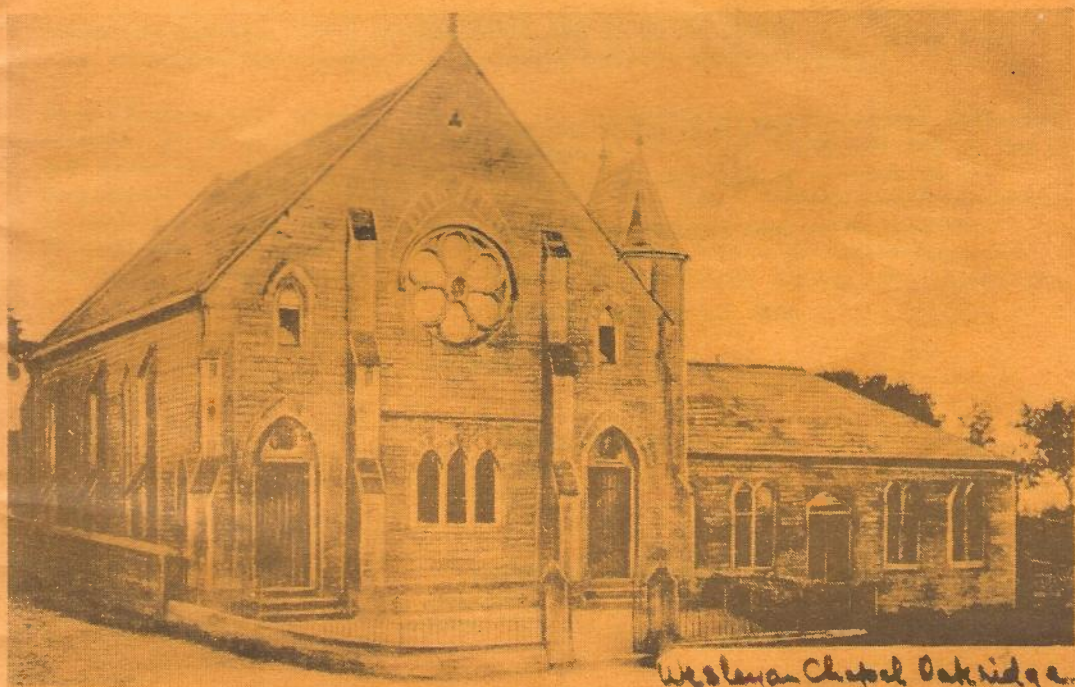


Oakridge Lynch  
Methodist Chapel

1874 - 1974



Methodist Chapel Oakridge

CIRCUIT MINISTERS.

REV. JOHN P. LE SUEUR. B.A.,  
(Superintendent)  
Egworth Lodge, Field Road,  
STROUD.

REV. BERNARD C. NIXON,  
21 Ashcroft Road,  
CIRENCESTER.

SUPERNUMERARY MINISTERS  
with Pastoral-Charge

REV. E. DAVID EDWARDS.  
Spring Cottage,  
Far Oakridge,  
STROUD.

REV. JOHN R. GIBBS,  
Oakhurst,  
Abbenesse,  
CHALFORD HILL.

OTHER SUPERNUMERARY MINISTERS.  
residing in the CIRCUIT.

REV. G. H. CROSSLAND M.C.  
CIRENCESTER  
Former Superintendent of the Circuit. 1932/7

REV. FRANK HARPER,  
Bisley.

REV. B. KAINES ATKINSON,  
Randwick,  
STROUD.

REV. WILFRED CHALLENGER,  
Randwick,  
STROUD.

REV. GEOFFREY N. STEPHENS,  
Randwick,  
STROUD.



## FOREWORD

About eighteen months ago, contemplating a worthy celebration of the centenary of the Chapel Building at Oakridge, it was hoped to produce a pictorial brochure. Nobody will be surprised that the project of producing such a brochure has had to be abandoned due to rising costs of printing and the expense of publishing anything very ambitious. Consequently, something more modest has been attempted, which it is hoped will excite interest in the forthcoming celebration.

An exhibition of photographs and newspaper cuttings, together with historical documents will be on display during the month of October tracing much of the history of the chapel and its people.

Former ministers of the Circuit will share the services and meetings, when friends from far and near will be welcomed at this Methodist shrine.

