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Journal

Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church of Canada Historical Society

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THE CONTROVERSIAL JOHN KNOX

(c1513-72)

POLITICS AND WRITINGS

John Knox lived during a time of tremendous political and religious upheaval, when many European countries were undergoing radical shifts in theology and were also seeking autonomy from the centuries old claims of the Roman See. (4) In this context, Knox is also noted as one of the distinguished translators of the Geneva Bible (1599), which was the first complete Bible to be translated into English from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. This endeavour was undertaken to address the Protestant needs for an English Bible separate from the influence of Roman Catholic interpretations.

Knox also wrote the much celebrated *History of the Reformation in Scotland* (5) to the Scottish Presbyterian Kirk's *Confession Of Faith*, which was adopted in 1560.

CONTROVERSY

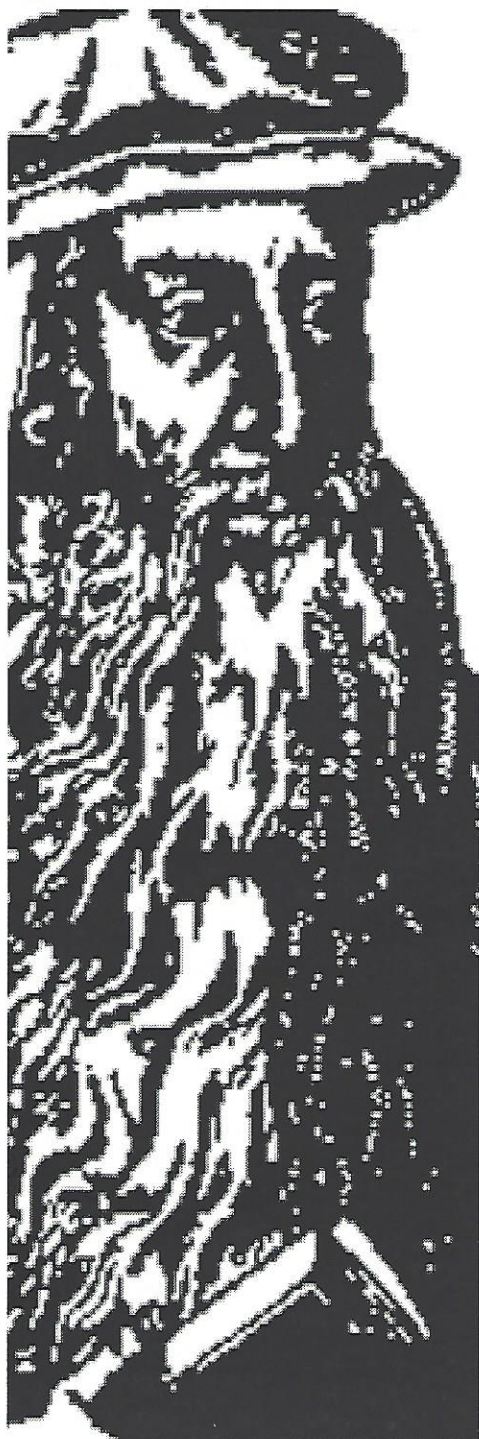
Knox is recognized to have pitted himself against the Scottish Roman Catholic establishment, the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise (1515-60), and later, her daughter the reigning queen Marie (Mary) Stuart (1542-1567). Possessing staunch Calvinist persuasions and a very strong bias against women in authority, Knox preached against all the female monarchs of his lifetime, including Mary Tudor (1516-58), also known as Bloody Mary. Knox is also famous for alienating the English Protestant Elizabeth 1 (1533-1603), who followed in succession upon the death of Mary. This momentous event occurred in 1558 when he published a tract entitled, *The*

It can be fairly stated that the Protestant reformer John Knox is one of Scotland's most famous historical figures. Knox was an influential preacher and is often claimed to have been a theologian, although the validity of this latter claim is somewhat weak. (1) He was a man of strong Reformation opinions and earned many epithets including *The Thundering Scot*, due to his aggressive manner in preaching and argument. (2)

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF A FIGHTER

There is a description of Knox in a letter from Sir Peter Young, dated 13th November, 1579. It reads,

"In bodily stature he was rather below the normal height. His limbs were straight and well-proportioned; his shoulders broad; his fingers somewhat long. His head was of medium size, with black hair; his appearance swarthy, yet not unpleasant. His countenance which was grave and stern, though not harsh, bore a natural dignity and air of authority; in anger his very frown became imperious. Under a rather narrow forehead his eyebrows rose in a dense ridge; his cheeks were ruddy and somewhat full, so that it seemed as though his eyes receded into hollows. The eye themselves were dark-blue, keen and animated. His face was somewhat long, with a long nose, a full mouth, and large lips, of which the upper one was slightly the thicker. His beard was black, flecked with grey, thick, and falling down a hand and a half long." (3)



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Sponsorship

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From the Editor

It hardly seems possible that a year has passed since the publication of the last edition of the Journal. As you can see, our authors have been very busy preparing and reviewing materials for presentation. There are articles and reviews echoing the major "Wesleyan" theme of 2003. The keystone article in this edition goes to another Protestant "heavy-weight", John Knox. Interspersed throughout the Journal are more "homely" and personal reflections of life - congregational and ministerial.

The juxtaposition of the mandate of the Journal to preserve, conserve and interpret a particular segment of history with twenty-first century technology and systems is a source of both great satisfaction, but also great frustration. Modern archives house the artifacts of the past. Publications such as this allow for interpretation and exposition of that past. And yet, it would take a conflagration similar to the burning of the library at Alexandria to match the sense of complete loss and hopelessness when seeing hours of work and study disappear from your computer screen. My sympathies for those of you who have had this experience recently.

And yet, for all that, promises are made and kept to deliver the "product", and again, here it is! I especially wish to thank the members of the Editorial Committee for their assistance, generosity and enthusiasm in bringing this 2004 edition of the Journal to publication. Thank you Stephen, Jim, Anne, and David!

We also thank those of you who will read and reflect on the contents herein. Jim George has prepared a special thanks (below) to contributors and friends to the Journal.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The ongoing work of the Alberta and NW Conference Historical Society is made possible through donation, individual membership fees, and corporate membership fees. The annual membership fee for individuals is \$25, for corporations is \$50. We define corporations as groups within the United Church such as Presbyteries, Congregations, UCW Units, and any other similar organizations. Sincere thanks and appreciations is extended to the following corporations who have supported the Historical Society in the past year:

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THE CONTROVERSIAL KNOX

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First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, shortly after Elizabeth's ascension to the throne. Originally, the tract had been written to bemoan the fact that the Protestant Reformation had been overturned by Mary Tudor who returned the English state to Roman Catholicism. Unfortunately, however, sentiments such as "To promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion, or empire above any realm, nation, or city, is repugnant to nature . . . and to God," (6) were not easily explained and Knox was not allowed to return to England.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

John Knox was probably born at Giffordgate, near Haddington, eighteen miles east of Edinburgh, in approximately 1513 and appears to have come from humble origins. (7) In keeping with a less than wealthy birth, records are somewhat confusing surrounding the precise date of entry into a university for training leading to ordination. Tradition maintains that Knox was a student at St. Andrew's University also known as the University of Glasgow. (8) As the University Register lists forty Knoxes, with at least eight with the given name John, it becomes difficult to identify which of these names applies to the reformer. (9) However, facts seem more secure surrounding the tradition that Knox studied under the theologian John Major. Popular history then states that he was ordained a priest (c. 1540) and practiced as a papal notary in the archdiocese of St. Andrews. (10)

Knox was ordained in 1539 and then began to study the Scriptures for themselves, rather than the scholarly works written about them. (11) It was during this time that more violent conflict arose between the dominant Catholics and the emerging Protestant reformers. Concurrent to these developments, Knox's own spiritual and philosophical orientation towards Reformation theology appears to have become very clear due to the influence of the noted Scottish reformer George Wishart (1513-46). Knox had been in the company of Wishart as both a confidant and a bodyguard. In 1544, at approximately age 40, Knox was himself pronounced a heretic and stripped of his priest-

hood. In 1546, Wishart was captured and imprisoned at St. Andrew's Castle, and later burned at the stake outside its walls. St. Andrew's Castle was then captured by the Protestants and it became a Protestant haven. Knox then went to the Castle and it was there that he began his ministry as a Protestant minister. During many of his very controversial sermons delivered at the Castle Knox pronounced the Pope to be the Antichrist. (12) Needless to say this caused more tension between the two opposing religious factions and when a few months later the Catholics regained control of the Castle, Knox was arrested and sent with many other Protestant men to the galleys as a slave. He laboured on the galleys for the next nineteen months of his life although it is not clear whether he spent the whole of this time chained to the oars. (13)

In the month of February 1599, Knox was released from slavery and he went to England where the English Reformation was slowly in process led by King Edward VI and Archbishop Cranmer. Knox was sent as a minister to Berwick, which was in the diocese of Durham where the Bishop was not sympathetic to Protestant Reformation ideas. (14) During this time Knox established himself as an outspoken opponent of the doctrine of transubstantiation in Mass. (15) As he was adamantly against the Mass, deeming it idolatrous, Knox wrote his own Protestant order of service, and there is an existent fragmentary manuscript written by him that describes the practice of the "Lord's Supper." (16)

Later, in 1551, Knox moved to Newcastle and was appointed as Chaplain to King Edward VI and was instrumental in having a specific clause known as the *Black Rubric* inserted into the 1552 Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*. The *Black Rubric* dispensed with the requirement for people to kneel when taking Holy Communion. (17) On July 6, 1553, King Edward, also known as Godly Edward, died and his sister Mary Tudor was proclaimed Queen. (18) Mary was a devout Catholic and immediately returned her realm to Catholicism and began to fiercely persecute the Protestants. (19) Knox was deeply upset with Mary's ascension as he knew it would hinder the Protestant Reformation and he resented the fact that religion could be turned around at the wish of a Queen. In 1554, Knox fled to

Europe along with over 800 other Protestants. He went first to Dieppe and later to Geneva where he studied under Calvin, and pastured for several years in Geneva and Frankfurt. (20)

In 1555 Knox returned to Scotland and preached against the Mass. As a result of these teachings the Roman Catholic clergy summoned him to appear before a church assembly to answer on the charges of heresy in 1556, but then withdrew the charges when they learned he was actually going to attend. Later that year, however, when Knox returned to Geneva, the Roman hierarchy pronounced in absentia that he was a heretic and then condemned him to death. (21)

In 1558 Knox, together with many other prominent Protestant leaders including Coverdale, Calvin and Beza, translated the Geneva Bible. That same year, the controversial *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regime of Women* was also published thus incurring the anger of the new English Queen, Elizabeth I.

... the monstrous regime of women ...

