RK209

HOW THIS BOOK CAME TO BE PRODUCED

When we were planning our 175th Anniversary year, it was suggested that we collect memories and have them on display, so during October 2007 we dropped an "I remember" leaflet in every home in

Newbold Verdon, asking people to give us their memories of the Baptist Church. We also put items in the Graphic, and Messenger, and in every Contact.

As a result, we were given the following memories, along with various articles and photographs which were put on display boards in the Church and were there from June through to October.

It was also suggested that we made a "Memory Book", putting the memories into a book that people could purchase.

This is the result of that suggestion.

All the memories we received are printed, but not in any particular order. However, we have not been able to print all the photographs we received, but have tried to print a representative selection of peoples' memories. So as to distribute the photos throughout the booklet, they may not be alongside the particular year they represent, but will have a connection with it.

We are grateful to all those who responded.

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NEWBOLD VERDON BAPTIST CHURCH

EARLY BEGINNINGS

Newbold Verdon Baptist Church is a branch of the Barton in the Beans Baptist Church, which has an exciting history and a great influence in the villages and towns around the area. Barton Church is an offshoot of the evangelical revival under Wesley and Whitefield. David Taylor, a servant of Lady Huntingdon, the Countess of Markfield, and John Taylor, a schoolmaster, were the chief agents at the beginning. The former preached in many of the villages around, and the latter, by invitation of two residents, preached in Barton itself. This was in 1743.

Great opposition arose and bitter persecution prevailed, but the work was of God and could not be stopped.

In 1745 a church was formed of seven members. Soon, however, the number increased. Many of the converts became evangelists and spread the news of salvation far and wide. They did not become Baptists until 1755 and did so by study of the New Testament.

The spread of revival was simply marvellous. Branch churches connected with this village centre were established, not only in Leicestershire, but in the counties of Derby, Nottingham, Warwick and Stafford.

The Lord's Supper was celebrated and Baptism administered at Barton.

So large had the movement become that it was deemed advisable by 1760 to divide into five groups, and appoint pastors over them. This was done as follows:

Barton Group: *Samuel Deacon, John Whyatt, John Aldridge.*
Melbourne: *Francis Smith, Thomas Perkins*
Kegworth: *John Tarratt, Nathaniel Pickering*
Loughborough: *Joseph Donisthorpe, John Grimley*
Kirkby Woodhouse: *Abraham Booth.*

Nearly a hundred Baptist Churches owe their existence to the influence started from the humble Leicestershire village of Barton in the Beans, including this Church in Newbold Verdon.

The present Church building was erected in 1833 and opened on Tuesday 22nd October 1833.

Celebrations continued on Sunday 27th October. The morning Service was conducted by Rev T. Orton of Hugglescote and the Evening Service by the Rev Joseph Goadby of Leicester.

The building stands on the site of old cottages and was built at a cost of £220.

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Article from the GENERAL BAPTIST REPOSITORY September 1833

"NEW MEETING HOUSE AT NEWBOLD VERDON"

"The friends at Barton having for some time preached the gospel in this village, with pleasing prospects of success, have recently resolved to erect a comfortable place of worship for the accommodation of the increasing congregation. They have been encouraged in this attempt by the liberality of one of their members, who has purchased a piece of freehold, and kindly devoted it to this sacred purpose. The building is already begun, and on Tuesday evening, July 30th, Mr Butler of Longford, accompanied by Mr Derry, the pastor of the church, and several friends from the neighbouring villages, repaired to the spot, and standing on the rising walls, delivered an excellent and appropriate sermon to a large and attentive congregation, assembled in the open-air. The words selected by the preacher on this interesting occasion, were Jude 3, "The common salvation". This will be the fifth meeting house erected by the church at Barton, for the worship of Almighty God. What hath God wrought!"

1870 A new schoolroom and outbuildings were added and the chapel renovated.

Extracts from Barton Church Magazines about the Church at Newbold Verdon

1894

"Chapel Anniversary Sermons were preached by Mr J.T.Hextall of Bosworth on January 14th..."

"A Temperance demonstration took place on Whit Tuesday May 15th in a field kindly lent by Mr Pickering. In the afternoon various forms of recreation were indulged in by the children. A Service of Song entitled 'Nan' was also given. Tea was provided and upwards of 250 sat down to it. In the evening a public meeting was held addressed by Messrs Bromley, Hargreaves and Pike, of Leicester. The Service of Song was given a second time on the following evening."

"On Friday evening, December 8th, Mr Thomas Palmer of Leicester, gave an evening of song and story in connection with the Band of Hope. Mr Orton presided. On December 15th a Lantern Exhibition was given in connection with the Leics. Sunday School Union."

1895

"A large pipe organ has been erected in the chapel and was opened on Sunday March 31st when two sermons were preached by Mr J.T. Hextall of Bosworth..... A tea meeting was held on Easter Monday, April 15th followed by a service of Song entitled 'The River Singers.'"

"A Concert in aid of the new organ fund was given in the Chapel on December 3rd. Mr & Mrs J.E.Bailey played two pianoforte duets and also acted as accompanists during the evening."

1903 The schoolroom was enlarged at a cost of £200

EXTRACTS FROM A REPORT OF THE MEMORIAL STONE-LAYING OF THE NEW SUNDAY SCHOOLS 1903

"A considerable number of friends were in attendance from the village and surrounding places. The Rev.J.R.Godfrey, the Senior Pastor, opened the service by announcing the hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' Name", after which the Rev.J. D.T.Humphreys, the Junior Pastor, read suitable portions of Scripture, and the Rev.G.E.Payne of Quorn offered prayer."

The Rev. J.R.Godfrey, after laying a stone for Sir Charles McLaren, delivered an address. He reminded the audience *"that the education question was one of the two great questions of the day. We were, he said, losing control of the markets of the world because we allowed other nations to get before us in the education of children. We could not expect to retain our position unless we had a system of education that was up to date, one that was truly national in spirit and in form. The occasion on which they were met reminded them that secular education, however complete, was not enough, but needed to be crowned by teaching that was religious and spiritual....."*

"The Sunday School teachers before him had been crippled in their efforts for want of room. They had done well with the small accommodation they had had, but he felt sure that they would do much better with the larger premises now in course of erection. Subsequently the stone was declared to be well and truly laid."



(After various people spoke and laid stones, they then adjourned to the Primitive Methodist School, where tea was provided.)

"In the evening a public meeting was held in the Chapel, presided over by the Rev. J.D.T. Humphreys."

"The Chairman, in an earnest address, referred to the work begun and carried on by the Baptist fathers of centuries past. They were noble and self-sacrificing in spirit, and did much with their limited means and opportunities. With their heroic spirit and better methods than they knew of, it would be possible to accomplish greater good. He exhorted that the best one possessed should be devoted to the Lord, who would not fail to reward in manifold degree."

"Mr Albert Pickard delivered an encouraging address, in which he congratulated the friends on the effort they were making to enlarge their accommodation for Sunday School."

"The Rev.G.E.Payne referred to the pleasant times he had spent in connection with the place in which they were met and in the old small schoolroom, now giving place to a larger one. If any regretted the demolition

of the old building, they might remember that the old spot, consecrated by many a prayer and song and hallowed experience, remained to them with an enlarged area, where those could be continued. The stones they had laid were, he thought, in their solidity and strength, symbols of what their spiritual ancestors were. For in their character and labours they were foundations on which they themselves were building a spiritual edifice."

"The Rev.J.J.Hargreaves of Measham, was the last speaker, and gave a thoughtful and animated speech, contending that what was invested in the children of the nation was the safest and finest investment that could be made. A collection was made, and with the Doxology and Benediction the meeting was brought to a close."

"The proceeds of the day amounted to about £42, which with £58 in hand previously, brings the building fund up to £100. The cost of the new building will be about £200."

1928 The chapel was extended, a new front door and porch built, made possible by the removing of two rooms from the cottages in front of the church. Prior to this the entrance to the church was in the jitty at the side.





The organ was built in 1859 by George M. Holdich a London organ builder, and was installed in 1895 by the late firm of Porritt of Leicester and sited at the front of the church.

1928 A special organ chamber was built and the organ was removed to its present position.

1951 An electric blower was added, purchased by the Ladies Bright Hour.

1975 A new kitchen, toilets and small schoolroom were added.

1981 Mr John Burns of the organ building firm of F.W.Burns and Son Ltd. carried out major restoration work on the organ.

1982 The Baptistry was built.

1997 The back screen was removed, enlarging the vestibule and the minister's vestry was built.

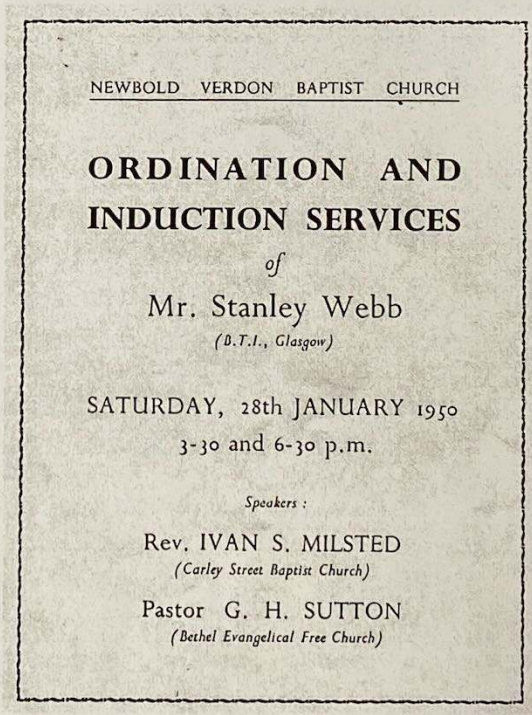
Rev Stan Webb Remembers .....

My first introduction to the Newbold Verdon Baptist Church was in the 1940's when as a teenager I remember conducting an Evening Service, bringing with me a young lady from my own Church, Bethel Evangelical Church, Wigston, who sang a solo.

Shortly after, I was conscripted to serve as a "Bevin Boy", working down the Limby Coalmine, Nottingham for three and a half years. At the end of this term of service I felt a call from the Lord to train for full-time Christian Ministry, applying to enter The Bible Training Institute, Glasgow where I did a two year course.

It was towards the end of this time I remember talking to one of the students who told me that whilst on vacation he had been helping with the work of the Caravan Mission to Village Children in Leicestershire, and had met Rev E.J.Garnham, Minister of Barton Fabis Group of Baptist Churches who expressed his need of assistance in the Group. I followed this up with Mr Garnham who was pleased for me to help at Newbold Verdon during my vacations, resulting in the Church inviting me to assist Mr Garnham in the Group, which I accepted with much pleasure and in gratitude to the Lord.

My Ordination and Induction took place at Newbold Verdon Baptist Church on the 28th January 1950 where I served for four and a half years. I lived in lodgings with Mr and Mrs Shaw during that time, who were extremely kind and helpful to me.



NEWBOLD VERDON BAPTIST CHURCH

ORDINATION AND INDUCTION SERVICES

of

Mr. Stanley Webb

(B.T.I., Glasgow)

SATURDAY, 28th JANUARY 1950

3-30 and 6-30 p.m.

