# THE CHAPELS SOCIETY

Newsletter 70 January 2019

*Ifield Friends Meeting House*
*(drawing copyright Michael Mackintosh)*

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# ADDRESS BOOK

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# NOTICEBOARD

## CHAPELS SOCIETY EVENTS

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| **18 May 2019** | Visit to Wakefield (David Leyshon and Colin Dews) |
| **6 July 2019** | Visit to Bethesda Chapel, Hanley and the Museum of Primitive Methodism, Englesea Brook with AGM and Stell lecture (John Anderson and Peter Ackers) |
| **Autumn 2019** | Possible visit to Norwich (Tim Grass) |

# EDITORIAL

Members will, I am sure, be pleased to see that we do now have a spring visit organised for this year. Council is grateful for the multiple offers it received from members. We are working on fitting some of the other offers into our future programme of visits. It is good to know that members are prepared to respond when it concerns something they so cleaarly value!

We have also been lucky in gaining a volunteer for the post of Visits Secretary in John Anderson, a seasoned member of the society and a former member of Council. We thank John warmly and hope that he will add new sparkle to our visits programme.

At the AGM in July we will be looking for replacements for our President and Hon Secretary as well as to fill vacancies on the Council. Suggestions from members and offers of service are always welcome – please contact Tim Grass in the first instance before making a formal nomination.

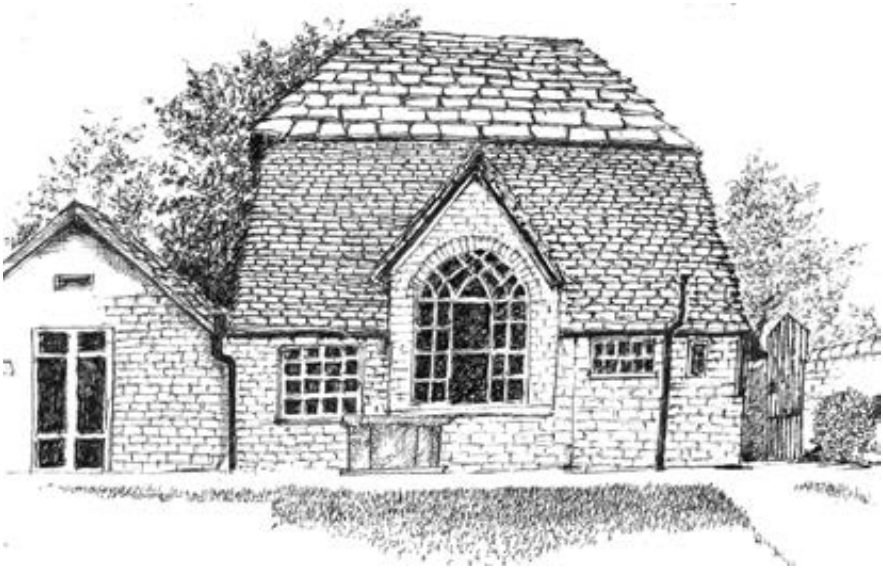
# PROCEEDINGS

## VISIT TO HORSHAM – 21 APRIL 2018

*The church of Our Lady of Consolation and St Francis, West Grinstead (drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

For this visit, there was an excellent choice of chapels by our President, Dr Tim Grass, who knows the area well, having been the pastor of Rehoboth Baptist Chapel. The buildings we visited spanned the ecclesiastical spectrum and illustrated how Protestant Dissenters and Roman Catholics alike have a history of suffering persecution and devising ingenious methods to enable themselves to worship without being noticed by the authorities. The most graphic was the penultimate visit of our tour – the secret chapel attached to the Shrine of Our Lady of Consolation and St Francis, West Grinstead (Grade II listed). Next to the massive early decorated-style church erected in the ninteenth century stands the sixteenth-century priest's house with the secret chapel, once established in a hayloft, where Catholic priests were able to celebrate mass in secret for many years. There were also two priest's hiding holes built into the chimney breast of the house, providing a place of refuge for priests possibly including some on their way to Rome to work in the English Mission. A sixteenth-century pewter chalice, mass utensils and a warning bell were found under the secret chapel, wrapped in a muslin cloth – signs that a priest had been forced to make a hasty departure. Remarkably however, the faithful Catholics in that rural community were never betrayed, perhaps due to the priest being disguised as a shepherd and the times of the Mass being displayed by the patterns in which the local Catholic ladies arranged their washing draped on hedges. The shrine holds the relics of the Venerable Francis Bell, the Franciscan who had served at West Grinstead and was martyred some years later at Tyburn in 1643. Visiting in 2018, we find a large and imposing Victorian chapel, slightly incongruous in the countryside. However, this hosts a Marian shrine which existed even before the Reformation and its continuance owes a great debt to the local staunchly-Catholic Caryll family who owned much land in the area. Generations of their family upheld the Catholic faith and when eventually in the

mid-eighteenth century they had lost most of their property partly as a result of persecution, they were able to offer the Franciscans a foundation to maintain Catholic witness there. The mission was served after the French revolution by fleeing French priests. After a decline in the mid-nineteenth century, Fr. Denis arrived with a vision to revive the church. He raised funds to build not only the large chapel, but also an adjoining school. Money came in, particularly from Brittany, because Fr. Denis had campaigned in 1871 to save many Bretons from execution by the Prussians. The church continues as a worshipping community and attracts pilgrims.



