

TRINITY  
METHODIST CHURCH  
WOKING  
1872 — 1972



HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

*This booklet has been compiled  
by a group of people with long  
memories and a great love for  
"Trinity"*

TRINITY METHODIST CHURCH,  
Brewery Road,  
Horsell, Woking,  
Surrey.

**From the President of the  
Methodist Conference**

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It is with very great pleasure that I send not only my own greetings and good wishes but also on behalf of the whole Methodist Church to Trinity Church at Woking.

For one hundred years the Church has maintained the Methodist witness, and although so much has changed since your Church began, the witness to the redeeming love of God in Christ is still relevant. I rejoice with you in your celebrations and pray that during this time of thanksgiving you will find opportunity for rededication for the future.

May God bless you and be with you in the years that are to come.

KENNETH L. WAIGHTS.

## Message from the Bishop of Guildford

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It is with great pleasure that I send congratulations and good wishes to my Methodist brethren in Woking in their centenary year.

In our Liturgy we say—

"We are the Body of Christ. By one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body. Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

I pray that despite our human failings this unity may soon come in accordance with Christ's prayer for us all.

But, remember, the divisions between all us Christians are but tiny cracks compared with the chasm that divides those who acknowledge Christ as their Saviour and worship Him in His Church and those who have no such allegiance.

As you step out into the next chapter of work and witness for Him may you have joy and peace in believing.

GEORGE GUILDFORD.

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## From the Secretary of Methodist Conference

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The invitation to send this message of greeting and congratulation indicated that the brochure would not only be looking back, but also forward to the future role of the Church in the Woking Community. That is just right. Christians are called to live in the tension between the backward look and the forward thrust.

What changes there have been since the Methodist Church in Woking began a century ago. But even greater changes lie ahead. As you look back with gratitude and forward with hope, may this centenary be a time of great encouragement and blessing for you all.

KENNETH GREET.

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## From the Chairman of the London South West District Rev. Cyril Wainwright, B.A., B.D.

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I count it a privilege to be associated with the many greetings and good wishes which will be extended to you good friends at Woking as you celebrate the centenary of Methodism in the town.

These hundred years cover some of the most eventful periods in the story of our race. There have been six monarchs on the throne of Great Britain, two world wars, and a whole host of other changes that have completely re-shaped the life of our land. Yet the work of the Church has gone steadily on, and has played an effective part in keeping life stable and bearable for many. Week by week, numbers of people have gathered for worship and fellowship, and have found relief from toil and care, balm for wounded spirits, and a way to spiritual power and vitality that have helped them to win through. The full story of the good done, the comfort and uplift received, we shall never know.

In this devoted work, many people have taken part, some ministers, others lay people; some of them known and loved by us all, some long forgotten. We pay a tribute of thanks to Almighty God for their loyal and steadfast witness.

Happily, the Church still survives in strength and influence, despite changes of place and days. I pray that God will richly bless you in these days of celebration and remembrance, and especially as you prepare yourselves for the days that lie ahead.

CYRIL WAINWRIGHT.

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## From Rev. J. C. McLauchlan, B.A. Minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Woking

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### Greetings

It gives me special pleasure to send a message from the Presbyterians in Woking to you, our Methodist friends, who are celebrating the centenary of Methodism in Woking, as I was inducted to the ministry here, in the former Trinity Methodist Church, 27 years ago. We were very grateful to the Methodists for providing us with accommodation for congregational and committee meetings while we had no buildings of our own. The Rev. H. W. Goldsack and his successors have all been good friends to me. I therefore welcome this opportunity of assuring you, and your minister, the Rev. W. H. Jones, of our good wishes for the future of Methodism in Woking, and our prayer that God will richly bless you in all your work for Christ and His Kingdom.

J. C. McLAUCHLAN.

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Greetings from Councillor David Boorman,  
Chairman of the  
Woking Urban District Council

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Council Offices,  
Woking,  
Surrey.

Dear Friends,

Many years before Methodism came to Woking it had had to split from the Church of England. A hundred years after coming, Methodists are faced with the question of re-unification.