Like so many of the hill-villages in the Cotswolds, Oakridge Lynch has its origin in a few houses built around the upper part of a combe - a depression in the face of the hill. It was in the late 18th century that a Wesleyan Methodist House was built on the Eastern upper part of the combe - the first place of worship in the village. From incomplete records it would appear that the Rev. William Jenkins, who was stationed at Gloucester in 1794, had Stroud under his pastoral care, and during his ministry in Gloucester was requested to come to Oakridge and preached on the Common one Sunday afternoon. Soon after that occasion a certain William Davis opened his house for preaching services and a Class was formed of converted people. From that time Methodism has sustained a Christian Witness in the village.

This brochure will give a glimpse of the enterprising spirit of the Methodist people. It is of interest to note that 'THE METHODIST RECORDER' one of the few remaining religious newspapers was able to publish an account of the opening of the present chapel one hundred years ago. Grateful acknowledgment is made for a copy of the account printed on another page made available through the circulation and Publicity Department of the Methodist Recorder. Copies of the Recorder will be available at the Chapel during the Anniversary

E.D.E.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS - 1974

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH - HARVEST FESTIVAL at 3 p.m.  
Preacher: Rev. Ronald A. Corner B.A. of  
Leamington Spa

Mr. Corner was stationed in the Stroud and Cirencester Circuit from 1949 to 1953. On this same Sunday he will conduct services at Chalford and Brimscombe.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6TH - CHAPEL ANNIVERSARY at 3 p.m.  
Preacher: Rev. Keith F. Lyon of Dunstable Circuit

Mr. Keith Lyon was stationed in the Circuit from 1953 to 1957. He too, will preach at Brimscombe.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10TH - THE CENTENARY CELEBRATION DAY at 4 p.m.  
Preacher: Rev. John Jackson of Whitechapel Mission, London.

John Jackson had one year in this Circuit in 1945, a much loved minister and heard through the length and breadth of the land at 6.40 a.m. every Monday on Radio 4. The familiar voice "Hello, another Monday morning" will draw a large number of friends to Oakridge on THURSDAY OCTOBER 10TH.

The afternoon service will be followed by a Public Tea at 5.15 p.m. and the evening meeting times for 7.15 p.m. Chairman: Rev. E. David Edwards

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13TH - FAMILY SERVICE at 10.30 a.m.  
Preacher: Rev. Frederick O. Le Sueur B.A. of  
Burnham On Sea.

The annual distribution of prizes to Sunday School Scholars will take place at this service.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20TH at 3 p.m.  
Preacher: Mr. Peter Webb, Member of the Arboretum Staff-  
Forestry Commission, Westonbirt. District Convenor L.P.M.A.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27TH  
Preacher: Rev. E. David Edwards  
Concluding with service of Holy Communion.

CHAPEL

TRUSTEES OF PROPERTY 1874

JOEL TANNER	-	Carpenter of Oakridge
JABEZ WHITING	-	Stone Mason of Oakridge
THOMAS LEWIS	-	Foreman in Stick Mills of Charlford
WILLIAM HUNT	-	Of Oakridge
HENRY JONES	-	Of Frampton
IRA CURTIS	-	Of Oakridge
HENRY ALBERT BLANCH	-	Farmer of Bisley
HENRY MORTIMER	-	Farmer of Littleworth
JOSEPH STONE	-	Grocer of Stroud
ENOCH HYDE	-	Merchant of Stroud

together with the following who were  
appointed in 1876

EDWIN HUNT	-	Labourer of Oakridge
WILLIAM FARRINGTON	-	Builder of Chalford
DREW		
ALFRED GRIFFIN	-	Foreman in Stick Mills of Chalford
GEORGE SHAYLOR	-	Carpenter of Brimscombe
JOHN JEFFRIES	-	Foreman in Stick Mills of Brimscombe

TRUSTEES OF CHAPEL PROPERTY  
1974

JOSEPH BATEMAN	-	Oakridge Lynch
MRS. GRACE EVELYN	-	Oakridge Lynch
COOKE		
MRS. HILDA DANGER-	-	Oakridge Lynch
FIELD		
MRS. AMY JEAN EDWARDS	-	Far Oakridge
MRS. LUCY FARMER	-	Oakridge Lynch
MRS. DAISY GARDINER	-	Oakridge Lynch
PETER GREETHAM	-	Trillis - Far Oakridge
MRS. MARY GREETHAM	-	Trillis - Far Oakridge
OLIVER HUNT	-	Oakridge Lynch
MISS EDITH MESSENGER	-	Bisley
MRS. EVELYN GRACE	-	Oakridge Lynch
WEARE		
MRS. RENEE WAGSTAFF	-	Water Lane

COPY OF LICENCE GRANTED APRIL 11TH 1809

To the Right Reverend Father in God George Isaac by divine permission Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Gloucester.

