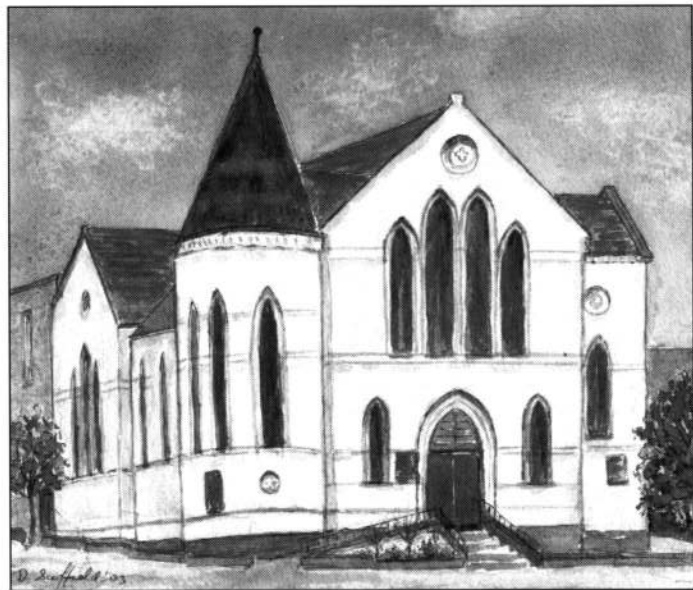


ROUND THE CHURCHES

65: Carrickfergus Methodist Church

Painting: Derek Scoffield

Text: Joan Ferguson



It is generally accepted that the first class meeting of Methodists in Carrickfergus took place among men of the Black Watch

Regiment. The Rev John Wesley visited the town on eight occasions between 1756 and 1778. In 1773 he records 'there

was a lively congregation' at Carrickfergus. There still is today.

In 1808 permission was given to build a new church, which was opened in West Street in 1812. Although a fine building for its time, repairs to the roof and floor were regular occurrences. This did not hamper the outreach work in the area and new churches were opened at Larne in 1827, Ballyclare in 1828, Hyde Park in 1829 and Islandmagee in 1829.

The 1812 church was replaced by a larger building in 1884. By the end of the 19th century Carrickfergus could claim to have excellent premises, consisting of a fine church, a schoolhouse with daily and Sunday schools and a comfortable manse.

The story of the 20th

century was of consolidation and outreach. Buildings were changed to suit more up to date needs, and in 1970 a suite of halls was opened in memory of the Rev S D Ferguson and a new gallery was added to the church.

Through time the buildings – once so fine – are now in need of repair and, to fit us for the 21st century, planning and discussion are taking place towards a replacement church.

We seek to share the gospel with young and old alike through uniformed organisations, Sunday School, Youth Fellowship, Alpha, Adult Fellowships, MWI, Bible Study, Prayer Breakfasts, Bowls, and twice weekly Fellowship Centre as well as regular Sunday worship. We feel that there is something for all ages to help them on their Christian path.