During its time in Woking, the Church has played a large part in the life of the Town. Today, with the Town at another peak of its growth rate, Methodists have to decide how they can best continue to serve the needs of the people.

Whichever way the decision goes, I know that it will only be after much careful thought, and that we can rely on you to be a source of moral guidance so much in need these days.

Best wishes,  
David Boorman,  
Chairman, Woking Urban District Council.

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1872—1972

## THE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

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**May 11th, 12th, 13th, 1972**

The Trinity Players Drama Group will present "Pray for a Wind" by Morwenna R. Bielby: a play depicting the origins of Methodism in the experience and work of John and Charles Wesley.

**Sunday, 4th June, 1972**

The visit of the Rev. J. W. Watson, former Minister of Trinity.

**Saturday, 17th June, 1972**

The Centenary Supper: a time to rejoice and to reminisce.

**Sunday, 18th June, 1972**

Church Anniversary.

The Anniversary Preacher will be the  
Reverend Dr. Kenneth Greet,  
Secretary of the Methodist Conference

The morning service will be attended by the Chairman of the Woking Urban District Council.

**22nd, 23rd and 25th June**

The Church will be "at home", from 7.30-9 p.m. to welcome visitors and friends to our Centenary Exhibition.

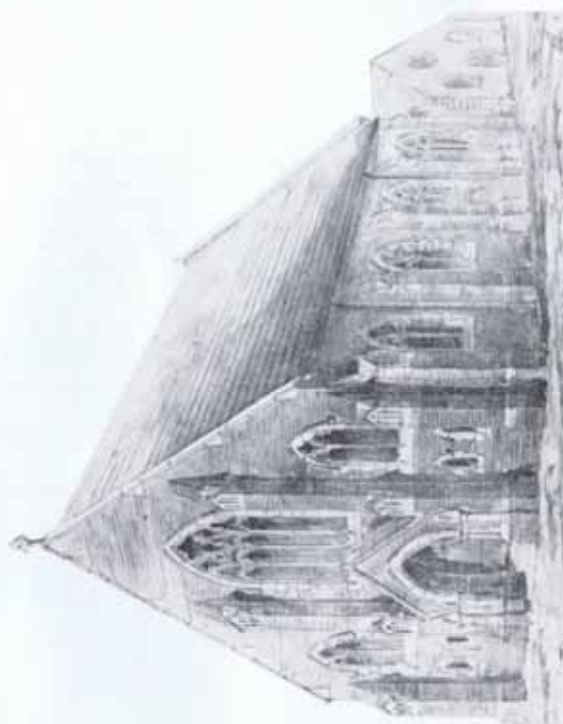
**Sunday, 23rd July**

Visit of the Chairman of the London South West District.  
Rev. Cyril Wainwright, B.A., B.D.

In the Autumn of 1972, Rev. A. Harrison Clulow, B.A., B.D., during whose ministry the present Church was built, and Rev. Donald S. Hailey, who also served at Trinity, will be visiting preachers.

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## Town and Church Grow Together

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The history of modern Woking and the founding and development of Methodist witness in the town are coincidental. Until the end of the third decade of the 19th century the name Woking referred in particular to the small village now known as Old Woking and in general to the tract of open heath and woodland between Brookwood and Maybury and which was typical of this part of northwest Surrey. In the fourth decade the railway system began to be established in various parts of the country and one of these had a considerable effect on the future development of our town. On 12th May, 1838 the first section of the London and Southampton Railway was opened between Nine Elms in London and Woking Common station and within a few years the line was extended to Southampton via Basingstoke with a branch line from Woking Common to Portsmouth. However, its importance as a railway junction and centre also gave it importance, particularly in dealing with Her Majesty's mails, and it was natural that some small development as a residential area should follow. It was not for another fifteen years or so that any substantial impetus was given to the building of houses with the provision of shops to cater for local needs.

