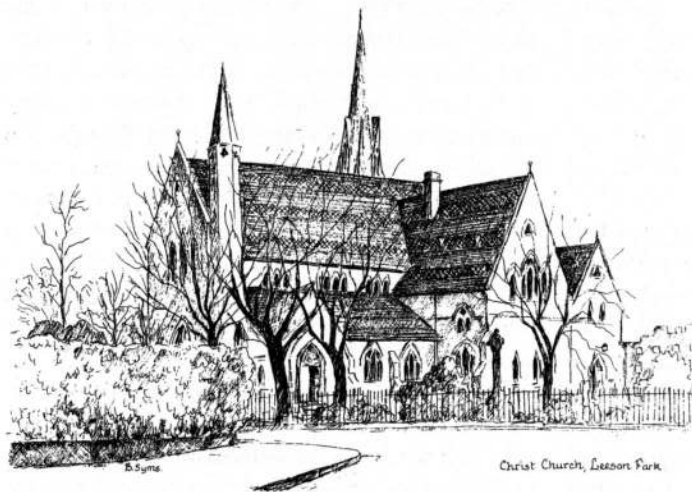


ROUND THE CHURCHES

Drawing: Mrs Bea Syms

30: Centenary Methodist Church

Text: compiled by members of the congregation



Methodism celebrated the centenary of the conversion of John and Charles Wesley in 1839 with immense enthusiasm and generosity. In Britain and Ireland a sum of £220,000 was raised – perhaps £80 million per year 2000 terms. It was to be used

for outreach both at home and abroad, and in Ireland £5,000 was allocated to build a new ‘Centenary church’ on Dublin’s St Stephen’s Green, which was completed in June 1843.

The Rev WB Lumley, writing in 1893 and 1943, gave account

of a church at peace with itself, warm and friendly, deeply and very generously committed to overseas missions, a church enlivened by the attendance of the Methodist girl and boy borders from Wesley College next door.

On Sunday 22 December 1968, church members arriving for a morning carol service were greeted by a charred ruin of smoking embers, the church having been destroyed by fire the night before. Wesley College Memorial Chapel next door became a base from which the congregation sought to find the right way forward.

In 1972 conversations opened with Christ Church, Leeson Park. There, the fire insurance and the sale of the site on St Stephen’s Green paid for

a suite of buildings called Wesley House for the use of both congregations and for others who might need them. The money also provided a manse for a full-time chaplain to students.

The Church of Ireland congregation meeting in Christ Church, Leeson Park have been encouraged over the years with the support of their Methodist partners. Two church services are held every Sunday morning, except on the third Sunday of each month when there is a united service. Here, for nearly thirty years, the church has maintained a warm and caring fellowship in a beautiful place of worship for a congregation scattered throughout south Dublin, including a significant number of foreign third level students.