

# Individual Recollections

*These recollections originally appeared in the booklet produced by the Church for their 60th Anniversary, and are reproduced here with thanks.*

## **Mary Russell recalls:-**

I think I must be one of the few who can remember the beginning of Stoneleigh Methodist Church. In 1937 Harold and I had friends in Stoneleigh Park Road (Fred and Barbara Blazey) who, as well as others, (Jack and Miriam Gardener) canvassed the neighbourhood to get support to build on the land in the Crescent (at that time called Stoneleigh Park Road, changed later to Stoneleigh Crescent when development continued towards Worcester Park). They were allowed the use of a room in Stoneleigh West School on Sunday mornings, and Harold and I were often present. We were also there at the Stonelaying of the Hall (or schoolroom). Then, in February 1938 that was opened. Harold and I were married in September 1938, and our membership was transferred from Southfield to Stoneleigh, and we have been here ever since – Harold died in 1965.

During the war most of the men were either in the Forces or being Civil Servants or teachers, we evacuated, and only a few of us were left to carry on raising the money to pay off the debt, and to look forward to building a church one day. It was hard work, but we had a lot of fun and happiness. I could write a lot more about those years and the many Ministers we had – right down to the present time.

*Mary Russell*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Stoneleigh Guide Company**

The Brownie Pack was progressing well and the Brown Owl, Elsie Barnes, asked my friend Edna Potter and me whether we would be willing to start a Guide Company. We had both been Guides some years earlier, and that was the extent of our guiding experience, but we were young and with the confidence of youth we agreed to 'have a go!'. So, in late 1938, we invited seven girls, who had never been Guides, to meet us.

It was case of the blind leading the blind, and I can still recall the picture of nine of us in what is now know as Room 1 discussing the possibility of starting a Guide Company, but such was their enthusiasm that by the end of the evening not only had they all agreed to join and try and bring a friend, but they had decided on the evening they wished to meet, and that their ties should be green and their patrol emblem should be birds!

A few weeks later the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stoneleigh Guide Company was formed, but unfortunately Edna had to leave and I carried on alone. However, such was the appeal of guiding, the number increased rapidly. Obviously the war caused some problems, but apart from camping we undertook most of the activities so enjoyed by Guides. The Company took part in various events organised by the Church, eg bazaars,

concerts, socials, and also in the District activities. The youngsters were always very keen and supportive, but we did not win any trophies! I recall coming 8<sup>th</sup> out of eight Companies in a singing competition, but we enjoyed our singing, and the elderly ladies in the home seemed to be delighted with our Carol Concerts each year.

When the number of Guides reached 44, despite a waiting list, we split the Company into two and met on separate evenings, although at that stage we did not form two separate Companies. Later a Ranger Group was started for the older girls by my Lieutenant.

I was sorry when ill health forced me to resign, but I have no regrets that I agreed to 'have a go!' I have most happy memories of the time spent with a grand bunch of girls, and count it a privilege to have had such friends as Pat Rock and the late much loved Captain Valerie Wycherly in my Company. Guiding quite rightly has always had an appeal to such girls, and I am confident that somebody will be writing about the Guides of Stoneleigh Methodist Church at its Centenary celebrations.

*Olive Civil*

### **Thursday Club**

About fourteen years ago the experience of a luncheon club and coffee shop venture, in which local church members became involved, revealed a need for more opportunities for older members of the community to meet together. It was realised that many folk, especially the elderly, are very lonely and it was felt that our church could help to meet this need.

Thus it was that on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 1982 the Thursday Tea Afternoon, now known as the 'Thursday Club', was opened in our Link Room to provide an opportunity for anyone in the neighbourhood who might be lonely (or just thirsty!) to pop in for a cup of tea and a chat, a game of cards, Scrabble, or Disco – game devised by one of our members as a simplified version of snooker, and much appreciated by our male folk.

On average about 20-25 of us meet from 2:00pm to 4:00pm every Thursday, and we have occasionally had musical afternoons, pottery sessions and quizzes, with a party at Christmas time, and a summer afternoon picnic, usually at Claremont Lake, Esher. Once a month we have a sale of 'good as new' articles which helps to cover the cost of heating and lighting. We are a friendly group, and readily welcome anyone who would like to come and 'try us out'.

*Joan P & Barbara Lock*

## **Care Scheme**

In 1983 a group of young adults at Stoneleigh Methodist Church produced a document entitled 'Youth and the future with the Community' which was discussed by a working party and resulted in a decision by Church Council that a Church based and organised 'Care Scheme' would be established.