Meanwhile, in Scotland in the same year, the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, had promised religious liberty to Scottish and English Protestants living in her realm. Many of the English Protestants had actually been encouraged to find safe haven in Scotland during the persecutions of Mary Tudor. The Queen Regent herself had actively encouraged the exiles to live in Scotland because of her on-going feud with Mary Tudor. (22) Unfortunately, when Knox returned to Scotland in 1559 he found that Mary of Guise was preparing to destroy the Reformation with the use of force. Subsequently, a riot ensued during which two monasteries were destroyed along with a large number of church furnishings. Although Knox had had no part in the riot, Mary of Guise blamed him because he was a leader within the Reformation movement. Hostilities increased with armies from both religious traditions facing off against each other. Mary decided to negotiate for peace and the Protestant army disbanded after she had given them certain assurances surrounding safety. (23)

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THE CONTROVERSIAL KNOX *continued from page 3*

From this time on, the Protestant leaders resolved to introduce the Reformed Kirk of Scotland in the areas where they held power. On October 21, 1559, John Knox and an assembly of Protestant lords met in Edinburgh and suspended the Queen Regent, declaring her deposed. (24) Mary countered with the might of her French army and hostilities continued. It was only upon her death in March 1560 that the French troops withdrew and the Reformed Kirk began to take hold in Scotland. (25)

On August 17, 1560, the *Scottish Confession* was accepted as the Confession for the Scottish Kirk. It had been written by Knox and fellow reformers. Knox went on to draw up *The First Book of Discipline* and then, in 1561, the *Book of Common Order*. (26)

Although these changes had taken place, issues of government and religion were, however, unresolved between the people and their monarch; and Mary, Queen of Scots (1542-87), daughter of Mary of Guise, was firmly resolved to take over the realm. In 1561 the Scottish lords invited Mary to return to be their Queen. This was an unwise move as Mary was a devout Roman Catholic and determined to eradicate the Reformed faith. Upon her return to Scotland she accused Knox of sedition. There was a heated argument between the two and Knox stated in response to Mary's statement that her conscience bore witness to the true Catholic Church, "Conscience, madam, requires knowledge, and I fear that right knowledge you have none." (27)

Matters between Mary and Knox and the interviews recorded by Knox, albeit biased in his favour, attest to the fact that there were "unpleasant personal relations" between them. (28) Mary saw her role as one of defender of the faith and that meant that she would use whatever means necessary to eradicate the reformers. Knox saw Mary as a proud, emotional, superficial woman. Whatever his summation of the Queen, through astute manipulation of law Mary restored a Roman Catholic Archbishop to Andrew's Church on December 23, 1566 and was on her way to

restoring Catholicism to its former power. (29)

Knox became Mary's sworn enemy and her personal conduct did not in turn endear her to many of her subjects. Through political intrigue and matrimonial scandal, Mary's power gradually declined until she was forced to abdicate in 1567. She was finally imprisoned by her own cousin, Elizabeth I, and later beheaded in 1587 on charges of plotting to overthrow the Queen of England. The Crown then went to Mary's only child, the infant James IV.

AN ENDING

John Knox had lived an intense and stressful life. He had lived to see the Reformed Kirk of Scotland introduced into his homeland and he had also lived to see Mary, Queen of Scots abdicate. There had been a revolution in both Scottish church and state and he had played an integral role in both. These victories, however, seem to have left Knox a lonely man at the end of his life. He appears to have suffered a great shock when one of his friends, James Stuart, Earl of Murray (1533-70), Regent of Scotland, was assassinated by a man who had previously been pardoned at the request of Knox. The political upheaval that ensued in the aftermath affected Knox deeply and he suffered a stroke in October 1570. Knox seemed to gradually fade away from that time on, becoming more frail as the days went by. On November 9, 1572 he preached his last sermon at the inaugural service for his successor James Lawson. He walked home as usual, but "leaned heavily on his walking stick." (30) John Knox, the *Thundering Scot*, died on November 24, 1572. He was 58 years old.

He left as part of his legacy a form of church government and a denomination named Presbyterianism which is known worldwide in Protestant circles. Knox emphasized that believers should know what they believed and be able to read their Scriptures, thus establishing the high Scottish tradition of general literacy. Through the centuries the Presbyterians have been leaders in missionary, medical and educational endeavours and have established a solid reputation as stewards of the word. Presbyterianism in Canada, as part of the United Church Heritage, brought education and assistance to people in all walks of life. The beliefs of

the Reformation, new life in Christ, and freedom from oppression are part of our shared cultural history.



- (1) Trevor A. Hart, *The Dictionary of Historical Theology*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), p 305.
- (2) Hugh MacDiarmid, *John Knox*, (Edinburgh: Ramsay Head Press, 1976), p 13.
- (3) Dickinson, p lxxxvii.
- (4) Henry Cowan, D.D., *John Knox: The Hero of the Scottish Reformation*, (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), p1.
- (5) John Knox, *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), William Croft Dickinson, ed.
- (6) John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regime of Women*, p 3, www.mcgees.net/fragments/primary%20documents/public%2
- (7) Geddes MacGregor, *The Thundering Scot: A Portrait of John Knox*, (London: MacMillan and Co. Ltd., 1958) p 1,
- (8) Cowan, p 23; Hart, p 304.
- (9) Cowan, p 24.
- (10) Hart, p 304.
- (11) www.pilgrimcovenant.com/weeklyArticle/wklyArt_99114.htm
- (12) Ibid.
- (13) Dickinson, xxxiii.
- (14) Hart, p 305.
- (15) The belief that the elements of bread/wafer and wine literally change physical properties and are transformed into the literal body/flesh and blood of Christ.
- (16) Hart, 305.
- (17) Roger A. Mason, *John Knox and the British Reformation*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1988), p 68.
- (18) Henry VIII had three survival heirs; Edward, Mary and Elizabeth. Edward, as son would inherit the Crown first. Then succession would fall according to age. Hence, Mary Tudor and on her death, her sister Elizabeth who became Elizabeth I.
- (19) During the last four years of her reign 1555-59, she had 283 heretic/Protestants burned at the stake, including Hugh Latimer, Nicholas Ridley and Thomas Cranmer.
- (20) Cowan, pp 118-125.
- (21) Hart, p 305.
- (22) Pilgrim, p 2.
- (23) Ibid, p 2.
- (24) The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition, Columbia University Press 2003.
- (25) Pilgrim, p 3.
- (26) Ibid, p 3.
- (27) Ibid.
- (28) Cowan, pp 261-289.
- (29) Pilgrim p 3.
- (30) Ibid.

EDMUND H. OLIVER

Pioneer College Principal, Moderator. 1882-1935

Edmund Oliver was the prime mover in the formation of St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon. His grandparents had come to Canada in the mid 19th century from England to the Chatham area of Ontario. To their son, George, and his wife Rhoda (Stark), a second son was born, Edmund. An illness nearly took him away in his childhood except that his mother nursed him through, to the surprise of their doctor. Twice again he was seriously ill, in his last year of Collegiate and before his final exams in the first year of university. His mother gave a great deal to the character formation of her children: no work on Sunday, no school lessons, regular attendance at Sunday worship, tithing and the treasures of the Bible (Oliver remembered her words, "The Bible is the only sure guidance for [my] girls and boys."). She wrote in her Bible that Oliver inherited, "Preach the Word." His siblings, five in number, had their own view of Oliver. "Fussy Benny," they called him. He disagreed with his parents' naming of his sister, Mabel. He preferred to call her Alice.

He began his schooling in the very country school built on their farmland. When he went on to the Collegiate in Chatham, Mrs. Davidson, the principal, described him: he was "small for his age, with large head and heavy shock of black hair, a curly lock on the top; tight knee breeches and exceedingly shy." He excelled in Math and Classics, ending up as Head Boy graduating with significant medals and scholarships admitting him to the University of Toronto in the 1890's. There his studies were in History, English, Classics, Languages and Political Science. He won a Fellowship to Columbia University which awarded him a Ph.D. for a thesis, "Roman Economic Conditions Under the Republic." He was given, afterwards, a lectureship at McMaster University in the history department. Dr. W.C. Clark wrote of his study habits: "Oliver had an abundance of natural ability, but his power lay in the amount and kind of work that he could do. He could sit at his desk for fifteen hours a day and never idle for five minutes. He had his lectures prepared two years ahead of time... constantly preparing to be ready to meet the future."

In 1904 Oliver accepted an appointment to supply the Presbyterian cause at Walsh, Alberta. It was the beginning of his love for western Canada. The first horse provided him was a bronco who immediately "threw him". When he mounted a second time, he won the admiration of the local people. His summer four-footed friend was called "Siam" who proved, when necessary, to be sufficient even as a pulpit. He lived in Walsh with Thomas A. Hargrave who wrote to MacKinnon, his biographer, "The Doctor during his stay here entered with great gusto into the spirit of the ranching country, was accepted wherever he went ... made himself useful in innumerable ways... [and] when he left, his genial smile and voice were greatly missed by everybody." Rev. Clarence MacKinnon, former Principal of Pine Hill Divinity Hall, author of a biography on Oliver and which has helped the writer a good deal with this article, has raised the question of why Oliver entered the ministry. He tells at length about the challenge to Christianity in Oliver's early life by the sciences in the university who, under the influence of Darwin, were asking whether or not God had a role any longer in the scheme of things. Religious Fundamentalism (a 6 day creation) had failed to meet their challenge. Higher Criticism along with the Canadian, Henry Drummond, popular among students of the day, together with the conviction that God remained the Creator and active mover in the universe, influenced those like Oliver to hold to the Christian faith and reject the scepticism of scientists. In the end, says MacKinnon, "He [had] a very profound realization of the actual presence and saving power of the Lord." There was another great moving force in the church of Oliver's early years. The Presbyterian Church, like the Methodist, was powerfully driven by a missionary spirit directed at the new people settling in western Canada.

Oliver arrived in the west on the eve of the creation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The Province of Saskatchewan invited Dr. Walter Murray to begin the work of forming the University of Saskatchewan. It was an unparalleled opportunity to create a university that would not be controlled either by church or state, as numerous ones

in eastern Canada were. It was his vision that the University must be able to meet the needs of the people of this new land; to have people trained in agriculture, and teachers ready for the many new schools. Oliver had been invited while at McMaster to join the faculty of the Christian College in Smyrna. Instead, however, he accepted Murray's invitation to join the new faculty in Saskatoon in the fall of 1910 to teach History, Economics and German. He delivered the first lecture with the inception of the University in the Drinkle Building. The President further gave him the task of providing the entire first year of lectures by Christmas time. Oliver also began the Archives that came to be housed in the little schoolhouse now adjacent to St. Andrew's College. The next year Oliver moved to Toronto to attend Knox College and finish his theological education. He then spent a year in Germany at the feet of Harnack and other German scholars. In June, 1911, he married Margarita Cowley whom he had met earlier in Toronto. They had five children between 1913 and 1927.

The Presbyterian church in 1913 appointed Oliver as Principal to establish a Presbyterian Theological College, St. Andrew's, in Saskatoon. When he arrived to take up the task there was no building, no money, and no salary, nevertheless, a contract was let and materials ordered on the strength of *promises* of \$50,000. Immediately a depression set in, and building was suspended. A boarding house on Albert Avenue was rented, and classes begun. (Tours of this building - "the Old Barn"- may still be arranged.)

