

1965 - THE YEAR EVERYONE IN WOKING COULD GET STD.

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Early in 1965 it was promised that at least 7,000 people in Woking would soon be getting STD. It would mean that the town could soon catch up with areas such as Byfleet and Chobham where apparently residents had already had Subscriber Trunk Dialling for some time!

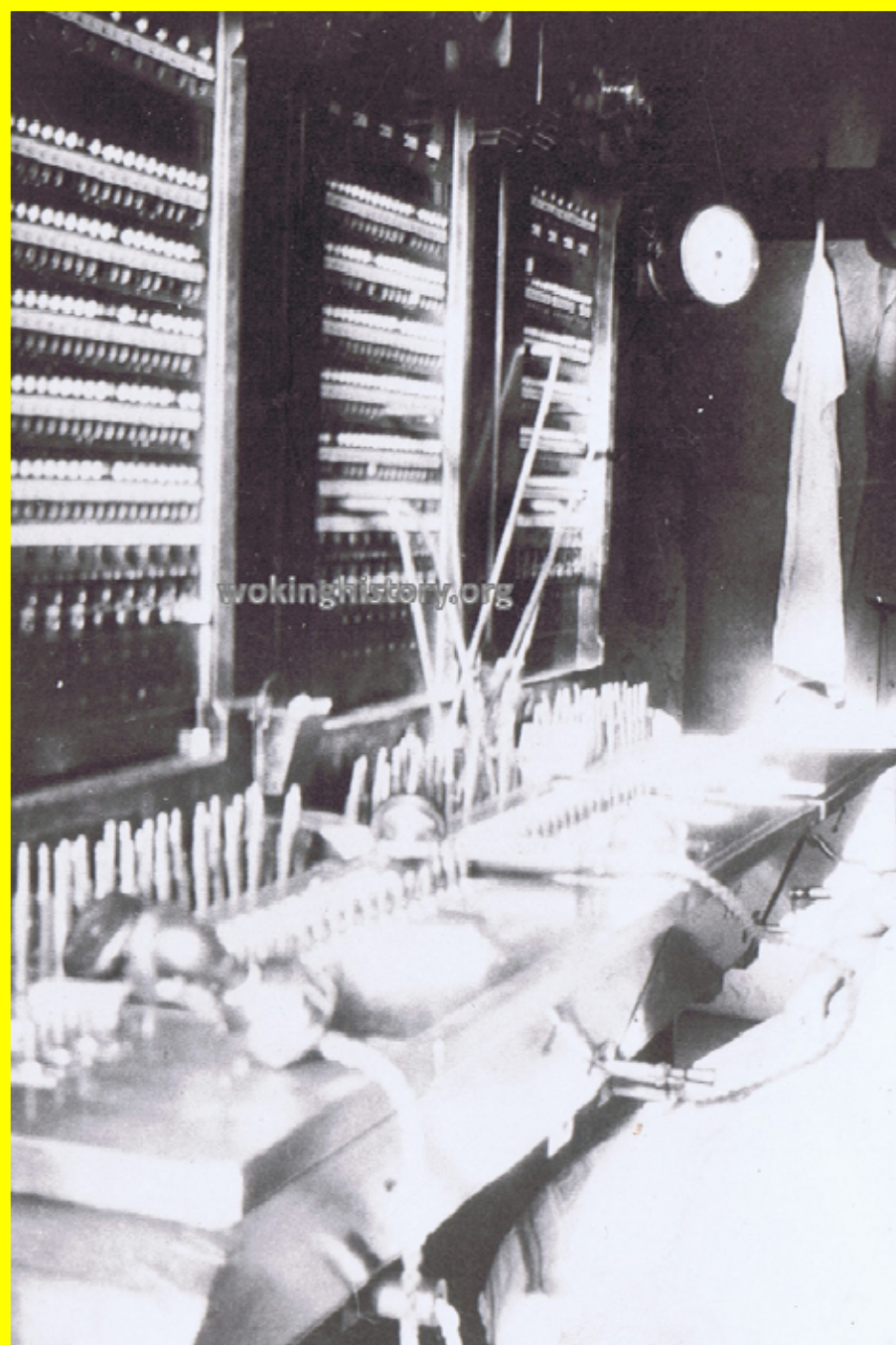
It was on the morning of the 24th March 1965 that the telecommunications revolution came to the new Telephone Exchange in Station Approach, Woking.