At this time certain London boroughs and parishes were in need of additional cemetery burial space and the relative cheapness of land opened up by the railway prompted the project approved by Parliament in 1854 that the Necropolis Company be empowered to purchase land in the Woking area for the provision of a cemetery to meet the needs of a large part of the Metropolis. Much more land than was necessary was acquired and later on an Enabling Act allowed the Necropolis Company to dispose of land surplus to requirements. The railway provided relatively easy, speedy and comfortable transport to London and the area was sufficiently rural to attract city workers to establish their homes in the neighbourhood, a practice which has continued ever since. This trend began to accelerate during the 1860's so that by 1871 the population had increased to 6,500 an increase of almost

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75% in 10 years and by 1901 to over 16,000 and today it is 78,000.

As the population increased, tradesmen established their shops in the immediate vicinity of Woking Common station with not a great deal of forward planning. The story of the growth of the town and of other institutions which followed the coming of the railway is only incidental to the present account which relates to the period under review as we come this year to celebrate the centenary of the opening of the first Wesleyan Methodist Church in Woking.

In the middle of the 19th Century there were two parish churches in the area; at Old Woking and Horsell with a chapel of ease at St. Johns which became a third parish in 1884. There was also a chapel of the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion at Kingfield which had been established in 1778. The first Methodist witness was that of the Primitive Methodists who opened their chapel in College Road in 1863, the fore-runner of that in Walton Road which was for a while, after Methodist Union in 1932, within the Woking Methodist circuit. There are few records available concerning the actual formation of the Wesleyan Methodist society but evidently local preachers from Guildford recognised the challenge presented by the developments at Woking and in 1871 began open air services in the vicinity of the station and the few shops. There must have been sufficient enthusiastic response to encourage these pioneers for almost immediately it became possible to acquire a plot of land next to that being developed as the shopping area and on part of it to erect the small chapel which gave its name to the lane by the side. The society was included in the Cobham circuit and was served largely by local preachers who travelled considerable distances, often in the Circuit horse-drawn trap, to conduct Sunday services but the progress was so promising that two years later the first appointment of a resident minister was made. This was the Rev. John Fairbourne, a young probationer, coming direct from College, who had responsibility for the Woking Station and Knaphill societies. Incidentally, John Fairbourne and his family came to Woking in retirement until his death in 1915. He and his two daughters are well remembered by a few of the present members of the church so that there is this direct link covering almost the whole of the century. The work and witness of the church was well supported by the tradesmen who were beginning to establish their businesses on the west side of Chertsey Road and the top half of the High Street, many of whom became active workers and pillars of the church.

Some idea of the shopping centre of Woking at the time of the

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opening of the first Wesleyan Methodist Chapel can be gathered from a description given by the late Mr. S. C. Knight, one of the pioneer tradesmen who opened his first shop in High Street in 1870. At that time Maybury Road was a track across the common leading from the station to Maybury Arch and the shopping area then and for many years afterwards was confined to the section of High Street between Chapel Street and the Albion Hotel and to the west side of Chertsey Road. It was possible to stand at the station and look towards Chertsey Bridge and see not half a dozen houses. On both sides of Chertsey Road there were gardens and in High Street below Chapel Street there were small cottages with front gardens facing the railway. In about 1890 the east side of Chertsey Road was developed together with the Broadway and also a part of Chobham Road adjacent to Chertsey Road.

Then and during the next forty years or so almost without exception the tradesmen lived over and behind their shops, prospering in their businesses and often taking active part in the commercial and civic life of the town. Mr. James Cobbett, a nurseryman living in College Lane transferred his membership from Knaphill to Woking Station in 1872. His daughter, Mrs. J. P. Price, the widow of a local preacher who made an important contribution to the life of the church at a later period is still in membership with us.

The society continued to flourish and to increase in numbers to such an extent that within twelve years it was necessary to build a second chapel on the adjacent land bounded by Chapel Street and Commercial Road, followed in due course by the erection of a manse and Sunday School on a site immediately opposite with frontages to Commercial Road and Bath Road.