*Horsham Unitarian Church, formerly General Baptist, showing the nineteenth-century addition of a sanctuary, with the original building with its slate roof behind (drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

As Tim Grass identified in his detailed visit notes, Dissenters too were supported by local wealthy families. 'Matthew Caffyn (1628–1674) who had been imprisoned for his beliefs while a student at Oxford' was one of the first ministers of the General Baptist church in Horsham, the first call on our tour. Matthew Caffyn also preached widely in the area. The Horsham church was among the first of the General Baptist churches to become Unitarian, influenced by Caffyn's gradual move away from belief in the divinity of Christ. This chapel, in the centre of Horsham, was completed in 1721 but, as described in the very helpful historical notes and brochure given to us on our visit, the cause dates back to the year of the Treaty of Westphalia, 1648, when local General Baptists were meeting in barns and houses, baptising in ponds and streams: it was not

until the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, that the gatherings became legal. The chapel has a roof of local slate, recently restored, and is set back in a graveyard and lovely garden. We were shown the former baptistery tank, now concealed beneath a trap door in the kitchen floor. The chapel history records that 'the Baptistery be made in ye Meeting House, a Room Built side of ye Vestry Room 1.2 foote by 10 Clear and to attempt to bring ye Water from ye Well belonging to this Church by Pompe and Shoots.' No baptisms have been carried out there since about 1840. The chapel retains a number of memorial plaques, including one to Captain Broadwood (1889-1967) who inherited the family's piano business. Also commemorated are John Dendy, apothecary/surgeon (died 1782) who, with John Geere, mercer, initially purchased the land on which the chapel was built, Robert Ashdowne (died 1861) who with this wife ran schools for girls and boys, and Maurice Jacks (1894-1964) who became Director of the Department of Education at the University of Oxford. The chapel has a fine organ which was rebuilt in 1991 and is used for services and recitals.

The Friends Meeting House in Horsham is a very near neighbour of the Unitarians, is similarly Grade II-listed and likewise has an important role in the local community, hosting a number of groups and societies. The cause also dates from the late-seventeenth century. Indeed, the Quakers were lively in West Sussex at that time. William Penn was the founder of the Blue Idol meeting house in the nearby village of Coolham. The present building in Horsham was erected in 1785 to replace an earlier structure. Worship has taken place in different forms – there is a bench for ministers on a raised dais. Present-day Quaker meetings adopt the normal circular arrangement of chairs on an egalitarian basis.

*Billingshurst Unitarian Chapel (drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

Our journey to the Billingshurst Unitarian chapel (Grade II listed), took us along the route of the Roman Stane Street. At Billingshurst too during the mid-seventeenth century there were groups of Dissenters meeting in various barns and houses when their gatherings were illegal. The present chapel is modestly tucked away behind the main street and is a miniature version of the Horsham chapel, given that it was founded in 1753 by William Evershed (born 1717) from Horsham together with William Turner. The cause received strong support from Horsham, but became a separate church in 1818 as a result of a dispute regarding the laying-on of hands. Apart from the presence of a small organ, the chapel retains its original appearance almost entirely. The welcome from the current group of enthusiastic members was most encouraging and, in addition to being a worshipping congregation, the church has found a wider role in fostering 'Contemplation,

Creativity, Compassion and Community' in the area, with meditation, healing, music, discussions and arts. It is also a wonderfully atmospheric venue for weddings.

The Friends' Meeting House at Ifield, discreetly located down a lane, with the 'cottage now adjoining (built *c.*1475) along with a blacksmith's shop and the surrounding land [….] acquired in 1674', as Tim Grass describes in his visit notes, is unsurprisingly Grade I listed because it is 'one of the oldest surviving Quaker meeting houses in the world'.

We imagined ourselves back at a time of struggle in a century of political, social and religious upheaval, when seditious pamphlets were censored and dissenters were required to pay tithes to the parish church. The Quaker emphasis on individual freedom found a ready audience in the area. The 'Short history of Ifield meeting' with which we were presented describes how 'on 24th June 1674, the local blacksmith, Robert Robinson' provided the current site and 'the Meeting House was completed […] in 1676'. At that time, though, men and women met for business separately on the site. The women possibly met in the cottage and the men in the main meeting house. A screen and shutters were erected in 1822, dividing the main space into two rooms, and thus bringing the women into the meeting house itself. Their former area is now a charming small library. Outside is an eighteenth-century mounting block which itself is Grade II listed and we admired the small orchard to the right of the meeting house. 'In 1970, Ifield Friends planned, financed, built and set up Camfield (the large modern building behind the meeting house), as a home 'for the lonely people of Crawley.' It now serves the community as an independent charity.