Speakers :

Rev. IVAN S. MILSTED

(Carley Street Baptist Church)

Pastor G. H. SUTTON

(Bethel Evangelical Free Church)

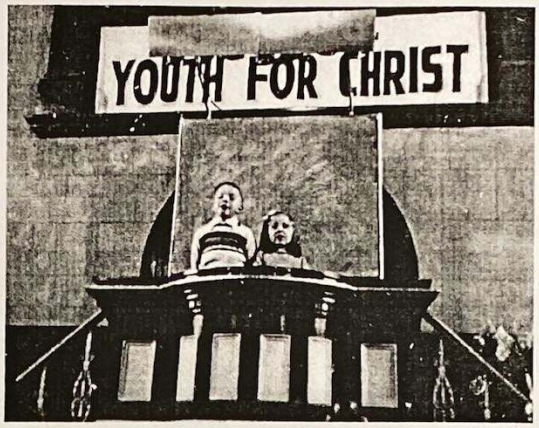
I do remember my first funeral, that of Miss Richardson of Brascote Lane, and the first wedding of Sheila Poole to Tom Bembridge.

My ministry was mainly serving in the Newbold Verdon Church, although I did preach in the other Group Churches on Sundays. As the months passed there was steady growth in the activities of the fellowship. The Sunday School was consistent both morning and afternoon, strengthened by the forming of a Bible Class.

Sunday School Anniversaries and Harvest Festivals always brought in large congregations.

I was brought up in Leicester and had contact with the Young People from some of the City Churches, who I invited over for Saturday afternoon rambles, followed by tea and Evening Fellowship, which

helped to bring in others. The introduction of the Bi-monthly Youth for Christ Rallies at Newbold Verdon, and sharing in the Leicester Y.F.C. Rallies, was a stimulus and the work amongst the Young People grew.



Enthusiasm spilled over into the Dixie Grammar School at Market Bosworth where some of the Young People commenced a Christian Union Fellowship at lunch-times, at which I had the pleasure of speaking from time to time. I was also invited to other school functions which gave me the opportunity of getting to know those from other villages, some attending the Youth For Christ Rallies.

A Youth Club was formed and we became affiliated to the Area Youth Clubs. One of the highlights arranged by the Youth Officer was an exchange visit to Germany. Such an exciting venture to take place shortly after World War II. The then young people, now old, still talk about it. What an impression it must have made.

Church fabric

Towards the end of the 1940's, the main sewerage and water pipes were brought through the village causing quite an upheaval, and were laid on at the Chapel. The old pan was replaced by water toilets and the old coal house under the stairs was converted into a kitchen. The ladies thought it wonderful! Tap water over the sink instead of carrying buckets of water from the cottage pump! How did they manage?

In the early 1950's the Chapel roof was re-tiled and several panels renewed in the ceiling and the Church decorated. Later the schoolroom and stairs were decorated. The Ladies Bright Hour paid for an Electric Organ Blower which was installed on 13th September 1951. A great asset to the organist who could play without arranging for someone to pump the bellows.

The work progressed as people came to faith in Christ. Baptismal Services took place at Cross Hills as there was no baptistry in our own Church. Other young people became members of their local churches and in later years some went into full-time ministry as Ministers and Missionaries.

When Mr Garnham, who I had worked with for four and a half years, informed me of his intention to retire, I decided to seek new pastures, accepting the call fro Arnesby, Bruntingthorpe and Walton-by-Kimcote, leaving in April 1954.

My friendship with Janet Hill continued and I returned for our marriage on the 4th September 1954. Mr Garnham officiated at our wedding.



We frequently visited Newbold Verdon over the following 38 years, being Janet's family home, and on occasion visited the Church.

Then upon retirement from full-time ministry in 1992 we returned to live in the family home.

For several years I served the local churches as both Minister and Moderator. However, we felt the Lord leading us to worship in our village church. This we did and later were brought into membership.

At the request of the Lay Pastor's wife, I took over as Church Secretary, and in April 1996, upon the resignation of Pastor David Voice, became Moderator.

In the summer of 1997 work commenced on the reconstruction of the back of the church with the removing of the wooden screen, building a new vestry and making a larger and brighter entrance including a new glass panelled door and replacing the wooden screen with a glass one. The wooden dado along the cottage side of the church and front needed to be replaced, as well as the rostrum floor due to dry rot. DAMPCO (UK Ltd.) inserted a chemical damp proof course by means of high pressure injection into the walls.

Mr John Smith, carpenter of Barlestone, led the work with the assistance of several of the fellowship. After the major alterations, the Church was decorated by others of the fellowship and the project was completed with a new carpet in the vestibule to which the ladies of the Bright Hour contributed. This six weeks' teamwork brought us closer together and at the same time enhanced worship.

Tragedy struck the village in January 1998 when six young lads died as a result of two car accidents within a few days of each other. The village was in mourning. The Church was open daily for people, young and old, to sit quietly to remember the sorrowing families in prayer.

A support group was set up to help. The Youth Officer from Bosworth Community College was contacted. Negotiations resulted in the commencement of a Youth Coffee Bar opening in our upstairs schoolroom, run by two Youth Officers. It certainly met the need, running for several years, then due to dwindling numbers, the College withdrew the Leaders.



I was very moved in January 2000 when unknown to me the Church had sent out invitations to all my former churches, friends and family to celebrate my 50th Anniversary in the Baptist Ministry. No easy task. I had no inclination of this until the day before and was rather overwhelmed when I walked into the Church full and overflowing. My brother Roy Webb led the Service with tributes from former Churches, family and friends. Both Janet and I were presented with gifts. After the Service we were directed to the Methodist Schoolroom to enjoy a sumptuous buffet with a professional touch. Something we shall never forget.

Change of Worship time 2001 (an important decision)

Since the beginning of the Church, the main Service had been Sunday Evening Worship due to the fact that we belonged to the Barton Group and had a shared ministry. Although the Church separated from the Group some years ago the pattern continued. Seeking to meet the needs of the changing society, the Church decided to have a trial period of six months of Morning Service at 10.30 a.m. Thereafter the change was accepted unanimously and the format continues to the present day except for special occasions.

After serving the Church for six and a half years as Moderator and reaching my mid 70's, I thought it was time to stand down and for the Church to seek a new leader, which they did. On the 14th September 2002 Mac and Kay Chamberlain were inducted as Lay Pastors. For this special occasion an amplification and loop system was installed - made possible as a result of a £1,000 legacy left to the Church by Mr Jack Ramsell.

Stan Webb

REPORT IN "OUR UNION MAGAZINE" November 1950

"On the 4th we were pleased to welcome amongst us Rev C. Rose of Hugglescote, and a happy time of fellowship was spent together."

"On the 11th we had our bazaar on behalf of our Pastor's fund. This was held in the Miners' Institute. Everybody was enthusiastically at work at the various gift stalls. The opening ceremony took place at 3 p.m. when the Rev E. J. Garnham presided, the Rev Stanley Webb taking the prayer."

"Mr A. N. Vesty of Leicester who was accompanied by Mrs Vesty, (an old scholar of our Sunday School) spoke and afterwards declared the Bazaar open."

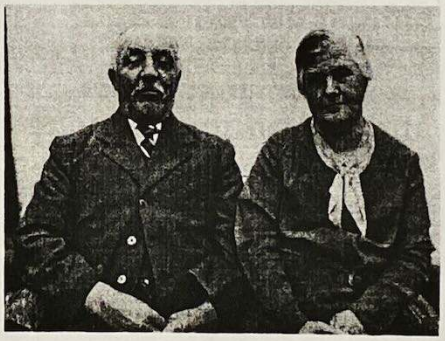
"Those in charge of each stall, with their helpers, are too numerous to mention, but we say 'Thank You' to them all for their loyal helpfulness. In the evening we were entertained by the Coalville Ebenezer Male Voice Choir. Mr Henry Freeman of Ratby proving himself a genial Chairman for this occasion. £97 was raised for the Pastor's fund."

"On the Saturday evening, November 25th, our Chapel was filled on the occasion of our second Youth for Christ Rally. Our pastor, the Rev S. Webb, presided and led the meeting in the opening prayer. The Revs. R. Meakin (vicar of Barlestone), and E.J.Garnham answered questions from the audience, and Mr Walter Causon was the chorus leader. Pastor Sutton of Wigston Fields gave a heart-searching address, the choir following with a special singing of "God is now willing, are you?" Two of our own new converts gave their testimony during the evening and three other young people made their decision for Christ. To His Name be the praise."

Janet Webb remembers .....

My grandfather James Hill was born in Newbold Verdon in 1859, 26 years after the Chapel was built, and lived in the village all his life.

He was one of the many Christians who have served the Lord at Newbold Verdon Baptist Church, becoming a Trustee at the age of 21, and deacon and choirmaster for many years. In 1907 he was presented with a conductor's baton inscribed: "Presented to Mr Hill by the Newbold Verdon Baptist Choir 1907"



PROGRAMME

OF

CONCERT.

TO BE HELD IN

MR. HILL'S SCHOOL-ROOM,

ON

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1888.

DOORS OPEN AT 6-30.

W. WILLSON, New Walk Printing Works, Leicester

Attached is a concert programme dated 3rd March 1888. The venue, Mr Hill's Schoolroom. This indicates his involvement in the work of the Chapel and his love of music.

My grandfather died in February 1945. His funeral service was conducted by Rev. E.J.Garnham, and he was buried in the Newbold Verdon cemetery. A small man with a strong faith in the Lord, of gentle and kindly disposition with a great love for children. His Christian life had a great influence upon me. I thank God for every remembrance of him.

Rev Ernest James Garnham - 1919 - 1953

The Rev E.J.Garnham served as minister of the Barton Group (of which Newbold Verdon was a part) from 1919 - 1953. His only form of transport during those many years was a pedal cycle which he used in all weathers to fulfil his ministry of Sunday preaching, mid-week meetings, funerals, visiting, plus any other commitments; serving four Baptist Churches in the villages of Barton Fabis, Bagworth, Barlestone and Newbold Verdon.

I recall one specific Sunday Evening Service at Newbold. Mr Garnham spoke on the parable of the "Pearl of Greatest Price". I would be in my teens, 16 or 17. I was touched by the Lord and remember Mrs Cave taking me into the schoolroom and praying with me. A step towards my conversion.

It was Mr Garnham who baptised me on the 19th September 1949 at Cross Hills Bagworth. The Church was full; several candidates were baptised at the same time. What great exuberance - such an overflowing of joy filled my heart as I walked up the steps of the baptistry after the act singing *"Follow, follow, I will follow Jesus"* - almost 59 years ago.

Five years later on the 4th September 1954 Mr Garnham officiated at our Wedding Service - then Janet Hill to Stan Webb.

Although Mr Garnham retired in June 1953, he continued in part time Ministry until the Induction of Rev John Gardiner in September 1954 as Group Minister. Mr Garnham died on 8th January 1958 aged 73 years.

Rev Robert David BROWNE 1931 - 1935

Rev R.D.Browne served as assistant Minister to Rev E. J.Garnham in the Barton Fabis Group. A man with a musical gift showing great interest in the ministry of song and music among the Youth of the Churches, and in particular Newbold Verdon. No doubt it is commonly known he wrote the hymn *"Thou Lord hast given Thyself for our healing"* in the Baptist Hymn Book.