'At two minutes past eight on Wednesday morning nobody in Woking was using the telephone. As the last call cleared and the speechless moment arrived, an instruction was given over a loud speaker to two lines of men standing each side of a metal frame in the new exchange building at Woking' and 'simultaneously they pressed into position wedges dividing contact points on the intricate wiring system on the frames. Contact with the old manual telephone exchange was broken and Subscriber Trunk Dialling began'.

From then on your telephone allegedly developed a 'new personality' and calls to many places throughout the country were suddenly cheaper – if you managed to understand how to dial the new numbers correctly and the system didn't develop a 'hitch' (which it was often prone to do).

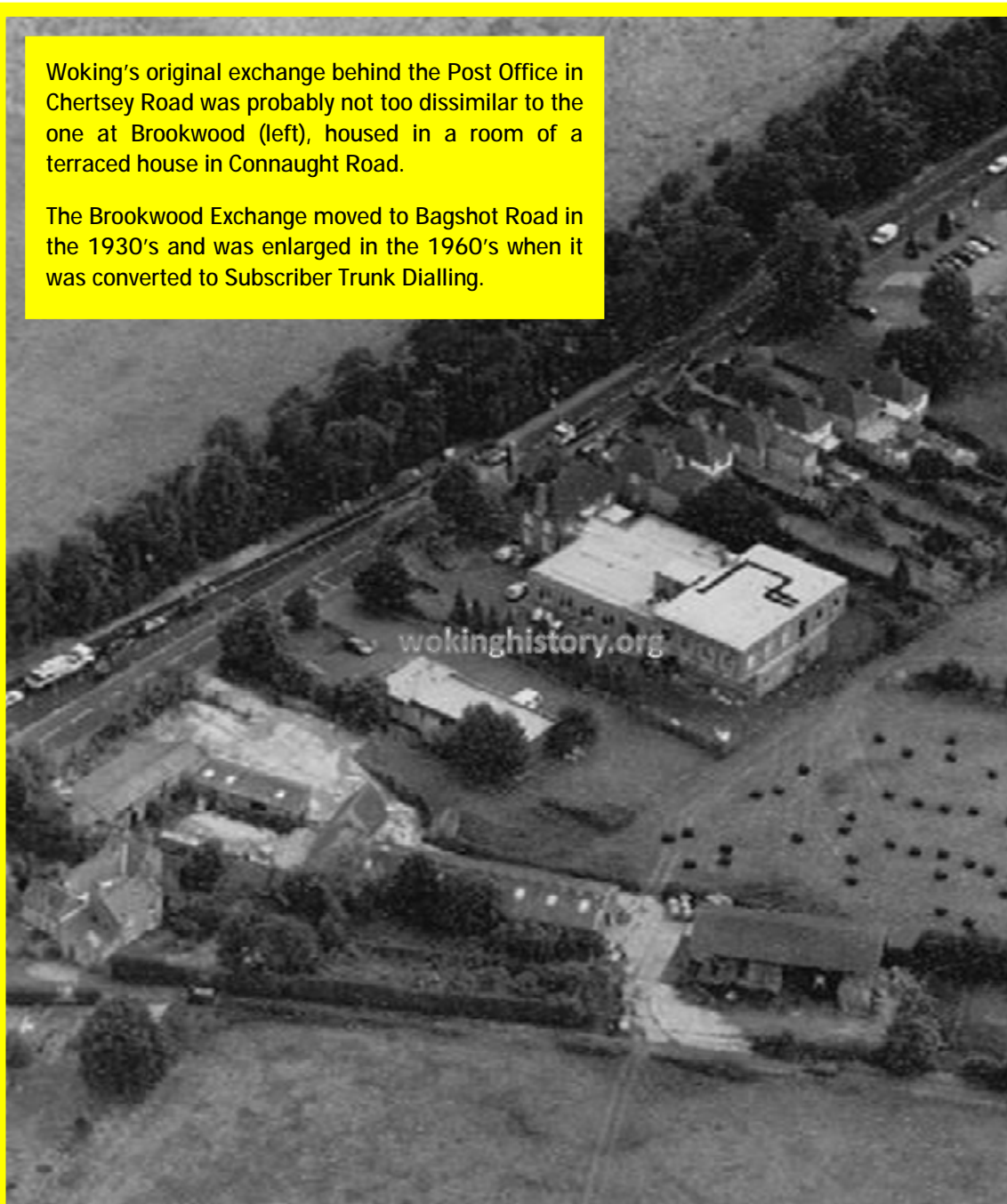


The new telephone exchange in 1965 occupied part of the site of the temporary commuter car park in



Woking's original exchange behind the Post Office in Chertsey Road was probably not too dissimilar to the one at Brookwood (left), housed in a room of a terraced house in Connaught Road.

