the Trustees of Pewsey Chapel being the amount of balance due to him at this date the money being advanced by Mr Goddard of Wilton. E.J. Lynden Wesleyan Minister)*

*(It seems that in years gone by the Chapel Steward who looked after the accounts was frequently found to be paying bills from his own pocket until he had some income from which to reimburse himself! Just one of the doubtful privileges of Chapel Stewardship!)*

Some other interesting items recorded in the accounts from the early years of the Chapel include:

May 5, 1887	Soap, soda, flannel and broom	2s 9d
Mar 25 1894	sixpence for washing clothes	
	Fourpence for soap	10d
Sep 13 1894	Paid Mrs Wells for extra help at tea	2s 0d
	Paid for half pound butter 7d & 3d for help	10d
June 2 1897	Waylans Bill for brush 9d, Flannel 7d	
	Soap 7½d Enamelin 2½d Hudson 3d	2s 5d
Oct 17 1907	Biling water & Washing up	2s 6d
	Servis songs 3/- & Bills 2.3	5s 3d
June 1911	Heating watter washing up	2s 6d
	Hood for fire	2s 6d
Jan 1916	New blines for Chaple	£1 19s 11d
	For fitting and fixing up	£1 17s 0d
Nov 1919	Paid Rev Thompson F.M. Horse Hire	6s 0d
1921	Cutting down trees etc.	£1 16s 0d

*(N.B.: Again all spellings are as found in the original account book!)*

Each Year the Church is required to pay an *assessment* which helps to fund the Methodist Ministry in the area (*Circuit*).

In 1946 there is a record of the Assessment being £15.5s.0d (£15.25) with the Church Income shown as £15.5s 0d - the Church at that time comprising 42 members. Later, in 1957, the Assessment is shown as being £45.0s.0d with the Church Income being £45.0s.0d - the Church by that time comprising 61 members.

It should be noted that in our 150th year our Assessment is £21,558 with a membership of 31!

**We are blessed to have a very generous Congregation whose gifts in money, time and talent enable us to continue to be a living Christian presence in**

## Pewsey.

### Celebrating 150 years!

To mark the 150th Anniversary of the Chapel some 'free to enter' events were planned many followed by traditional Methodist hospitality - light refreshments in the form of tea and cake!

On 6th May a Tea to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla organised by Mrs Greta Longson.

On 3rd June a 'Memories, Music and Muses on Age' Concert with the Pewsey Male Voice Choir followed by tea and cake!

Over the late August Bank Holiday an entry in the Pewsey Carnival Scarecrow Trail - with thanks to Stephen Longson and Richard Sercombe for a wonderful 'Disney White Rabbit from Alice in Wonderland' - combined with a Flower Display in the Chapel with thanks to the Flower Arranging Team.

On 14th October a 'Sing-a-Long in the Chapel' with the U3A Pewsey Singing for Pleasure Group again followed by tea and cake!

On Sunday 19th November two Anniversary Church Services. The 10.30am service being led by our own minister, Rev. Stephen Skinner and our Circuit Superintendent Minister Rev. David Gray and a Circuit Service at 3pm led by Rev. David Gray and Chair of Bristol District, Rev. Dr. Jonathan Pye again followed by tea and cake!

On Wednesday 20th December a 'Carols by Candlelight' service followed by tea and mince pies!

On Saturday 27th January 2024, the final event, a concert with the Pewsey Belles Ladies Choir again followed by tea and cake!



In compiling this short history of the past 150 years in the life of Pewsey Methodist Church for a commemorative Booklet, my thanks go to those who went before and provided much useful source material and to those who shared their memories and provided photos and documents from years gone by. Sadly it became impossible to include them all in the Booklet but some are added below.

Chrissy Whittington

Pewsey Methodist Church Secretary 2023





Chapel Summer Outing



Garden Party at Milkhouse Water 1937



Early Sunday School Carnival Float





Chapel Sunday School Carnival Float 1973



Chapel Archery Contest



Chapel Harvest Display



Sunday School Harvest Tea



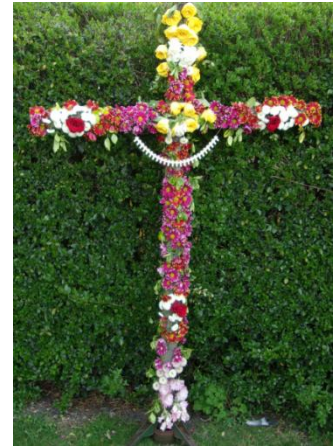
Chapel Blue Peter Fund Raising Stall



Easter Sunrise - Martinsell



Lenten Cross



Easter Cross 2022

A Copy of the Great Rally Programme 1959

FUTURE RALLIES

*There will be a series of Rallies at Pewsey during the coming Autumn and Winter. - Dates and Speakers will be announced later.*