*Reheboth Baptist Chapel, Horsham, showing the recently added extension (drawing by Michael Mackintosh)*

We ended our tour at the Rehoboth Baptist Chapel in Horsham. The biblical name tells us that 'the Lord has made room for us' – a highly encouraging message for a chapel and we were given a welcome there with a tour of the new rooms upstairs and a chapel tea. Tim describes the 'Sussex Calvinists' as 'good dividers' and it is therefore not surprising to see another Baptist chapel almost next door. There are other Baptist congregations in the town. It appears that Rehoboth 'originated in a division which affected the Independent congregation, now URC, in 1834'. It is a little discouraging to see that the picturesque graveyard (where the Lord made room for wildlife) has now given way to a featureless car park. Selected gravestones, including that of Edward Mote, have been moved and now located along the graveyard. Edward Mote (1797-1874) is famous for his hymn 'My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness' and it now lives on in the modern version known as 'Cornerstone'.

Hearty thanks to Tim Grass for all the planning, detailed notes and arranging the coach trip, also to all those who greeted our party as we descended on their chapel.

*Christine Denman and Michael Mackintosh*

# MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

**New Members**

We are pleased to be able to welcome Cathy Field, who has already joined a Society visit as a guest, John Berrington Davies and the Revd Dr Sarah Hall as new members of the Society.

**Obituary – Brian Ferrier**

We are sad to report the death of life member Brian Ferrier in August 2018. Brian was a cabinet maker by trade, a fine craftsman, who lived for the whole of his life in the Grimsby/Cleethorpes area of Lincolnshire. His many interests included the use of wood in buildings and their furnishings, and in his earlier days as a member he enjoyed the opportunities afforded by Society visits to appreciate the workmanship of the chapels visited. (With thanks to Rod Ambler).

**Data Protection**

Council reviewed the Society's Information Governance Policy and Data Procedure document at Council at its meeting in November 2018. No changes having been identified as necessary, it was agreed to review the policy again in November 2019. If you would like a copy of the document, either electronically or printed, please contact me – my details are inside the front cover of this *Newsletter.*

*Stuart Leadley*

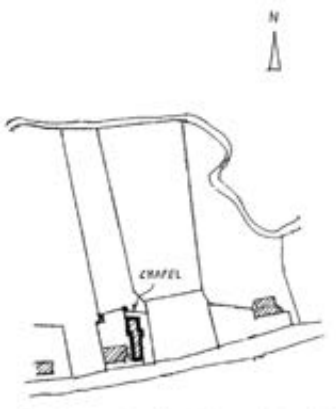
# THE CHAPEL, WELLINGTON, HEREFORDSHIRE

## AN ARTICLE BY EDWARD PETERS

The chapel at Wellington, Herefordshire, is at the west end of the village, on the north side of the road. It was a Brethren meeting room by 1867, possibly from when it was built. It had developed from Sunday school work, initially connected with the parish church. Tracing its history is complicated by the lack of chapel records before 1931.

In 1819 St Peter's Church in Hereford, which was evangelically inclined, sent Thomas Day, then a young man, to assist the Vicar of Wellington, the Revd J.W. Parsons, presumably with Sunday school work. Day must have travelled over each Sunday, as he was involved in the family shoe-making business in Hereford. Wellington is five miles north of Hereford. Parsons died in late 1824. Day is recorded as disagreeing doctrinally with Parsons' successor, and so ceased to help with the work at the church. But Parsons' successor resigned within a year: was Day's disagreement with him, his successor, or both?


BASED ON TITHE MAP, 1842




BASED ON 1ST ED. 25" OS MAP, 1880

*The situation of the chapel on a sketch map*

The Sunday school work, however, continued, independently of the parish church. A woman living at Pear Tree House is said to have allowed Day to hold the Sunday school in her house; another source, however, says that Day had applied to a nearby farmer to use a barn. One location could have followed the other. However, local information considers that Pear Tree Cottage, a little west of the parish church, is the relevant house. A photograph taken in 1903 shows that the cottage was then a single bay, partly timber-framed building, with a larger, brick section adjoining. The latter part had a wide window with a cambered head and a pedestrian doorway. Examination shows that the window was originally a double door, suggesting that that end could have been a barn. The Sunday school would presumably have been held in the larger, brick part. If the building has been correctly identified this

could combine the two remembered locations. But the occupier must then have changed by 1842, as both owner and tenant were then male.

In due course the Sunday school outgrew the building used; a separate building was erected in 1849 by Thomas Smith on his own land further west in the village. He owned the adjoining cottage, and the land running back to the stream. The tithe map and award of 1842 only record a cottage on the site at that time. In the application made to the Bishop in late 1849 for registration for religious services the building is referred to as a Sunday school; it could be that the decision to hold services was made whilst the building was being erected. The following year Thomas Smith sold the land and buildings thereon to Thomas Day. Thomas Smith had lived at Wellington Marsh, about 1½ miles away, since at least 1842. By 1871 this property, too, had been purchased by the Day family, and Mrs Day, Thomas Day I's widow was living there by 1881.