The Brookwood Exchange moved to Bagshot Road in the 1930's and was enlarged in the 1960's when it was converted to Subscriber Trunk Dialling.



WOKING.	
16	ALDERSHOT Dairy Supply AssociationHigh street.
42	ALTHORP, A.Chemist...Commercial road.
22	ASHBY, Thos. & Co.Old Bank.
32	BIDE, S.Nurseryman...St. John's.
29	BINNIE, R. M. G.Physician and Surgeon...Ryde house.
20	BOORMAN, Jas.Coach Builder...Guildford road.
8	CLINTON, A. G.Estate Agent...Chobham road.
30	EAGER, J. CawleyPhysician...Abingdon.
19	EDWARD, G. DundasSurgeon...Dunira, West Hill.
41	FRIARY, Holroyd & Healy's Breweries, Ld.Byfleet.
45	GRIDLEY, J. & F.Timber Merchants...Arthur's Bridge wharf.
3	HART, H.Butcher...Commercial road.
4	IVENS & Co.Central stores.
5	JACKMAN & Son.Nurserymen and Florists...
15	KILN, C. H.Hop Merchant...Claremont house.
21	LAW, J. OrlandoThe Shrubby, Wych hill.
27	LITTLEBOY, J. W. H.Chemist...3, High street.
40	LOCOCK, E. A.Uplands, Maybury.
28	LONDON Necropolis Co.The Broadway.
7	MOORE, E.Fly Proprietor...Goldsworth road.
1	NATIONAL Telephone Co.Heatherside.
43	NEATE, Mrs. S.Stone Manufacturers...Worplesdon.
24	OWEN, WilliamCivil Engineer...Pontsarn.
46	PAIN, R.Sanitary Engineer...High street.
38	POLICE Station, County
50	POST Office (for Postal facilities ONLY)
36	PREECE, E. W.Cab Proprietor...Albion Hotel stables.
35	PREECE, E. W.Cab Proprietor...Dolphin house, St. John's.
9	SAUL Bros.Grocers...Chertsey road.
37	ST. PETER'S Memorial HomeMaybury hill.
37a	ST. PETER'S Memorial Home (Mother Superior)....Maybury hill.
31	STEVENS, R. N.Woodham hall.
39	STOREY, W. C.Beechcroft.
10	TIBBENHAM Bros.Drapers...Waterloo house, Chertsey road.
25	WASLEY, R. & G., Fishmngs, Poulterers, Butchers...20, Chertsey road
17	WATERS, E. J.Fly Proprietor...Church street.
11	WATERS, C. F.Hotel Proprietor...Railway hotel.
12	WENHAM Bros.Butchers...2, The Pavement.
12a	WENHAM, BrosButchers...High street.
13	WHITE, F. W.Delivery Agent, Contractor...Walton road.
44	WHITMAN, DavidGoldsworth arms.
18	WOKING, Aldershot, Basingstoke Canal & Naviga-....Onslow buildings.
33	WOKING Golf Club
26	WOODS, J.Albion hotel.

Above. One of Woking's first telephone directory listings (from 1899) shows just forty-five numbers, although some (such as Woking 2, for the Accumulator Industries in Oriental Road) are obviously missing.

Below. The directory listing for the Hook Heath Exchange in 1905-6.

Right. The advertisement for the introduction of STD in March 1965.

