

Church and Chapel

Chapel

There were two Methodist Chapels in Hindringham in the nineteenth century, the earlier of the two being the Wesleyan Chapel situated on Knoll Corner. The religious census of 1851 states that the building was erected in 1818, but the chapel was in fact built in 1834. Perhaps the first Wesleyans met in a cottage on Knoll Corner following the visit of John Wesley to Walsingham on 30 October 1781. The Wesleyan Society ceased to exist for a time, we don't know why, but in 1840 there is evidence that they rented their chapel to the Primitive Methodists for five years before using it again. We know that there were Primitive Methodists in Hindringham in 1823, as the earliest mention of the society in the village comes from the Quarterly Meeting Book of the Fakenham Circuit of March 1823, and in March 1824 Hindringham was included in the Preaching Plan of the Fakenham Circuit. However, they didn't have their own chapel until the present Primitive Methodist Chapel was built in The Street in 1845.

The religious census of 1851 states that on 30 March that year the Wesleyans had a congregation of 22 in the afternoon and seven in the evening, apparently an average congregation. This was considerably lower than the Primitive Methodists' congregation was on the same day, however. They recorded a total of 100–120 in the morning, 186 in the afternoon and 189 in the evening. It seems amazing that the Sunday school accounted for 125 of the congregation in the afternoon and a similar number in the evening.

In April 1898 the Wesleyans sold a small piece of land behind their chapel to a Mrs Harvey, who built Candlestick Cottage on the site. It was following this sale that new deeds were drawn up for the chapel following the model deeds of John Wesley. These deeds were signed by 17 leading members of the chapel, with each signature witnessed by other members of the local circuit. These members were Felix Samuel Frankling, John Wesley Merry, George Maplestone Button, Thomas Frederick Oakford, Robert Oldham, Charles Rix Smith, Richard James Eland, George Back, Robert John Faircloth, Charles Ward Watts, Herbert Wright, Walter Wright, Henry Wall, Nehemiah Smith, George Daplyn, Fred Lee and Charles Glasswell. Witnesses included several prominent members of the Wesleyan Chapel at Walsingham, as well as two from East Dereham, one from Great Massingham and one from Rushden, Northamptonshire.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, some prominent Wesleyan families in Hindringham were the Allisons, the Walls, the Mackies of Home Farm and the Maces. After the First World War the chapel closed and we know that some of its members joined the Primitive Methodists in the village. The building was sold on 17 December 1923 to Sidney Thomas Neale for £25. The indenture was signed by the surviving chapel members who had signed the 1898 deed: Charles Rix Smith, George Back, Robert John Faircloth, Herbert Wright, Walter Wright, Henry Wall, George Daplyn, George Maplestone Button and Charles Glasswell. The building was converted into a carpenter's shop in 1926, remaining so until the start of this century, when it was incorporated into the new and extended Candlestick Cottage.

The Primitive Methodist Chapel has remained relatively unchanged since it was built in 1845. The roof and windows were altered in the 1920s and 1930s and the kitchen was added in 1974 after the land at the side and the rear of the chapel was sold. The floor was raised, a carpet was laid, the old pews were replaced by chairs and a cross was put up on the wall above the pulpit, which had been a gift from St Martin's in 1934. The iron gate and railings, which had been added in 1865, were requisitioned for the Second World War effort and were eventually replaced with the present wall. The chapel remains an attractive feature of the village, its style unusual for a Methodist building in North Norfolk, as they are usually built of red brick.

Some of the earliest members of the Primitive Methodist society included T. Daplyn, a grocer and miller, who was appointed one of the trustees in 1823, and Hercules Sands, a tailor and local preacher who held many other circuit appointments. Another prominent member of the chapel, and indeed a well-known local preacher, was Jimmy Smith, who worked as a coal carter. His grandson is Charlie Greves, a great stalwart of both Hindringham Chapel and the local circuit. Charlie married Edna Mace, the daughter of an influential Methodist and local baker, Herbert Mace, who had previously been a Wesleyan. The communion table commemorates Herbert, who died on 3 September 1948, and his wife, Emily, who died on 27 April 1961.

Another of Mr Mace's daughters, Margery, married Alfred John Gaskin (known always as Jack) and the two of them ran the Sunshine Bakery for 35 years. Jack was one of the best-known local preachers in Norfolk. He was well known in the wide

✦ THE BOOK OF HINDRINGHAM ✦



Wesleyan Chapel members outside the chapel on Knoll Corner at the turn of the twentieth century.



The Chapel as it is in 2009.



The Methodist Chapel prior to the roof change but after the windows had been replaced in the 1920s. Note the lantern over the gate.



The earliest picture of Hindringham Primitive Methodist Chapel, pre-1905.



Right: Sunday-school outing to Brancaster Common for a picnic in the 1970s.



Chapel members in the mid-1980s. Left to right, back row: Elsie Claxton, Ivy Seals, Ivy Gardiner, Winnie Wright, Ethel Walker, Major Round, Philip Walker, George Dent, Jack Gaskin; middle row: Margery Gaskin, Dolly Dent; front row: Charlie Greves, Edna Greves, Eileen Hill, Sheila Curson, Rene Bartholomew.



Charlie Greves with Mrs Fred Loads at the Methodist Summer fête in the early 1960s.



