

BARNHAM METHODIST CHURCH



50TH ANNIVERSARY

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US AT OUR  
ANNIVERSARY RALLY AND SERVICES THIS  
YEAR, WHEN WE CELEBRATE THE 50TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEGINNINGS OF  
METHODISM IN BARNHAM.

SATURDAY MAY 12TH

7 P.M. IN THE VILLAGE HALL

ANNIVERSARY RALLY:

SPEAKER, REV. FRANK DIFFEY (MINISTER  
1964-9)

MUSICAL PROGRAMME GIVEN BY THE GOSPORT  
GOSPEL MALE VOICE CHOIR.

SUNDAY MAY 13TH

SUNDAY SERVICES.

11 A.M. AND 3 P.M.,

PREACHER, REV. FRANK DIFFEY.

FOLLOWED BY BIRTHDAY TEA FOR ALL MEMBERS  
AND FRIENDS.

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## THE STORY OF METHODISM IN BARNHAM

IT WAS 50 YEARS AGO THAT THE STATION-MASTER AND HIS WIFE, MR. AND MRS. HEWETT, AND THEIR TWO SONS, AND A MRS. PRINCE BEGAN TO HOLD A SMALL SERVICE IN THEIR HOUSE ON SUNDAY EVENINGS. AS THE GATHERINGS BEGAN TO SWELL THEY HELD THEM IN THE CORN EXCHANGE IN THE MARKET, ACROSS THE ROAD FROM THE PRESENT RAILWAY STATION.

TWO OF THE FAMILIES STILL REPRESENTED IN OUR CONGREGATION WERE AMONGST THE PIONEERS OF THIS NEW VENTURE. MRS. POULTON'S PARENTS, MR. AND MRS. HARRIS HAD BARNHAM'S LARGEST FAMILY, AND WERE ASKED IF THEY WOULD SEND SOME OF THEIR CHILDREN TO START A SUNDAY SCHOOL. THEY WERE JOINED BY THE CHILDREN OF MR. AND MRS. CARTER, WHO HAD JUST COME BACK FROM AUSTRALIA. MRS. STIESSSEL REMEMBERS HOW GLAD THEY WERE TO HEAR OF THE NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE VILLAGE BECAUSE UP TILL THEN THEY HAD BEEN WALKING ALL THE WAY TO YAPTON ON SUNDAYS.

THE NUMBERS SOON GREW, AND IT WAS DECIDED TO RAISE MONEY TO BUILD A CHURCH. MRS. POULTON REMEMBERS THE CONCERTS AND OTHER MONEY RAISING EFFORTS. HER MOTHER, WITH FOURTEEN CHILDREN OF HER OWN, ALLOWED REHEARSALS IN HER COTTAGE; AND HER FATHER, ONLY A POOR FARM CARTER, PAID FOR THE VILLAGE HALL FOR THE ENTERTAINMENTS. THE PEOPLE OF BARNHAM GAVE GENEROUS AND WARM HEARTED SUPPORT, AND THE BUILDING FUND GREW STEADILY. BEFORE LONG IT WAS POSSIBLE TO BEGIN LOOKING ROUND FOR A SUITABLE SITE FOR THE CHURCH.

A SITE WAS OBTAINED IN 1928 FOR £180, THE GIFT OF JOSEPH RANK THE WELL-KNOWN METHODIST BENEFACTOR. THE CIRCUIT FORMED A BODY OF TRUSTEES. IT SAYS MUCH FOR THEM, AND FOR THE LOCAL MEMBERS, THAT WITHIN A LITTLE OVER TWO YEARS THEY WERE ABLE TO BEGIN TO BUILD. THE STONE-LAYING WAS A GREAT OCCASION; METHODIST CHILDREN TOOK NOTES TO THE HEADMASTER OF THE DAYSCHOOL ASKING TO BE RELEASED EARLY SO THAT THEY COULD ATTEND. THE HYMN THAT WAS

SUNG IN THE OPEN AIR WAS 'NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD'. IT IS GOOD TO REALISE THAT TWO OF THE ADULTS AT THE SERVICE, MRS. CARTER, NOW IN HER 80'S AND MRS. HARRIS, NOW IN HER 90'S, ARE STILL ALIVE, AND CAN REMEMBER THE EVENT VIVIDLY.

THE OPENING OF THE CHURCH CAME IN THE SPRING OF 1931. IT HAD BEEN ERECTED AT A COST OF SOME £1,300, A GREAT VENTURE OF FAITH IN DAYS WHEN MONEY WAS VERY SCARCE. MANY OF THE ORIGINAL BAND OF METHODISTS LIVED ON TO SERVE THE NEW CHURCH FOR MANY YEARS; A TABLET WAS ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. ADA HEWETT WHO DIED IN 1956 AT THE FINE OLD AGE OF 92. SOME AS WE HAVE SAID ARE STILL WITH US TO SHARE IN THE REJOICING OF OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY.

NAMES ARE NOT IMPORTANT, AND IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO RECORD THEM ALL. NOR WOULD THE EARLY MEMBERS HAVE WISHED THEIR NAMES TO HAVE BEEN REMEMBERED. THEY WOULD HAVE SAID: 'EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE THEY LABOUR IN VAIN WHO BUILD'. THIS MUST BE OUR FAITH AS WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT PERIOD IN THE HISTORY OF BARNHAM METHODISM.

2002

1 sep

Dear Friends,

You will notice that the plan has been altered considerably so that it can include all the relevant information which you may find helpful. I trust that you will like the new format but please let me know if you have other suggestions to make.

It is with much sadness that I have to announce the closure of Barnham Methodist Church. At the recent Church Council held on October 23rd it was unanimously agreed that the time has come to cease to meet for worship, to close the Church and eventually sell the site. It has not been an easy decision but we nevertheless feel it is the right one at this time. We have tried to find alternative accommodation to worship in on Sundays eg. Schools and village halls but have been unsuccessful. The membership of Barnham will initially be transferred to Bognor Regis while members decide where in the circuit they wish to belong.

The last service at Barnham will therefore be on the morning of December 22nd at 11.00am. when we shall celebrate the birth of Christ and give God thanks for the life and witness of Barnham Methodist Church.

You will see that we have given details of the various times and places for the Christmas Services throughout the Circuit and I trust that as many as possible will join with us in these celebrations of God's greatest gift of His Son to the world.

May you know the peace and love of Jesus with you this Christmas and throughout the coming year.

Yours in Christ,  
*Philip.*

*Rev Philip Seaton*