Harvest Festivals

The Baptist Harvest Festival has, as long as I can remember, taken place the first weekend in October. As a child and teenager a door to door collection was made in the village for the produce, collected in wheel barrows. Fresh vegetables were dug up out of the gardens, washed and strung together in bunches - beetroot, onions, parsnips and carrots, with celery and potatoes, and pears and apples freshly gathered from the trees. Home made cake, jams and chutney were other items collected. Being tall I was given the job of decorating the windows

which I enjoyed doing.



The Chapel looked wonderful as we gathered for worship on Sunday to give thanks and praise to the Lord - always a choir item or two, and the exuberant singing of a full chapel of the old familiar Harvest Hymns. *"We plough the fields and scatter"* - *"Come ye thankful people come"* - *"To Thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise"*, etc. bring back so many happy memories.

The Harvest weekend concluded with the auction of the produce, taking place in the Schoolroom on the Monday evening.

Christmas Carol Singing

This was a special treat for me and my cousin Myrtle (who always spent Christmas as a child and teenager at my home), to be allowed to join the Baptist Carol Singers, meeting at the Chapel at 10.00 p.m., not getting home until 3.00 a.m.

I don't remember how many were in the group, but what I do remember is being invited into the Hall Farm near St James Church by Mr and Mrs Milner for mince pies and hot drinks and singing in their large Hall.

After singing round the village we walked up to the Heath singing outside the home of Mr and Mrs Barsby Snr. who also invited us into their home to get warm. The house was so cosy, with a lovely coal fire burning. After a hot drink, mince pies, and getting our hands and feet warm, we walked back to the village, and after singing the last Carol which I believe was outside the Chapel, we bid each other a Happy Christmas and made our way home.

Doors unlocked, stone hot water bottle in the bed, we snuggled up together, soon fast asleep. Two of the old carols we sang and which I loved were *"The Angels' Song"*, and *"How Beautiful Upon the Mountain"*.

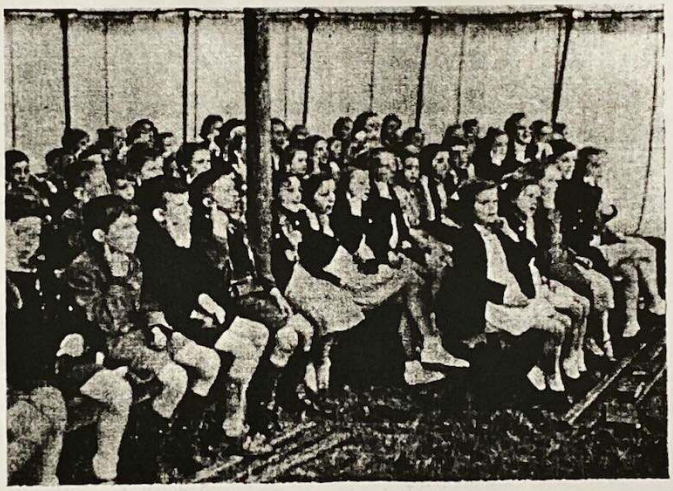
Caravan Mission to Village Children

I recall a visit of Mr Haddon Careless who visited the village when I was a child 8/10 years old. He held his Mission in the Baptist Church Upstairs Schoolroom, showing slides of Pilgrim's Progress in a room overflowing with children. As I watched I felt a touch from the Lord - I cannot explain the experience, but I know it was real.

In the early 50's Mr Ron Jones came to the village, setting up his Tent and caravan in the field behind the Baptist Church for one mission. This was very popular - the tent was full of children every night, singing choruses and listening to Bible stories illustrated by the Flannel Graph Board.

An Extract from the Leicester Mercury:

"This tent Mission was led by Mr Ron Jones of the Caravan Mission to Village Children. Each night at 6 p.m. the children gathered in the tent, and many nights a hundred were present. Mothers could not understand why, for when picture night came along the children did not want to go, they came to the tent instead. Many parents were drawn to the meetings through the children."



Photo, " Leicester Mercury "

I remember the early morning prayer meetings in the tent before going to work. For a number of years we took some of the Sunday School children along to the Rallies held in Leicester at Carley Street Church.

Rev Stanley George Webb 1950 - 1954

On the 28th January 1950, Stan was Ordained and Inducted as Minister of the Newbold Verdon Baptist Church, having concluded his ministerial training at the Glasgow Bible Training Institution, assisting Rev E.J.Garnham in the Group.

Stan was brought up in Leicester and had many contacts with the Young People in the Leicester Churches, leading summer camps. Through these contacts, groups of Young People came over on Saturday afternoons for rambles, tea and evening Fellowship.

Early in his ministry he introduced Bi-monthly Youth for Christ Rallies, which brought in young folk from villages around and about. A time of enrichment with the formation of a Youth for Christ Choir, young people making commitments to follow Christ, giving testimonies at the Rallies and some following on in future years into full time service for the Lord.

Baptismal Services took place at Cross Hills, Bagworth as there was no Baptistry at Newbold Verdon. This was a stimulant to the work in the Chapel.





In 1951 the ladies of the Bright Hour purchased an Electric Blower for the pipe organ which had previously been pumped manually - see plaque on the organ. This was replaced in 1997 at a cost of £488.00.

In the late 1940's water and main sewage pipes were laid through the village and into the early 1950's brought up to the Chapel. The old pan lavatories were replaced by water toilets and a kitchen built under the stairs with a sink and tap water. Previous to this, water was carried in buckets from the cottage pump.

Stan resigned in April 1954 to take up Group Ministry of three village Churches at Arnesby, Bruntingthorpe, and Walton-by-Kimcote.

We married at Newbold Verdon on 4th September 1954 as mentioned earlier, when I joined him at the Manse, Arnesby.

Retiring from full time ministry we returned to live in Newbold Verdon in August 1992. Stan became Moderator of the Chapel in 1996 following the resignation of the Lay Pastor, David Voice, serving the Church in this capacity for six and a half years.

Janet Webb (nee Hill)

I Remember When .....

I had a new frock for the Anniversary and that was the only one I got - all year.

I remember my mother cleaning the Chapel (Annie Baker)

I remember the Chapel being full. Everyone in the village went to the Anniversary.

I remember getting married to Jack Hill at the Chapel in 1937 with the Rev. Garnham officiating.

I remember when the congregation would fill the Chapel every Sunday.

I remember being baptised by Harold Willimott when the baptistry was first used.

I remember getting Speakers for the Bright Hour.

Nora Hill (aged 95)



Brian Hill Remembers .....

My family, through both my father and mother's line, has, I believe, been connected with the Newbold Verdon Baptist Church since its beginning. A member of the original Building Committee was named Statham, linking with the information about my mother's family below. Further probability lies in that my paternal great grandfather, James Hill, was born in Newbold Verdon in 1859, this just 26 years after the Chapel was built.

From James Hill, to my son Clive Hill, there were five successive generations from our family who served the church as deacons.

My paternal great grandfather, John James Statham, commemorated by the plaque in the chapel, was born at Carlton in 1867.

The evidence that the Hill family was prominent in the life of the church is supported by the concert programme, dated 3rd March 1888, and describing the venue as "Mr Hill's Schoolroom". He was the choirmaster at the church, and was presented with a silver-mounted conductor's baton in 1907, and that is now in my possession. I remember it being brought out once a year, for the Sunday School Anniversary, when I was a child, the then choirmaster being Perce Wright.



HUBERT STATHAM

The family of both my father, James Leslie William Hill, and my mother, born Lily May Statham, were Baptists at Newbold Verdon. When John James Statham died at the age of 43, Roland Statham married his widow, Rose Bevins Statham, and later became the church secretary.

Hubert Statham, my grandfather, was the choirmaster in the 1930's, notably on 2nd December 1933, when the Messiah was performed, three years after the opening of the extended chapel.

My father, who was organist for some years, was the organist on that occasion at the age of only 21, and in 1929 had been the organist at the opening service following the extension work. The first hymn book I remember in use was the Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised) which was published in 1933. I have copies of this, including a tune book. However, with earlier hymn books, only words were published, and the organist had to find tunes from elsewhere. The main resource for this was The Bristol Tune Book, and I still have my father's well-used copy.

Before the chapel was extended in 1928, the organ was placed centrally at the front of the chapel, and the pulpit was in the front corner, on the playing field side. The extended chapel had a new central pulpit, and the present small extension was constructed to house the organ.

My father told me, many years ago, that two harmoniums were in use on the premises in the latter part of the 1800's. and the early 1900's, the large one known as 'Goliath' and the smaller one 'David'. When the new organ was installed in 1891 at a cost of £60, 'David' was dispensed with.

Maurice Farmer, who later became the church organist, learned to play on 'Goliath'.

The pipe organ was built by George M. Holdich of London, a noted organ builder, and installed by the local firm of Porritt of Leicester.



Larger organs by the same builder can be found in the United Reform Church, Hinckley, and in Lichfield Cathedral. The organ underwent a major overhaul in 1981, the work being carried out by F.W.Burns and Son Ltd. of Nuneaton.

The extension of 1928 caused problems. It was financed by some private giving, of which I have some of the notes of donors (church members) made by my father, but largely by money supplied by the Hinckley and Country Building Society, for which Roland Statham was an agent. I have some correspondence from the Society to Rev. E. J. Garnham, who was minister at the time.

It took some years to pay off this loan, and several of the younger men in the church clubbed together and bought a silent film projector, to show films in the lower schoolroom. A small brick building, housing the projector and the projectionist, was constructed at the rear of the schoolroom, on the land belonging to the Vera Cottages, which then belonged to the Barton Group of Churches.

I think the admission was 6d, and the room was packed each week. There was, of course, no television then, and such entertainment was only available in Newbold Verdon at the Baptist Church, and at the Miners Welfare Institute. Films were usually hired from Frank Jessop, of Leicester, whose name lives on in the modern firm of Jessop's, which I believe grew from a later development of what had been a private business. Frank Jessop travelled himself from Leicester to show the films at the Miners Institute.

The chapel and schoolrooms were heated by a coke-fired boiler, and a gravity fed radiator system. This system had a header tank in the very small shelved cubicle, off the upper schoolroom. There being no mains water then, the tank had to be topped up by taking buckets of water up the stairs to the tank, and often, before Sunday School, this had to be done.

As I grew up, having been baptised at Cross Hills with Christine Causon (now my wife), Gillian Poole (now Jones), and Nancy Kind (now Smith), in a small church it fell to some of us to take on responsibilities ourselves. I was a deacon for almost 25 years, and church secretary for most of that time.

My wife and I have many memories of those years, much of which was quite a struggle to keep the church going.

We were always looking for ways to involve and reach children and young people. For some time, I ran an evening event which we called 'The Five Star Club', which consisted of games, singing, and telling stories (often Jungle Doctor stories). It was not unusual to have forty or so children literally sitting at my feet, listening.

Teenagers, as they were then known, were also catered for. 'The Hideaway' was a kind of coffee bar, held in the upper schoolroom. We begged old comfortable chairs and so on, and it was simply somewhere for youngsters to come and sit and chat, listen to music, and have a soft drink. We were told by a local policeman that it was one of the best things to happen for youngsters in the village for a long time. Otherwise, many of them just walked around the streets, bored. No computer games to hold them at home in those days!

One consequence of 'The Hideaway' was the discovery of a structural problem. At times we had up to sixty youngsters upstairs, and I found on one occasion that when they were there, it was not possible to replace the wooden dividing panels which were then in the lower schoolroom.

