






Wangford Primitive Methodist Chapel and a time capsule

Norfolk Road Wangford

Site Location of The primitive Methodist Chapel & Ebenezer Chapel

Legend

-  Feature 1
-  Norfolk Rd
-  Site of
-  SPAR - Wangford
-  Wangford Post Office


ary Clinic  Site of Wangford Primitive Methodist Chapel


B1126

 Norfolk Rd

Norfolk Rd

 Southwold Building & Design...

 Site of Ebenezer' Chapel

 Wangford Post Office

Google Earth

100 m



1827

Site of original Chapel built in 1827 in Norfolk Road, near Pound Corner.



1844

'Ebenezer' Chapel originally built with attached Sunday School Room and Toilet.



Photo taken 1968

1930s

**Extract from 1936 Wangford Methodist
Sunday School Minute Book**

A teachers' meeting attended by Mrs D. Wythe and Mr F. Prime.

AGREED: Mrs Folkard and Mrs Peck be accepted as Sunday School Teachers.
That Classes be rearranged as follows –

Class 1	Teacher Mrs Folkard - Joan Muttitt Pauline Gant Edna Ridgewell Daphne Stockdale Ann Barber Derek Ridgewell	Class 4	Teacher Raymond Easy - Francis Bullard Sylvia Cook Margery Youngs Peter Muttitt Winifred Ridgewell Ronald Smith D. King
Class 2	Teacher Maisie Cook - Morton Peck	Class 5	Teacher Mr Prime - Mollie Wythe

	Eric Bullard B Ridgewell Ray Smith		Dora Prime Nancy Thirtle J. Crowford Nancy Stockdale J. Gilbert Vera Ellis
Class 3	Teacher Mrs Peck - R. King Margaret Gant Alfred Peck Kenneth Ridgewell Dennis Stockdale George Thirtle	Class 6	Teacher Mrs Wythe - W.Walker Eric Wythe Harold Easy Ray Cook Percy Stockdale

1960s

By the 1960s the numbers of regular worshippers at Wangford Methodist Chapel had diminished. For years the four Stewards had explored ways of regenerating the Society. Various options were considered to modernise the building, or totally replace it. Plans were even drawn up to provide a multi-purpose building on the site instead.

In 1968 the Stewards finally faced the reality that there was little prospect of regeneration and with increasing maintenance and heating costs, reluctantly decided to demolish the Chapel.

During 1969 the Methodist Chapel was demolished by Mr Ivan Smith and his team. As bricks and mortar were dismantled a time capsule was uncovered dated 1844. The sealed bottle contained handwritten documents recording the origin of the Wangford Primitive Methodist Society and the events leading to building of the 'Ebenezer' Chapel in 1844.





The buried remains in front of the Chapel were exhumed and reinterred in Wangford Parish Churchyard and the grave stones re-sited there.

The time capsule

A transcript of the time capsule documents is shown below (the original copy is lodged in Suffolk Records Office, Lowestoft).

Salem Chapel Wangford Suffolk

The foundation of this Chapel was laid by Mr William Gooch of Wangford on Friday 26th April 1844 – in the presence of a Layer and respectable assembly to whom the Rev. William Wainwright of Gt. Yarmouth had just preached an energetic and practical discourse from the latter clause of the 13th verse of the 6th Chapter of the 2nd Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians - immediately after the deposition of the stone in the south eastern corner an address was delivered by the Rev. W. Brining Jnr. Late of the North of England explanatory of the grandeur and the design and the erection of an earthly temple in which to worship God – of the facts, doctrines, precepts and ordinances of the Christian Religion, to be declared, enforced and obeyed in it – showing the necessity of the undertaking and the solemn and absolute obligation devolving upon the people freely and devoutly to engage in it for its final accomplishment and exhorting to faithfulness in their honourable and blessed vocation that Christ might be glorified in the Holy and devout life and soul be saved by implicit reliance on the just atonement, the divine foundation, the sinners hope, desire, refuge and home.*

The very interesting ceremony then concluded as it commenced with praise and prayer.