World War II broke out just as the College was getting started. The call to join with the rest of the British Empire to resist Prussian militarism and fascism was answered across Canada by many young men. MacKinnon says that Oliver could not see them leaving for the front and not go with them. He was appointed chaplain to the 196th Western Universities Battalion. At Camp Hughes he organized a recreational hut for the soldiers, and a library that was later divided on his transfer between two English military bases, the partial cost for which he paid out of his own resources. He was sent to France, Vimy, Passchendaele, the Hindenburg Trench. In a small loose-leaf note book, he wrote, "I buried soldiers from every land, not exclud-



St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon

ing even Germany. I know no stranger emotion... than burying the enemy's dead with our Christian service." At the hospital at Boulogne after Passchendaele, he wrote some 40 letters per day for those wounded or dying, and answered those who wrote back asking for more details. His education passions drove him to help with the organization of the Khaki College, to organize "The University of Vimy Ridge," participation in a Philosophy Club in another location and evening classes at another base. At Camp Whitley in England following revival meetings among the troops, Oliver organized studies in St. Mark's gospel after 40 men declared their intent to enter the ministry after discharge. For all these efforts as chaplain he was promoted to Colonel. Early during the war, Oliver was invited to become Principal of Queen's University. He declined. Later, during his first year as Moderator, he was invited to become President of Dalhousie University. Again, he declined, "If God had wished me to accept such a position, He would have opened the way...." His path was with the nascent St. Andrew's College.

His return to the development of St. Andrew's College coincided with the turmoil within the Presbyterian Church over union with the Methodists and Congregationalists. Oliver favored union and allied himself with other unionists in the

province. His addresses focused on the needs of the churches on the prairies where overlap and duplication were wasteful, and on the spiritual and moral values of union. After 1925, he urged the provincial government to establish a committee to hear the grievances of dissenting Presbyterian churches who felt robbed of their properties. The committee recommended no action.

St. Andrew's was still without building, funds and students. With the assembling of students ready for theological education, the Albert Avenue property was purchased, and the students were encouraged to bring their own food, some of which, with the help of the Matron, was canned for winter use. Oliver turned also to locating a building on the University Campus. In 1923, the south wing of the present building, parallel to College Avenue was opened at a cost of \$190,000. Funds came from the Synod, the Guild and the bank. The mortgage was paid off in 1933. The top floor, according to Oliver's vision, was given over to accommodating non-Anglo Saxon high school students, which brought generous grants from the Home Mission Board. Oliver taught New Testament Greek and History. My father, Harold Fennell, was among his students. He required the students to take agriculture courses that they might be better able to understand rural Saskatchewan. In the meantime Oliver was everywhere in the

province speaking throughout the year. In one church he was asked to baptize twenty persons by immersion in a large galvanized wash-tub. In another location, he was asked to baptize a child who had run from his mother to hide in the woodpile. She ran screaming after him, "Come here, you little heathen, you are going to be a Christian in five minutes." He was chosen the first President of the first Saskatchewan Conference after union.

In 1930, the United Church chose him as its fourth Moderator. He declared his goal, "I am going to do the best I can during my term as Moderator ... to make the East understand the West and West understand the East." The eruption of the Depression especially hard on the prairies gave him a special opportunity. He recounted in one address, "There is no house, so cold as an empty manse.... Yet 29 manses have been closed in one district.... In one place, there are over three hundred families in the district and no minister to serve them. We have had to remove ministers ... no money.... These manses would have stayed open if the people of Canada had given so much as a postage stamp a day." He made a major trip across Canada. His biographer says that in eastern Canada, "He went like a flame through city, town and village ... was followed back by a string of cars with vegetables, fruit, and bales of clothes." In a period of 16 days he spoke at 14 banquets. The price was that he probably burned himself out.. The Premier of the province thanked him when Christmas toys flowed to the west during the winter of 1931 to 1932.

Oliver was a prolific writer, with many books to his credit, the recipient of five honorary degrees from Universities across Canada, the contributor to Hungarian and Ukrainian magazines. He went off in the summer of 1935 to provide classes at Camp McKay and on the evening prior to the day of his death, he said to the assembly, "I would rather be a minister of God, even in an obscure place, than be the Prime Minister of Canada."

*Prepared for the
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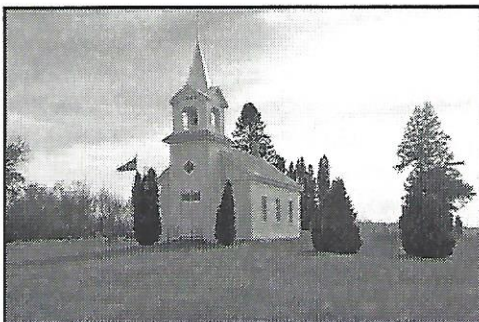
THE BENNETT-HAMMER CHURCH

March 4, 1912 to June 10, 1951

In January of 1995, 14 words on my phone message compelled me to take the bus to Edmonton. "All the records of the Bennett-Hammer Church are located in the Provincial Archives" said the friendly female voice of the minister of the Olds United Church. Previously I had waded into my family's religious life with trepidation. Today we are such a diverse bunch, how could "we" have a church named after us?

In that three and a half hour bus trip, previous research swirled in my mind like the blowing snow around the bus. Before immigration to the United States from Germany in 1846 or 1847, Hammers had always been Catholic. Records indicate that after their arrival in Illinois, a devastating cholera epidemic in 1849 wiped out all the adults in the Hammer Family. The children were separated from each other and my great grandfather, Anton Hammer, was adopted by a Swiss Family who were Lutheran. During that time, many children lost their names, nationality and religion. My great grandfather, around the age of 10, lost his nationality and religion but kept his name.

At the age of 32, Anton and his third wife moved to Missouri. They became charter members and active in the German Zoar Reform Church. From Catholic to Lutheran to German Reform, what twists Anton's spiritual life had taken.



Zoar Moravian Church, Minnesota

This was startling information for me. This was revealed in Zada Hunter's book "The Hammer Story". Before her publication, I had believed my ancestors were Swiss Protestants. About 150 years ago, a cruel twist of fate for one young man altered future generation's nationality, thinking and

religious beliefs. 64 years after Anton's birth and before his death, the 1901 Canadian census lists his sons, Louis, William and John as German Presbyterians. (Interesting combination!)

Reaching the archives on that -30 degree winter day, my thawing hands eagerly opened the files marked "Bennett-Hammer Church". Sprawling across the library table fell nearly 40 years of Church history. Reading a typewritten article "History of the Bennett-Hammer Congregation" sent a surge of warmth through me. The article prepared by Mrs. L. Hammer Sr. (my grandmother) and her neighbor, Mr. Wesley Ashton, commanded my attention. Wow! My grandmother, who married at 16, raised 11 children, had taken the time to document her church. Overwhelmed, I re-read the pages. Everything I have ever known of my grandmother represents inner strength. She was the small lady, a quiet force. The more I studied the church documents, the more I realized my grandmother, Rose, was the family's faithful-church-member. She was several times President of the Ladies Aid, proposed motions at the annual meetings, ran bazaars, food sales, church suppers and it was documented that only she took communion. Rose was the church worker and Grandpa contributed financially. Rose's children and grandchildren were involved in many Bennett-Hammer activities.

Family Church's life began at the Hammer School in 1902 or 1903. At that time, the two leading Protestant denominations Presbyterian and Methodist alternated services as the preacher came from town. The service was followed by lunch and an afternoon of sport. On May 11, 1909, Church services at the Hammer School were discontinued and worship moved to the Bennett School, four miles east of Olds. These 2 bordering school districts called their new group Bennett-Hammer. Bennett School #526 district 4 miles east of Olds was established January 4, 1900. The four mile square district was named after R.B. Bennett elected member of the assembly of the NWT Territories, later in the 30's Prime Minister of Canada. The original 3 Hammer families who immigrated from Missouri 8 miles east

of Olds, named their school district. At that time, School districts were extremely significant landmarks; therefore it was logical for the church to be named after these two bordering districts. This new Board of Trustees observed stricter Sabbath laws, suspending lunch and sports. My uncle, Anton, reportedly said "Sunday was never much fun after that."

That same year, the Ladies Aid was organized. The ladies raised funds and organized the social events for the congregation. In 1909, the ladies raised \$591.00. In the quietness of the archives, I pumped my arm "Great going, ladies". Another source said the Ladies Aid was organized in 1910 and had raised \$943.00 after only 3 years. Exact details have been lost in time, but regardless of which is correct, I have great admiration for those pioneer women. Having been a fundraiser myself, I felt their exhilaration.

My search continued and much to my astonishment out of the archival vaults came the 1912 to 1953 original records of the Bennett-Hammer Congregation. The complete church documents, some pencil written in scribbles, are in pristine condition. Every meeting, every financial transaction, the progress of the building and the amount received by collections were all documented by various recorders. I smiled to myself, in the first half of this century; we had "paper trails". My hand quivered, I was actually holding invaluable documents.

1912 was a very significant year in the Church's history. On March 4, a historic public meeting was called. There were 32 families in the two districts; 10 Methodists, 8 Presbyterians, 8 Lutherans, 3 Baptists, 2 Anglican and 1 Christian. Mr. Wesley Ashton was elected permanent Chairman. A vote was taken and those assembled decided to build a church. Both Mr. D. McLaren and Mr. A. Reddon offered an acre of land. The members present decided to accept Mr. McLaren's offer largely due to its location with the understanding that when the land ceased to be used for church purposes, it was to revert to the McLaren's estate. The diverse Protestant faiths met again on October 4, 1912. From the 6 faiths in the 2 districts, a church board was elected made up of four representatives; Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran and Presbyterian.

On November 25, 1912, those assembled moved to call the new church "United Church of Bennett and Hammer Districts of Olds, Alberta." This was 13 years before "The United Church of Canada" was established. Many documents listed Bennett-Hammer as a Union Church. No matter what the name, near the turn of the 20th century in a small rural community, the seeds of an ecumenical movement were planted. My soul filled with admiration at the pioneer spirit.

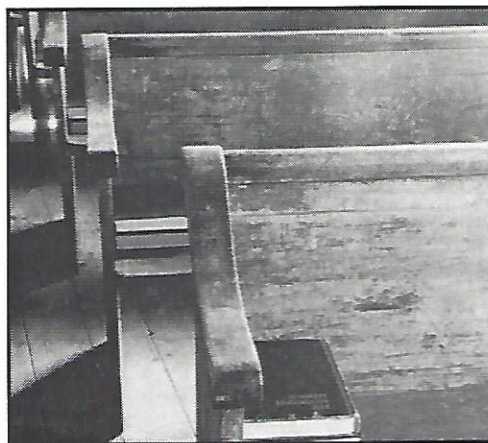
November 16, 1912, the board accepted the plans, specifications and let the contract of the church. Mr. Dan Powell was engaged as the contractor for the sum of \$1450.00 excepting the materials for the foundation and inside furnishings. The work was to be completed in a "neat workman-like manner" by the 15 January 1913.

As the majority of the congregation was American, the building reflected that influence. The beautifully proportioned, clapboard church reflecting American Colonial roots stood alone on the prairie. It was a simple, symmetrical wood frame 26 x 40 foot structure with a steep pitch roof, shallow eaves, steeple and arched windows. The steeple was prominent, piercing the enormous sky. The most intriguing part for me was the arched windows. The builder transformed square windows by using an arched decorative molding. On April 27, 1913, the trim little Protestant church 5 miles east of Olds (SW quarter of section 6, township 33, range 28, west of the 4th meridian) opened with its first service.