These are to certify your Lordship, that some of his Majesty's Subjects being protestant Dissenters intend holding a meeting for the Worship of Almighty God in a Building erected for that purpose in the village of OAKRIDGE in the parish of Bisley in the said County of Gloucester.

We therefore pray that this Certificate be registered in your Lordships' Registry pursuant to an Act of Parliament in that case made and passed in the reign of their late Majestys King William and Queen Mary as witness our hands this ninth day of April in the year of our Lord, one thousand and eight hundred and nine.

William Drestalk (?)  
Thomas Crook  
John Whiting

Reuben Phelps  
James Blackwell  
William Cook

11th April 1809

I do hereby certify that this certificate was duly registered in the Consistory Court of the Lord Bishop of the Dioceses of Gloucester as the Act directs

Thomas Rudge - Regs.

An interesting side-light to the above application for Licence to register a non conformist place of worship is an extract from a book published in 1949 "Claims of the Free Churches" by Henry Townsend, Principal Baptist College Manchester.

"During the latter half of the eighteenth century the older free church experienced a remarkable growth in membership. On February 27th 1810, Viscount Sidmouth referred in the House of Lords to the alarming increase of non-conformist preachers and places of worship and called for official returns. These were made from licences issued by Bishops (as the above example). Non-conformist places of worship outnumbered Anglican Churches by 3,457 to 2,655. This convincing progress was due to the quickening spiritual forces of the Evangelical Revival. Due to pressure from one particular political party or at least from the High Church section of it, the Government was persuaded to vote £100,000 for the building of Anglican Churches and such grants were renewed until over £1,000,000 was spent in erecting churches against the growth of dissent".

Happily that outlook on religious life of the country by the various Communions no longer exists.



NB. PARAFFIN LAMPS.



WHIT-TUES. CHAPEL EVENT.



LIST OF MEMBERS - JUNE 1833

JOHN PEACY LEADER  
THOMAS WATKINS  
ELIZABETH COWLEY  
SARAH OXLEY  
ANN BENNETT  
SARA MOORE  
SARAH LEWIS  
MARY CHANDLER  
BETTY COOK

THOMAS MERRET LEADER  
ELIZABETH CURTIS  
BETTY HANCOX  
FRANK WHITING  
ANN WHITING  
JABEX WHITING  
CLARA MORGAN  
JABAL GARDNER  
WILLIAM JONES  
SARAH JONES  
WILLIAM BUCKNALL  
MARTHA BUCKNALL  
MARY DAVIS  
SARAH YOUNG  
ANN JEFFRIES  
ELIZABETH HUNT

JASPER TANNER LEADER  
T. WHITING  
J. COOK  
ANN RESTALL  
A. MORGAN  
P. BLACKWELL  
SARAH PHELPS  
WILLIAM HUNT  
BETTY HUNT  
B. MORGAN  
N. ALLEN  
S. GARDENER  
H. TWIZZLE  
M. TWIZZLE  
SARAH TWIZZLE  
S. WHITING  
P. WHITING  
ELIZA WHITING  
J. HUNT  
S. TYLER  
M. WHITING  
SARA WHITING  
DORCAS WHITING