The aims of the Care Scheme would be:-

to provide transport to the elderly and handicapped people in the Stoneleigh and Ewell area to hospitals, clinics, doctors etc.

to provide a shopping transport or deliver/collection service for the same range of people

to visit to the lonely and housebound, and allow carers to go out

to have a Community Room (later known as the Care Centre) for people to call in and talk about their problems over a cup of tea.

The Care Scheme opened on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1985 with three two hourly sessions on weekdays, and one on Saturday mornings, using volunteers from Stoneleigh and other Churches in the area. During the first year of operation there were about 350 calls for help, with very few actual visits to the centre.

Nowadays the area covered has increased to include Epsom, and some 1,500 calls for assistance each year – and increase unfortunately not matched by a rise in the number of volunteers. Nevertheless the care Scheme continues with two sessions every weekday, and provides a service much appreciated by District Nurses, Social Services etc.

*Edward W*

## **Where's that Music Group?**

Through Ian we had a wonderful opportunity to improve our singing. A music group was formed – if it had been called a choir I would not have had the courage to join!

When we still had the old pews placed sideways as for the choir of the past, we would assemble on these seats – usually quite a large group turned up for practice.

Under Ian's leadership we learned, with the aim to boost the congregation at Sunday Services. Hopefully, with some success; I personally have learned a lot. We have been very privileged to have Ian with us, and we wish him every success for the future.

*Adri*

PS. Why was it allowed to die?

## **Humour on the Hill**

For 60 years this church has been a beacon on the hill.  
Enlightening and life's purpose bringing to suburbia.  
Preaching the promised peace and joy in doing the Lord's will.  
Listening to those in need who know that help is here.

May Festivals were loved by all. Elaborate was the stage.  
Non-sewing Mums would costumes hire, and never would let down  
the keen producer, though one child who had the role of page,  
(and now a grandpa, grey), was in disgrace. He dropped the floral crown!

Ambitious Thespians there were, who put on Priestley's plays.  
One actor's script bulged through his shirt, and one forgot his cue.  
"Prompt please", in a stage-whisper loud, the audience heard him say,  
and then above the stifled laughs, a much relieved "Thank you"!

At 8:00am each Sunday morn, church members met in prayer,  
and in the summer months, matins were interspersed with smiles,  
for from a neighbouring house, a pious dog would join them there,  
and at the evening service too, he'd trot along the aisle!

No Super more intelligent and learned one could find  
than that Welshman, here long ago, in Jungian theories steeped.  
Compassionate this pastor was, and for his searching mind  
a compliment from the psychiatrist himself he reaped!

The Guild invited him to be guest-speaker at retreat.  
But he was late. They sat in prayer. The leader in a stew!  
The suddenly, in duffel coat, he burst in from the street.  
"Will someone tell me, please", he begged, "where I can find the loo?"

But more than laughter, influence too on many lives is found,  
and none more powerful than the one I am relating now,  
Words spoken from the pulpit had a message most profound  
on a Nigerian mental nurse whose tasks demeaned somehow.

To church he came. The sermon was on Christ's humility.  
"That was my turning point", he said. "I made my future plan.  
For if God's Son could stop and wash His followers' feet, surely  
in caring service I could go and help my fellow man".

A letter from Lagos I have, with joy filled, and delight.  
Now VIP in Health is he. Entitled Chief Omobogie.  
"He took a towel", was the text he listed to that night.  
"My whole career", he said, "I owe to that church in Stoneleigh!"

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Stoneleigh Scout Group**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Stoneleigh (Methodist) Scout Group was formed in 1938, but there are no records of the early years, or of the name of the Group Scout Master. There was a Cub Pack and Scout Group, and during the war years they combined with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stoneleigh (St John's) Group.

In 1946 Harry Megarry was appointed Group Scout Master at a time when the Group was without one. From that time onward the Group began to flourish, numbers of boys and Scouters increasing. A Parents' Committee was formed and through their efforts the necessary items of camp and other equipment were purchased. A Senior Scout Troop and a Rover Crew were formed in the late 1940s and early 1950s respectively. For the first time there was a complete Group with a membership of some 120. In the period 1952-63 seven boys received the Queen's Scout Badge, and one a Commendation for Bravery.

In 1963 Harry retired as GSM on his appointment as Assistant District Commissioner (Rovers), a position he held until Rovers were disbanded in 1967. Harry was awarded the Medal of Merit in 1963 for his services to Scouting.