Louis Hammer, my grandfather donated \$50.00 to the building fund. \$725.00 was the first payment made to the Merchant Bank in Olds. Listed were all the contributors, the largest contribution from the Ladies Aid. Pews were purchased by mail from Cushing Mills in Calgary for \$198.00, \$53.05 for lamps, \$2.50 for 2 turnbuckles, \$0.25 for express, \$0.25 for telephone messages, \$3.10 for coal and \$2.50 for hymnbooks from Maybanks Drug Store. The building and the furnishings were insured for \$1500.00, 36 months insurance cost \$37.50. Yearly \$100.00 was paid for Ministers and \$50.00 for livery hire. The \$125.00 organ was donated by Mr. George Cloakley, a predominant Olds citizen, R.B. Bennett donated the altar and the cloth. Families took turns

with the janitorial work. In 1913, the collection for the General Church Funds by subscription, envelope collection and Sunday School was \$248.75. The board which met in members' homes decided on December 6, 1915 to pay \$0.25 per time to hire the fires to be built and sweeping the church house. In 1932, the salary for the same duties doubled to \$0.50 per time. That same year, a church member was paid \$0.60 to scrub the floor. By 1925, the annual ministerial salary was \$400.00. January 1, 1941 recorded the Minister's salary as \$30.00 per month. In March 1932, the Ladies Aid's dues were reduced from \$1.00 to \$0.10. The documents of financial obligations are very complete and I only recorded those which intrigued me.

No photographs or documentation of the church's interior were found. I sank back into the rigid library chair and went deep into my memory. I felt myself going through the main entrance on the gable end of the building. It was cold. I kept my red melton cloth coat with white rabbit on as I clutched my grandmother's hand. Next, we went through one of the two doors on either side of the vestibule. Eight or nine rows of pews faced the raised altar. Two aisles separated the pews and a winding staircase lead to a gallery over the vestibule. If you were close enough, a central pot-bellied stove gave some warmth.



We sat, bowed over heads and listened to the organ music. That was the organ my cousins, Ben, Garnet and Cynthia would stop to play on their way home from Bennett School. The music stopped and a stern, overwhelming man in a black robes appeared at the front. He never seemed to smile and he mumbled loudly. Terrified, I nestled into my grandmother's soft jet black, electric seal fur

coat. I held my eyes downcast, my feet dangling in new black patent shoes. I felt immersed in darkness.

The wooden floor, hard wooden pews, vertical wooden wainscoting encircled me. Suddenly we stood while people sang rather lovely songs. This part was the best, everyone seemed so joyful. The rest seemed terribly stern. I knew I had better be quiet.

The mention of angels captivated me. I fiddled with my nickel collection tied in the corner of my handkerchief. Dare I look up into that voluminous white ceiling which sloped up into a small flat portion at the centre. Would angels be flying there?

Sources vary as to when the famous church suppers began. Church records indicated the all male board requested the ladies to bring baskets for the anniversary supper May 3, 1914. Since the church had no basement and the pews were screwed to the floor, the event was held in tents. I believe this tradition lasted 5 years when the board passed a motion that the supper charge be \$0.50. The pews must have been unscrewed from the floor. Preparations for the first supper were arduous as no stove was available.

Things were made easier the following year when Mr. Henry Moritz pulled his cook car up to the Church's front door. Shortly after, a cook stove was purchased, placed in a coal and wood house. According to Aunt Gladys Hammer's notes, "We made out fine. Three to four hundred people were served at \$0.50 a plate and we felt like millionaires. Having a family didn't deter the women from taking part as that was an evening the dads took over the kids." For nearly 40 years, "The Bennett-Hammer suppers earned a country-wide reputation for the abundance of good things served. They were patronized not only by the local folks, but by great crowds from Olds, out for a big feed and a good time".

"During all the years, a very active Sunday school took place. The primary class for toddlers to age 5 or 6 was held in a small room off the entry. The east side of the Church was curtained off for 2 classes and the gallery held the teenagers. The main auditorium housed the Bible Class. There was a place for all who attended the services and Sunday school".

2003

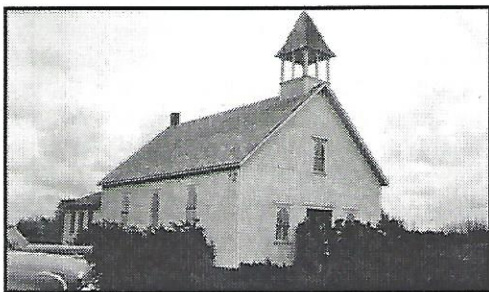
Stars of the Millennium Volunteer Awards

The Church served many community functions; picnics, teas, plays, father-son banquets, summer bible schools and sports days. From 1914 until nearly 1940, a joint Christmas concert with children from the Bennett and Hammer schools was held at the Church.

Bennett-Hammer had been a pioneer in uniting people of different denominations. It was a natural move in 1925 for it to become a United Church. With this change, "Olds" and "Bennett-Hammer" became one charge, served by the United Church minister from Olds.

In 1934, the Church Mortgage was burnt at a special ceremony. Plans were made to build a 18x26 foot kitchen and Sunday school on the north side. The annex was built by volunteer labour under the supervision of Ben Trimble. To finance the addition, it was decided to put on a play. After some weeks of practicing, it was found to have a copyright number. Fortunately it was a USA copyright. After getting legal advice and changing the name, the play went ahead. It was a real success playing twice in the Church, in the Olds Opera House and the Bowden Sheffield Hall to capacity crowds.

The Ladies Aid was active during the entire life of the Church. From my Aunt Helen Hammer's diaries when she was president of the Ladies Aid: One humorous event stood out in Gladys' account. *"We decided to entertain the Ladies Aid and our Missionary Society at an afternoon tea. All the building was spruced up and we took our best china, etc. Someone had given a large teapot a good cleaning and apparently used soap flakes or powder and some got stuck in the spout. We served bubbling tea, which made a good laugh but was rather embarrassing."*



Bennet- Hammer Church
with Annex - closing photo
December 24, 1951
image contributed by Amelia Hammer

Only 2 weddings were held in the Church. It was the accepted custom at the time to hold weddings in the Bride's home. Funeral and Baptismal records are vague. I am not sure if services were held at home, in Bennett-Hammer or in Olds. No cemetery was attached to the Church.

One question that puzzles me. In the original Hammer family of 11 children, it is generally believed they were not baptized. A family very involved in church life but no record of baptisms - curious!

After the second World War, times changed. Roads improved and everyone had a car. Rural churches began to close. On June 10, 1951, the final Sunday service was held and Bennett-Hammer amalgamated into a town congregation. Originally, the property was to revert to the McLaren estate. By this time, the new owners, faithful Bennett-Hammer members would not accept the land back. After much negotiations, finally in 1977 the property was sold to an individual who by then acquired an adjoining 20 acres. The little rural church and all the fixtures were sold to a group of United Church people from Wimborne. The sale sum of \$1942.00 was earmarked for the new United Church Manse in Olds. On February 12, 1952, the building moved and renamed the Wimborne Memorial United Church.

The first payment was made in April 1952 and the last payment in January 1958. The building was used as a church for a couple years after the last payment was made, as it appeared that those who were active have either passed on or moved away, it is just a neglected run down building. "We people who were interested, it is a heart ache to see."

Sadly, in the early 1960s, the building was destroyed because of its' neglected condition. Despite its demise, the spirit of the little rural church still lives on. In 1999 on the streets in Olds, you will still hear references to the church, especially to the ladies of Bennett-Hammer.

From research conducted by and an article prepared by Dianne Cleare

Pauline Feniak of Warspite recently received the Stars of the Millennium Volunteer Award and was also inducted into Alberta's Volunteer Wall of Fame at Government Centre in Edmonton.

Community Development Minister Gene Zworzdesky made the presentation. Her Honour Lieutenant Governor Lois Hole was also in attendance.

The prestigious award initiative of the Wild Rose Foundation and Alberta Community Development, honours two outstanding individuals in each of three categories: Youth, Adult and Senior. Mrs. Feniak was honoured in the senior's category.

Although Mrs. Feniak's volunteer work was varied, her greatest efforts went into research and documentation of local history that resulted in the designation of Victoria Settlement as a National Historic Site of Canada.

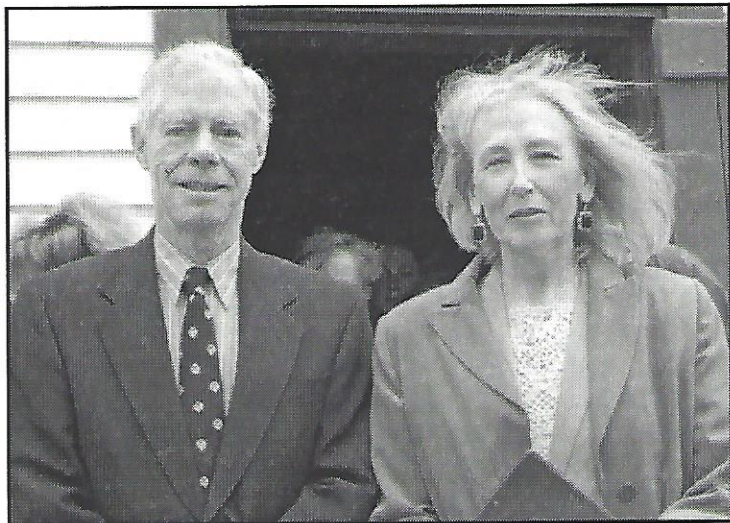
The County of Smoky Lake nominated Mrs. Feniak for the award.



Pauline Feniak of Warspite, recipient of the Stars of the Millennium Volunteer Award and inductee into Alberta's Volunteer Wall of Fame at Government Centre in Edmonton.

A CELEBRATION OF METHODISM

*Thoughts taken from June, August and September, 2003 Commemorative Addresses.
Dr. Anne White.*



*Dr. Gerald McDougall and Dr. Anne White
following the June 2003 Commemorative service at the
McDougall Memorial United Church at Morley*

It is a privilege, albeit a somewhat nostalgic one, to be able to mark the tri-centennial of John Wesley's birth and to address some of the many issues surrounding Christianity today. As at the time of John and Charles Wesley, Christianity again stands today at another crossroad. Evangelicalism, and Methodism as one of its many offshoots, was formed to meet the need for a relevant and satisfying religious experience. Today many within the Christian church also feel a need for something more powerful, something more true to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The secret to radical revivalist Methodism was that it cut to the chase as it gradually broke through class and gender barriers, and gave people hope and a sense of empowerment. I know this because I have the privilege to be a Methodist Local Preacher, of the same order of Local Preachers that John Wesley instituted in the 1750s. I became a preacher in 1972. This is the same order that in the early 1760s formally acknowledged the role and ministry of women as evangelists, preachers, and teachers. In this context, I am very much aware that Methodism has made an enormously positive contribution to the world.

Now, I know that by merely using the phrase enormously positive contribution I will immediately cause some to be shocked and embarrassed. After all, we have all been immersed in such a negative recounting of Christianity and its narrow, destructive

ways. So, for all detractors of Christianity, and in a local context Methodism as it pertains to Western Canada and the destruction of indigenous cultures, allow me to speak briefly on behalf of our foremothers and forefathers in the faith.

I would like to present a very broad overview of British Methodism as it swept through various parts of the world including England, Wales, Cornwall, Scotland,

Ireland and Canada. Time will not permit me to address all the evangelistic and philanthropic endeavours that Methodists turned their hands to in Africa, India and many other parts of the then existent British Empire, but suffice it to say, there were many. These were not all evil, bad, negative, or debasing for the indigenous people.

This is not to dismiss the many failures, marks of colonialism, imperialism, self-righteousness and whatever else detractors of Christianity would like to throw at our belief system. However, to merely scuttle away and assume collective guilt for every single horrible thing done by white colonial powers on unfortunate inhabitants of the British Empire is inaccurate, uninformed and cowardly. It is also not historically correct.