The return for ihe Religious Census of 1851 was made by Thomas Day, who gave his address as Bye Street, Hereford. The return noted that the building had been erected in 1849, and that it had 140 free seats, with standing room for a further 40. It was described as Protestant Christian, with no affiliation noted. On census Sunday there were 35 at the morning service, 75 at the evening, with 60 at the Sunday school presumably held at a different time. Average attendance over the previous twelve months was recorded as 90. The first county directory the the writer has seen which refers to the chapel is Littlebury's of 1867, recording it as Plymouth Brethren, with Thomas Day of Hereford as minister. Whether this affiliation applied from the beginning is not apparent: the lack of detail in the Religious Census return is not unusual for Brethren meetings. However no reference has been found to Thomas Day or Wellington in the minutes of the Barton Street Open Brethren meeting in Hereford, which run up to the later 1840s. It was with this meeting that Wellington was later associated.

Thomas Day, whilst continuing his involvement in the family shoe-making business, was much involved in philanthropic work in Hereford, interestingly with bodies set up by the Revd J. Venn. He had been appointed to St Peter's Church in 1835, following the death of the previous incumbent, under whom Day had been sent to Wellington. Day was clerk to the Hereford Friendly Society, set up in 1858, and secretary to the Hereford Society for Aiding the Industrious, set up in 1841, in both cases from their inception. He was later manager of the corn mill set up by the latter body. It is said that Venn thought highly of him. These say much for the two men, in view of Day's Brethren membership, as the Brethren meeting in Hereford had been formed in 1838 in part from members of St Peter's Church, who had left because they considered Venn too Arminian. Venn had even preached a sermon against the Brethren!

Thomas Day died in late 1869, and the work at Wellington was taken over by his son, Thomas Day II. The ownership of the meeting room and land was left to Thomas Day's widow: she transfered them to her son, Thomas Day

II, in 1876. The work prospered, so that in due course it became necessary to enlarge the chapel. In passing, the cottage was let, in 1851 to a bricklayer, but by 1861 to at least 1901, to a labourer. A front room in the cottage had been provided with an external door so that Thomas Day I and later his son could use it on Sundays. Presumably this use will have ceased when the extension was built, as that included a vestry. In the early 1880s the Sunday school was said to have been flourishing so that there was not one at the parish church. Dissenters were then said to have been strong in the parish (these comments were from an Anglican source).

The adjoining land to the east was part of the Wellington Court estate, sold as a single lot in 1855, and again in 1871, when it was broken down into various lots. One of these was the cottage and land to the east of the chapel, which was purchased by the Day family, presumably in 1871. The cottage is said to have disappeared some time in the first half of the last century.

Thomas Day II died in 1902, and was succeeded in running the chapel by his brother, Edwain Day. E.H. Day had, until then, been involved with the Brethren meeting at Orleton, in the north of the county. After his death in 1930 a trust was formed to run the chapel, the 'ministers' no longer connected with the Day family. Arrangements were being made in 1980 for the registered name of the building to be changed from 'The Room' (a common name for a Brethren meeting) to Wellington Chapel.

*Wellington Chapel from the road, 2017*
*(photograph copyright the author)*

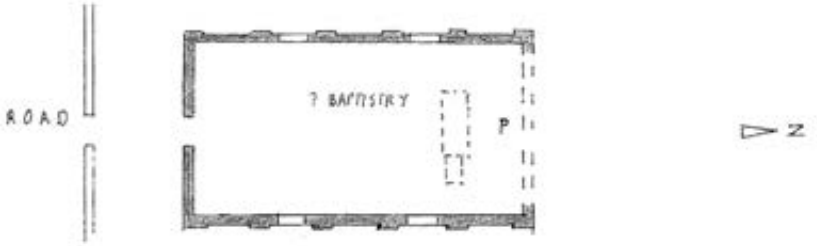
A dry rot outbreak was investigated in 1998; two years later the problem was sufficiently bad for it to be necessary to close the building. Services were initially moved to the village hall, then to a Portakabin on the site. Sale of some of the adjoining land was used to finance repairs and a major extension. Building a new chapel on part of the land to the east seems to have been considered, but it was decided instead to repair the existing building; this was done in 2005. In 2009-10, as a second stage, the original north end was adapted and the building extended to the north. In the meantime, the chapel had officially changed its allegiance, joining the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches in 2006. Since 2008 there has been no 'minister', the chapel run by elders. The adjoining cottage was rebuilt in 2016, by then in separate ownership.

Turning to the building, it is oriented north-south, built just east of the cottage. It is of red brick, with rubble stone footings just visible on the east. The sides have recessed panels with semi-circular heads, separated by plain pilasters. The windows have timber sashes and semi-circular heads, matching the panels. Originally it was of five bays each side, with windows in two, the others blind. Access was by a door in the south, road end, the pulpit opposite, against the north wall. The meeting room at Marden, a few miles away, which appears to date from shortly after 1851, is of similar design.