Harold Russell became the new GSM, but unfortunately was almost immediately faced with the retirement of a number of Scouters, mostly because of other commitments. As a consequence the number of boys fell considerably, and the Senior Troop and Rover Crew were closed. Harold himself found it necessary to retire in 1965 and Edward ('Bunny' in Scouting circles) Warren took over as GSM. He was very soon faced with a complete reorganisation of Scouting. Rover Crews and Senior Scouts were abolished, to be replaced by Venture Scouts run, not by Groups, but on a District, or combined Group, basis.

Despite these changes the period 1965-68 was a time of great growth. Our numbers went up to nearly 100 boys in the Pack and Troop, twelve Scouters and ten non-uniformed Leaders. The Parents Committee was re-formed, and their enthusiasm and hard work enabled the Group to buy its own coach and a lot more camping equipment. Both the Cub Pack and Scout Troop were very active indeed, and began to win District events. The ability of the Section Leaders was later recognised; Stephen Hall being appointed Assistant County Commissioner (cubs) and Graham Hall District Scout Leader. 'Bunny' Warren also received the Long Service decoration and the Medal of Merit for his services to Scouting.

In 1977 Alan Bower took over as GSL and was succeeded by Colin Cooper in 1982. This period saw a consolidation of the earlier growth, and under their leadership the Group continued to flourish, with the Beavers being added to the Group in 1982.

As the Group continues to look to the future we wish it every success, and hope that it will continue to be active within the life of the Church for years to come.

*Edward W*

### **Stan & Peggy Shepherd**

Shortly after we moved to Worcester Park in May 1954, I discovered that Austin Rees was the Minister at Stoneleigh Methodist Church. Austin had been my Sunday School teacher in Cardiff over 20 years previously, and so it was wonderful to meet him again. After the evening service in the Hall (the Church was then only half-built), Austin introduced us to David and Madge Lillie, and to Harry and Jo Megarry (the Ulster connection).

Now, over 40 years later, we can look back on very many happy memories of those long lasting friendships, and the many other great blessings that membership of SMC has brought us.

*Stan & Peggy S*

### **Geoff Lawrence recalls**

It must have been a special week-night meeting in the early 1950s, when Reg Walker was Minister of Stoneleigh and I was a teenage member at Christ Church, Worcester Park, with Reg Brighton as our Minister there. Reg Walker somehow contrived to get a few of the big names in Methodism to speak at Stoneleigh and, on this occasion, a young friend of mine from Worcester Park (Chris Dalton) whose family had moved to Stoneleigh Park Road, invited me to hear the Rev Dr Leslie Weatherhead. It must have been during my national service in the RAF, but as I was stationed for most of the two years at Stanmore there was no problem in getting away for an evening. Although I remember little of Leslie Weatherhead's address, I do know that it helped me tremendously on my early Christian path to be in a large gathering at Stoneleigh that evening, and to hear the great man speak. He began by telling of a recent visit he had made to a country circuit, and of being greeted at the Church Hall with the words "We've got one of them new tripe-recorders here for you Sir!"

Although it is only a year or two since Queen Mary's Hospital moved from its large Carshalton Beeches site to the main St Helier building, there was always a children's ward at the latter. Thanks to an initiative by Stoneleigh Methodist in the early 1970s, I had the pleasure and privilege, while at Christ Church, of joining Pat Rock's father, George (a much loved Sunday School Superintendent at Stoneleigh in those days), in visiting the children at St Helier on Sunday afternoons for an hour of singing, friendly chat, and a short prayer. Parents, brothers and sisters of the young patients would often join in the hymns and songs, as would the Sister-in-charge of the ward who co-operated fully in the venture. The special song books that had been compiled for these memorable Sunday sessions were not unlike our present SMC blue books, and one cannot help wondering whether those children – most of them probably now parents themselves – have similar happy memories of our outreach while they were recovering from their illnesses and injuries in hospital.

*Geoff L*

**From the Eyrrie**

Our daughter Sheila baptised by Ken Richardson in 1962 at a Parade Service; clear recollections of Harry Megarry (GSL) standing near the Communion table to receive flags.

Our son Richard in the beginners department, taught by 'Teacher Janet' (Nina Burge's daughter) and singing 'Two little eyes to look at God' etc, while Sheila was in the crèche with Louise Roebuck and others including Sue Thomas (still in pram!) looked after by Jean Gransden and Mavis Milledge

Each Christmas Eve when our children were in bed, George Rock (Pat's father) came round with present for them.