In an article in the last issue of the Journal entitled, The Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of John Wesley, Mr. Jim George presented an excellent written portrait of the man John Wesley. George also acknowledged the organization that Wesley built and the legacy that he left as still being an honourable one.

As a Methodist preacher and as a Christian, I too want to state that Christians should not be ashamed that they are Christians. We should take comfort in the great contribution made by Christianity, and in the context of Canada, by the contribution of local Methodism in building the prairie provinces

and in particular Alberta.

Weslyan Methodism – or early Methodist Revivalism saw the need to educate its adherents and society at large. It also saw the need to improve social conditions, welfare systems, protect the poor, and provide decent working conditions and labour laws. Some of the earliest social and labour reformers, including the Tolpuddle Martyrs, suffered for their social and religious convictions. Some were transported in the infamous hulks or prison ships, to Australia because they were social malcontents.

Women, as members of the laity and Order of Local Preachers, became involved in social reforms and openly preached from pulpits and from hills and grassy spaces, about the needs for transforming Christianity to work its influence upon society. These people were poor and sought to establish fairness in God's world, for many of the downtrodden. Was this elitism? Was this intolerance? Was this arrogance? Was this self-seeking? It depends on which side of the historical interpretive line one stands. The facts are that many social reform movements, including major organized religious lobbying against industrial abuse was and is an historical fact. It was called Methodist Cottage Religion and its influence permeated Northern England and helped and contributed to organized trade unions.

Methodist missions, (along with other Christian groups) both home and abroad, placed free or cheap education in the hands of many, thus empowering them. The Methodists also provided medical care and care for the widowed, orphans and destitute. Was this a sly and sneaky policy of acculturation and indoctrination? Again, it depends on which side of the fence one is viewing the issues. Perhaps there is another way to view this - perhaps some of these religious people actually did sincerely care about the good of others and felt that Jesus Christ was the best answer to all needs. At this point I am sure that I must have shocked and dismayed some of my listeners!

In Canada, the Methodist record is a strong one. Again, one must state that it is undeniably not without faults and weaknesses. No one can claim perfection or infallibility, but let us consider some of the positive influences that it did stage.

Being subjective here, let us consider the role of the female Methodist reformer. I was privileged to work with the Famous Five Foundation for the acknowledgement of five, turn of the twentieth century Alberta based women, in the granting for Canadian women the recognition of being Persons Under the Law! Before that, due to legal definitions and wrangling grinding down to the enth degree, the position of many Canadian women was that they were not regarded as full persons. The crusading, campaigning, social reform women were named Henrietta Muir Edwards, Louise McKinney, Nellie McClung, Emily Murphy, and Irene Parlby.

McKinney and McClung were strong Methodists and Muir Edwards was a Baptist/Anglican. All three women had participated in revivals, and these revivals were interdenominational, with Methodists, Baptists and Anglicans often sharing in what was known as The Blessing. All three grew up with the knowledge, based on a strong revivalist and or Methodist tradition, that women could and should preach and lead. Parlby and Murphy also grew up in religious settings but their conviction was not so much based on a religious ideology as a straightforward legal claim for women's rights.

Addressing McKinney, McClung and Muir-Edwards, each one had been a lay preacher/evangelist/missionary in a Canadian setting, and each was also a strong prohibitionist. Although today we may view some of their ideas narrow, even somewhat alarming, at the time they were radical and of great importance.

In her book *Canada Dry*, historian Jan Nolls addressed the problems of drinking in society. The historical facts Nolls presented were horrific. Men were often paid on a monthly basis in two installments; one being in alcohol and the other by cash or cheque. By the time many men reached home there was little money left to provide for the family. Violence and inefficiency to the point of horrendous crimes and ineptitude were not uncommon but people generally accepted payment in alcohol as a normal part of the working transaction.

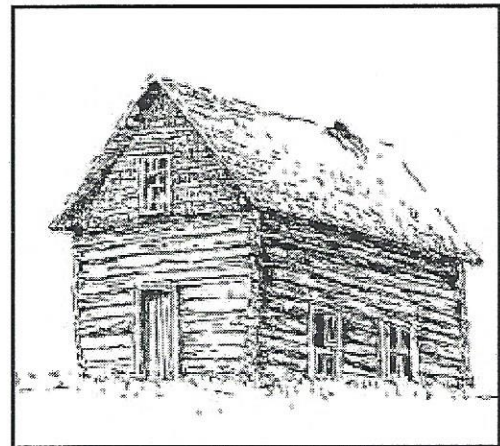
McKinney, McClung and Muir-Edwards, took on the establishment and through popular networking and political strategy, they won. The reason why society has more awareness today about the evils in the abuse of alcohol, is that these issues were taken up by women like these who accepted the role

of positive Christianity and social reform.

Another example of Methodist social and religious commitment is a woman named Emily Spencer Kerby. She was the wife of the famous Methodist minister George Kerby, the man who founded Mt. Royal College. How strange it is to actually review some of Emily's work and to find out that, in Alberta, she was one of the earliest firebrand social reformers, who possessed the strong Methodist spirit of fair play and social reform and that she too played an integral role in the forming of this leading Alberta College. Emily campaigned tirelessly for women's rights and the education of the masses, and in so doing often was in combat with entrenched political and religious ideologies. Again, at this point, detractors would be eager to point out Emily's faults. But I never did claim that anyone should be canonized!

So, where does this leave those odd Methodist? Well, let's consider the McDougalls, the legendary Methodist missionaries. Oh yes, those purveyors of white colonial religious oppression. The McDougalls gave their all, including life and health, to helping and protecting the Stoney Nation. To be brutally candid, the settlement of Canada, like any other country in history, was one whereby a larger, dominant group invaded and took over another smaller group's territory. Even the Stoney did this before the whites came, when they migrated from the South around Montana, into what we now call Alberta. The Stoney massacred the Snake nation, who were the original inhabitants. This is in no way to detract from the full ramifications of invasion and the consequences of one force taking over from another. It is an unfortunate part of our species' modus operandi. However, let us look at what the McDougalls did. The McDougalls knew that the Stoney people were going to be engulfed by the white invaders, which, with a name like McDougall, would also make the missionaries purveyors and part of the invading forces. However, these Methodists chose to help and protect. They chose to offer skills and protection to the aboriginal people in order to help them negotiate some of the painful aspects of adaptation. John McDougall and the missionaries at the Stoney Mission were strong proponents of aboriginal rights and stressed the importance and dignity of the Stoney people. Were the Stoney all pristine and saintly before the whites arrived? Did the whites completely abase them? No, that is not historically true. The Stoney were and are full-fledged human beings, full members

of the human race and they too had engaged in tribal warfare, killing and cruelty, just like any other group of humans in a society. What the Methodist missionaries did was try to help these people facing tremendous stress through acculturation and to survive. So, in conclusion, what can be said for Methodism in this celebratory year? Good things and bad things, successes and failures. However, never let it be accepted by any Christian that the role of the dedicated believer is of no importance and that we should cringe and be ashamed of our faith. Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord said that the greatest commandments were to love God with our whole being and to love others as ourselves. If we follow Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith, and his example, we need not be ashamed, no matter what our detractors may say.



REPORT ON VICTORIA SETTLEMENT

The Parks Canada local committee has not met since last summer. The impasse over the plaque location seems unresolved. The location previously chosen does not meet the landowner's approval. (This location is on a road allowance and would deprive the landowner free access to his property.) An alternate location has not been given consideration.

Would it be advisable for our historical society to write Parks Canada in Ottawa suggesting one or two alternate locations?

Considering that the Methodist presence established Victoria Settlement initially, would it be in order to pursue the issue from that viewpoint?



**ALBERTA AND NORTHWEST CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**President's Report
Pauline Feniak**

The Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church of Canada Historical Society continues to fulfill its adopted mandate, of caring for and preserving the heritage of the United Church of Canada and its antecedents within the Conference.

Progressive achievement characterized the past year.

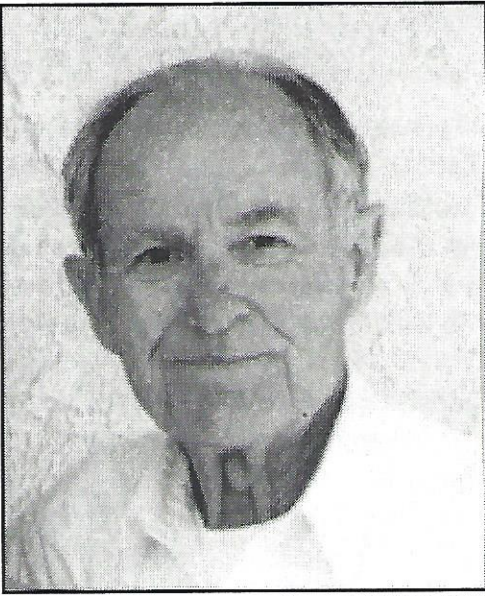
- With the Website Project, Missions and Missionaries in Alberta, completed a mini launch was held at Conference in Lethbridge and a full launch at the annual meeting in Red Deer. Visit the website at www.AlbertaSource.ca to learn more of the rich Alberta heritage that this series unfolds. Thanks go to Austin Fennell, Jim George, Henriette Kelker, Dave Ridley and Stephen Wilk for their extensive work in this undertaking.
- The Journal, the Society's main outreach vehicle and vital repository of church history continues to be printed; 1000 copies were distributed to Society members, Conference and Presbyteries and church libraries. Kate Reeves, Mark Wiencki and all contributors are to be thanked for the 2003 publication. Back issues of the Journal have been chronologically arranged and boxed for sale. Contact Jim George (403 320-0714) for purchases.
- An editorial committee for future publications has been recruited with Mark Wiencki as editor; policy guidelines have been established. Thanks go to Stephen Wilk for his many years of dedicated service to Journal editorship in the past.
- Robert MacDonald continues his research on Conference history and the book reviews for the Journal. We appreciate the dedication and expertise devoted to this work.
- We applaud the work of Gerald Hutchinson and the knowledge he shared with the Society. To honour his association with us, the Society awarded him an Honourary Life Membership. We feel confident he will continue to share his wealth of information for future reference.

In addition, thanks go to:

- Austin Fennell for the inspiring devotions he brings to every meeting.
- Jim George for promotions and membership recruitment and the research into church histories.
- Len McDougall and David Ridley for keeping us informed on associated mission sites, McDougall Stoney, and Rundle. I keep the Society informed on Victoria Settlement.
- The Royal Canadian Legion #284 Chapelhow Branch for their ongoing support.
- David Ridley and Mark Wiencki, we welcome them into the Society's Board of Directors.

My Ministry

by Reverend Allan Hunt



Reverend Allan Hunt

I was born in Calgary in 1924 and lived there with my mother and sister until I began university. My religious life started off at the Hillhurst United Church in a Sunday School class of boys ten or eleven. Later with my mother and sister I attended worship services conducted by Dr. William Hollinsworth, a man who told wonderful children's stories. My uncle was Baptist, and one night invited my mother and me to a revival service in First Baptist Church conducted by an evangelist named Robertson. There was an altar call and I went to the front of the church. I knew then that I was a child of God. I have never doubted it, in spite of a lot of sinful things I have done along the way.

I enlisted in the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1944. During my basic training in Toronto I attended the stately gothic Metropolitan United Church, whose minister at that time was the Rev. Dr. Peter Bruce, a man who later became moderator of the United Church. After church the tall, dignified gentleman invited me to join him for lunch. It was a kindness I would remember, and this was the man to whom I would turn at a later critical period in my life. Following the war I returned to university and completed an undergraduate degree in science.