Inspection found that the main joist in the upper floor was bending to a dangerous degree with the weight. We solved the problem by having two steel joists fitted, either side of the older wooden one, to support the floor timbers.



Left - Right Back: M. Talbot, G. Newman, E. Gardner, M. Archer, G. Preston, R. Hunt, G. Penny.
Middle: J. Saunt, M. Tuckwell, I. Mitchelson, T. Crowfoot, T. Bott.
Front: R. Pettit, P. Clinton

The RSJs were provided by the father of one of the youngsters at cost price, and they were paid for, at least partly, by a sponsored walk by the youngsters themselves.

For a time there was an inter-church Sunday School football competition. Tom Brown, of the Methodist Church, and I had the idea, and there were teams from

the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, St. James' Church, and, I believe, Barwell Methodist Church, who played each other. David and Tony Crowfoot, and Terry Satchwell, were among the players. We had a set of yellow football shirts, which Chris, my wife, washed and ironed! It was an excellent additional activity, involving boys and their parents, who came to watch.

Improvements to Ancillary Rooms

The facilities at the church had always been poor, with a tiny 'kitchenette' under the stairs, and inadequate toilets outside at the rear.

We agreed with the Barton group that some of the land which had been part of the gardens for the Vera Cottages, but which had lately been uncultivated, could be taken into the church property. A plan was then drawn up to demolish the old outbuildings, and enlarge the lower schoolrooms to provide a proper kitchen, an extra small meeting room, and proper internal ladies' and gentlemen's toilets.

One side issue here was that the old boiler house was finally defunct, although this boiler had for some time not been used, as infra-red electrical heaters were installed in the chapel, and other electric heaters in the schoolrooms. This change was to save an enormous amount of money and labour. I had spent many hours, often late at night or early morning, stoking the coke boiler!

The improvements to the rooms were carried out by W. Oakley and Son of Carlton, but money had to be borrowed. Several of us stood surety for the money, but it was repaid in a comparatively short time.

John Poole and I also laid a new concrete path at the rear of the chapel, and in process discovered that the old men's urinal had been fed into the 'Baccy Pit' - no wonder it stank! We said nothing at the time!

Alarm came when it was noticed that the rear corner of the chapel on the playing field side was bowing. Again, Mr Bill Oakley was consulted, and he recommended that the rear wall of the chapel needed to be stabilised. The work done consisted of all the bricks below damp course level at the rear of the building being replaced with engineering blocks. This Mr Oakley did, and as far as I am aware, the building was stabilised.

Brian Hill

More Memories of Janet Webb .....

After Mr Andrew Statham retired as Sunday School Superintendent in the mid 40's (my memory is not too clear about the exact year), his niece Betty Shaw took over. It was at this time she asked me to help in the Sunday School, which I did until September 1954 when I married and left the village. I believe she was on her own teaching in the Sunday School when she asked me, but when I left, an encouraging Team of Young People were working in the Sunday School, who today continue their walk with the Lord.

Mr Maurice Farmer was pianist, having taken over from Mr Perce Wright who had moved to Mablethorpe. Perce had been the pianist, choirmaster and Sunday School teacher for some years.

The exuberance and chatter of the children coming up the stairs into the Schoolroom is something I well remember. (I don't ever remember an accident on the stairs).

The Schoolroom was soon full and with the ringing of the bell on the desk at the front, they settled down quietly.

The routine was to mark the register, followed by hymns, choruses and a talk. At this time the children were taught altogether in one room. Sunday School was held morning and afternoon, with an evening adult Service.





A Bible Class was started by Stan in 1950. They gathered in the downstairs schoolroom which at that time was partitioned making two small rooms. I don't remember how many classes we split into. I do know I had my class upstairs - these were the younger children of the Sunday School. The teaching material I used was Flannelgraph and Bible Story Film Strips.

Valerie Statham, one of the children in my class, died as a result of a fall. I think she was 7 years old. This was a great sadness for us all.

The S.S.Anniversary (Sermons), was probably the highlight of the year and a real delight for me. I just loved all the preparations with singing practices twice a week for six weeks. We always sang a March, and an Anthem for the Choir, with a number of special children's items. One Anthem I remember singing was *"Open the Gates of the Temple"*. The chapel was full for both afternoon and evening services, and often chairs brought in down the aisle, with people arriving very early to get a seat. The platforms were built up either side of the pulpit situated in the middle of the Church at the front. Children occupied one side with the choir on the other. Mr Walter Causon was then choirmaster/conductor and Gillian Poole organist.

In the 40's/50's family cars were few, making the Sunday School Outings popular. Several years the Baptist and Methodist Sunday Schools united for the outings, filling several coaches. One of the United venues was Trentham Gardens.





One outing to Billing Aquadrome stands out in my mind. A group of us made for the boating lake - what fun - we were enjoying splashing each other with our oars, when one boat capsized and the boy who tipped out was unable to swim. He very quickly re-appeared with water up to his neck, standing on the bottom of the lake. Panic!! He was rescued by an attendant and given dry clothing to enjoy the rest of the day.

I remember one year taking them to Dudley Zoo - no mishaps this time. The lions had been fed!!

It was custom to decorate a float for the village parade - the children just loved this as you can imagine. Most children like to dress up as a special character - the problem being who to choose to avoid disappointment. Does anyone remember -"Moses in the Bulrushes" and "Sunshine Corner"?

Janet Webb (nee Hill)





More of Brian Hill's Memories.....

The Sunday School Anniversary, on the first Sunday in June, was the event of the year. Some six weeks of practice, usually twice weekly, preceded the day. The two platforms erected in the chapel, either side of the pulpit, one for the children and one for the choir, were simple but strong affairs. Each had three sloping supports, pegged into the floor at the bottom, and resting against the wall at the top. Boards fitted on to pegs on these supports, and one of the boards had a curved piece cut out of the rear edge, presumably from the days when it had to fit around the old corner pulpit.

I graduated from singing to pumping the organ. Before the present electric blower was installed, the long wooden handle had to be pumped, with an eye on the small gauge.

The earliest Anniversaries I remember had Perce Wright as choirmaster, and my father as organist. When the Wrights moved to Mablethorpe, my wife Chris' s father Walter Causon, took over, and organists included Maurice Farmer and then Gillian Poole, Chris's cousin.

For some years, the Caravan Mission to Village Children (CMVC), which was a branch of the Scripture Union organisation, visited the church for, usually, a week's mission. The first missioner I remember, was Haddon Careless, a lovely man. He would come with his caravan and it would stand in the yard of Harry and Lucy Poole (parents of Sheila Bembridge). Later, the missioner was Ronald Jones, who once came with his tent, erected on the playing field at the rear of the chapel. The meetings were a mixture of hymns, choruses, quizzes, and illustrated talks.

Two other annual occasions were Harvest Festival and Christmas. In those days, the 1940's, the village was much smaller, with a population of around 1200. The three village Harvest Festivals, (Baptist, Methodist, and Church of England) were on fixed days, to avoid a clash. A great effort was made to fill the chapel with fruit, flowers and vegetables. And in those days, everybody had a productive garden.

On the Saturday morning prior to a Harvest Festival, the produce would be collected from the houses all round the village, and in many cases, it was put out ready by the back door. People expected the churches to come for it, and were glad to supply it. My own joy was, as a boy, going round for this collecting with Harry Smith, who lived in one of the cottages in front of the chapel, for Harry usually managed to borrow a pony and trap for the job. And I loved that. One year, it had to be a builder's handcart.

The produce was sold for church funds on Monday evening, after the Harvest Sunday. This again was a village event, and was in the form of an auction. In those days of wartime, and immediate post-war rationing, treasure like a 2oz. bar of Cadbury's Dairy Milk chocolate fetched ridiculous prices.

Christmas

The feature of Christmas for me was carol-singing round the village. Both the Baptists and the Methodists, separately, formed a carol singing party to sing round the village on Christmas Eve. It was wonderful! We began at 10 p.m., and sang our way up Main Street and Dragon Lane, to the Heath. There Mr and Mrs Charles Barsby (senior) expected us at their bungalow, with tea, cakes and mince pies waiting. We then sang our way down to the village, and came down Mill Lane to the chapel, where some of the ladies of the church were waiting with more refreshments. Then, we covered the lower part of Main Street and Desford Road, before returning to the chapel before going to our homes - at about 3 a.m. And there was no collecting for the singing either! We did it for the joy of it.

We sang the old carols, two which had been sung year on year, but of which no music or word copies existed. One of them, which I was told was my grandfather's (James Roland Hill) favourite, was this (I still remember words and tune):

Morning star in splendour shining,
Glad we hail thee on thy way,
While we chant with happy voices,
Christ the Lord is born to day.

(Refrain)
Ring merry bells, ring merry bells,
Sweetly chime this Christmas morn,
Ring merry bells, ring merry bells,
Christ the Lord is born.

Son of David, King eternal,
Born to set Thy people free,
Reign for ever, King of glory,
All the world is blest by Thee.

Ring merry bells etc.

The other was this:

How beautiful upon the mountains
How beautiful upon the mountains
How beautiful upon the mountains
Are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings.
That bringeth good tidings,
Good tidings of joy.
That publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion:
'Thy God reigneth, thy God reigneth'.

Break forth into joy,
Sing together, sing together
Ye waste places of Jerusalem.
For the Lord, He hath comforted His people,
He hath redeemed Jerusalem.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Praise ye the Lord!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Praise ye the Lord!

Rev E.J.Garnham

It would be impossible for me to record my memories of the Newbold Verdon Baptist Church without paying my own tribute to Ernest James Garnham.

He came to Christian faith in a Bible-class held by one of the sisters of Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He became minister at King Street, Loughborough in 1907, and then at Basingstoke from 1913. It was at King Street that he was admonished by the deacons for not preaching a sermon that was long enough! This was somewhat daunting for a young man who was then quite shy, but who nevertheless cured this by the practice of forcing himself to speak to everyone in the congregation before they left the chapel after worship.



He became minister in the Barton Fabis Churches in 1919, and remained so until retirement - a pastorate of some thirty five years. Before the war, he was one of two ministers, as had been the case in these churches for many years, until financial considerations in the 1930s meant that only one stipend could be afforded.

He was not college trained, but read widely. One of his bits of advice to me was to read a good Western occasionally, as well as theology!

He raised his family, having married when living at Barlestone, on what was never a large stipend. When he retired he was being paid £208 per year, plus the manse. On such money, a car was never a possibility, and he rode between the churches of Barton, Cross Hills, Newbold Verdon and Barlestone on his bicycle.

His preaching was of the old style of taking a text, and working a framework for the sermon strictly from the text, which was probably only one verse of a passage. The style of service he led was simple, and in the old style of 'the long prayer', and the sermon toward the end of the service.

But one gained the sense of awareness of God in such worship. I can still hear the deeply respectful way in which he often pronounced the word 'God', and also the way in which he would at times spontaneously break into a hymn at Communion. One such was after the sharing of the bread and wine, he came and stood with us in the pews and broke into song:

'And above the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus hath done all things well.'

When I expressed a sense of call to the ministry, at the very young age of seventeen or eighteen, he immediately helped me. I would travel to the manse at Barlestone on Friday evenings where he would give me three texts to prepare sermon outlines for. The ones I prepared from the previous Friday were discussed and gently dissected, altered and often scrapped! And always we knelt in prayer before it was time to go home, and say goodbye to Mrs Garnham and their handicapped daughter Margaret.

