

# Memories of Two Gates Ragged School

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Many happy memories come to mind of Two Gates Chapel, but none more so than those of Sunday school. My Granny lived opposite the chapel and she was a big part of the chapel and Two Gates life, she was known to everyone as “Granny Bate”. So it was following the Bate tradition that I attended Sunday school from an early age. I was about 3 or 4 when I first started. Together with my big sister Pat we were taken by Margaret Taylor in our Sunday best with mom telling us not to get dirty (very difficult for me as I was such a tom boy!). Each and every Sunday whatever the weather we walked the mile to chapel and enjoyed the songs and stories with all the other children. Sometimes we were lucky and allowed to call at Mrs Hill’s sweet shop to buy a treat on the way back home.

Every year in December or January the prize giving took place and if your attendance had been really good you

were awarded a special prize. My first prize, ‘The Nightingale’ was awarded 30/12/1945 and presented by my mother (Elsie Southall) who was a life member of Two Gates until her death in 1969. How difficult it must have been at the end of World War 2 to get a suitable prize for all the children.

Sunday school outings were the highlight of the year and many happy times were spent at Kinver and Clent with picnics to enjoy in the lovely hot summers.

Fond memories are held of the Anniversaries which took place every summer. Many weeks of practice were held under the strict supervision of Harry Cox, with Percy Bate (a kind gentle man) on the organ. I shall always remember Mr Bate’s devotion to the chapel. Our song sheets were looked after with great care as no replacements were given.

The Anniversary day arrived and we all looked forward to wearing our new dresses, If we were lucky we had a new one for each service. Mine were often made by Mrs Clara Cartwright (Tony’ Mom). Nervously we made our way to the platform hoping we would remember our songs without our sheets! And how proud we were when Mr Willetts congratulated us “on a job well done”.

How happy I am to have such happy memories of a wonderful childhood enriched with life at Two Gates Ragged School.