The following summer I worked underground at the International Coke and Coalmine in Coleman as a laborer. One day,

two of the men with whom I worked were killed. I knew that had I been where they were I too would have been killed. I wondered, what was the reason?

I had a vague idea that I could make some kind of positive impact on society through writing, and had applied to and been accepted by Carlton College in Ottawa for a course in Journalism. In September 1946 I boarded a train for Ottawa. On the second night out of Calgary I began talking to Canon C. E. S. Bown, a priest of the Church of England who was returning from a Synod meeting. I talked about the summer, about the Navy, and things that were important to me. He listened, and before we left our berths, quietly asked, "Have you ever thought about the ministry?" The words of this man burned into my mind. I had thought of becoming a minister, but was torn between ministry and medicine. I changed trains at Sudbury and headed for Toronto. Dr. Peter Bryce was the only person I knew in Toronto. This was the man who had befriended a lonely sailor during the war years. I made an appointment with him and told him my story. He directed me to the theological college of the United Church, and before long...without any recommendation from Presbytery or Conference, I turned up and was accepted on a provisional basis at Emmanuel College.

After my first year at Emmanuel was completed I was assigned to a mission field on the Pelly-Melonek Pastoral Charge, three small congregations north of Pelly in Saskatchewan. My means of transportation was a bicycle, or when the roads were impassable because of rain, I hitched a ride with a mail wagon.

After graduating I was assigned to the Bow Island Pastoral Charge in southern Alberta. In May of 1949 I travelled in my mother's 1924 Model A Ford over a dusty gravel road to Bow Island, loaded with books, clothes and household goods that I thought a newly ordained minister would need. The charge consisted of five small congregations at Bow Island, Burdett, Winnifred, Whitla, and Grassy Lake.

Iona Marjorie Lindquist sang in the Saint Andrew's United Church choir. She and I

were assistant leaders at a young people's camp directed by the Rev. George Spady, minister at that time of the Memorial Salem United Church in Medicine Hat. At the Elkwater camp a delegation of men from Brooks visited me and invited me to accept a call to the Brooks Pastoral Charge. I was flattered and accepted their offer. The charge consisted of four preaching points, Brooks, Duchess, Tilley and One Tree.

Iona and I were married on October 6, 1951 in the St. Andrew's United Church with my friend, George Spady officiating. Our son, Arthur Bruce Stockton Hunt, was born in the Brooks Hospital on September 8, 1952. Brooks was a much different experience from Bow Island. In retrospect I realize that I was brash and inexperienced. It wasn't long before I got into trouble over unilateral decisions I made.

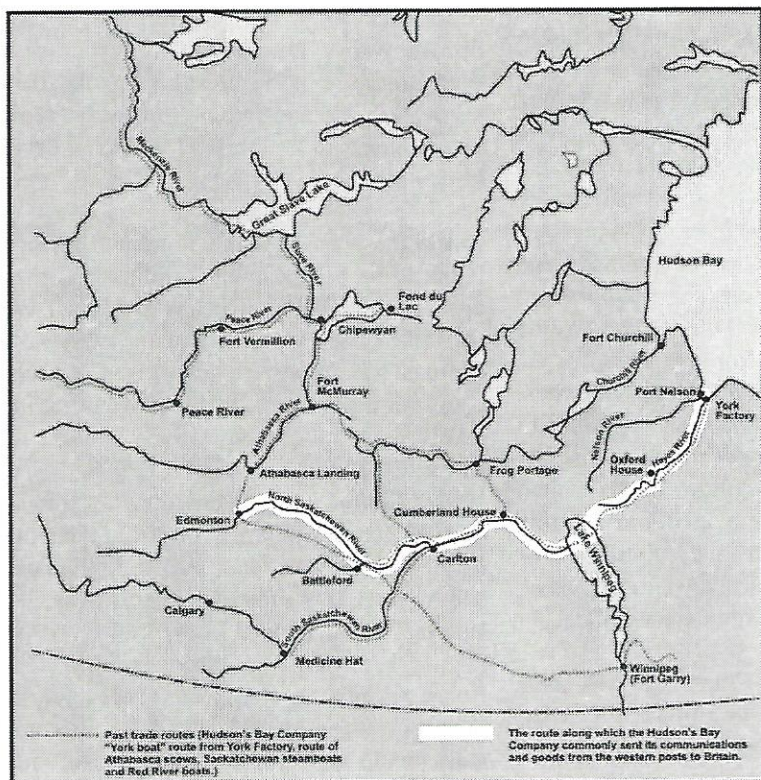
One of these was in regard to infant baptism. I discussed the meaning of the baptismal vows with a young couple who wanted me to baptize their child. It became clear that baptism was purely a social event for this couple, who had no intention of becoming involved in the church. I flatly refused to perform the baptism. Fifty years later the United Church has set guidelines for ministers and congregations to follow. In the winter of 1952 my conduct was unforgivable, and evoked the strongest criticism of the Board. The antagonism of the Board was so intense that I handed in my resignation. The Board accepted it. They were glad to get rid of me. I was out of a job, and had a wife and a month old baby to support. Fortunately for us, Iona's parents took us into their home in Bow Island, where we lived for half a year. I was bitter that the church had not supported me, and could easily have left the ministry at that time.

Sometime that winter, Rev. R. W. K. Elliot, the Superintendent of Missions, and one of the saints of the United Church visited me. I asked if he knew any pastoral charge that might accept me as its minister. Since the Carlyle Charge in southeastern Saskatchewan was vacant, Bob made it possible for me to go there and complete the church year. The congregations I served loved me back to health and self-confidence. The four months passed quickly and I accepted a call from the Coaldale Pastoral

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Methodist Missionaries in Alberta

At the UCHS Annual General Meeting held in Red Deer in November, the website *Methodist Missionaries in Alberta* (www.albertasource.ca/methodist) was launched, with members of the UCHS present, along with Morris Flewwelling and Adriana Davies of the Heritage Community Foundation. The website is one of several Alberta and Western Canadian history websites developed by the Heritage Community Foundation, a key partner in the project, along with the Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation and the UCHS. The project's senior writer researcher was Henriette Kelker, working with Nathan Lysons, an honours history student at the University of Alberta.



Developed with a general audience in mind, the site is useful for students, teachers and others who may not have prior knowledge of this historic presence and the related issues. As was mentioned in last year's edition of the UCHS Journal, the project idea for the website grew out of the United Church Artifact Collection Project, developed by Rev. Dr. Stephen Wilk and David Goa, Curator emeritus of the Folklife at the Provincial Museum of Alberta (PMA). The website should be regarded as one of the products of that work. The Collection Project had its genesis when Dr. Wilk visited the Spiritual Life gallery at the PMA and noted the absence of the life of the United Church of Canada in that now dismantled exhibit. As David Goa has said, "Scholars in this part of the world know more about Siberian shamanism than the United Church of Canada," and the collections project worked to address this deficiency in a key public institution.

The website presents the missionaries, their spouses, helpmates, and the story of the historic missions. This

is done in relation to the mission activities of other Christian denominations, namely the Roman Catholic orders of priests, brothers and sisters present in the same era and faced with many of the same dilemmas and challenges.

The site is unique in presenting a section on "The Missionary" which addresses the role of the missionary and the evangelical impulse as an important and common cultural activity. The missionary is a bridge between distinct worlds of understanding, living at the edges of both home and host culture. A brief primer on Methodism is provided. The site includes hundreds of images and historic photographs, along with 40 audio features from CKUA Radio Network's *Heritage Trails Series* and also two video features. These feature Rev. Dr. Gerald Hutchinson on the development of Cree syllabics and an excerpt from the production based on Rev. Geoff Wilfong-Pritchard's play on James Evans, *Cloven Hoof*.

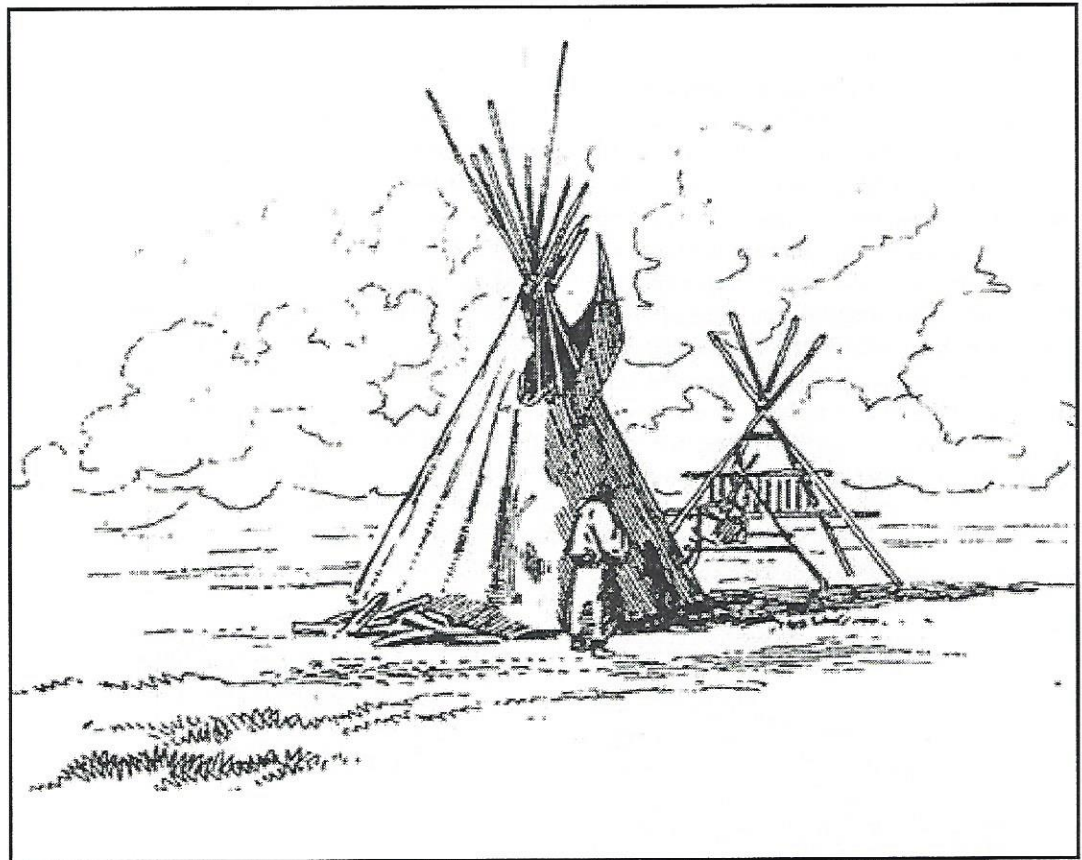
Methodist Missionaries in Alberta



Methodist Missionaries in Alberta

It should be acknowledged that the concerns and attention of the present-day United Church seem far from those of the Methodist missionaries. The engagement of the relationship of the larger church to this history is somewhat overlooked. The Methodist missionaries were certainly foundational and antecedents of the organization to come, but are not likely to be embraced as the spiritual forerunners of the United Church, given the perspective on the legacy of residential schools and on the understanding of evangelical mission. The *Methodist Missionaries* website attempts to present fair comment on this legacy, while leaving open some of the questions that only further reflection and development may answer. The website represents a significant breakthrough in presenting these questions to a new generation who seek knowledge through internet technology and within the frame of public history, beyond the denominational and specialist confines to which mission history is too often confined.

