

ABBNEYHILL METHODIST CHURCH
1896 - 1996

Abbeyhill Methodist Church was founded as a result of outreach from the Methodist Church at Nicholson Square to the soldiers stationed at Piershill Cavalry Barracks. The barracks, built in 1793, were situated about half a mile east from Jock's Lodge on the Portobello Road, now the site of local authority housing.

Originally the soldiers had a long march of about three and a half miles from Jock's Lodge, through the Queens Park, up the steep hill to the Pleasance, then over Nicolson Street to Nicholson Square. Later a local place for meeting and for worship was found in an upstairs flat opposite the barracks - now found above the local fish and chip shop!

In time it became necessary to improve this limited accommodation and in 1896 the Abbeyhill Methodist Church Society was founded, originally meeting in St Mark's Episcopal Church, at Sunnybank, but later moving to an iron roofed church near the present site.

In 1902 a new iron church was bought for £60.00! - and from this point the church was referred to locally as the "Wee Tin Kirk", and is still affectionately remembered in this way by the local people today

The present church building, which was built to accommodate 150 members and cost £2000.00 to build and furnish, was opened on 15 November 1930.

In 1968 the church underwent major renovation and was converted into a dual purpose building. New sanctuary furniture and chairs were purchased, and reflooring and complete redecoration took place.

It was at this time that Sunday school and youth work thrived at Abbeyhill and this continued through the 1970's and 1980's, and today, though the groups are smaller in numbers, the children and young people continue to respond with dedication and enthusiasm.

In 1984 the roof was re-tiled, thanks to the generous gifts of money and individual tiles by the church members, and the slater, Mr J Graham, donated a cross for the church spire which was dedicated on 15 December 1984.

In 1986 during the period of the Commonwealth Games at Meadowbank, the church members engaged in outreach and witness in the running of the "Welcome Cafe". The waste ground behind the Church was cleared, paved and planted to create a Community Garden in the late 1980's and this was opened and dedicated on 21 July 1990.

In 1991 major renovations and redecoration again took place when a problem with extensive wet rot in the exterior walls was discovered and eradicated, once again thanks to the committed and generous giving by the church members.

1996 brings us to our Centenary Year and we celebrate the faith and commitment of so many who have over the last century, given their lives to the service of Christ Jesus at Abbeyhill. We celebrate too, the deep, unfailing love of God for his people at Abbeyhill - a love which will continue to nurture and mature our Church in years to come.

(Further details of the history of Abbeyhill Methodist Church are contained in the Centenary Brochure, available by application to the church at Lower London Road, Edinburgh).