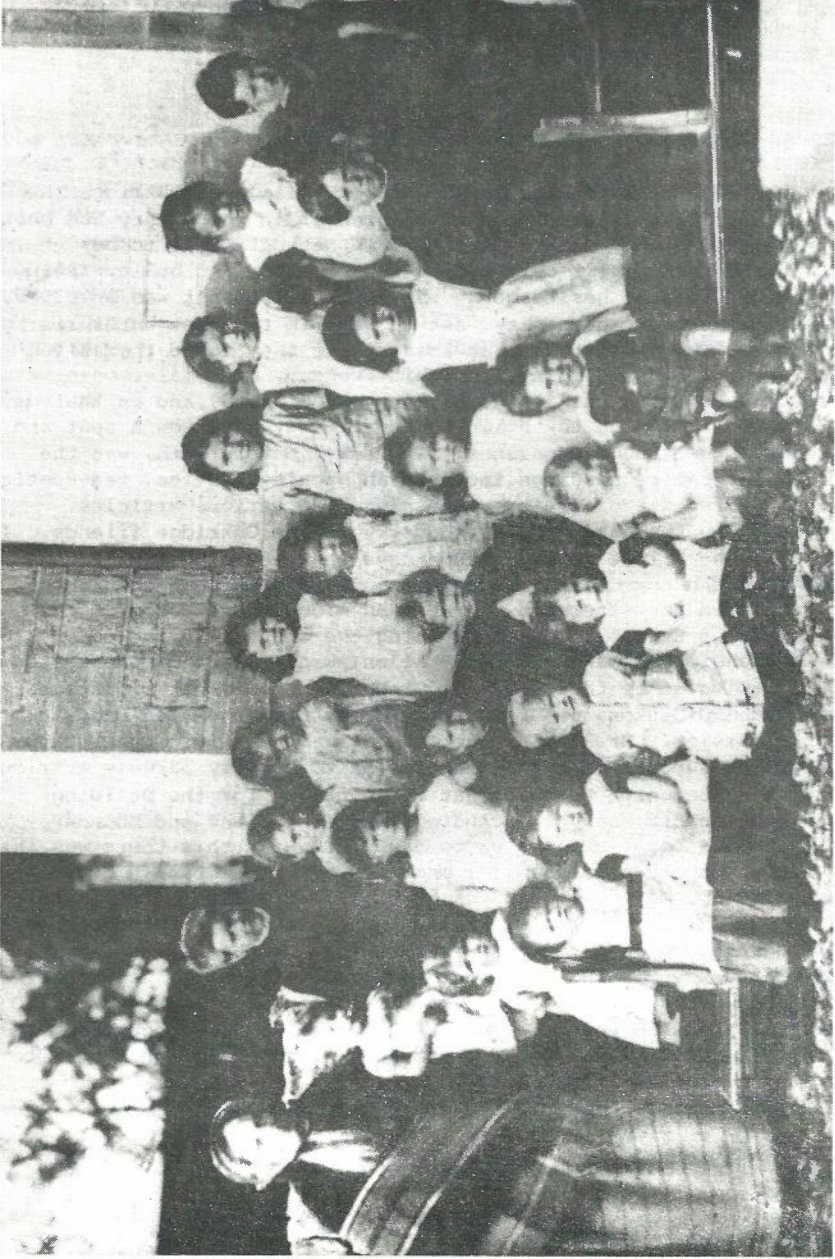


FROM THE "METHODIST RECORDER"

30TH OCTOBER 1874

OAKRIDGE (STROUD CIRCUIT)

About three years ago the Wesleyans in the little village of Oakridge found that the old, badly lighted, and inconvenient chapel in which they had been long worshipping, had become unsafe, and that if Methodism was to be perpetuated amongst them, their only course was to arise and build. Being few and poor, they at first hesitated at the expenditure that was involved, but on feeling its absolute necessity, set to work in the most enterprising, determined manner. The result was that last spring they found themselves in a position to begin the building. On Whit-Tuesday, memorial-stones were laid by Messrs. S. Budgett, Dickinson, Marling and G. Ford, and on that day the sum of £130 was added to the building fund. They have now a neat and substantial chapel, seating 250 persons. Thursday, October 8th, was the day of opening, and the proceedings included an opening service, tea-meeting, public meeting, and a sale of fruit, vegetables, and various articles, collected together by the hard working industry of the Oakridge friends. It was just one of those bright lovely autumn days that would be likely to tempt people from the surrounding neighbourhoods, and in consequence the chapel was crowded in the afternoon, to hear an eloquent sermon from the Rev. Paul Orchard, of Bristol. In the evening the chapel was packed in every part. The chair was taken by Henry Allen, Esq., Mayor of Gloucester. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. Paul Orchard, the circuit ministers, Messrs. Pitchford and Denton, of Gloucester, J. H. Carpenter, of Randwick and H. Blanch of Bisley. Mr. Lewis, the indefatigable building secretary, to whose energy the success of the enterprise is to be very largely attributed, read a financial statement. He said that the contract for the building was £747, and that sundry extras, including lighting, plans and boundary wall, would bring the total expense up to £890. Towards this there was in cash £626. 9s. 8d. unpaid promises £32; promised by Chapel Fund a grant of £20 and a loan of £50, making a total of £728. 9s. 8d., and leaving a deficiency of about £160. On the two following Sundays, the 11th and 18th, the opening services were continued, when sermons were preached by the Rev. H. Banks, our newly-appointed superintendent, and the Rev. C. Willis, of Gloucester. The total proceeds of the opening services, including subscriptions of £20 each from Messrs. H. Allen and J. Weston, of Gloucester, are about £100, so that there is a deficiency left of about £60, which the friends hope to clear off in the course of a few months.



CHAPEL DAY SCHOOL (DAME SCHOOL)

EXTRACTS FROM CHAPEL ACCOUNT BOOKS 1798 and 1874

1798

In former days, members paid what was called "SEAT RENTS" which entitled the people concerned to sit in what was regarded their own pew or seat. It was not unknown that some people would have to wait several months before a pew or seat could be allocated to them.