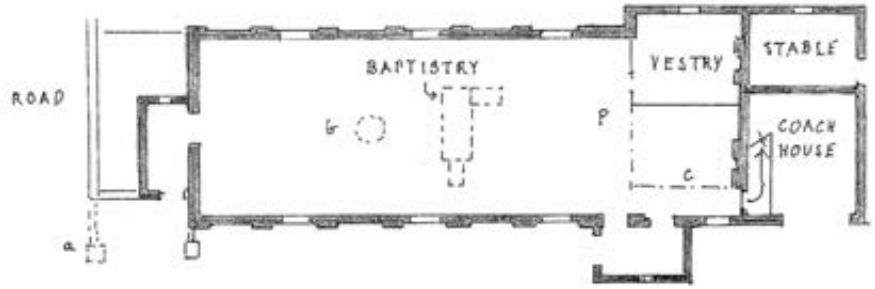
As noted above, the chapel was enlarged at some stage after 1870: was the 1876 transfer of ownership significant in this? The work involved raising the eaves level, lengthening the chapel and adding various rooms at the north end. The brick used was smoother, and very slightly different in tone. Judging from the west side the eaves were raised about 18 inches, but the opportunity was taken to make the public, that is the south and east sides, a little more fashionable with some permanent polychromy. The east wall was rebuilt from below the springing on the window heads, the arches being reformed in yellow and blue brick (but not those to the recesses, which remained in red).

The new roof was hipped, finished with Welsh slate. The chapel itself was lengthened by about ten feet, with beyond a two-storey section, a little wider than the chapel on the west. Beyond was a lean-to, containing the stairs to the upper floor, a coach house and stable, presumably for Thomas Day's transport from Hereford. The extension included a porch, with a pedimented gable; internally there were separate doors to the chapel and the larger rear room. At some stage a porch with a hipped roof was added at the south end. There was a low stone wall between the plot and the road, which changed to brick just before the gate piers, and decorative iron gates. The gates and piers were probably part of the 1870s' work. Some time after 1900 the gate piers were rebuilt further back, so as to allow easier access from the road. The stone wall was removed after 2009, to permit forming a pavement along the road.

Internally the chapel has a boarded ceiling, following the under-side of the rafters over the lower half of the roof. The walls were painted brickwork above




1849 CHAPEL




POST 1870 CHAPEL

a ORIGINAL POSITION OF GATE PIER
b APPROX POSITION OF STOVE
c INSERTED PARTITION

*The development of the chapel in the nineteenth century*

dado panelling. In design the panelling dated from between the two World Wars, but as the brickwork behind was unpainted, must have replaced earlier panelling. There were timber rails with coathooks on the side walls at the south end, the rails extending across the south end. There are monuments to Thomas Day I and II on the west wall at the north end. Heating was by a stove, set centrally, with a flue taken up through the roof. The baptistery was below the floor; from its position, it is likely to have been an addition to the 1849 building, where it would have been just in front of the pulpit, a normal position (one would not have been needed for a Sunday school). The western steps to it must, from their position, date from the 1870s' work.

Beyond was the two-storey section, with two rooms on each floor, each with a fireplace. As noted, the large ground-floor room had a door direct from the porch, and another to the stairs. With access separate from the chapel it is likely

that this room and the two upper ones were for the Sunday school, and the smaller ground-floor room was the vestry. The stairs, curiously, were included in the lean-to section, not the main building. There must have been a proper wall originally between the rear rooms and the chapel, providing, *inter alia*, a backing to the pulpit. However, a 1998 plan appears to show only openlng doors between the larger room and the chapel, but, if correctly interpreted, this must have been, like the passage made to provide separate access to the stairs a late alteration. It is said that a gallery formed part of the 1870s' extension. However, this would have been behind the pulpit, and with two rooms upstairs, each with a fireplace, and that section wider than the chapel, this seems very unlikely. A gallery could have been formed later, by replacing the upper part of the wall to the chapel with shutters.

At some stage the chapel was turned round, with a platform and pulpit or reading desk at the south end. It was presumably at that stage the the outer door to the south porch was built up, so that entry was only by the east porch. Forming a gallery could well have related to the reversal of plan. It is likely that this rearrangement was in the second half of the twentieth century: had the panelling present in 1998 been related to the reversal of plan, it would have stepped up on the south wall to relate to the raised platform, but it was all at one level.

The chapel is still functioning, oriented towards the south end, with access through the 2009-10 extension. The south porch has been reopened, presumably as a fire escape. Part of Thomas Smith's original plot is now a car park, reached by a new drive across the land to the east.

*The writer is indebted to elders at the chapel for access to the building and documents relating to it, also some information. Notes were made on visits in July and August, 2017; the writer had noted the building from the road in 2009. He is also indebted to Mrs Andrew and Mr J. Palmer, both of Wellington, for identifying Pear Tree House, or access to early photographs and for some information. Various maps, sale particulars, census returns and the Bishop's Register were consulted at the Herefordshire Archive and Record Centre. Books consulted were J. O'Donnell, 'John Venn and the Friends of the Hereford Poor', 2007; H.H. Rowden, 'The Origins of the Brethren', 1967; T.M. Grass, 'Gathering to His Name', 2006.*

# NEWS AND NOTES

**British Methodist buildings**

Dr Peter Forsaith of The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History informs us that they have recently completed the digitisation of some 10,000 pictures of Methodist chapels current and past from collections previously deposited in the Wesley Historical Society Library. The intention is to place these images on the internet as a the British Methodist buildings website. We hope to bring your further information in due course.