He found me preaching opportunities within the Barton Churches and although circumstances meant that I did not actually train for ministry until some years later, it was to Mrs Garnham, then his widow, that I wrote on being ordained, to say that that day was largely due to him.

He was a man often misunderstood, at times badly treated even within the churches, and at times he thought his life had too many failures. But from him I learned the simplicity of reverence and Christian faith, and shall for ever be in his debt. His photograph still has a place of honour in my study.

Rev. R.D.Browne

I only met Rev Robert David Browne in his later years, but he was the second minister in the Barton Churches for a period in the pre-war years. He became, and remained, a friend of my father for the rest of his life. He has a hymn in the Baptist Hymn Book, beginning, *'Thou Lord hast given Thyself for our healing'*. The hymn, with slightly

altered words, is also in the latest hymn book, 'Baptist Praise and Worship'.

The hymn is set to an old tune, 'Springfield', which Browne never intended, and in his later years, my father wrote a tune for the hymn, which he called 'Bartonia'. I have copies of this if anyone might be interested.

I mention Mr Browne particularly, because in a letter to my father in the later years of his life, he said that he had never come across a Baptist Church with the quality and love of music which he found in Newbold Verdon in the time of his pastorate. This was a remarkable tribute to a small village church. Browne, I believe, sang tenor in the singing of Handel's Messiah in 1933. He wrote many other hymns for use in his churches, and I have copies of many of them which he was kind enough to send me before he died.

Chris and I left the membership of the church at Newbold Verdon in 1981, when we moved to our first pastorate at Long Buckby. After training at Bristol Baptist College, I was ordained in this chapel, the preacher on that occasion being Rev Dr Morris West, President of the College.

Brian Hill

I Remember When .....

I attended the Sunday School as did my late husband Ernie Kind. The Anniversary was always a special day for us.

I would like to give a donation in memory of Ernie, and also his parents Mr and Mrs E. Kind, and also my parents Mr and Mrs P Wright.

My father was the choir master and both our mothers were in the choir.

Ernie and I were married in the Church in January 1947. The first Sunday of June was always a special day for us both, bringing back many memories.

Dorothy Kind (nee Wright)

I Remember When .....

.....my grandfather Joseph Edwin Newbold told me that he walked from Ibstock to preach at Newbold Verdon Baptist Church, possibly between the wars, and crossing the fields, between the Heath and the Baptist Church, some lads behind a hedge shouted to him. As he turned round, one threw a cow pat at him and hit his chest, all over his white shirt.

He said some old lady took him in and cleaned him down and he carried on to preach his sermon before walking home to Ibstock. In later years, 60's, I would take him in my dad's car to Barton and Swannington, although this Chapel seems to have disappeared. He was a life-long Baptist. He had four sons and one daughter, all brought up Baptists and married at Ibstock. He even married one of his grandsons.

Joseph James Newbold

I Remember When .....

.....we used to have plays at the Chapel and invite the public to raise money for the upkeep of the Chapel. It is also where Pastor Webb with his black curly hair first brought Janet with her lovely hair, and introduced us to her.

Maureen Shaw

I Remember When .....

.....Brian Hill "magic'd" some fruit pastels out of a wooden box that looked untouched for years - a lesson in believing what you don't see, I think! I became a Christian whilst on camp one year, and was baptised in the (freezing) baptistry.

My time with Newbold Baptist was a very happy one with warm and caring people.

Linda Chapman (nee Perks)

Nancy Smith Remembers .....

I was about 8 years old when I came down to the Baptist Chapel to see the Black and White Films which they brought and showed. This was a great time for us kids in those days.

This particular day I got to thinking about the films they would be showing that night. What could I do for a bit of fun? I went to the cupboard at home and got out a pepper pot with pepper in it. It was quite a big pot and cut glass, but I could get it into my coat pocket. So off I went in the evening with a few more of the children from the Heath.

Half way through the film I got the pepper pot out of my pocket and started to throw it about. They did start to sneeze a bit! I emptied the pepper pot.

I asked myself, "What shall I do with the pot?"

Funny how children's minds work - I was frightened to take it back home in case I got into trouble.

At that time, just inside the field there was a water pit - just the other side of the spiked fence, so this is where I threw it.

In time they filled the pit in with dirt. The pepper pot must still be there - a bit more of an antique!

I never got into a row. My mother never did miss it!

Harvest

When I was a young girl I went to the Baptist Chapel. At this time it was called a Chapel, not a Church like it is called today. I lived up Newbold Heath , nicknamed Gorby-Knob, (I don't know why it was called this).

At Harvest time my mother would always send me round the houses to collect vegetables, fruit, tinned food, etc. to decorate the Chapel. I would take it and put it in our home where it would fill the living room and the kitchen floors. In the middle of the morning a lorry would come and we would put it onto the lorry and take it down to the Chapel to start the decorating, hanging up bunches of carrots, onions, beetroot, and decorating the windows with flowers.

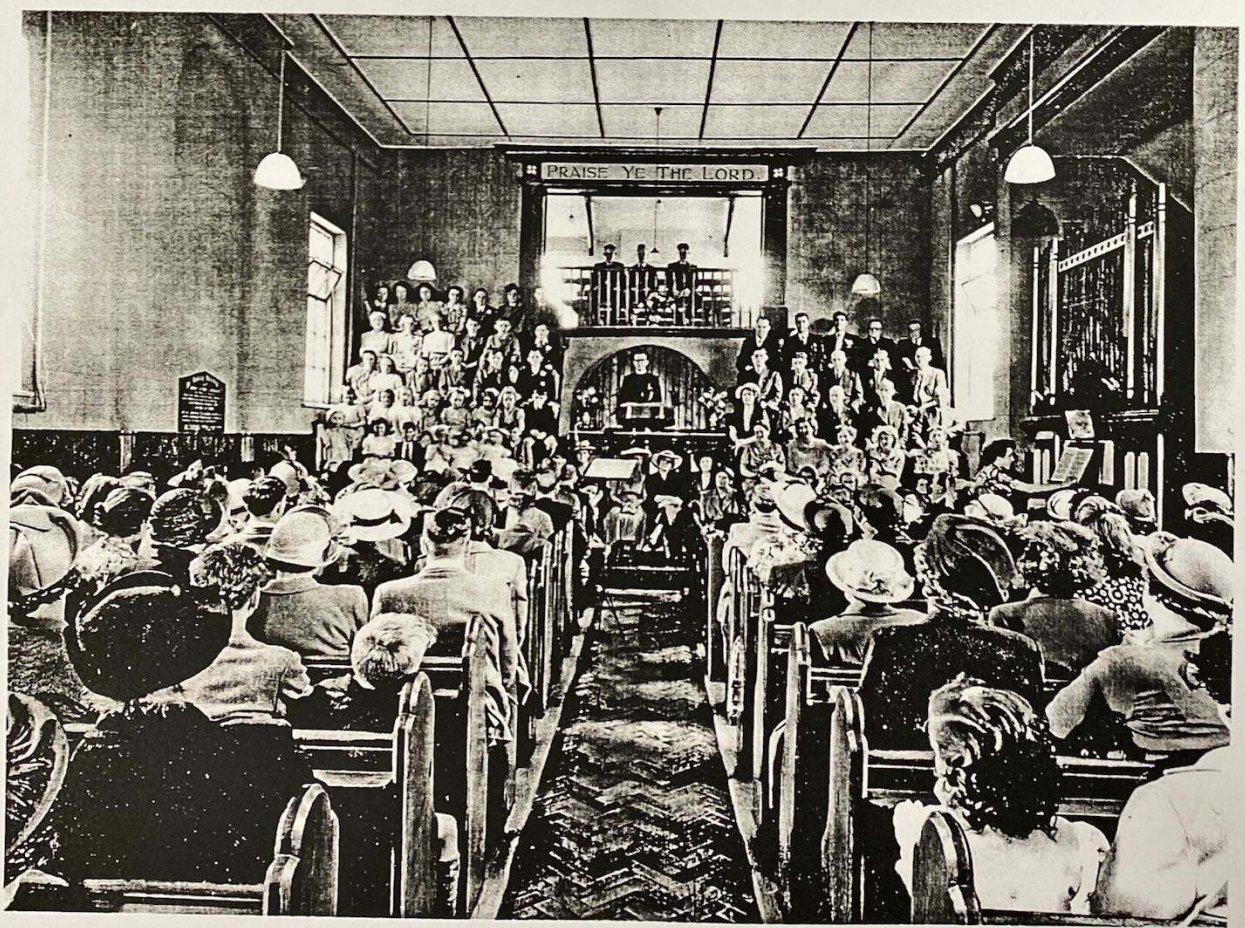
We put tables up and filled them with the tinned fruit, apples, pears, grapes etc. On the Sunday, we had Services afternoon and evening.

On Monday evening all goods were auctioned off in the back room. The room got packed with people. For me the time wouldn't pass quick enough for me to grow older so I could help sort it all out and be the one to stand at the door and pass the goods into the back room to the auctioneer. Everything would sell.

Sunday School Anniversary

The Anniversary always took place on the first Sunday in June. This was about 60 years ago. At that time it was always hot and sunny. I had to walk from the Heath with my mother in the afternoon. Mother would tell me not to step on the tarmac so I didn't get it on my shoes, but I always did. I liked to pop the tar bubbles. I had to make sure I cleaned my shoes before I went into Chapel so I didn't mark anyone's dress on the platform.

This particular Sunday I must have been 14 years old, the last year for me on the children's platform. Next year I would be with the Choir on their platform.



This last year I sang with the children, I had to sing a verse in the song. It was.....

"In the white Rose unsullied and perfect
is a lesson of purity sweet;
And as daily I grow my young life should be so
Till I lay it at last at His feet.
As the roses bless the summer air
With a grace and charm beyond compare
Help me loving Lord to stand by Thee,
Fragrant as the roses I would be."

The Chapel was full of people and we had to put seats down the middle of the Chapel to get them all in. We had a lovely time together. It was a very good Service.

After the Anniversary

After the Sunday School Anniversary the children had a treat. The ladies would make tea for them. All the children would go onto the Backy Field - that is the field next to the Chapel. There they would play all sorts of games....the three-legged race; other running races; egg and spoon race; relays etc. We all enjoyed this, especially if we won.

Afterwards we all went into Chapel and the ladies gave us a lovely tea. In time this finished and they started taking us out on the bus to different Parks. We had happy times together. We got to join together with the other Churches.

This went on for a while and then we started to go to the seaside, mostly Hunstanton. This went on until it started to cost a lot of money to book a bus, so in the end we stopped going.

Nancy Smith

I Remember When .....

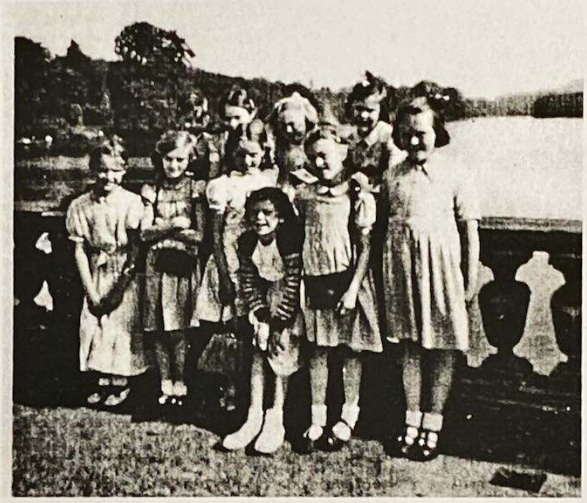
.....I was possibly 4 or 5 when I came to the back of the Church and saw the mountain of a wooden staircase that I needed to climb for the Sunday School. Linda, my sister, took me then. Hazel was the kind lady who greeted us. I remember first seeing my name on the Cradle Roll and felt very special..... and the picture of Jesus on the wall always took my interest.