David Ridley was the Director of Research at the Heritage Community Foundation during development of Methodist Missionaries in Alberta. He was a contributor to and editor of Aspenland II: On Women's Work and Lives in Central Alberta. He currently works in the Folklife Program at the Provincial Museum of Alberta.



*Sketch of a Nakoda (Assiniboine) tipi by Dr. Nevitt c. 1875
Glenbow Archives*

MY MINISTRY

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Charge, and began my ministry there in July 1953.

Iona, Bruce and I had four happy years in Coaldale. Iona was leader of the Canadian Girls in Training. She had good support from the parents, and the girls loved her. I became chaplain of the Sea Cadets in Lethbridge, and in 1954 returned to H.M.C.S. Corvallis for a month of chaplaincy training. Following this training I spent the next three summers at the naval base at Esquimalt, a part of Victoria.

I left Coaldale in 1957 to study at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley. The Rev. Hart Cantelon had attended this institution, and strongly recommended it. I received the degree of Master of Sacred Theology from PSR.

Following the year in California I returned to Canada, and served the Redcliff Pastoral Charge from 1958 to 1970. Iona, Bruce and I were very much a part of the community. After twelve happy years at Redcliff I resigned. I needed a change, but was bitter that during all those years my income was inadequate to cover my travel expenses; Iona needed to work to pay for our living expenses. I am glad that salaries and travel allowance for ministers have become more realistic today, but I wonder how many other ministers, who loved their work, have left because they could not afford to stay in the ministry.



I was admitted into the first year of the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. Upon graduating with a Master of Education degree, my first job was at the Alberta Hospital at Ponoka. With this experience I was able, in 1972, to register as a certified psychologist with the Psychologists Association of Alberta. The following year I was hired as the counsellor of the Medicine Hat College, where I worked for thirteen years. It was not the ministry of the word and sacraments, but there are other valid ministries. In 1979 the college granted me a leave of absence to study, and I spent a year at the University of Arizona at Tempe, doing doctoral work. It was a good year for both Iona and me, and the climate was good for her asthma. She had taken a year off from her work as bookkeeper in Medicine Hat, and returned before my university year was over. Back in Alberta the weather was cold and damp. She was hospitalized for asthma, and died of a heart attack.

Four years later I married Lillian Smith, the widow of a good friend who had been in my Redcliff congregation. My friends, The Rev. Graham Dickie and the Rev. Barry Godley officiated at our wedding in the Fifth Avenue United Church.

Until this time I had lived my life blissfully unaware of or indifferent to the plight of the poor throughout the world. In 1985 that slumber came to an end when James McAfee Brown spoke at the Medicine Hat College. He introduced his audience to what for me was a radical new concept: Christianity is not so much a matter of attaining personal salvation as it is a struggle to achieve economic and social justice in the world. Liberation theology means going to the Jesus we find in places like Nicaragua, frightened for his life because of the contras.

Early that year my sister, Jeanne and I spent a month in Nicaragua, under the auspices of GATE (Global Awareness Through Experience). On December 1, 1986 we all attended the Iglesia de Maria de los Angeles. After the service a woman, whose son had been killed that day in the war against the American-supported Contras, came up to us with a kiss of peace and hugged us. She gave us a gift little booklet containing the Magnificat, with the words, "Derribo a los reyes de sus tronos y puse en alto a los humildes." (He has brought down the

mighty kings from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly).

I wondered, How long O God?

My Chilean friend in Medicine Hat, Alfredo Aravena, had suggested that I visit his homeland, Chile, and tell my story when I returned. I September 1987, I flew to Santiago, was met by the mother of Alfredo, and her daughter Nena. The month I spent with these gentle, brave folk made a profound impact on my life. In 1973 a young general named Pinochet overthrew the government. What followed was a bloodbath. Among others that I visited was Carmen Gloria Quintana. Two years previously, this beautiful eighteen-year-old university student took part in a demonstration. Soldiers arrived and brutally beat her and her friends. They took a can of gas from their truck, and soaked their bodies from head to foot, set them on fire and left them to die. Doctors in Montreal were able to save her life. When asked if she were not afraid to return to Chile, she replied simply, "Yo estoy aqui en mi pueblo, luchando". (I am here in my city, fighting). The Chileans fought with words. One popular song contained the words, "Nunca mas...Nunca mas!" (Never again).. Never again will there be disappearances, political murders... never again will we not know where our children are."

In 1993 I was asked to conduct occasional services at the Memorial Salem United Church in Medicine Hat. I countered with an offer to build up the congregation, if they were willing. They were. I discovered later that the South Alberta Presbytery was not pleased: this is not the way ministers are appointed to pastoral charges in the United Church. It was an exciting year: we tried innovative forms of worship, and had fun doing it.

Since then I have sung in the choir, chaired the Outreach Committee at Fifth Avenue, preached occasionally at United and Presbyterian churches in the area, and played a lot of golf. I like the mix, and hope to be able to continue these activities for whatever time I am given.

book reviews by dr. robert macdonald

Samuel J. Rogal, *The Historical, Biographical, and Artistic Background of Extant Portrait Paintings and Engravings of John Wesley (1742-1951)*, Queenstown, Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003 215pp.

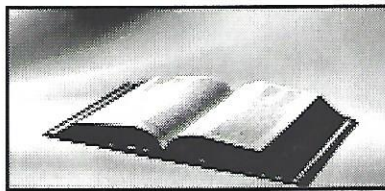
During the tercentenary of John Wesley's birth, it is understandable that various books have appeared to illustrate the life of such a pivotal evangelist of the Protestant Faith. Among illustrations are the familiar preacher reading on horseback or the portrait used in last year's Journal. This book by an emeritus professor, reexamines a number of portraits and sayings gathered by John Telford in 1924, who hoped to "get closer to Wesley." In all, over fifty portraits are analysed and annotated, with reference to Wesley's diary and other evidence of the painter's (or sculptor's or engraver's) association with Wesley, to determine, among other things, the circum-stances of the "sitting". It is an attempt to analyse these visual images to "probe additional depths toward an understanding" of Wesley. Rogal used this method to ask whether the portraits provided a more reasonable view of the founder of Methodism.

While there are portraits from as early as 1741, just as he was beginning his evangelistic pilgrimage, most of those illustrated in this volume date from his years over seventy and especially in the last decade of his life. Of course, with any portraiture, there are differences in emphasis as each aimed at a specific viewing public. However, one thing that they all seem to agree upon, according to the author, was the pronounced nose and the long curling hair, as well as the slender fingers and sharp features of this slight figure. The illustrations range from paintings, busts and engravings: in 1744, an engraving shows him as a stern and disciplined figure, while a study of 1765 gives a fuller view, with a hand raised as if giving a sermon. In 1773, a portrait by an artist who knew Charles Wesley as well as Samuel shows a favourite theme, his hand on the Bible. One from 1783 illustrated the move from crayon to painting to engraving. An interesting portrait came from the persuasive influence of Sarah Tighe whose Irish family had a long friendship with Wesley: for a man not only of that age but one who travelled an estimated 250,000 miles including

forty-two trips across the Irish Sea, sitting for six hours was a feat, reflecting her ladyship's influence. At the end are engravings from his funeral in 1791.

Some of the artists were well known, such as Romney mentioned just above, Joshua Reynolds, Enoch Wood (whose bust is well known), Benjamin West and William Hamilton. Others, though reasonably well known as the notes indicate, are less familiar to present-day readers. The author suggests, however, that few of them probably, saw or heard Wesley preach, and hence there is a formal aspect to the visual images, even the clerical gown or the Bible by his side, or the slightly raised hand do not erase this impression. On the other hand, some of the artists were quite familiar with the Methodist movement in its varied aspects, for example, Jacob Rowell who had been an exhorter in the early years. Others were tied to the Royal Academy and, as the author indicates, fit into the eighteenth-century portraiture. It should be noted that some images were made after Wesley's death, some decades later, and some were copied from other portraits.

One problem with the study is quality of reproductions (black and white). In part this may reflect the choice of publisher. As well the illustrations themselves are at the end, after the discussion, making it a little awkward for the reader. Nevertheless, the importance of the visual images (and the annotations) is that they create in one's mind what Wesley might have looked like, including to contemporaries.



Ralph Waller, *John Wesley: A Personal Portrait*, New York: Continuum Publishing Group; 2003, 128 pp, notes, index.

A different study is Waller's portrait, reflecting a life-long study of Methodism, the Wesley's and the non-Conformist movement by a well-respected British scholar. The structure of the book begins with an examination of his family; his impecunious clerical father whose imprisonment for debt had

a significant influence on Wesley's social activism; and his mother, daughter of a cleric, experienced in theological debates, and determined to give her children a thorough education including at home and in religious affairs. John was sent to Oxford for further study, after Charterhouse, and eventually prepared for a life as an Oxford academic in Lincoln College. However, he had assisted his father on occasion. It was at Oxford that he developed the discipline of study, and assembled a small group, The Holy Club, which debated issues including his views on Christian Communion, responsibility for others, and the importance of the written word: the group visited prisons and hospitals, and, under Wesley's leadership, a disciplined approach to theological study.

Illness of his father cut short the academic life, and after Samuel's death, Wesley went on an evangelical tour in the colony of Georgia, which in many ways was a failure. Upon his return, Wesley came under the influence of a pietist German group, the Moravians, and this, combined with his experience at Oxford, led to the development of the Methodist movement, with the establishment of the Fetter Lane Religious Society in 1739. This led, in turn, to open air preaching, development of itinerant lay preachers, and composition of hymns. The Moravian influence was continued during a voyage to the continent in 1738 but soon ended in disagreement, it is suggested, partly over control of the nascent Society, partly over theological differences. Another influence noted was that of George Whitefield, a younger contemporary whose evangelistic influence on religious life at the time rivaled Wesley's. However, despite letters and friendship, the two began to disagree over issues such as "Grace" (Predestination) and the emotional appeal of Wesley. The relationship was strained after 1741, and despite attempts to reconcile in 1750 it continued strained until Whitefield's death in 1770 (though Wesley had been requested by the former to preach at his funeral).

The author takes a different approach in the subsequent discussion, by focusing on themes rather than a chronological outline. For example, he discusses Wesley's preaching style. While much of what he preached

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A DECADE AND MORE AFTER

(Reflections on my years as Moderator of the United Church of Canada 1990-1992)

As I set about the task of recalling the years I served as Moderator, I have deliberately chosen to forgo searching out the papers and mementos that I collected. Instead, I will focus on the memories that most quickly surface - and I will reflect on that great number of United Church people I was privileged to meet in those two years.

My term began with the call to go, almost immediately, to Oka. There, first nations people were in a stand-off and face to face with police forces and the Canadian military. Powerful weaponry, razor wire, armoured personnel carriers and security checks were facts of life. The United Church community of Kanasatake had requested the presence of the Moderator. The apology of a few years earlier was demanding another kind of involvement on the part of our church. It was evident that there were not going to be simple solutions nor room for patronizing attitudes. When gospel and gospel people are called to become involved in the real political arenas of country and world, we learn powerfully the limitations and the contradictions and ambiguities involved in a flesh taking faith. There were lines, not drawn in sand, but spray-painted on pavement, and people of faith and of faithfulness-seeking stood on both sides of those lines.