**A major benefactor of Liverpool Wavertree Baptist Church**

As a footnote to the report of the closure of Liverpool Wavertree Baptist Church in the last *Newsletter*, member John Hamilton sends news of his great-great grandfather William Henry Watts, a successful businessman and Lord Mayor of Liverpool in 1895. At his funeral service, held in the church in March 1924, the minister claimed, according to the local press report, that: 'He was the greatest contributor towards the reduction of the heavy debt of this church at the beginning. The site on which it stands was given by him, and the site upon which the new school and institute will be erected was his gift.'

**Avenue St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Southampton**

*Avenue St. Andrews URC, Southampton of 1897-8 by Cubitt and Collinson*

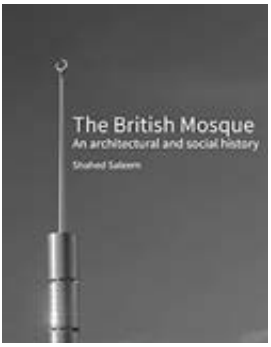
New member, Sarah Hall, writes about the history and buidings of this church, of which she is presently the minister. Originally known as Avenue Congregational Church, Avenue St Andrew's was built to serve an expanding Congregationalist church whose members were moving out to the suburbs from Albion Church, founded in 1844 in the city-centre St Mary's parish. Albion itself was an off shoot from the main Above Bar Congregationalist Church, founded in 1662 and made famous as the childhood church of the hymnodist Isaac Watts.

The current church building is an important survival of the architectural work of James Cubitt (1836-1912), being built in 1897-8 to a design by Cubitt and George Frederick Collinson. One of the church's unusual architectural features is a wooden ventilation shaft issuing in a turret. This is now in urgent need of refurbishment, and in 2019 the church will be launching the Avenue 2020 project, to share its architectural heritage more widely, and to raise the funds for this and other high-level work. The church would be glad to hear from other congregations still worshipping in churches designed by Cubitt. Any other offers of help would also be gratefully received!

Much more fascinating information about the church can be found on its excellent website at asaurc.org.uk/church-archives/.

# BOOK REVIEWS

*The British Mosque, An architectural and social history* by Shahed Saleem. Swindon: Historic England, 2018. 293 pages, 350 illustrations (mostly colour), hardback. £60.00. ISBN 978-1-84802-076-4.




This book has been written just in time, while the story of British mosque-making (at least since the 1940s) can be told with the testimony of people who were involved. It is as if someone three hundred years ago had written an account of the early Nonconformists' places of worship. Shahed Saleem has drawn on such records as survive – including newspaper cuttings, planning applications, promotional literature and videos – and must have talked to hundreds of the local movers and shakers of Muslim communities across the country. The result is impressive as well as timely.

The typology of Muslim places of worship in Britain broadly resembles that of seventeenth-century Nonconformist or Jewish practice in this country. In the beginning, one might say, was the house mosque. Next in the sequence might be the adaptation of larger premises, and finally the purpose-built mosque. Thankfully, examples of all these types are explored and generously illustrated in the book, whether humble or spectacular. Another parallel with the Nonconformist world is the extent to which mosques accommodate a wide range of educational and social activities as well as worship. But there are differences, of course. If the progress of building individual mosques is sometimes fitful, it is a reminder that Muslims abjure the system of interest-bearing mortgages which financed so many nineteenth-century chapels.

Although the author is a practising architect, and so necessarily with a position in current debates about the nature of British mosque design, the book is certainly not a Whig interpretation of history. In analyzing buildings there is no rush to judgment, whether (as the reader infers) the architecture is to Saleem's taste or not. He has a chronicler's sympathy for the post-war migrants who overcame opposition and financial hurdles to create prayer halls in backstreet houses or to erect bold new mosques with minarets. This concern for the *process* of creating mosques as well as the architectural outcome gives the book a distinctive character.

Some idea of that character may be given by citing just three from the dozens of case studies which form the book's core. Howard Street mosque in Bradford is a Victorian terrace house, which in 1958 was adapted to provide prayer rooms on two floors, with classrooms above. Soon an adjoining house was acquired, and later a third, and the side walls were opened up to create quite large prayer halls that could also be used for Islamic classes. Other rooms became

offices and places in which the mosque provided support for its community. The local authority was pleased that this adaptation helped save a group of listed buildings whose future was otherwise uncertain, while retaining all the external features.