In the 1980s, when John Rowland was Minister, a particularly memorable evening service when we were each given a fir cone at the start of the Service – symbolising any resentment or bitterness we held in our hearts. At the end of the service we were invited to place our cones at the foot of a cross as a sign that with God's help we were relinquishing these negative feelings and replacing them with love.

The visit of a group of Cliff College students to our Church – the result for me was a spiritual renewal, a fresh start when prayer and worship seemed to come alive.

An evening service led by John Rowland (Youth Workers' re-dedication Service) when we all went out to the Communion Rail and John prayed a different prayer over each one of us, using our names. A very moving service.

*Hazel E*

**Not so long ago**

My first visit to Stoneleigh was to Harvest Festival in 1988, when Ruth Williams thrust a tin of pineapple into my hand so that the children would not feel left out! I shan't forget cleaning up straw after Holiday Club (it was everywhere!), nor my husband Geoff and I (not often on Church premises together!) wrestling with the church oven recently in an attempt to get it to cook anything in less than 45 minutes! Essential when you have hordes of hungry Brownies, trampolining for charity, queuing at the hatch!

I remember Angus Drummond's kindness to me as a newcomer, although of course many others have since made me feel equally welcome.

On the subject of Anniversaries, my Mum is off this month to yet another of the get-togethers organised by the Barnes Methodist Youth Club that she joined (amidst the blackout) in 1943!

*Sue B*

## **Bunny recalls**

There are too many memories for me to mention them all, but over the years I have found great friendship and happiness, and a real love for Christ, in the Church.

It all began from making friends at school with Vernon Andrews whose parents, Horace and Gladys Andrews, showed me what the love of God really meant. Through them I joined the YPF which met on Sunday afternoons at the home of Ted Brooker, and I was a founder member of the Youth Club in 1942.

One of the Club members in those early days was Eileen Salisbury, or Eileen Manning as she was then and I well remember the evening when we said farewell to her as she went to India. While speaking to her the other Sunday, she said she had recently had a telephone call from another old member, Margaret Kitson, who also had two brothers in the club, John and Stan. Olive Civil will remember them.

I was on Care Scheme duty a while ago when another ex-Club member called in – Stan Cosham who was over here on a visit from New Zealand. Only recently we had a call for help in the Care Scheme from Chris Waite in Epsom – and he was a member of the Club and remembers Rita and Brian Russell well. It seems quite strange to make so many contacts with the past so recently!

It was through my association with YPF and the Youth Club that I became a Church member in 1945, and I well remember being received by our then Minister, the Rev Leslie Craig. During the years in the Club, particularly when I was Secretary, I shall never forget Jack Davies, the local Youth Secretary, for all the help and support he gave me. Indeed, it was through him that I became, in 1948, the Circuit, and later the District, Youth Secretary. I am often reminded of those days when I go to other Churches in the Circuit to preach.

Then, of course, are my memories of Scouting. It all began when Harry Megarry, then Group Scout Master, asked me to become Scout Master of the Senior Troop in 1949 – and I carried on in Scouting until 1977 when I retired as the GSL. I can well remember our County Commissioner and the District Commissioner, Steve and Graham Hall respectively, as boys in the Group, and then later as my Scouters. I also still remember days in the '50s round at Harry's home packing up camping equipment which he kept in his garage.

There are also memories of the more recent past.

When I was Junior Church Superintendent asking Lesley Lee if she would be prepared to help in Junior Church – little did she or I know what this would lead to.

In 1987 I was elected to Conference as District Representative at which Ian was Ordained – I certainly did not expect to have him as our own Minister a few



years later.

And so it could go on. Both Jeanne and I have so many memories at Stoneleigh that we could almost write a book! The things we perhaps remember with the most joy are the Baptismal Services of our five boys, and the happy times they all had in the various organisations to which they belonged whilst they were in Stoneleigh.

*Edward (Bunny) W.*

### **Thoughts from a bicycle**

Yes, I remember there was this young woman in her red coat sitting near the front on the right, she seemed to be a newcomer. It appeared she had triplets. Robert Teasdale used to carry them – one at a time. She introduced her cousin with young son, then a married couple followed. She is still flourishing, more so it seems!

WEFT – the threads that cross the warp for selvage to selvage. John Rowland started WEFT – Worship Enabling Fellowship Teaching – three weekly meetings a month, the fourth week left free for HouseGroups and Classes. Lynne Morris was the Registrar. These meetings were excellent, they lasted for some years, the early attendance was 40, later dropping to 30 – I loved WEFT!