• •

*We shall be pleased to see you.*

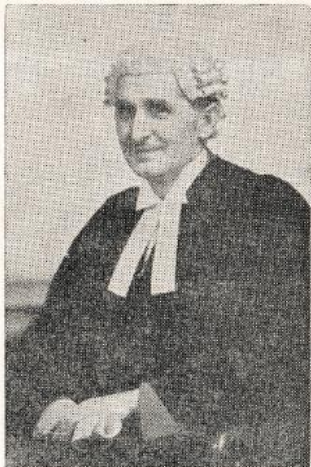
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If you are not in regular attendance at any other place of worship, why not come along to

**PEWSEY METHODIST CHURCH.**

---

- A PLACE OF HAPPINESS
  - A PLACE OF FRIENDSHIP
    - A PLACE OF INSPIRATION
      - A PLACE WHERE YOU MAY FIND A FAITH FOR THE TIMES.



**Dr. NORMAN G. DUNNING, M.A.**  
Barrister at Law.

Dr. Norman Dunning is probably one of the most widely travelled men of our day. Even before the war he had preached to vast congregations all around the world. He has been on the air in England and other countries. Since the war he has been conducting missions in many lands, and during the past two winters has been in the leading Churches of the United States. His preaching has packed the biggest churches in America. And he is coming straight from there, and . . . .

**IS VISITING PEWSEY METHODIST CHURCH !**



- WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30th -  
at  
PEWSEY METHODIST CHURCH.



DO NOT MISS THE

*Special Visit of*  
**Dr. Norman G. Dunning**

Barrister at Law  
who has recently returned from a preaching  
tour in the United States of America.



- COMMUNITY SINGING
  - SOLOS
  - QUARTETTES
  - REFRESHMENTS

- COME ALONG AND BRING SOMEONE WITH YOU -

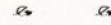
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 30th

4.30 p.m. DIVINE WORSHIP.

Preacher : Dr. Norman Dunning.



5.30 p.m. TEA (1/- each).



6.0—6.30 p.m. Dr. Dunning will answer questions  
at the tea-table.



6.30 p.m. COMMUNITY SINGING.



At 6.45 p.m.

**GREAT RALLY**

Chairman :

W. H. SPRAY, Esq., M.A.

Guest Speaker :

**Dr. Norman G. Dunning.**

- A FRIENDLY WELCOME AWAITS YOU -

Fund-Raising Plant Sale 2012:



Cross for Remembrance Day 2018 - 100 Poppies



Weddings & Anniversaries!:

The Wedding of 'Bel & Doug Wiltshire 1934



50th Wedding Anniversary 'Bel & Doug Wiltshire 1984



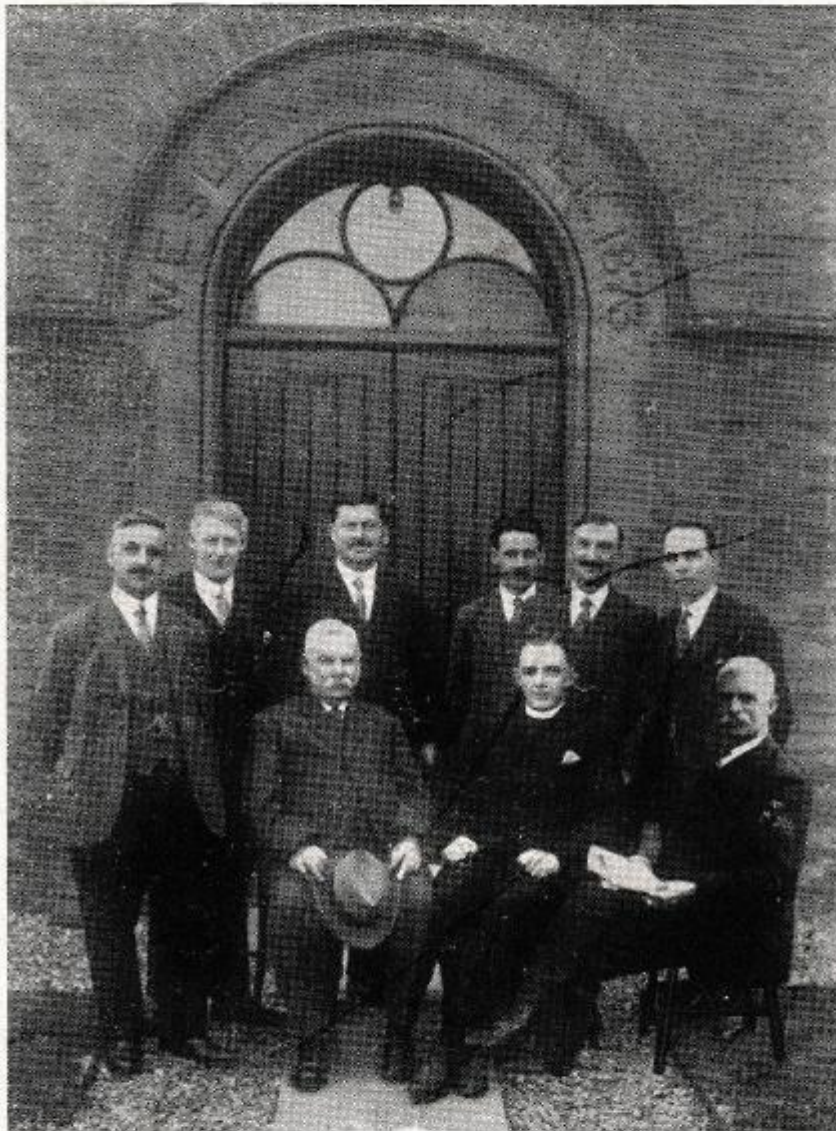
Wedding of Deborah King & Trevor Gale Nov 1981



