

## METHODISTS IN BARNEY

If a note in the **1851 Religious Census Report** is to be believed and there really was a Methodist Chapel in **1787** in Barney it would have been one of the earliest rural Norfolk.

The minister's note in the same report suggests that the congregation had lost a number of its members in the disputes of the 1849/50 when the majority took the side of the **Reformers** and opted to leave the Wesleyan Connexion. Fortunately the reformers seem soon to have settled down as members of the **United Methodist Free Church**.

In the **1950s** the chapel had a thriving **Sunday School** for which the highlights of the year (as in other chapels) were the Sunday School Anniversary (events which gave children a first taste of speaking in public), the annual **outing** to the seaside and the **annual prize** giving with its gifts of books. There being ~~no~~ Sunday School in Fulmodeston Chapel some children from that village (including war-time evacuees) swelled the congregation in Barney.

Sadly the deaths of a number of senior members and social changes in the village, led to declining membership and the chapel was at last **closed** in the **1960s**. A plan by Mr **Tom Cook** of Sennowe Hall to turn it into a **St John's Ambulance** base failed to materialise and it fell into dereliction until, in recent years, it has been restored and converted into a dwelling.

Barney was one of the relatively few village chapels to have a graveyard.



Barney Methodist Sunday School summer outing to Hunstanton in 1950.