Before the Link Room was built I had a group of Sunday School girls. On Sunday mornings I walked them to my home, there I ran the classes (being at home gave me confidence).

Brief encounters; There was this girl sitting at the opposite side of a side aisle in a large hall somewhere in London; somehow we spoke to each other, I was the one from Stoneleigh Methodist Church. I discovered she belonged to a group of young people who met at Roland Bryan's home. I cannot remember when she joined our Church, however she later introduced her fiancé, later husband, becoming the wizard of our sound system – guess what, yes, Jennifer, Nicholas, Philippa – just see their happy, smiling faces.

There is this man with whom I felt tongue-tied for years when I was in his vicinity, he has become one of my most favoured and loved friends.

I must not forget the one who enabled me to relax my vocal cords, so that I can now sing without fear.

*Adri Austin*

### **The Link Room Fund Raising**

The phone is answered. "Hello, Bernard Chessum here . . . I wonder if you could help me? As you know, the Church is raising money for an extension – the Link – and I have been asked if I would help by organising a Jumble Sale. The most efficient way is to close the Church Hall for a week . . . to have the Scout

parents sort the jumble as it comes in. We shall have a Jumboutique in the morning, and a Jumble Sale in the afternoon (with stock added). My problem is to cover as many houses as possible, and I wonder if you could help by putting leaflets through doors one week and collecting the jumble the following week?"

Were you one of those generous people who rallied to the call? Were you the lady with small children whose husband would have the car, but nevertheless would collect if someone could fetch it from her house?

Were you one of the Scouts with the trek cart? Were you one of the dedicated band of sorters – not everyone's cup of tea! Were you one of the sellers who was grateful for the fish and chip lunch between the morning and afternoon efforts?

Were you one of the 'clearer-uppers' who waited with a slight sense of panic as the time ticked away, and the rag and bone man had not yet collected the sacks and sacks of stuff left over (almost enough for another Jumble Sale the next week if the need had been there? Were you the person who counted the money – some £900 – and had the problem of what to do with it until the Bank opened on Monday?

Many will have moved away from the district, or have passed a greater way – many still will remain.

Of one thing I am certain – any who took part will never forget that week, nor particularly Stan Quaife from whom came the name 'Jumboutique', and the expertise in building such a magnificent jumbling team.

### **Where is that Church?**

How did we come to Stoneleigh Methodist Church? We arrived in Stoneleigh in 1957 with a one-year old daughter. We were looking for a Church.

Joy was a confirmed member of the Church of England who had transferred her allegiance to the Congregationalists; I was a Methodist. We agreed that it was important for our family that we should go to the same church and, since my family had deep roots in Methodism – Joy thinks they thought of it before John Wesley! – it was agreed that we should try the local Methodists first.

So it came about that one Sunday evening I set out alone to find the Methodist Church, leaving Joy baby-sitting. I really had no idea that it was only about two years old; indeed, I still have difficulty in believing that it hasn't been there since the Norman Conquest. I enjoyed the service, and took a favourable report home. Then there was nasty hiccup; the next Sunday evening it was Joy's turn to go and, following my explicit instructions to cross the station and take the first turning on the right, she walked up Stoneleigh Park Road, never found the church, and ended up in Worcester Park. She couldn't see the funny side!

Happily, the situation was saved by the fact that the Minister at my old church contacted the Rev Austin Rees who called to see us one sunny afternoon. Joy was

out, but I had a few days off and was replacing the roof of a coal bunker. Getting no reply when he rang the bell, but hearing the sound of hammering in the garden, he let himself in through the back gate and greeted warmly the grimy face that appeared from within the coal bunker. I don't think we shook hands!

We sat on the kitchen doorstep and had the traditional cup of tea. He subsequently introduced us to the Twenty Club, run by John Holmes, which exercised a tremendous influence on the younger members of the Church at that time, providing gentle guidance but also encouraging us to question and grow. Perhaps here, more than anywhere else, I learnt 'the faith of a Methodist'. The Twenty Club of the time produced at least three Ministers and two local preachers from a group of not more than a dozen.

So we became members at Stoneleigh and the rest, as they say, is history.

*Arthur & Joy Miller*

### **Water, water everywhere!**

Greetings and good wishes to Stoneleigh on celebrating its 60th Anniversary. May it be a time of great joy to you all – remembering not only the happy times of the past, but also in planning and sharing for the future.