Brent mosque occupies a big Gothic chapel that was built for the Congregationalists of Cricklewood in 1901-2. Bought by Brent's Muslim organization in 1980, the chapel was quickly adapted for Islamic worship by clearing the floor and creating a mihrab (the imam's niche) roughly where the communion table had stood. An interesting proposal by Latif Siwani – one of the design team for Regent's Park mosque – to remodel the exterior failed to win the new congregation's full support, and a radical scheme (approved in 1983) to rebuild with towering minarets and a grand dome was also dropped. Following more modest changes in 1996 and 2002 the mosque still functions as a major Islamic centre, with daily prayers in the former Congregational hall-cum-schoolroom. Friday prayers are held in the old chapel, which is dominated by a great chandelier, while the gallery serves as the women's prayer hall.

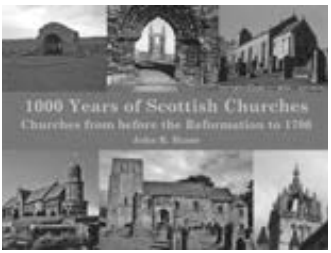
The Jame mosque in the Spinney Hills district of Leicester began in the 1970s when a typewriter factory was fitted out for worship. A plan by local designers to create a new mosque in 2008 was thought under-ambitious by the mosque committee, who promptly commissioned architects from the United Arab Emirates to design the striking building that rose in 2010. Externally and internally its lavishly decorated features evoke the architecture of late-medieval Cairo, and reflect the confidence of a new generation of British Muslims in creating landmark mosques in a fully Islamic idiom.

There is much more to the book than such examples can suggest. Some readers will want to focus on the early material, such as the late Victorian mosque, whose vivid orientalism can still surprise visitors in suburban Woking. Other readers may jump to such very recent buildings as the mosque in Cambridge, whose architects (Marks Barfield) have been more concerned with space and structure than with the common British expectations of minarets and domes. Yet other readers will want first to explore the relation of mosque design to the various branches and sects of the Muslim world in Britain.

*The British Mosque* maps its subject thoughtfully and sensitively. It avoids the simplifications that a lesser author (driven perhaps by an aesthetic, social or denominational imperative) might have brought. Though its structure is not always straightforward, the text manages to weave many themes into a rich fabric. The photographs, some by the author himself, are of the highest quality and there is an abundance of clearly-drawn and informative plans.

*Christopher Wakeling*

*1000 Years of Scottish Churches* by John R.Hume. Catrine: Stenlake Publishing, 2018. paperbacks, illustrated. Published in six volumes, each £10.95: *Churches from before the Reformation to 1700*, 56pp, ISBN 978-1-84033-762-4; *Eighteenth Century Churches*, 48pp, ISBN 978-1-84033-812-6; *Early Nineteenth Century Churches: 1800 to the Disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843*, 64pp, ISBN 978-1-84033-813-3; *Mid Nineteenth Century Churches: the Disruption to the Restoration of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy, 1843-1878*, 48pp, ISBN 978-1-84033-814-0; *Late Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Churches, 1878 to the First World War*, 56pp, ISBN 978-1-84033-815-7; *Churches built since the First World War*, 48pp, ISBN 978-1-84033-816-4.




In 576 photographs this series of six little books provide a comprehensive survey of Scottish churches. To those of us who live south of the border they are a reminder that Scottish churches are often very different to English churches, both architecturally and denominationally. The Chapels Society visited Edinburgh in May 2015 and some of the places visited are illustrated here.

Some of us know of John Hume as a pioneer in the study of industrial archaeology in Scotland but his interest in buildings is far wider than that. He worked for many years for what is now Historic Environment Scotland as an Inspector of Ancient Monuments and subsequently Buildings. He has had a lifetime's involvement with churches and has served the Church of Scotland as an Advisory Member of the General Trustees and as a member of the Committee on Artistic Matters. He has also been involved with Scotland's Churches Trust, whom these books are issued in conjunction with. They arose out of a lecture he gave to the Trust in 2014. As he explains in the Series Introduction, which is repeated in each volume, the choice of churches illustrated here is explicitly personal: churches with a particular meaning for him by virtue of aesthetic appeal or association, or both. Account is taken of both geographical and denominational diversity, although some churches are here because he felt they 'ought' to be there, but he does not reveal which ones. He does not claim this is a work of scholarship, although as one might expect the photograph captions, always informative and never anecdotal, show the author's scholarship. Ultimately, he says, we should look on this work '…as a love-letter to the Church Universal. Each of these buildings is in its own way a place to encounter God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to go out into the world imbued with the idea of loving God and loving our neighbours.'

After the Series Introduction, each book has a one or two page introduction to the period covered and then the pages of pictures, normally two per page. One minor point is that sometimes the page arrangement does not make it clear which

caption applies to which picture. Around a quarter of the pictures are in colour, the rest in black and white. Some churches are blessed with two photographs, but they are all exterior views, there are no interior views. A few are historic photographs, the rest are by the author. None are dated but they clearly range over a long period going back to the 1960s. Sometimes vehicles or the clothing of people may suggest an approximate date – the classic 1970s' Scottish bus passing Forfar Old Parish Church, the boy with the chopper bike at Dunning, or the people waiting at the bus stop outside Fort William Free Church. Some churches have been altered or demolished since the photographs were taken and this is duly noted. Geographical coverage is indeed from Lunnasting on Mainland Shetland in the north, to Isle of Whithorn, Wigtownshire, in the south, from Peterhead in the east to Garrynamonie on South Uist in the west.

