



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Trinity Second Meeting House

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Image: Trinity Second Meeting House, 1920s. Photo, Library of Congress.

The history of Trinity United Methodist Church, today located on Cameron Mills Road, spans more than 235 years. Established as Alexandria's first Methodist society in 1774, Trinity built its first meeting house in 1792. The second meeting house, built in 1803 and extensively renovated in the 1880s, stood on the east side of South Washington between Prince and King streets until the early 1940s and can be seen in this late 1920s photograph.

In the 1840s, as the country struggled over the issue of slavery, so did the Methodist Church. At an 1844 Methodist conference in New York, a resolution co-sponsored by Trinity's pastor requested that a bishop in Georgia who owned slaves resign. This position and the issue of slavery divided the Methodist movement, and a new church, Methodist Episcopal South, was organized in 1845. Trinity's congregation was split, too, and in 1849, several members left and formed a new church, later known as Washington Street Methodist, which built its own house of worship directly across the street. Trinity's membership plummeted, dropping from a congregation of 700 in 1849 to 125 in 1867.

By 1939, the year of Methodist reunification, Washington Street's membership exceeded 1,000 while Trinity drew only a dozen or so parishioners on Sundays. In 1941, Trinity's congregation made the decision to move from downtown to the new suburbs of Beverley Hills. On December 28, 1941, the last service was held at the second meeting house. Trinity purchased property on Cameron Mills Road and used the bricks from the old church to build the new one. Other materials and furnishings, such as pews and stained glass windows, were also incorporated in the third meeting house, and Trinity thrived in its new location.



"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical



**Office of Historic Alexandria
City of Alexandria, Virginia**

images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.