The Gale's 25th Wedding Anniversary Nov 2006



# Pewsey Wesleyan Church Thanksgiving Day.



JULY 11<sup>TH</sup> 1928.

SOUVENIR. & .....  
..... PROGRAMME .

*Back row (standing) from left:*

Howard Lampard    Walter Absalom    Charlie Whitbread  
William White    George Perry    William Bailey

*Front row (seated) from left:*

Andrew Waylen    Rev.G.S.B. Knapp    Frederick Amor



LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS IN FINAL EFFORT.

	£	s.	d.
Mr. A. Waylen .. .. .	82	0	0
Rev. G. S. B. Knapp .. .. .	6	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. G. Perry .. .. .	8	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. C. Whitbread .. .. .	12	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. H. Lampard .. .. .	12	0	0
Miss G. Whitbread .. .. .	10	0	
Miss Beryl Whitbread .. .. .	10	0	
Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Bailey .. .. .	3	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. W. F. White .. .. .	3	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. W. Absalom .. .. .	3	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. F. Amor .. .. .	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Marshall .. .. .	5	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. H. Marshall .. .. .	1	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. T. Willie .. .. .	1	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. C. Smith .. .. .	2	0	0
Mrs. and Mrs. W. H. Bullock .. .. .	1	0	0
Mrs. Bradley .. .. .	1	0	0
Mrs. Kimber .. .. .	10	0	
Mrs. T. Munday .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. and Mrs. Sheppard .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. C. Siney .. .. .	1	0	0
Miss V. Herbert .. .. .	10	0	
Miss D. Hassall .. .. .	3	0	0
Mr. L. Lampard .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. R. Lovelock .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. C. Phillips .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. F. Phillips .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. R. White .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. D. Wiltshire .. .. .	5	0	
Mrs. I. Delicate .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. and Mrs. F. Smith .. .. .	5	0	0
Miss Edith Smith .. .. .	5	0	
Mrs. A. Waylen .. .. .	1	0	0
Mr. E. Gillett .. .. .	5	0	
Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Phillips .. .. .	10	0	
Mr. and Mrs. L. Waylen .. .. .	1	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. J. Lampard .. .. .	2	0	0
Mr. and Mrs. F. Hoare .. .. .	1	0	0
	£164	5	0

NEW WESLEY HALL.

List of Local Trustees :

A. WAYLEN, F. AMOR, C. WHITBREAD, W. ABSALOM,  
G. F. PERRY, W. T. BAILEY, W. F. WHITE,  
and H. LAMPARD.

Resident Minister :

REV. G. S. B. KNAPP.

1925.

1928.

£1400

Scheme completed in 2 years 8 months.

Hon. Secretary:  
H. LAMPARD

Hon. Treasurer:  
MRS. W. F. WHITE.

: : PROGRAMME. : :  
AFTERNOON. EVENING.

HYMN 19.

PRAYER.

HYMN 718.

LESSON.

Solo - MISS P. VILE.

HYMN 102.

Sermon - REV. E. D. GREEN, M.A.

NOTICES AND COLLECTION.

HYMN 586.

HYMN 13.

Prayer - REV. A. A. THOMAS, B.A.

REPORT BY H. LAMPARD.

RECEIPT OF GIFTS BY MRS. E. D. GREEN.

HYMN 665.

Chairman's Address - REV. E. D. GREEN, M.A.

Solo - MISS L. MILLS.

Address - REV. A. H. BESTALL, KtH.

COLLECTION.

ANTHEM BY THE CHOIR.

Addresses : REV. F. W. HILBORN, R.A.F.

REV. A. A. THOMAS, B.A.

REV. G. S. B. KNAPP.

DOXOLOGY.



'Clean Up Team' getting ready for the Chapel Renovation in 2008



*Back row from Left:*

Stephen Longson Colin Lampard Jackie Lampard  
Chrissy Whittington Barry Lakeman, Ken Harmsworth

*Middle row from left:*

Judy Lakeman Pete Whittington Sheila Harms worth, Heather Fry,  
Anita Johnson

*Front row:*

Richard Sercombe Arthur Johnson



Coffee after Sunday Service 2014