Here is an extract from one list.

GALLERY - 7 Sittings

Abigail Whiting - One shilling  
 Robert Butler - One shilling  
 Sarah Thery - One shilling  
 Thomas Gardner - Two shillings  
 Henry Pavey - One shilling  
 William Davis - Three shillings

Annual Account 1854

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Bal. Bt./Fwd.	29.	6.	10½	General Chapel Fund	10.	6.	
Seat Rents	13.	1.	9½	Mrs. Cennick for Int.	2.	8.	6½
House Rent	3.	5.	0.	Sundry bills paid	1.	10.	11
Proceeds of Tea Meeting	4.	10.	0.	Property Tax		1.	9.
Funeral		3.	0.	Int. to Mr. Whiting (1 year)	2.	10.	0.
Int. on Balance		18.	9.	Mr. Tanner (1 year)	2.	10.	0.
				Sundries		10.	0.
	£51.	5.	5.				
				Bal. Crd./Fwd.	10.	1.	8½
					41.	3.	8½
					£51.	5.	5

Treasurer's Comment 1858

"In the filling up of the schedule it is impossible for me to say anything of the original cost of enlargement. The chapel was enlarged in the year 1836. I have no accounts no further back than 1838. The debt then was £213.0.6. Since that time it has all been cleared off, the last £50. was paid August 9th, 1858. The chapel is now clear from debt.

A feature of the Centenary Celebration is an EXHIBITION of old documents, photographs, medals, antiques and Fine Art.

The Exhibition is under the direction of Mrs. P. Greetham, Thanks to the friends who have loaned exhibits, the items will be on display from OCTOBER 6th to OCTOBER 13th inclusive. Church Vestibule and Schoolroom.

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When the Celebrations are over the Trustees will have to give serious consideration to repairs in the fabric, and the Chapel Interior needs to be redecorated. The main Schoolroom has been given a new floor, also complete redecoration of walls, altogether making a most attractive Hall. The Trustees acknowledge the generosity of friends and of the voluntary work of a small band of keen helpers.

Through the good offices of Rev. G.H. Crossland, and TARLTON CHAPEL Trustees some useful furnishing together with a piano and other articles have been transferred from Tarlton to Oakridge Chapel as gifts of goodwill and friendship.

To further the work financial help is still required, and whereas no direct appeal will be made at the Centenary Celebration, it is hoped that friends will be as generous as possible.



EXTRACT FROM WRITTEN DOCUMENT

"The Wesleyan Chapel at Oakridge was erected in the year 1786, the principle person in getting it builded was a local preacher living at Stroud, named William Pickersgill. Before that a preacher, Mr. William Jenkins used to preach out of doors and in a cottage in the village opened for them by William Davies then living here.

In the year 1886 the chapel was thought unsafe to worship in and too small for the congregation sitting give in a pew, and no place for the children to sit in service time. So it was resolved to repair and enlarge it- so it was began in May. On the 10th the corner-stone was laid and a sermon preached by Mr. H. Jackson local preacher-on-trial living at that time in Cirencester. In September the same year 1886 the work was nearly complete and was reopened Wednesday September 21st. The Rev. Mr. Jones of Rodboro Tabernacle preached from Exodus 36 v.14 "And He said My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest". In the evening Romans ch.5. v.1. Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God. He preached two excellent sermons. The collections £3.10. 8. after made £3.18. 0.

On the following Sunday the Rev. Aquila Barber of Dursley preached from Colossi 1. verses 21 and 22. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works etc. In the evening he took Acts 18. 38. Be it known unto you, therefore men and brethren that through this man is preached unto you, the forgiveness of sins. The collection afternoon and evening £3.15. 6. and Mr. Clissold sent a second donation of £1. He also preached two very good sermons but the place was so crowded to be at all comfortable there was a deal of music which drew more people than money and the people was living under the truck system could not do as well as they might as it was but seldom they get money at any of the Mills.

And many of the friends and some strangers had helped while the work was being done. Stephen Clissold, Esq. gave £20. Earl Bathurst gave some timber. E. C. Codrington, Esq. £10. Lord Segrave £3. Mr. W-- of Stroud £3, the trustees gave what they could and John Whiting went out several days collecting and begging and John Cook went to the people about home and some gave materials and some a few days work some shaping stone and timber and the work was mostly done by the people that lived in or near the village. John Whiting and James Tanner took charge of the work and gave much of their time as well as their mon and all the expenses of the repairs and enlargement was covered. But the debt on it before was £212, was still the same".