During this period of development the Woking area was under the administration of the Guildford Rural Sanitary Authority but under considerable pressure from the growing local community this was replaced by the Local Board established in 1893 until 1895 when the administration of the area was undertaken by the formation of the first Urban District Council with Mr. G. F. Wermig, father of Mrs. H. B. Pryor, as the first Chairman. It seems almost incredible to think that up till 1893 despite the building which had been proceeding for more than 20 years there was no drainage, no street lighting and no made up roads except the main ones. The Victoria Arch was only 15 ft. wide and the Wheatshaf Bridge only 11 ft. wide. The first Council offices were in rooms over Ashby's Bank in the Broadway until they were destroyed

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in a fire which necessitated the removal, after an interval, to the new building which was erected as part of the development of Commercial Road opposite the Victoria Arch.

Again there was a period of growth which came to its culmination during the ministry of the Rev. George King Pryor who was appointed Superintendent of the circuit in September, 1901. He was a man of much courage and enthusiasm with almost uncanny foresight, a forthright preacher and popular with everyone. The impetus given to the society by his preaching soon emphasised the fact that the premises were no more than adequate to meet present demands, quite apart from the need to move with the times in a rapidly growing community which might well present even greater challenges in the future. It was he who proposed with all the weight of his forceful personality that the society should in fact start afresh with a much larger church and with ancillary premises designed to meet demands as far as they could be foreseen. Commercial Road was at that time largely residential but a site was available close to the newly erected offices of the Woking Urban District Council. This site was acquired together with a house in York Road for use as a manse. The building of the church proceeded during 1904, the foundation stones being laid on 4th May and the top stone of the spire on 16th September. On 18th January, 1905 the new church was opened by the Rev. Sylvester Whitehead, the President of the Conference. It is on record that the electric lighting failed during the course of his address but that he carried on regardless until the lights were restored! The proceedings were overshadowed by the tragic illness of the Rev. George King Pryor a few days before. He did not recover and became a supernumerary in the following September and died on 31st December, 1906 without ever having preached in the church he was so largely instrumental in bringing into being.

The former church buildings were sold to the Surrey County Council and for many years were used for evening classes and for the training of the boys and girls of the local schools. Later on they were used as the Labour Exchange and subsequently they were taken over for the present use as the Public Library. The Sunday School and manse property was for many years the local headquarters of the Y.M.C.A. until it was sold for use as offices and the Atlanta Dance Hall.

In 1902 another milestone was reached for Woking became the head of a separate circuit with the very small churches at Byfleet,

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Knaphill, Ripley, St. Johns and West End under the charge of one minister. During this same period the Anglican Church commenced its work in the town; a temporary building was erected in 1877 followed in 1889 by the opening of the present Christ Church which became a separate parish in 1893 by taking over the town area from St. Johns. For a few years members of the other non-conformist churches attended the Wesleyan Methodist Church but as the years passed independent churches were opened by the Baptists, Congregationalists and by the Salvation Army and Courtenay Road Mission, and the Methodist community rejoiced in the help it was able to give in the extensions to a constantly outreaching Christian witness.

No record of the hundred years would be complete unless some reference was made to the outreach of the Church. It has been stated elsewhere that the early membership included many of the pioneer tradesmen of the town who were as enterprising in the work of the Kingdom of God as they were in their thriving businesses and it was not long before they were beginning to make their mark in local government and in many philanthropic and educational developments in the town. As the years have passed the number of tradesmen within the membership has tended to decrease but at the same time there has arisen a new type of membership with diverse skills which have been made available to the community both within and without the context of the direct Church activities. It would be invidious to mention all the ways in which laymen and laywomen are today dedicating their qualifications to the service of the under privileged, to the necessitous young and old, to the lonely and infirm and to the wider claims of people of every race with all their varying needs. One of our own members made it possible for the National Children's Home to acquire Ashwood on very favourable terms and another gave Woodbank as a branch of the Methodist Homes for the Aged and the current management of each is largely in the hands of Committees in which our Church is largely represented. The Westgate Centre for the disabled and elderly commemorates two members who gave outstanding service in an association of over 60 years. Ladies of our Church share in this service to the community by providing voluntary staff once a week to serve coffee and tea at the Centre!