I remember when we had "The Sermons" and the platform where we sang our hearts out and practised forever ..... and moving up one form each year until we finally reached the top. We always had a new

outfit and new shoes or sandals. I also remember Mr Walter Causon who conducted us and him saying quietly "bless you" to us all when it came to the end of the singing before we sat down.

I went on to sing in the choir and became an "alto" singer with Phyllis and a few others .... happy days. I remember various people on the organ and wishing I could play like that.

I remember when we had the Sunday School outing to the seaside and to Trentham Gardens. All very exciting. A treat for us who weren't used to going on a weeks holiday. A day out was always something very special.





I remember the Village Fetes and the drays/lorries where we would pick a theme and dress up.

I remember the Youth Club run by the Methodist Church on a Friday evening. Wilfrid Bills leading our quiet time at the end ..... and a few of the boys getting the giggles and messing about. Often we would go to the fish and chip shop in the village afterwards.... and once I was in trouble for being out after 10 o'clock!

I remember Mr Jones when he came with the Children's Mission. Also, later in the early 60's when Bryan Gilbert played his guitar in 'the back room'. Didn't realise how much that inspired me then.

I remember Youth Clubs run in our own Church with John and Janet Poole and others. We used to have lots of really fun games and activities.

I remember a small house group led by Christine and Brian Hill and Christine and Tony Bayliss. We were a very small group and I was in my early teens. The adults were very welcoming and encouraging and had time for us.

We youngsters, my brother Graham and his friend Geoff, Kathryn Hill and myself were encouraged to run a Friday night Club for the village teens. Geoff, Graham's friend was an up and coming artist and designed and drew sea pictures and depicted 'Fishers of Men'. We

decorated the upstairs room and added fisherman's nets and shells etc. to give a 'Fisherman' Place effect.

We also led our own production with some teenage friends from the Methodist Church. I think Robert and Josephine Fennell (who married Michael Wilkinson) was in that group at the time. It was 'Jesus Christ Superstar' and we did this at Easter. I was 21 and my brother Graham would be 16. Geoff Roberts, his friend, was also involved.

I remember when Christine and Brian took Graham and myself with their family on a longboat trip on the Canal for a week. It was wonderful. We had such good fun.

It was one Sunday morning when 3 of us, Pauline Bembridge, Kathryn Hill and myself were having a Bible study with Christine Hill that both Kathryn and I accepted Jesus as our Saviour, after asking the question of how do you become a Christian. We were both baptised in May 1969 at Barlestone Baptist Church. I was 19.

I remember going on a Christian Holiday Fellowship to Wales. I knew no one and met another lot of young people in Leicester, where we were taken by bus to a centre near Black Rock Sands. Our Church Secretary, Brian, had organised it for me and gave me a lift to Leicester to make sure I met the right group!

I remember leading the little ones in Sunday School and leading a Youth Club with Kathryn for a while too.

I remember when Kathryn Hill (we had become good friends by now) married Paul Higgott in October 1971 at the Baptist Church and I was one of the bridesmaids. It was a warm, beautiful Autumn Day. I remember when Stuart and I were also married at the Church on 5th May 1973. The Rev. Geoff Richards who was minister of Hinckley Baptist Church led the ceremony.

I moved away to live a short while in Syston, and then moved on to live in Melton Mowbray where I transferred my membership and have served there ever since.

I have very fond memories of lots of people who were involved with the Church at Newbold and recognise that each one influenced me in some way and made a difference to my life.

Of all the gifts anyone can give is Time, Love and Caring.... and that is what they have given to me. I am extremely grateful.

It was certainly for me ...Happy Days.

Wendy Posnett (nee Marlow)

I Remember When .....

..... Mr Walter Causon called on me at No.110 Main Street and asked me where the children went to Church. I explained that I was a Baptist and attended the Barlestone Baptist Church when I was living at home. There was a family of 9 of us then and we all went there.

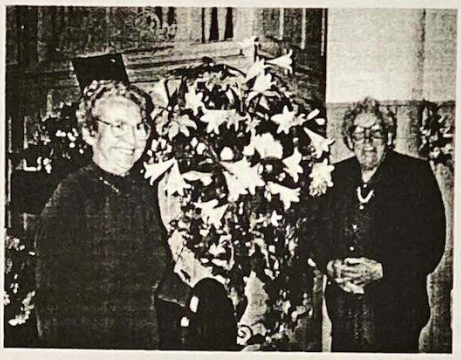
So my children, Linda, Wendy and Graham, used to go to Sunday School and take part in the Anniversaries here at Newbold. It was always June and the Church used to be packed with people.



Later I myself joined the Bright Hour. We used to have happy times helping in the kitchen and serving the tea.

I remember when we used to have what we called "Happy Hour", when a group of ladies would meet and knit squares to make blankets. These were used at the Bosworth Home Hospital. On one occasion we ended our meeting with pancakes cooked by Mrs Edith Arnold, who lived in Main Street, across the road from the Chapel.

One of my happy memories was when we did the "Flower Festival".



My happy memories, and still are, are of helping Sheila Bembridge and her group with the Rummage Sales. Sheila would always make the marmalade. There would always be lots of laughter.

Even now we have good memories and happy times with Bob, Doreen and all the Church members.

God bless you all .....and thank you for the friendships.

Ivy Marlow

(Sadly both Nora Hill and Ivy, pictured here together, died during 2008 within two months of each other!)

I Remember When .....

..... I lived in Newbold Verdon (1978 - 1983) I was a member of the Chapel and "Bright Hour". I have very happy memories of the time when the "Bright Hour" purchased the carpet for the Chapel after the Baptistry was installed.

I was Treasurer of the "Bright Hour" at that time. Nora Hill was Secretary. I am still in contact with Ivy Marlow.

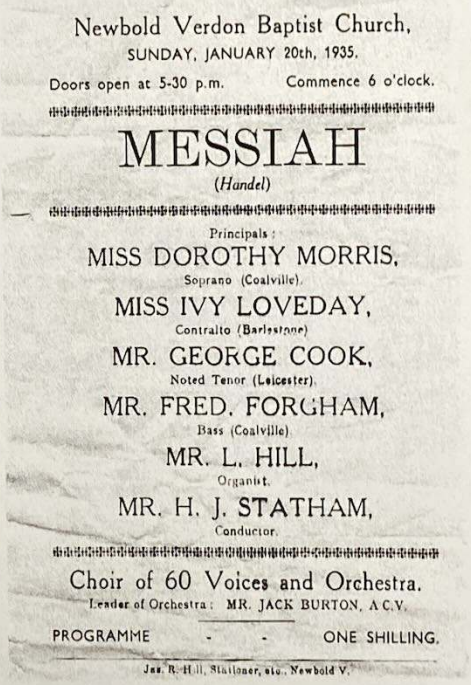
Mrs Rena Saunders , N. Thoresby, Grimsby

I Remember When .....

.....I met my husband in 1938. One of our loves was singing, mainly in Choirs for Anniversaries. He used to be a member and deacon of the Baptist Church and he told me of the time when his father, Mr Hubert Statham, the Church organist, arranged a performance of Handel's Messiah.

Members of the Church Choir with the help of singers and musicians from the Coalville area, put on the performance. His uncle Stanley Statham took the tenor solos, he was a professional singer. This event was quite a sensation for a small village like Newbold Verdon.

Connie Statham



Newbold Verdon Baptist Church,
SUNDAY, JANUARY 20th, 1935.
Doors open at 5-30 p.m. Commence 6 o'clock.

MESSIAH
(*Handel*)

Principals:
MISS DOROTHY MORRIS,
Soprano (Coalville).
MISS IVY LOVEDAY,
Contralto (Barlestone)
MR. GEORGE COOK,
Noted Tenor (Leicester).
MR. FRED. FORGHAM,
Bass (Coalville)
MR. L. HILL,
Organist.
MR. H. J. STATHAM,
Conductor.

Choir of 60 Voices and Orchestra.
Leader of Orchestra: MR. JACK BURTON, A.C.V.

PROGRAMME - - ONE SHILLING.

Jas. R. Hill, Stationer, etc., Newbold V.

I Remember When .....

In 1966 Sylvia Clifford Wallis started taking Richard to Sunday School. Then I started to go to the Services and took Jane then Rebecca to Sunday School. They attended the Anniversaries, led by Mr Causon, which they enjoyed very much - new dresses and sitting on the platform.

We had some lovely Sunday School outings to Bradgate Park, playing cricket and paddling in the brook; Abbey Park, Chester Zoo, Drayton Manor, Wicksteed Park and Alton Towers.

I Remember When .....



I have very happy memories of the Christmas parties and Christmas. Jane wrote the Nativity play one year and Rebecca was Mary - I was very proud of them both.



Wendy Marlow asked me to take over her Sunday School class - infants - in 1973 as she was getting married and moving away. I really enjoyed the 11 years with the children - lots of laughs.

I was received into membership in 1982. Rev A. Neave took the Service followed by Holy Communion.

Two very happy occasions were when Jane was married to Kevin in 1988 - Rev Neave officiated at the Service. Then Rebecca and Tim were married, Rev Tim Heard taking the Service.

In 1972 John and I had our wedding blessed by Rev Ted Hale.

Jobs I have done in the Church in the past:-

Chapel cleaning with Kitty Poole: Drop-in with Nora Hill - started by Ann Constable and some girls from Desford College: Secretary a short time: Pulpit Secretary: Treasurer: Sunday School Teacher - quite a variety of jobs! I was a member of the Bright Hour - very enjoyable.

Over the years I've had some lovely Christian friends, especially in times of trouble.

Doris Cope (nee Boam)

I Remember .....

CHAPEL. I could see the Chapel from the back of our house, a red-bricked imposing building, standing in the corner across the 'reckie'. I must have been about 5 years old when I first attended Sunday School, being greeted by Mrs Shaw and another teacher Hazel Statham. I think, in time, Mary Goacher would assist Hazel.

I recall being in the 'upper room' of the school rooms sitting on forms that had adjustable backs, and singing hymns, reading the words from large printed sheets which hung on the wall. We all seemed to enjoy singing choruses, soon learning the words off by heart. When outstretching our arms during the singing of 'Wide Wide as the Ocean', we would very often knock the people sitting next to us! 'Zacchaeus was a Very Little Man' was a favourite. We attended Sunday School both mornings and afternoons.

At Christmas-time a nativity play was usually performed, and I can remember that my first speaking part was King Herod, thinking myself resplendent in a red dressing gown and gold crown. Richard Price was a scribe and Sue Baker deserved an Oscar for her part as Mary, and remembering the words spoken to Gabriel.... "My soul doth magnify the Lord...." I recall Norma and Janet Goddard being involved in these productions, and little did I know then, that in future years I would produce and direct a nativity play myself!