My happy memories of Stoneleigh are countless, but perhaps one incident stands out – illustrating the caring work which still continues as emphasised by the Care Scheme.

New neighbours, recently married, had moved into the bungalow next door to mine, and I was delighted they belonged to our Church – Hilary and Alan Bower. Some time later, just before Christmas, we were deep in snow and one morning, after the thaw had set in, Hilary saw water pouring from my roof. I had already left for the City and not knowing where I was, Hilary contacted Kenneth Richardson, our Minister. Between them they were able to track me down and I raced home.

What a sight greeted me – the rising main had burst, and the force of the water hitting the roof resulted in a back surge over the whole of the loft which was deep in water, and cascading into every room below – umbrellas were a necessity to step over the threshold. Stalwart help from my Stoneleigh friends soon got rid of most of the surplus water, but Ken was not satisfied – the bungalow would never dry out with sodden insulation. Not only was it sodden, but the dust of years had settled on top of it.

Next morning Ken arrived with boiler suit and tackle – the offending insulation was removed entirely, the loft made spick and span, the plumber summoned and the Minister, looking as black as an old fashioned sweep, was fortified with Hilary's tea which I too shared and enjoyed. A few of my ready packed presents were rescued, and what might have been a miserable Christmas turned into a very happy occasion.

Long may the caring work of Stoneleigh Methodist Church and its Ministers continue. Blessing and thanks to all of you.

*Muriel Upright*

### **Is He behind the curtain?**

My connections with Stoneleigh Methodist Church go back over 20 years! I was christened by Kenneth Richardson, whom I was to subsequently meet many years later when he returned to take part in one of our Golden Jubilee services. My husband and I were married by Robert Teasdale in 1990, and he also christened both my daughter Hannah and my niece Ceri in a double family christening.

My other link with Stoneleigh Methodist is through the Beginners Department. I can't accurately recall exactly how many years I was involved. I do know that I was approached by Jennifer Watkins after a morning service one day when I was in my early teenage years and, in that softly spoken way she had, I found myself agreeing to help out before I really thought about what I was agreeing to! I finally left the Beginners Department roughly three months before I got married in 1990! When Jennifer left the Beginners Department was taken over by Peggy Shepherd, and then later by myself. It was, like so many things, to be a temporary job, until 'someone' came forward who knew how to run a Church Department. However, with the unstinting help of many people – Debbie Woolford, Judith Goodchild and Dora Thomas included – I ran it for several years. It was here that I was to be truly tested by those dear enquiring minds of 3-5 year olds.

I remember well the occasion when a small 4 year old with an inquiring mind engaged me in a conversation about God – something like this. Child – “where is God?”. Deidre “Well, he is all around us” seemed like a reasonably good answer at the time!. Child “Is he here in Church with us?” “Err, yes”. “What, in this room”. “Um . . . well . . . (help.--what's coming next!). And finally, “If He's here, is He behind that curtain, and can I go and have a look?”

As anyone with young children will know, there were to be many other occasions when I was on the end of such questions! Despite all that, it is a time I remember with great fondness, and my experiences with the children there have helped out when I was called on to run a playgroup in Bristol, and to 'teach' in Kenya.

Throughout my life, wherever I have been, whether it has been Stoneleigh, Bristol or Kenya, Stoneleigh Methodist has always been there. I have been kept up to date with all the news even in Kenya, both through my parents and through the newsletter which miraculously made it through the Kenyan postal service. What is so lovely is to know that there it is somewhere I can always come back to, and am always made to feel welcome; whether I've been away for a couple of weeks, or three years.

*Deidre B*

### **The Song of the Stewards**

Notices given me just as I'm going  
Boilers not working and taps overflowing  
Sometimes I feel that I want to grow wings:  
These are not some of my favourite things.

Cross lights not put on, I always forget it.  
Microphones hooting and how do I check it?  
Ministers winding themselves up in strings  
These are not some of my favourite things.

Folk who keep carping and won't sing a chorus;  
Those who keep talking go on 'til they bore us.  
Some don't like change, Oh the problems it brings!  
These are not some of my favourite things.

There are some folk I don't give a high rating  
Preachers who come late with all of us waiting  
Changing their minds about hymns we're to sing  
They are not some of my favourite things.

When all else fails and my heart quails  
'Cos no preachers come,  
We'll give 'em to learn 'em a John Wesley sermon  
And then they will be struck dumb

© *Hilda B*

Also, from one of our members, an account on the [Epsom & Ewell History Remembered website](#).