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## Those were the days

It would appear that the first recorded Quarterly Meeting was held at Woking Station on 30th September, 1878, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Walter Lethaby, the Rev. F. Cunningham being appointed as Secretary. There were six others present. The Circuit seems to have comprised Woking, Cobham, Knaphill, Effingham and Byfleet.

### 20th June, 1880, at Effingham.

Having heard the statement made by Mr. Lethaby respecting a new Chapel at Woking Station, Mr. James West (Circuit Steward) moved that Mr. Lethaby should take what action he thought best toward the erection of an iron chapel.

### 22nd December, 1881, at Bookham.

That immediate steps be taken towards the erection of a Wesleyan Chapel at Woking Station, to take the place of the School Chapel now in use.

### 21st June, 1882, at Effingham.

"The meeting was conversational and had no motion before it to be seconded". (The complete minute of the Quarterly Meeting!!!)

### 24th March, 1884. (Local Preachers' Meeting at Woking Station)

To the question 'any new places', Leatherhead was considered again, but the brethren cannot yet see their way to work it. Horsell was also mentioned.

### 30th March, 1885, at Woking Station.

"Bro. C. Vine was nominated by the Superintendent as a candidate for the Ministry. The nomination was unanimously endorsed". This young man would appear to be our first candidate for the ministry.

### 30th March, 1886, at Woking.

Proposed that the Superintendent's stipend be £160 instead of £150 and that travelling expenses be £10 instead of £20. (Net gain nil — a generous age!)

### 26th June, 1888. (Local Preachers' Meeting).

Successful service held during previous quarter in the Old Industrial Schools at Pyrford.

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### 25th March, 1891, at Woking.

The meeting agreed that a Horse Hire Fund be formed as suggested by the Local Preachers' Meeting, and that a Quarterly Collection be made in each Chapel.

### 24th June, 1891, at Effingham.

"Arrange for a Rummage Sale to furnish extra room at the new Manse at Woking".!!!

### Christmas Day, 1893.

The Leaders met on Christmas Day and handed in their Class money.

### 28th March, 1894, at Woking.

The Rev. Henry Hopkinson was unanimously invited to remain a third year and accepted on condition that the Circuit be divided and a house provided for him at Leatherhead.

It was unanimously decided to recommend the division of the Circuit — Woking to be head of the new Circuit — to include Woking, Knaphill, Ripley, Byfleet and Woking Village. Leatherhead to be head of another Circuit — to include Leatherhead, Cobham, Effingham and West Horsley — on condition that Dr. Rigg approve the scheme.

Plans for the new Sunday School building (Woking) were placed before the meeting, estimated cost £1,000.

### 19th August, 1896. (Leaders' Meeting)

Bro. X. was present as desired from last meeting, and having signed the Temperance Pledge and acknowledged his wrong doing, and being sorry for the past, proposed we give him the right hand of fellowship and all the help we can.

### June 1899.

Local Preachers' Cottage meetings at Old Woking ceased.

### March 1900.

Chapel at Littlewick considered — left to Knaphill Leaders' Meeting to consider finally. (Interesting in the light of present Slocock's development).

### TRUST RECORDS 6th October, 1897.

A letter was read from Mr. Skeet asking to be allowed to hire the Hall one night a week for a chess club, when smoking was allowed. It was proposed by the Rev. J. R. Cleminson seconded by Mr. Ingram that the Hall be let to the chess club for 5/- a night for a series on condition that smoking be strictly forbidden.

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### 14th May, 1900.

"Resolved that the organ blower be engaged at 2/6d per month for twice on Sunday and once in week."

### 30th July, 1900.

"Resolved that the price of centre seats be 2/- each sitting, Side 1/6. Gallery in front two pews 1/6, side 1/-. If whole pew is taken it to be counted one seat less."

### 28th September, 1900.

"Resolved that a more suitable burner be procured for lamp outside Chapel, also a ladder for reaching same".

"Mr. Schofield, organist, was present and made a request that the present choir be disbanded. Resolved that he be empowered to do so".

### 29th March, 1901.

"An application was made by the Curate at Christ Church for the loan or the purchase of Boys' Brigade rifles. Mr. Gibson moved that the application be declined as the guns were a gift and could not be parted with".