Hallelujah – God was there and good was done

The Primitive Methodists are a denomination of Christians raised up by divine providence in the beginning of the present century they succeeded in establishing an interest in this village in 1823 and in 1827 a Chapel was built for their use though not belonging to them a Connexional property, in which the glorious Gospel has been regularly and powerfully preached up to the present time. But by the blessing of the Lord accompanying the labours of his servants the place has long been too strait for the worshippers that have attended it which is the joyful reason why we raise a larger sanctuary. This edifice is erected at but a very short distance from the other – it is now being settled by law on the Primitive Methodist Connexion and we hope, nay we are fully confident the Great Head of the Church will prosper us and all his people more abundantly –

Jah Jehovah, fill the house with thy glory.

The number of the Church Members at this time connected in society at Wangford is 53 in the whole circuit 630. The increase in the circuit for the last is 60. The Rev. W. Rudd is the present superintendent the Rev. Messrs. Yeadon and Wilkinson are his colleagues.

Statistics of the P. M. Connexion taken at the last annual conference held at Nottingham June 10th – 18th 1843 are as follows –

<i>Members of Society including 905 in British North America are</i>	<i>85,565</i>
<i>Itinerant Ministers</i>	<i>488</i>
<i>Local Preachers</i>	<i>7,438</i>
<i>Connexional Chapels</i>	<i>1,278</i>
<i>Sabbath Scholars</i>	<i>74,450</i>
<i>Sabbath School Teachers</i>	<i>14,892</i>
<i>The deaths for the year preceeding</i>	<i>934</i>
<i>The increase for the year including 242 in British North America was</i>	<i>6,042</i>

These societies are scattered through nearly all the counties of England – several parts of Wales, Scotland, Ireland the Isle of Man, the Isle of Wight, the Norman

Isles and British North America and three Missionaries are on the point of departing or have already departed for Australia and New Zealand.

'Ebenezer'

It is but 34 years since the first Chapel was established in the County of Staffordshire under the auspices of the Lord of Hosts who has called His grace to multiply exceedingly –

To God be all the Glory

Page 4

Mr Thos. Denny of Kelsale is the builder of this Chapel.

<i>Trustees - Wm. Gooch</i>	<i>Wangford</i>
<i>Wm. Bardwell</i>	<i>Wangford</i>
<i>Charles Hales</i>	<i>Wangford</i>
<i>Wm. Driver</i>	<i>Sotterley</i>
<i>Peter Piper</i>	<i>Westall</i>
<i>John Davey</i>	<i>Stoven</i>
<i>Peter Roe</i>	<i>Reydon</i>
<i>James Bloomfield</i>	<i>Wangford</i>
<i>Wm. Edwards</i>	<i>Frostenden</i>
<i>Henry Brown</i>	<i>Uggeshall</i>

Written May 2nd 1844 being the 7th year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria sovereign of the British Empire the largest Empire in the World and being one year after the signal defeat of Sir James Graham and his co-adjuter Bill called the Factory Education Bill but which was in reality a most infamous attempt to deprive dissenters of their own children according to their own desires and principles –

'He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet'

**2 Cor. Chap. 6 verse 13 - Now for a recompense in the sane, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged.*

1970s

After the demolition of the Chapel the very small congregation continued to meet at the home of Mr & Mrs Fred Prime, Mill House, Wangford.

All this coincided with the decision in the village to build a multi-purpose Community Centre to serve the entire village and replace existing dilapidated meeting places that had belonged to numerous groups in the past, i.e. the Womens' Institute Hut, the British Legion Room and the old Reading Room.

When the new Community Centre was eventually completed in 1974 the small Methodist congregation was able to worship in the Community Centre Committee Room. This continued for some years until numbers reduced further and it became more practical to join the Southwold Methodist Society.



Supplied by
Gwen Stockdale neé Prime
June 2014

Addendum

Later a row of houses was built on the old chapel site and thought to be named after Peter Piper, one of the original chapel trustees 'Pipers Row'.

Gwen Stockdale
August 2022