HOOK HEATH EXCHANGE	
PUBLIC CALL OFFICE.	
1 Star Hill	National Tel. Co. Ltd.
9 ALBRIGHT J. F.	Uplands
5 BIDE S., Nurseryman	St John's
8 BRINTON M. A.	" Kenilworth " West Hill rd
13 CLIREHUGH S. V.	The Becon
11 COX Mrs. Edith	Hookerel
2 HUNTER F. Mansfield	The Links
4 INKERMANN Barracks	Officers' mess
6 MESSER A. A.	Little Widbury
3 PRICE A. R.	High Houseen
12 SLOCOCK W. C., Horticulturist	Goldsworth
10 SPENCER F., Engineer	Janoway hill
14 THORNE Lady	Fairlawn
7 YOUNG J.	Ravenscroft

For just 2d (1p) – or 3d from call-boxes – you were able to make a six minute local call (twelve minutes at reduced rate periods), or talk to someone in Scotland for 15 seconds (twice that between 6pm and 6am weekdays and all-day on Sunday's).

The conversion at Woking had cost a third of a million pounds, 'and already capacity was being increased by 50 per cent at a cost of another £107,000'. Within a week it was hoped that 600 people on the waiting list would be able to be connected to the new automatic exchange,

which the Deputy Director of the Home Counties Region of the Post Office, Mr L.J. Glanfield, accepted 'should have been done years ago', had it not been for insufficient capital resources.

Woking's first telephone exchange, behind the Post Office in Chertsey Road, was probably very similar to the one pictured here at Brookwood (literally 'housed' in the terrace opposite the Working Mens' Club in Connaught Road), before it was moved to the Bagshot Road in Knaphill in the 1930's. From what I can gather the Woking

TO WOKING SUBSCRIBERS

Overnight your telephone develops a new personality with STD

QUICK From March 24th at 8.0 a.m. you will be on Subscriber Trunk Dialling. From your own telephone you will be able to dial direct to many cities and towns throughout the country. You're through—automatically—in seconds! (Operators will still be on duty to connect calls which you cannot dial yourself.)

EASY You dial a code followed by the subscriber's number. For example: The code for London is 61. So for London, VINcent 1234 you dial 61 ... VIN ... 1234.

Make it easier by following this simple dialling drill:
 Look up the exchange code in your Dialling Code booklet and jot down the code and telephone number. Dial carefully: pull the dial right round to the stop and let it return freely.
 Give the equipment time to route your call. There will be a pause before you are connected.

CHEAP All dialled calls are charged in 2d units (3d from a coin box). The time you get for 2d depends on the distance of your call. Local calls—6 minutes for 2d; the farthest trunk call—10 seconds for 2d. Most calls are cheaper because you pay at a lower rate only for the time you use.

CHEAPER STILL from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. weekdays and all day Sundays—local calls 12 minutes for 2d; trunk calls one-third cheaper. Reasonable length calls hundreds of miles away for 1/- or even 6d.

NEW 3rd COIN BOXES are being installed in this exchange area and will be brought into full use by March 24th. Look out for the new operating instructions when you make your call.

STD BRINGS YOU TOGETHER QUICKLY, EASILY, CHEAPLY

TRY A FREE CALL AT THE DEMONSTRATION OF STD AT 29 GUILDFORD ROAD WOKING
(Almost opposite the Police Station)
 Open now until 3rd April
 Weekdays 9.0 am to 5.0 pm
ADMISSION FREE
 EXTRA COPIES OF STD LITERATURE ARE AVAILABLE AT THE DEMONSTRATION OR FROM YOUR AREA TELEPHONE MANAGER

Exchange opened in about 1898 or 1899, with the Byfleet one opened by 1906-7 and Brookwood's in 1910, although who had the initial Brookwood telephone numbers I have not yet been able to ascertain.

There has been a small 'Hook Heath' exchange set up by 1905-6, but where it was housed I have so far been unable to find out (although I suspect it was probably at the Post Office on Star Hill, judging by the address given for the National Telephone Co. Ltd in their 1905-06 telephone directory).

Incidentally, before STD, there had been many problems with people trying to contact numbers in both Cobham and Chobham, with some operators not realising that the two nearby exchanges were not the same. To combat this problem it had been proposed to rename the Chobham Exchange (when the new building was opened in the Guildford Road in the early 1960's) Chobham Common, but that was evidently abandoned, possibly at the suggestion that there was little 'common' about anyone in the village, let alone telephone users! In the end Standard Trunk Dialling overcame the issue, and both the Cobham and Chobham exchanges could be left in peace.



Chobham's telephone exchange in Guildford Road.