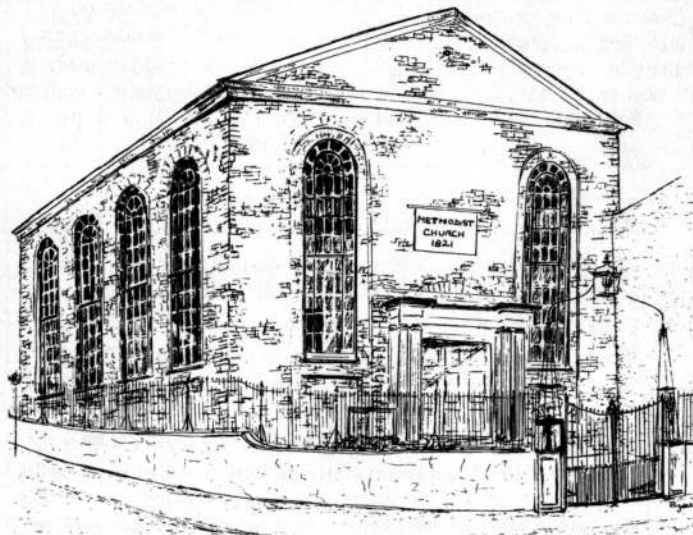


ROUND THE CHURCHES

Drawing: Elizabeth Giles

67: Bandon Methodist Church

Text: Geraldine Bateman



The town of Bandon is celebrating its 400th birthday this year and our Methodist church has been there for almost half that

time. It was built in 1821 and is the oldest of all the churches in use in Bandon today.

The present building, which

can seat 400 people, is in fact the third Methodist church to have been built in the town. The first church was built in 1758 and the second in 1789 but both of these proved too small for the growing congregations.

John Wesley preached in both of these churches, preaching at the opening of the second church on his last visit to the town. The 17 occasions that he visited Bandon between 1749 and 1789 must have contributed in no small way to the cause of Methodism in those days!

It is interesting that the plaque over the door reads 'Methodist Church 1821' as most buildings of that time would have had 'Wesleyan Chapel', especially

as there was also a 'Primitive Wesleyan Chapel' in the town at that time.

Today Bandon, one of the seven churches on the West Cork circuit, has an active and lively congregation with almost 180 members. This includes some 50 children and quite a few asylum-seekers and other newcomers into the area. We cooperate on many fronts with the other denominations in the town and we look forward to fully implementing the Connexions Programme so that we can take up the challenge of our Mission Statement: 'To know Christ and mirror His life through our love, lifestyle and witness'.