### 5th February, 1902. Church Enlargement.

The matter having been introduced by the Rev. G. King Pryor, Mr. Ivens was called upon to make a statement, which was to the effect that if possible a purchaser be found for the Chapel property, and a better site secured and a new Church built.

It was decided to form a Sub-Committee to obtain offers for the Chapel property and to get prices and particulars of a suitable piece of land.

The Committee: Messrs. Ivens, Last, Gibson, Collinson and Ivor Moore.

### 14th February, 1902. (Nine days from previous meeting)

Mr. Gibson stated that the Sub-Committee were unanimous in requesting the Trustees purchase from Mr. Knight the site offered in Commercial Road, next to the Conservative Club, for £1,200, the frontage being about 100 feet. (A deposit of £120 had already been paid by Messrs. Last and Ivens).

### TRUST: 13th October, 1900.

Reported that a Joint Meeting of Trinity and Manse Trustees had been held to consider Town development and the way ahead.

Also reported that letters were being received from Agents for developers as to the willingness of Trinity Trustees to sell the Commercial Road site. (See note dated 14th February, 1902).

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The opening of the handsome new Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1905, to be known as "Trinity" after Methodist Union in 1932, was a milestone in Methodist witness in Woking. The site in Commercial Road was purchased for £1,200, the contract price for the Church and School Buildings being £6,900 and £1,685 respectively. Toward these costs £754 14s. 7d. was raised at the Stone-laying ceremony on Easter Monday, 1904, and the Church was officially opened on 18th January, 1905. The interior of the Church was later to be enhanced by separate gifts of a memorial stained glass window, and oak panelling and choir stalls.

The new premises were the centre of an active Church life. Large congregations attended Sunday worship. The flourishing Sunday School, with morning and afternoon sessions, drew its scholars almost entirely from the adjacent streets. In those days few members or scholars lived at any great distance from the Church. During the week, accommodation was taxed to the limit by organisations catering for all ages. The fellowship of the Church was sustained by regular attendance at the numerous class meetings, and by concerted efforts to reduce the debt on the buildings. These efforts usually took the form of an annual, three-day bazaar.

During the 1914-1918 World War, the Church became a meeting place for Service men from all over the world, many of whom entered fully into the life of the Church. On Sunday afternoons, the hall was crowded for tea. During the second World War, it was again a meeting place for Service men and women, the Sunday evening Social Hour being a special feature. Here friendships were made which have continued over the years.

Music has always played a major part in the life of this Church. In this connection, perhaps we may be permitted to mention two names. Mr. Howard Brodie Pryor, son of the Rev. George King Pryor, was, after serving as Assistant Organist for several years, appointed Organist on 16th January, 1908. He continued to serve well into 1948, thus completing forty years as organist. An able musician and an excellent accompanist (and story teller!), he is reported to have

kept the old organ together with string and stamp edging. The new organ was dedicated on 22nd October, 1935, by Mr. F. W. Holloway, F.R.C.O., supported by a special Festival Choir, under the direction of Mr. A. F. P. Bellew. Redesigned, the organ was eventually transferred to the present Church.

The other name is that of Frank Moulding, who, while still in uniform, set Woking Methodism singing after the first World War. Not only did he establish a fine Church Choir, but he also created the Epworth Choir. He was also responsible for the Sportsmen's Services which for several years were a feature of Church life.

No attempt is being made here to record the names or the achievements of Class Leaders, Sunday School Superintendents, Teachers, Trustees, Choristers and others. They would not wish it. Their reward is in the life and witness of the present Church.

By 1927, the membership had reached 250, and the next thirty years saw an expansion of Methodist work in and around Woking. Following Methodist Union in 1932, the former Primitive Methodist Chapel in Walton Road was closed, and its members brought added strength to the Society at "Trinity". The chapel at Brookwood was transferred from the Aldershot to the Woking Circuit, and in 1938, a second minister was added to the Circuit Staff. In 1938, the manse in York Road was sold, and a generous gift made possible the purchase of "Fircroft" in Hillview Road.