The main event of the year was the Sunday School Anniversary or The Sermons, normally held on the first Sunday in June. We practised hard for weeks prior to the Anniversary, on Tuesday and Friday evenings. Maurice Farmer or Chris Hill would play the organ, and Walter Causon was our conductor and choirmaster.

As the Anniversary day approached, two wooden platforms were erected either side of the pulpit, and the older you were, the higher up the platform you stood - it was a nightmare for those suffering from 'vertigo'! On the day we would wear our Sunday 'best', sometimes even sporting a buttonhole! The Services, held at 2.30 p.m. and 6.00 p.m. were always well supported and very often extra chairs had to be hurriedly placed down the aisle, but for some of the congregation it was 'standing room only'.

After being well taught by our choirmaster, we sang our hearts out, but he would hold his arms outstretched and would not continue to conduct until he had everyone's attention!! After breaking down during a solo, I feared Walter's wrath, but not a word was spoken. He

simply rearranged the evening programme, which meant that I sang first and therefore had no time to think about it! (The hymn was 'O God our help in ages past'!!) I recall that on one occasion there was a fault and I was given the task of pumping the organ so that it could be played.

The Anniversary over, we were rewarded by being taken on the 'Sunday School Treats', which were generally held on the following Saturday. A fleet of 'Deacon and Hardy' buses would take us, very excited kids, to destinations such as Alton Towers, Trentham Gardens, Wicksteed, to name but a few. The ladies of the church could be found in the schoolrooms frantically preparing sandwiches from mountains of bread, and packing other 'goodies' for a picnic later that day.



The chapel would always look splendid at Harvest-time, decorated with an abundance of fruit, vegetables, and sheafs of corn. We were all invited to take a gift to celebrate harvest, and I was very proud of my dad's homegrown bunch of carrots which I gladly offered. Any food that was left, after first being distributed to the sick, was 'auctioned' off the following Monday evening. Mr Causon was a great auctioneer who carried out his duties with great gusto, and would start the bidding at 'tuppence' or 'who'll give me a tanner?'! Mrs Hart and Mrs Henson would often be there to bag a bargain!

During the week I attended the Young Peoples' Fellowship meeting which was led by John Poole. It would involve Bible study, and on one occasion we had to study St.John chapter 1, and recite it off by heart during the following weeks.

Brian Hill organised a Youth Club and we enjoyed many of the activities We had a great time playing 'Murder in the Dark' and other games. I recall more sedate activities, like making lamp shades using raffia, supervised by Mrs Abel!

In later years another type of youth club was formed, hoping to encourage young people to the church. We had the use of the upper schoolroom, revamped it a little, and Geoff Roberts was commissioned to paint a mural. Not quite the Sistine Chapel, but his painting of a Walrus and other sea creatures was awesome! (He later gained a place at The Royal College of Art) The club was called 'The Sign of the Fish', but would become known as the 'Hideaway'. The club was very successful, attracting a lot of young people from the village and surrounding area.

Just before one Easter we staged a Passion Play, depicting some of Christ's early life and the Easter story, and I recall Brian and Chris Hill and Christine and Tony Bayliss, penning the script, directing and producing. The production was a success and enjoyable, even though an over zealous mother, sitting in the audience, was overheard saying, 'Go steady' as her son carried the heavy cross unsteadily up the aisle!

The Baptist Chapel would often enter into the spirit of village events, notably the village Carnival. We had great fun taking part on the 'drays' and had many winners, and also some Baptist Carnival Queens! We even had our share of celebrities visiting the Carnival, and when one of our floats won first prize, we were presented with a cup by the one and only Jennifer Lewis (Miss Leicester/U.K.)



To reward our attendance at Sunday School, the annual prize-giving service was held in November. We all waited in anticipation for our names to be called, then we would excitedly collect our book from the front. I collected my first prize in 1958, and my last Bible in 1970.

There were many personalities who came and went during my involvement with the chapel;, and whom I remember for various reasons, and I recall: Peter Peel, Tom Elsby, Mr and Mrs Cartwright, Janet Poole, Harry Smith, Mrs Kind, Tom and Kitty Poole, and of course, not forgetting the Hills!

Graham Marlow

I Remember When .....

I was part of the Sunday School. I used to love the Anniversary Sunday when all the children sang, standing on the platform. We practised with Mr Causon and as we got older had the chance to sing a solo, which was scary but rewarding! Also when you were one of the oldest, you stood at the top of the platform, which seemed to be so high! We had a new outfit and Mum would curl my hair.

I went on to help with the Sunday School and now lead the children's work in the Church I attend near Peterborough.

Jane Carter (nee Boam)

I Remember When .....

..... in the 1950's we clattered up the wooden stairs to the top schoolroom for Youth Club - playing games - basket weaving - having fun.

I remember in the 50's when the platforms either side of the pulpit were so full on Anniversary Day that we had to open up the top schoolroom for the oldest boys.

I remember playing the piano (when I was about 10), for the ladies at the Bright Hour to sing their hymns. (My grandma Annie Baker's instructions).

I don't remember being dedicated in 1947 but my name is on the Cradle Roll - Jacqueline Ann Hill. I was never christened Ann - much to my Granny Baker's disgust.

I remember Stan Webb performing the marriage ceremony on a beautiful day in October 1970.

Jackie Day (nee Hill)

I Remember When .....

..... I was a little girl at Sunday School and having a new dress for the "Anniversaries". We would practise our singing for weeks before and then sit up on the platform in Chapel - it always looked really high up to me!

I will certainly never forget our very special wedding day at the Baptist Chapel, with friends and family and church members that I had grown up with. Tim Heard was the minister and his wife Rachel did the reading. Rhoda played the organ and Nancy made the lovely flower arrangements in white and yellow.

Everyone commented what a lovely Service it was, and we had the band playing outside as the Newbold Verdon Carnival passed by!

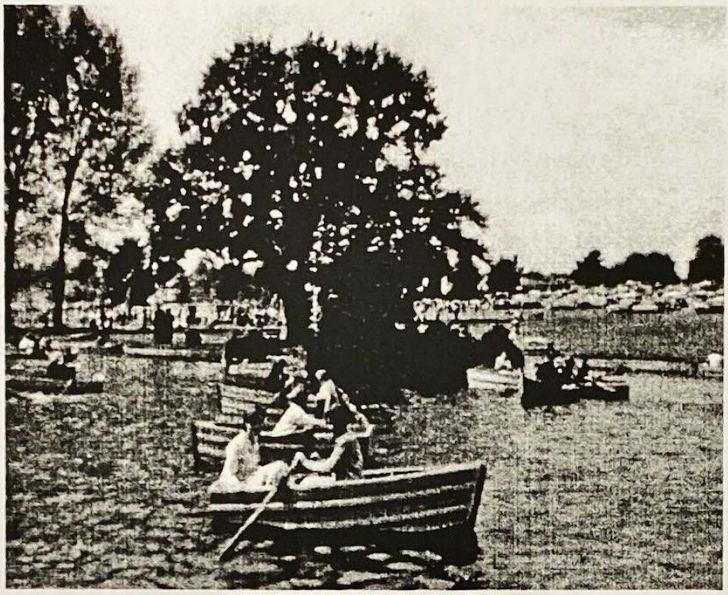
Rebeccca Atton (nee Boam)

I Remember When .....

.....we were small and lived in Mill Lane, my twin Gill and I went to Sunday School twice on a Sunday and on Anniversary Day we always had a dress made by Mrs Gilliver who also was living in Mill Lane. Gill never liked being dressed the same, but Mum liked it that way.

We had a concert in the Chapel once. My twin Gill and I played a duet on the organ. We played "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot".

My brother Michael's name is on the Cradle Roll. His surname is Stain, perhaps we are too old to be on there.



WICKSTEED PARK

The highlight of our year was the Sunday School outing to either Wicksteed Park or Trentham Gardens.

Rosemary Baker (nee Stain)

I Remember .....

Sunday School Outings and Anniversaries.

Getting married. 2 children being dedicated.

Singing Alto in the Choir.

Being baptised; becoming a member and deacon.

Prayer Meetings and Bible Studies.

Bright Hour and Knitting Class.

Helping children in Youth activities.

Weddings of son and daughter.

Phyllis Storer (nee Talbott)

I Remember When .....

..... My husband Percy and I moved house to live in the village of Newbold Verdon in March 1985. Prior to this we lived in Surrey and worshipped at the Free Church in Tadworth, both being baptized as young people.

My first introduction to the Newbold Verdon Baptist Church was a visit to the Thursday morning Coffee Drop-in where I was warmly welcomed by Nellie Farmer who introduced me to the others there. This became a regular weekly meeting place for me, where I made new friends.

From the Coffee Drop-in I began to attend the Bright Hour and well remember my first visit, and the friendly ladies who greeted me, Nora Hill and Audrey Prime, who took me under their wings, making me feel quite at home.

The annual Rallies were great occasions when ladies from churches around the district were invited. Tea was served in the schoolroom after the service and many friendships made. Our return visits to them widened the circle of ladies known to us in the area, creating a bond of friendship between the churches.

Bright Hour has always been a happy hour for me and at the age of 92, I still look forward to attending our meetings, made possible by the team of menfolk from the Church using their cars to get us to and from the meetings.

Percy and I became worshippers at the Church enjoying the fellowship and friendly atmosphere. The Rev Arthur Neave and his wife Gladys were at the Church when we came. One thing that stands out in my mind is, at that time everyone addressed them as Mr and Mrs Neave, whereas today there is a far more personal relationship between minister and congregation, as we relate to each other by our Christian names.

At this time the main Church Services were held at 6.00 pm in the summer and 4.00 pm in the winter.

I remember Mrs Neave taking Nora Hill and myself to a Women's World Day of Prayer Service at Desford.

One of the annual summer events I looked forward to was a visit to the small village Baptist Church in Belton, Rutland, to take their Evening Service, travelling by mini-bus. Clive Hill arranged this and would sometimes take the Service. After the Service we gathered at the home of one of the members for refreshments and a time of fellowship.

The fellowship at the Church has been a blessing to me -

surrounding me with love, friendship and prayer, none more so than when Percy died in December 2002.

I had the joy of being brought into membership of the Church on the 8th June during this our Special 175th Anniversary Year, and give thanks to God for His goodness to me in leading me to the Baptist Fellowship in Newbold Verdon.

Doris Rogers

I Remember When .....

..... My husband Sam and I moved from Reading 24 years ago to live in Newbold Verdon to be near my daughter and her husband Maureen and Ray, who live in Thornton, to help look after their new born son - Daniel.

I was brought up in the Anglican Church attending the Sunday School and Evening Services. We did go to St James' Church in the village a few times, but did not feel at home.

After my dear husband died in 1994, I became friendly with Doris Rogers a neighbour, who asked me if I would like to go to the Baptist Church with her. How pleased I am that I did - there I found such interesting, kind people, which has helped me so much. It's always a pleasure to meet them all.

I've been going to the Bright Hour for a number of years - such a friendly meeting which I still enjoy at the age of 94 years. Nancy Smith was leading the meetings when I started. Others I remember who are not well enough to go now, are Madge Robinson, Edith Graves, Molly Roach and Norah Bowden.

Living alone I really looked forward to the friendship and company I enjoyed at the Coffee morning. Edith Graves, my neighbour and I went along together. I also went with Molly Roach.

