



## The Little Tin Chapel at Chandlers Cross

A talk given by Richard Lee  
at the Sarratt Local History Society

**I** suspect most of us who have driven through Chandlers Cross have noticed the little corrugated iron building with gothic shaped windows and vaguely wondered what it was doing there. So we were delighted to be told the story of this tiny building, by Richard Lee.

In 1869, The Parish of Croxley recognised that would be worshippers in the Chandler's Cross area were a long way from both Croxley and Sarratt, so they suggested a 'chapel of ease' be built, ie a small chapel for Sunday worship in addition to the main Parish Church. Agreement was only finally reached and enough money raised (£197) for the project to go ahead in 1903. Among the donors were the Clutterbucks of Micklefield and Goldingtons and the owner of Red Heath Heath.

All over the British Empire, the first 'flat-pack' buildings ( long before DIY and IKEA) were being shipped from the great Northern industrial cities. The grandest formed parts of palaces for Indian Princes, as in Mysore, or railway stations with ornate iron columns. But the most modest were the little 'tin' mission chapels.

And Chandlers Cross was one of those.

The 'ladies' from 'The White House' nearby, 'tastefully decorated' it. But the simple tongue and groove wooden inner walls gave little insulation and when it rained 'it didn't 'alf rattle!'

Not only services were held there, but before WW1 it was also used for whist, billiards drafts and socials and even, in the 30s, a jazz band. A harmonium accompanied the hymn singers and some baptisms were performed there. A little bell tower was even erected.

But after WW2, attendance began to fall away and the building started to deteriorate. In 1951, the Red Heath Estate, on whose land the chapel stood, was sold and gradually the little building was virtually abandoned, with only 2 families attending. So the church was formally closed and by 1982 it had basically become a garden shed for the adjoining house.

Happily for the building itself it has now been restored and though not serving a religious function, is now available as a B & B - suitable for young families? Sadly the present owners were not at the talk to hear and see the story of their 'little little tin chapel'.

Angela Colman