Wider aspects of Methodism, and in particular of Methodism's social concern, were literally brought home to Woking, when in 1947, the large house "Ashwood" became a branch of the National Children's Home. It has served as a Nursery for 38 babies and toddlers up to the age of 5, and for the training of Nursery Nurses. In 1972, its role is being altered to meet changing needs in the work of the National Children's Home. And as a result of a gift of land, what had been a residence for a small number of retired missionaries was developed into a branch of the Methodist Homes for the Aged, when in 1960 the purpose-built "Woodbank" was opened. "Trinity" has close links with both these homes, and values the fellowship of members of both communities.

Far-reaching changes for Woking were foreshadowed after the second World War. The Sheerwater Estate was built in the 1950's, to house 5,000 residents from London's "overspill" population. A Methodist Church was founded on the Estate in 1951, and in 1954 an "all-purpose" building was erected, to supersede the builder's hut,

## Activities at Trinity, 1972

### Sundays:

Morning Family Worship, with a Creche for very young children, Junior Church, and Young People's Fellowship.

Evening Worship. The Young People's Fellowship meets fortnightly after the evening service. Its members recently raised £150 in six weeks, to help a school in Kenya.

### Mondays:

Women's Fellowship.

Guides.

The Wives' Monday Club (fortnightly).

### Wednesdays:

The Woking Sisterhood (interdenominational).

The Epworth Choir meets for rehearsal.

### Thursdays:

Cub Scouts.

The Badminton Club.

### Fridays:

Brownies.

The Youth Club.

Scouts, meeting at Woking Congregational Church, Church Choir Rehearsal.

### In addition:

The Supper Club meets monthly during the winter.

A pre-school Play Group is held on three mornings each week.

The Drama Group meets regularly.

An adult Discussion Group and a Study Group meet monthly in members' homes.

A Prayer List is circulated weekly to members of the Prayer Circle.

Our premises and facilities are also used extensively by various organisations in the Town.

We pay tribute to Mr. A. C. Long, our Caretaker, who carries the burden of these many meetings with cheerfulness, patience, and great kindness.

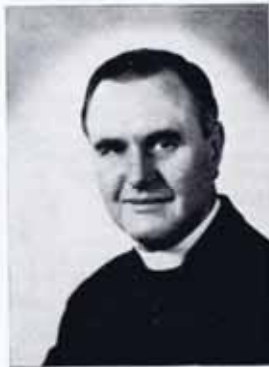
which had been the Church's first home. The work at Sheerwater was initiated by members of the "Trinity" and Byfleet churches, and the building was financed in part by a substantial memorial gift. Connexional grants, and proceeds from the sale of the Walton Road Chapel.

Further developments affected "Trinity" more directly. Hillview Road was scheduled for high-density residential development, and this resulted in the sale of the Manse there. The proceeds of the sale made possible the purchase of a new manse, "Epworth", in Woodham Road, and also a manse at Knaphill, "Fircroft", as the home of the third minister in the Circuit, who was appointed in 1961.

Meanwhile, the society at "Trinity", in common with the whole Christian Church, found the pattern of Church life changing. The Church itself proved too large and expensive, while its ancillary premises were inadequate. Furthermore, its position in Commercial Road came within the scope of the proposed re-development of the Town Centre. These factors resulted in the sale of the old "Trinity". Although the present site in Brewery Road was earmarked for residential development, it was made possible for the Trustees to purchase it for the erection of a new Church. The site was dedicated on Palm Sunday, 22nd March, 1962, followed by the stone-laying on 22nd May, and the completed buildings were dedicated on 12th June, 1965. The new Church is similar in design to the Anglican Cathedral in Mbale, Uganda, which had been planned by the same architects, Edward D. Mills and Partners, and together with the new halls, classrooms and kitchen, forms a fine and distinctive suite of premises.