Chronologically, three out of six of these volumes are devoted to churches built between 1800 to 1914, with churches before 1700 covered in a single volume. Somebody from south of the Border may think this to be heavily biased, reflecting the author's personal selection. But of course this is not the case, it is a reminder that things are different north of the Border, where there are comparatively few medieval churches and those that do remain are often ruinous or fragmentary. Within the volumes the churches are arranged chronologically so the first is Kirkmadrine in the Rhinns of Wigtownshire where fifth century grave-markers have been found, although the current church is of the nineteenth century, and the final volume concludes with the chapel at Scotus College, Bearsden, Dunbartonshire, built in 1997.

This chronological difference in part reflects the very different church history of Scotland where there are not dissenters in the English sense, rather there are seceders and it was secessions from the established Church of Scotland which partly fuelled a growth in church building in the eighteenth century. The Church of Scotland is a Presbyterian church, one could secede from it and set up another presbytery while maintaining the establishment principle. Establishment in Scotland is the view that the civil authorities should maintain and support the Christian religion without having jurisdiction within the Church. Christ is head of the church, not the monarch. In fact many of the secessions were over the issue of patronage, where landowners or burgh town councils had the right to appoint ministers, which was considered to contravene this principle. Although there were other factors, this was certainly the case in the greatest succession of all, the Disruption of 1843 when something like a third of the Church of Scotland left to form the Free Church. This event, without parallel in English church history, forms the division between the third and fourth volumes in this series. The Free Church was faced with the task of building new churches, the earliest like Alyth in Perthshire, were simple buildings but as the century progressed they became more ambitious, like Free North in Inverness with its great tower and spire overshadowing the adjacent eighteenth-century

Old High Church as if to assert its presence. Other groupings represented here include the Episcopal Church; the Roman Catholic Church; Methodists, noted as being essentially English and represented by the very-English Nicholson Square church in Edinburgh; Baptists; Congregationalists, who have somewhat different origins in Scotland to what they have in England; the Glasities and the Catholic Apostolic Church.

Eighteenth-century churches tended to be Classical in style, often longitudinal in plan, sometimes with steeples in the centre of the longitudinal frontage, as at Mearns Kirk. Cromarty East, now in the care of the Scottish Redundant Churches Trust is on a T-plan, Kilarrow on Islay is circular and Kelso Old Parish

*The octagonal Kelso Old Parish church of 1773 by James Nisbet (photo copyright Scotland's Churches Trust)*

Church octagonal. Construction in the classical style continued throughout the nineteenth century, particularly by the Presbyterian denominations. To English eyes, some of these buildings may appear more secular than ecclesiastical: Bellie Parish Church, Fochabers, of 1798 could be the Town Hall, South Free Church, Aberdeen, of 1892 could be a library. But in the early nineteenth century 'Gothick' also became fashionable, at least for the Church of Scotland. The Parish Church of St Peter in Thurso to English eyes may look rather like

'Commissioners Gothic' but in Scotland is correctly described as 'Heritors' Gothic'. Not surprisingly, more correct 'archaeological Gothic' was associated particularly with the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Roman Catholic Church, particularly after restoration of the Catholic Hierarchy in 1878 which forms the second nineteenth-century division between volumes in this series. The Episcopal Church was often known as the English Church and in accord with this sometimes went south of the border for its architects, notably to Sir George Gilbert Scott for St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh. Later in the century, the emphasis on liturgy and ritual even affected the Church of Scotland, for example at Hyndland Parish Church of 1887 in Glasgow. By then even the Free Church was becoming less averse to Gothic, as at Free North in Inverness of 1890-3, and Gothic even reached other denominations, the most amazing example being the Thomas Coats Memorial Baptist Church in Paisley of 1894; one fears this was built as much to the glory of the Coats family as it was to the glory of God. On the other hand, Langside Free Church of 1894-96 was still strictly classical and in remote rural areas very simple churches were still being built as at Arnisort Free Church on Skye.

One might be surprised at the final volume devoted to churches constructed since the First World War but it amply demonstrates the amount of church building carried out during the twentieth century, some to serve new towns or expanding housing estates. While some, particularly inter-war building followed traditional forms, after the Second World War the Roman Catholic Church in particular built some strikingly modernist churches. However, some of these developed structural problems and have been demolished. Some may want to suggest unfairly that the surprisingly modernist Roman Catholic church at Garrynamonie on South Uist looks like part of the missile range or that the tower of Abbotsford Parish Church resembles that of a Fire Station. But the author's appreciation is far wider and he finds some of these modern buildings to be deeply moving.

Anyone who studies this series of books will develop a greater understanding and appreciation of Scottish churches which should encourage them to explore the country further. They can be unreservedly recommended to readers of this *Newsletter*.

*Roger Holden*



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