Some Chapel members in the early 1960s. Left to right, back row: Fred Stedman, Enid Loades, Dora Lee, Ivy Seals, George Dent, Albert Dent; front row: Sheila Curson, Edna Greves, Joy Loades, Blanche Bullen, Dolly Dent, Stanley Dent, Charlie Greves.

on the beach and had tea in the pavilion before returning home via Warham, arriving back in the village about 9p.m.

The Sunday school had about 30-40 members in the last part of the twentieth century, and continued to flourish until 2000. The high points of the year were always the Whit Sunday Anniversary and the annual outing, which, in more recent times, was to Great Yarmouth.

Hindringham Methodists have always had a tradition of well-supported social events. The Sunday school took part in local circuit sports and held its own nativity plays and Christmas parties, while the seniors held summer fêtes and flower and vegetable shows. There was a flourishing Sisterhood (formerly the Bright Hour), started in the 1950s, which met on Wednesday afternoons at the chapel. When numbers dropped, these meetings were moved to Mrs Elsie Claxton's bungalow, where they continued to be held until the mid-1990s. The Hindringham Methodist Guild, which started on Wednesday, 2 November 1949, continues to thrive, with a full programme of talks and events attracting members from far and wide. At the first meeting, Jack Gaskin was appointed secretary, and we know from records that 42 members were present at a meeting held on 15 November.

In 1952 a Guild Choir was formed under the leadership of Mr George Dent, and in that first year the choir visited Sharrington, Colkirk, Sculthorpe, Great Snoring and South Creak. Many people no doubt remember the choir and its harmonica band performing in the village and visiting other chapels in the area during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Early members of the harmonica band were David, Cyril and Eva Allison, Fred Hewitt and Charlie Greves. Later members included John Dent, Maurice and Don Kinsley, David Edmonds and Roy Howard. At the time of writing, Hindringham Guild continues its musical traditions with a mature male voice choir.

St Martin's Church

Few villages can boast a more imposing church than Hindringham. St Martin's tower, at 84 feet high and standing 200 feet above sea level, can be seen from miles around, and dominates the village. The Village Hall, the old school, the beautiful barns of Church Farm and St Martin's standing proud on Church Hill form the picture in most people's minds whenever they think of Hindringham.

According to church records, the first priest was instituted in 1301, although the church was built or enlarged between 1330 and 1348 in the Decorated style. The chancel arch, the arcading and the belfry windows in the tower date from that period, but the west window is in the Perpendicular style and fifteenth century. The original tower collapsed in 1386 and the first stage was rebuilt in the new style,

✦ CHURCH AND CHAPEL ✦



Sunday school in the early 1990s. Left to right, back row: Ceri Griffiths, Rebecca Gardiner, Timothy Bacon, Andrew Howlett, Anne-Marie Grange, Hannah Lake, Karen Griffiths, Stuart Howlett; third row: Kirsty Gardiner, Lucy Lake, Ben Hall, Kim Griffiths, Kerrie Leeder, Donna Kinsley, Thomas Dye, Darren Francis, Kevin Francis; second row: Lisa Pengally, Nicola Brown, Kathy Flood, James Dye; in front of rail: Sophie Greves, Sarah Pengally, Lara Smith, Samantha Hall, Kate Gardiner.



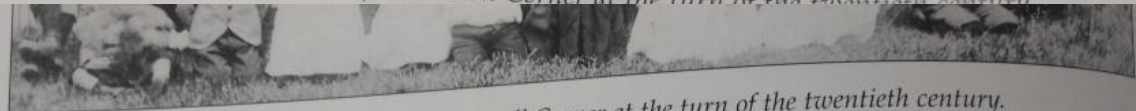
The Methodist Sunday school in 1961. Left to right, back row: Sybil Preston, Jackie Spooner, Edna Greves, Dol Dent, Pat Abel, Ann Purple, George Dent, Margaret Gardiner, Revd Sugden, Fred Stedman, Albert Dent, Brenda Preston, Joy Loades; middle row: Richard Spooner, Janet Spooner, Linda Warner, Robin Abel, Margaret Preston, David Lake, Malcolm Greves, Adrian Loades, Stanley Dent, David Loades, Christopher Loades, Lorna Daglish; front row: Mandy Spooner, Rita Ramm, Graham Warner, Brenda Seals with shield, Shirley Greves, ? Daglish, Verna Hall, Kenneth Abel.

allowed to make their way down Cemetery Road and return home. The older children went back to chapel after tea for the Annual General Meeting. The Sunday-school treat took place on the Wednesday on Mrs Elizabeth Flood's meadow behind the chapel. Tea was set out on trestles and games were played until dark, when the little ones went home, leaving the older children to stay until late.

The annual Sunday-school outing took place the middle of July, when three wagons loaned by village farmers carried members to Wells and Wighton. Bread and cheese, homemade ginger bread and mugs bearing each child's name were packed into boxes for their dinner, which they ate on the bank when they reached the quay (always after saying Grace). The children spent the rest of the day



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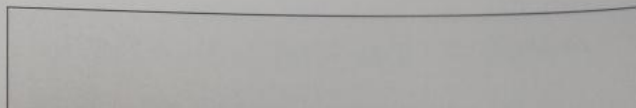
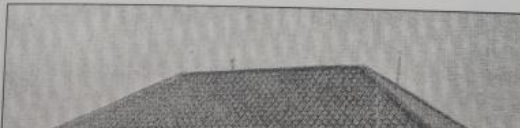
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