We now have a modern Church, which seeks to serve the community in which it is situated, through Sunday Services, its music, the Junior Church, Youth Club and Youth Fellowship, uniformed organisations, the Women's Guild, Wives' Group, the Drama Group, Badminton and Tennis Clubs. A Play School meets on the premises each week, and it is also the home of the Epworth Choir, and the strong interdenominational Sisterhood. An adult discussion group and a study group, recently formed, may point the way to a renewal of group-fellowship which Methodism lost by the decline of the Class Meeting.

The devoted men and women who built the little Chapel in Chapel Street a century ago would look in amazement at the strange new town of Woking, and perhaps the equally strange Church in Brewery Road, but they would rejoice that that which they began in faith continues to the glory of God.



Rev. Wilfrid H. Jones,  
Superintendent Minister,  
Woking Methodist Circuit,  
Minister of Trinity 1972

1972—

It is good to remember. It encourages the graces of gratitude and humility. In publishing this booklet, we give thanks to God for the way our Church has been led, and we express our admiration of, and our debt to the earlier Methodists of Woking.

We are their heirs in the work, and this account of "Trinity" must conclude with reference to the present and the future. Like them in their day, we are the children of our times, and our times are very different from theirs.

Woking itself is different. In 1902 its population was 16,000; today it numbers more than 78,000; by the end of the 1980's, it will be nearer 100,000. The town centre is being transformed, and its citizens can look forward to civic amenities worthy of the present size of population.

Similarly, life itself has changed, and the rate of change seems to be accelerating. Secularisation, social and moral attitudes, standards of living, life-style, the range of knowledge and the extension of education, ease of travel, are all vastly different from the days when Methodism came to Woking. Changing patterns of work and leisure have all affected the life of the Church.

The word "ecumenical" has entered the common vocabulary of ordinary Christian people. Co-operation between the Churches is at its highest-ever level, and there is a greater openness to each other, amongst Christians of different traditions. This trend will grow; it will enrich the life of every part of the Church, and eventually alter the form and presence of the Church in the world.

This is the context in which the "Trinity" of 1972 lives and works. Our fine modern buildings symbolise the fact that we are a Church of the present, which is already responding to the pressures of the future.

Our membership of 330 represents a cross-section of the generations, with a preponderance of families with children still at school. Our "Community Roll" which includes members of the Junior Church and adherents who regularly worship with us, as well as the membership, numbers 750. It was recently estimated that there are 1,000 "attendances", representing 800 individuals, on our premises each week.

Our Church life and outlook is based on the concept of Christian Stewardship, whereby, through the pledging of Time, Talents and Money, we seek to meet the needs of our Church, and to contribute to the life of the community in which we live. Our whole aim is to discover and to pursue the Servant Role of the Church, to which, we believe, our Lord calls us in the remaining years of the twentieth century.

We treasure our past, because in it there is much that is worthy. We believe that, under God, our future will be worthier still.

HERITAGE WALKS ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Superintendent Ministers

WOKING AND COBHAM CIRCUIT

- 1872 William Cornforth.
- 1875 Henry Cotton.
- 1876 Charles W. Rhodes.
- 1878 Walter Lethaby.
- 1881 John Percy.
- 1882 Henry J. Sykes.
- 1884 George J. Brett.
- 1885 William Rapson.
- 1888 Henry J. Quilter.
- 1890 John Priestley.
- 1892 Charles Rose.

WOKING AND LEATHERHEAD CIRCUIT

- 1895 J. Robinson Cleminson.
- 1898 James Spensley.
- 1901 George King Pryor.

WOKING CIRCUIT

- 1904 George King Pryor.
- 1905 John S. Hicks.
- 1908 Thomas Nicholson.
- 1911 Daniel Heaton.
- 1914 Arthur H. Bestall.
- 1920 George R. Forde.
- 1923 Alfred Smith.
- 1926 J. Oswald Warburton.
- 1929 J. J. Johnston, B.D.
- 1934 G. Ernest Bailey.
- 1938 Harold Spencer, B.A.
- 1944 Harold W. Goldsack.
- 1951 Rudland F. Showell, B.Sc.
- 1957 Donald S. Hailey (Assistant).
- 1957 John W. Watson.
- 1961 A. Harrison Clulow, B.A., B.D.
- 1967 Wilfrid H. Jones.