It was a special experience and pleasure for me to be brought into membership of the church on the 8th June during the 175th Church Anniversary Year by our minister Rev Bob Simpson.

Beryl Palmer

RHODA CROWFOOT'S REPORT
in an old "Contact" about a Sunday School Weekend

The Sunday School children and teachers would like to thank everyone who helped make the weekend a very special one.

We started our weekend on Saturday with our annual Sunday School Outing. We left the Chapel just after 10.00 a.m. and arrived at our destination, Twycross Zoo, at 10.45 a.m. We were one of the first to arrive at the Zoo so had plenty of space to let our own little monkeys out for a run! The weather was perfect, and everyone of us enjoyed the slow walk around the Zoo enjoying the antics of the animals and also enjoying the pleasure of each others company.

The café appeared to be the general meeting place for everyone, and I'm sure the catering staff at the Zoo will be writing to Mrs Nora Hill and Mrs Nellie Farmer thanking them for boosting the day's takings.

Our only regret was that only 29 of us could share this day, but having said that, 29 of us arrived home thoroughly exhausted, sunburned, hungry, dirty and thanking the Lord for the fellowship we shared.

Sunday 2nd June, the day we teachers half dreaded! - the Sunday School Anniversary. Once more the Lord blessed us with perfect weather, which set the standard for the day. The children arrived on time, all looking a little cleaner than the day before, and all present and accounted for - thankfully no one had been left at the Zoo! The children decided that even if they can't sing at the practices, they certainly can on the day, and we thank each one of them for delighting us with singing the songs they had chosen.

The Rev Brian Hill helped to make our day all the more enjoyable and our thanks go to him for two memorable services. Our last thank you goes to the parents for allowing their children to come and learn about the Lord Jesus. We thank you not only for this weekend, but for your support throughout the year.

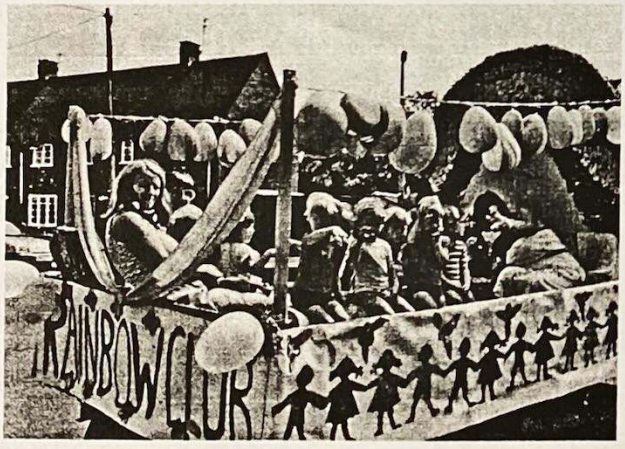
Rhoda Crowfoot

But Jesus called them unto Him and said "Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not for of such is the Kingdom of God."
Luke 18 verse 16



I Remember When .....

After a gap of eleven years, I had my third child, Richard, and started to meet up with new mums in each others' homes on a weekly basis. As our babies started to crawl and walk, we decided to find larger premises.



Rainbow Club was formed, meeting one afternoon a week in the Chapel Schoolroom. Our main objective was that it should be a child orientated club. Different activities were arranged each week from cooking to obstacle courses.

I remember a very friendly group of mums and the occasional dad.

Many of the children joined the Sunday School and remain in touch with each other today, in spite of living in very different parts of the world, including China, Singapore, Paris and Australia.

Christmas parties were very special. Rev Neave was always our Father Christmas and he was just right for the part.

Sunday Club

With the declining number of children attending Sunday School due to changes in social attitudes and competition from sports clubs, shopping etc., it was decided to transfer Sunday School to a Wednesday evening. We called it Sunday Club.

The first part of the evening consisted of a short service followed by lessons and then a social time.

We still managed to arrange great Anniversaries and Christmas Services.

I remember one Anniversary where we had a huge signpost made, pointing the Way the Truth and the Life.

For a Christmas Service we had children jumping out of Christmas parcels spelling out the hope of the Christmas message.

Scramblers

A Youth Group was set up for 11 plus children during the late 80's. A variety of activities including country walks, brass rubbing, and treasure hunts were organised.



SCRAMBLERS' FLOAT

A favourite was skipping. This was a generation that had "skipped" the skipping craze!_

Rhoda and I would spend what seemed like hours twirling a long rope while the girls and boys jumped in and out in various ways.

It was decided the children should experience 'camping'!

We had what would now be called a sleep-over in the schoolroom. There was huge excitement and needless to say, the children apparently took a long time to settle.

Rhoda, Gail and I slept on camp beds. I slept through everything. Rhoda and Gail had a sleepless night!!

Maureen Hayes

I Remember .....

As a relative newcomer to Newbold Verdon (I have lived here for 21 years), my memories of Newbold Verdon Baptist Church are comparatively recent ones.

I remember, and look forward to the special Services such as Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

Walking into the Church at Harvest-time, the Church beautifully decorated by Nancy; the scent of flowers, fruit and vegetables all mingling to make an intoxicating assault on the senses; we all joining together to sing the old familiar Harvest hymns and some new ones, thanking God for all our Blessings.

Christmas time when we have our Candlelight Service with the Christmas decorations and the lights twinkling on the Christmas tree. The Nativity Scene usually at the front of the Church and all of the light bulbs changed to red ones, so there is a lovely welcoming glow; singing the well-loved Christmas Carols as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Sunday School Anniversaries when the children sang like little angels even if they weren't!

Sunday School sleep-outs - now they were something!! I remember one occasion when after enjoying a barbecue, we all settled down to sleep in our sleeping bags on the schoolroom floor. Rhoda positioned herself across the door into the church, me across the door to the little schoolroom, and Maureen somewhere in the middle.

All night long the children either wanted to use the toilet or have a drink, or they just couldn't sleep. Rhoda and I were up and down all night seeing to the children, and Maureen slept all the way through it all!! I also remember how cold it was.

Once, during a Service I noticed that some of the children didn't know all the words of the Lord's Prayer, so the next time I was shopping in Leicester, I visited S.P.C.K. where I bought some beautifully illustrated cards with the Lord's Prayer printed on them. These I left in the choir pews which were in front of the organ in church. But on the next Sunday they were missing! What had happened to them? I searched for them; I asked if anyone had seen them. I wondered if the cleaner had perhaps moved them? Then one day when I was talking to Nora (Hill), I found out what had happened to them. Apparently Nora had spotted them, and thinking they were perhaps for sale, had asked the members of the Bright Hour if they would like to buy them, and they had! Another mystery solved!

I was once asked unexpectedly to serve at Communion. Kay (Chamberlain) blessed the bread and off I went, and it wasn't until I had sat down and Kay was blessing the wine, that I looked up and to my horror realised that I had missed out two of the congregation when serving the bread - Rev Stan Webb and Jim Goodacre. I didn't know what to do! Ivy Marlow said I looked like a rabbit caught in the headlights of an oncoming car!! She never did let me forget it, but it was all said in fun - still, nobody does it like me!

But of all the memories I have of the Church, the overwhelming one is of the friendship and the love I have received from my Church Family. Thank you all.

Gail Horsley

I Remember .....

..... when I started attending the Bright Hour after moving with Bob into Newbold Verdon on Bob's retirement from full-time Ministry.

At one of those early Bright Hour meetings, I was amazed when Nancy was showing photographs and talking about the visit of the Caravan Mission to Village Children to the village. She mentioned Haddon Careless and Ron Jones, and these were people I had known as 'Uncle Haddon' and 'Uncle Ron' from early childhood. This is because my father, Charles Mason, was a missioner for the Caravan Mission to Village Children in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, and Ron Jones and Haddon Careless were close friends and colleagues of his.

It has been fascinating for me to read peoples' memories of the C.M.V.C. and see the photo of the tent - reminding me of the many meetings I attended in such a tent in my childhood!!

When I found out that Stan and Janet had known my father well, it made me feel I had a link with the village right from the time we moved here!

We are absolutely positive the Lord brought us to this village - we love the village - the people, and especially the Baptist Church. We already, after only six years, have happy memories and are sure we will go on to have many more.

Doreen Simpson

OUR MINISTER, REV BOB SIMPSON, BRINGS THESE MEMORIES UP TO DATE

I Remember When .....

..... Doreen and I first arrived in Newbold Verdon. Since that was at the end of November 2002 it doesn't tax even my poor memory!

My first blessing was to find Stan and Janet Webb here. I had known Stan from my first pastorate in Lincoln, in the late 1960's when we met at Ministers' and Association events.

Doreen and Janet soon became good friends and we had a warm welcome at our first Service in Newbold Verdon Baptist Church.

We were delighted that Mac and Kay were recently appointed Lay Pastors because we were in need of a long rest after a very busy and demanding pastorate in Waterlooville, near Portsmouth. After a while I was involved in preaching and taking Bible Studies when Mac was absent. Doreen became Church Secretary and a year later I somehow became treasurer!

By the time Mac and Kay decided to end their pastorate at the beginning of 2007, I was ready to accept the invitation to become part time Minister, and was appointed at the Church Meeting in March 2007 and duly inducted by Rev Steve Mantle, our Senior Regional Minister.

I remember when Rhoda pointed out that 2008 would be the 175th Anniversary of our building, (the Church actually was formed a couple of years earlier). When we decided to have special events every month to try to reach as many people as possible, little did we realise just how much work would be involved. However, each event has proved to be better than we expected.

The first was an Old Fashioned New Year's Party in January, then progressed through a Special Valentine's Service in February; a Joint Service at our Mother Church, Barton in the Beans, in March; a Children's Puppet Show in April (about 50 children!) and a Thai meal in May.

I had a short series of sermons on "One Step Forward" and was delighted when two of our ladies, both over 90yrs., applied for Church Membership and were received in on the 8th of June this year.



SERVICE AT BARTON - OUR "MOTHER" CHURCH

On the first Sunday in June we had a Sunday School Reunion, having invited past scholars to join us. We had our Exhibition ready for that occasion, with lots of old photo's, articles and memories. Even the local school had provided contributions from the children. We had a great congregation, with people coming from far and near.



At the end of June there was a Village Open Gardens Day, and we were asked to open our toilets for the visitors, so we decided to open our Exhibition, and again many were fascinated to peruse the exhibits.

In July we had a Car Treasure Hunt and in August a Walking Treasure Hunt and BBQ, which was very well supported. A Mens' Games Evening was held in September, where men were able to be boys without the mocking gaze of the ladies!

By the time you read this we will have had our 175th Anniversary Celebration on October 26th. I have no doubt it will be as well supported as the other events. But what will thrill me most is that I will have the privilege of baptising Gail Horsley. This will be the first time the baptistry has been used for over twenty years! May it be the first of many.

Since we have our Autumn Fayre in November we have not arranged another "special" for that month, but in December we plan to have a Christmas Tree Festival and have invited outside organisations to take part, as well as our own regular activities.

Our small Fellowship has worked hard and done wonders in this past year, and some of us are feeling the strain. However, not one of us would want it any different.

Our Church "verse of the year" for 2008 has been Proverbs 16 verse 3: *"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed."*

This has certainly been true for us as a Church this year, and we look ahead to what our Lord will do next as we open ourselves to the guiding (and the power!) of the Holy Spirit.

My grateful thanks to all who have helped make this such a special year, but all praise and glory to our God!

Bob Simpson