General Council in 1990 had reaffirmed the actions of General Council in 1988. The church was experiencing many bitter divisions as congregations and individuals struggled to find faithfulness as we were engaged in following through on the implications of accepting gay and lesbian persons and celebrating their place in the ministries of the church. Many individuals and some congregations left the United Church. Confused with this struggle was the imperative laid upon us to deal with issues of abuse, often, but not necessarily, sexual. Much of my time was spent talking and praying with people in a wide variety of congregations and communities. Issues of sexuality, issues of power and abuse of power and position, and issues of belonging and not belonging dominated many conversations and forums.

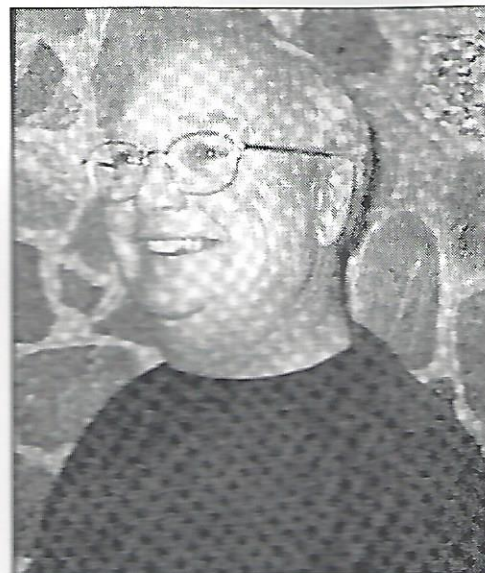
A Moderator's Task Force was struck to deal with issues of inclusion and exclusion in church and community. Clearly, gay and lesbian persons had been marginalized and

often subjected to abuse and condemnation. The Task Force sought to face that reality and to assist the church in finding ways to become more genuinely welcoming and inclusive. However, there were others in the church who felt marginalized and disenfranchised because of their theology and more conservative morality and ethics. Ways were sought to honour them and keep us all engaged in conversations that allowed for difference of opinion and conviction but also for a mutual holding each other to account.

The changing realities of Canadian culture certainly made an impact on the United Church during my term of office. Despite their graciousness, my unilingualism prevented me from engaging effectively in essential dialogue within the Francophone communities that are an important part of the United Church.

Members from ethnic churches within the United Church rightly insisted that it was time for the church to look at the ways in which persons from ethnic minorities, and often ethnic congregations were treated. Many were the voices insisting that they were to be heard in the name of the good news of Jesus Christ. So that too became one of the mandates of the Task Force addressing issues of inclusion and exclusion. I believe that those engaged in working on that part of the Task Force did some of the most significant work accomplished by it. Visits to Cuba and Jamaica and our partner churches there, visits to Zambia and South Africa, were also part of my two year term. I learned anew how important our partners are to us, as well as how important we are to them. Nelson Mandela had just been freed in South Africa and there was hope among many for a new day of opportunity and reconciliation. Over and over again, African Christians expressed their appreciation of the Canadian churches and Canadian government in speaking out against apartheid. When they identified the apology offered the first nations of Canada as one of the most significant things we had done - it was truly humbling. I knew how far we were living from that apology.

I was grateful that my wife, Joan, had been able to accompany me on many of my trips within Canada. She accompanied me also on



The Very Rev. Walter Farquharson

the trips to partner churches. In both Zambia and South Africa we heard from pastors and other church workers that HIV-AIDS was devastating some of their communities. We saw mission hospitals filled with patients listed as having TB but it was clear that it was a facet of their HIV-AIDS. Governments and community leaders were still for the most part choosing to deny that they were living with a pandemic. Pastors in some communities told us they spent much of their time burying the dead - particularly young people 18-30.

We saw too the ravages of currency devaluation and economic restructuring, in some corners a grinding poverty and in others an ever-shrinking expectancy in terms of lifestyle. Parts of Africa and Zambia that we visited were dealing with a drought that had seen deserts expand and farmlands erode. But we also saw and celebrated an amazing resiliency among the people and a determination to be partners in creating the future that would be marked by equality of opportunity. We visited land reclamation projects. Places where new wells brought new hope, clinics and schools, and a variety of community co-operatives.

The Gulf Crisis and then the Gulf War saw the division of Mission call for a monthly day of prayer for peace 'until our world should truly know peace'. It was a call too easily ignored and then forgotten, and I often wonder if things might be different in our world today had we persisted in that call. In

the name of the church, a pastoral letter went out to the people of the churches. There were resources for prayer services and vigils, expressions of pastoral concern to armed service people and their families - and there was a focus on the children of the church. The largest amount of mail I received as Moderator came from the children of the church in response to that initiative! Their pictures and letters filled my Toronto office and their prayers I carried, and still carry, in my heart.

My primary fears for the United Church had to do with a perception that we had, in many corners, become a church prone to complaint and a kind of carping negativity. Too many of our sermons and prayers and too many of our statements sounded ominously self-righteous and either condescending toward, or condemning of, any who disagreed with us or who saw life from a different perspective. While officially proclaiming the virtue of inclusivity and an openness to people of other faiths and of none, we were having more and more difficulty hearing and appreciating each other within the United Church family. Warring 'camps' tend often to demonize those perceived as enemy.

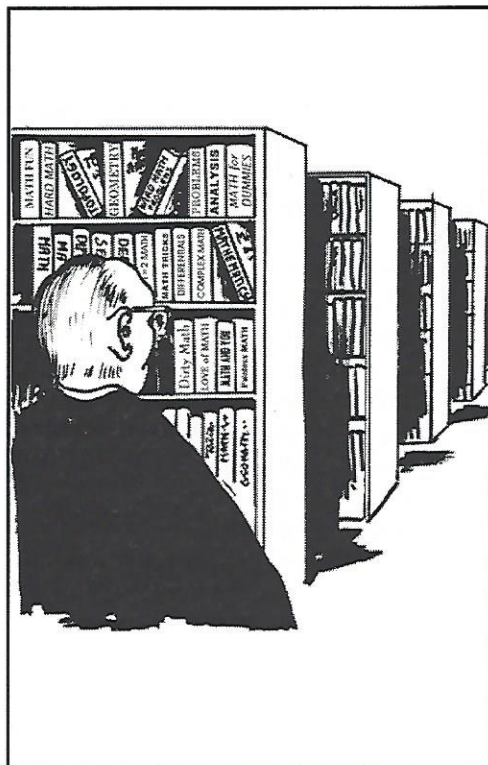
I had been elected, in part, because of my commitment to rural Canada, always a source of United Church strength and a place where who we are as a United Church has been shaped. After all, the local union churches of Western Canada had played a major role as catalyst in the union of 1925! My advisory committee felt that it was important that I visit as many congregations of the church as possible during my term. That I did. Again and again I found people pushed to the limit. From Newfoundland and the Maritimes, across Central Canada to the prairies and the B. C. coastal areas communities and congregations, and especially rural ones, were facing declining numbers, an aging population carrying more and more responsibility, and shrinking resources in terms of both personnel and finances. Neither governments nor the church seemed able to grasp the depth of the crises facing rural communities and such fundamental industries as agriculture, fisheries, and forestry. My task was to listen, to encourage, to celebrate healthy examples of ministry and outreach, and to encourage weary pilgrims to seek healing, spiritual direction and re-creation in the Spirit. And I remember

urging the Executive of General Council to address issues of morale and the need for spiritual pastoral care within the offices of Council itself.

The years I served as Moderator are years I count as privilege. Throughout Canada, and in visits to our overseas partner churches, I met the most wonderful people - seeking day by day in a myriad of ways to be faithful to the gospel call to justice, peace, healing, environmental stewardship and gentle neighbourly living. Those are ministries that needed then to be encouraged and supported. They are ministries today that need the same!

*"Tell me what you read
and I'll tell you who you
are" is true enough, but
I'd know you better if
you told me what you
reread.*

- François Mauriac



book reviews

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seemed extemporaneous, his papers reveal a careful thought and analysis such as "Scriptural Christian in 1744 at St. Mary's Church, Oxford. Open air preaching also reflected the style; initially not as forceful as Whitefield, eventually he was able to preach to large numbers, up to 32,000 on one occasion, with a voice audible at 420 feet. The impact on many, the author suggests, was life changing. Similarly, Waller discusses opposition to "Methodism, including not just from Church of England divines but also others, resulting in a few cases, riots and threats on his and others' lives. Characteristic of John Wesley was his indomitable traveling, much on poor roads, which, however were being improved in the economic expansion of the eighteenth century. Waller notes that the Journal is a joy to read because it reflected a happy traveler: he also indicates Wesley enjoyed visiting gardens and other venues, with interesting comments on these. Travel, Waller suggests, was part of Wesley's strategy for evangelism. Estimated to have preached 40,000 times, traveling until age seventy by horseback only, giving services several times a day, he experienced the dangers of travel. But his travels became part of Methodist lore. Another theme relates to his relationships with women, including a late marriage that, perhaps because of his travel, disintegrated: he was married to his work, preventing several relationships from maturing. Social concerns are another central part of the Methodist legacy still held dear in the United Church today: the concern for prisoners, widows and orphans, education, and later slavery (on which he preached at age eighty-five) were part of his experience. Yet salvation of souls remained his leitmotif. However, the long life - preaching, writing tracts and books, supervising the lay preachers, organising societies - took its toll in his late eighties. Yet he was preaching until ten days before his death.

This book consists of a series of short chapters on various aspects of the Wesley influence and life. It is buttressed by constant reference to his Journals and letters, as befits a scholar. This is particularly true of the earlier period. It is an easy read which gives an excellent overview of John Wesley and his influence and times.

AUBURNDALE UNITED CHURCH

This history of the Auburndale United Church was compiled by Jim George from material sent to him by Mrs. Beverly Green of Vermilion, Alberta. Many of the articles, written by Anne Warrington, had been published in one or more of the local newspapers, The Western Producer, The Observer, and their Golden Anniversary Cookbook.

The Auburndale United Church claims the honor of being the first United Church in Canada to be dedicated following church union. The United Church of Canada came into being on June 10, 1925, when representatives of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches signed the Basis of Union. The Auburndale United Church was dedicated on June 14, 1925 at 3:00pm. Another United Church, in Ontario was dedicated the same day but at 7:00pm. So it appears that Auburndale's claim to have been first is valid.

The Auburndale Church is located on Highway #41 between Wainwright and Vermilion in central east Alberta. This area, settled about 1905, adopted a pattern, common throughout the prairies, of holding church services in homes and schools, and even an occasional outdoor service. Worship services were conducted by circuit riders, travelling on horseback or in buggies. These ministers were mostly of the Methodist Church and later of the Presbyterian Church. Because they held several services every Sunday, they had to ride from one schoolhouse to the next on horseback. What a blessing it must have been when they obtained the help of student ministers! The following excerpt from a newspaper article, written by the son of one of those early student ministers, gives a brief glimpse of their life in that period of history:

"Dad's first 'field' around 1910 was Cummings, a place located between Vermilion and Wainwright. As a Presbyterian student minister, he was responsible for the services in six schoolhouses: Heatherbell, Battleview, and Paradise Valley, Gilt Edge, Wildmere, and Autumnleaf, and he later recalled the occasion in a recent letter:

'I had only time for a hasty interview with the minister in Vermilion who told me to hurry as the mail driver would soon arrive. I had to travel in his buggy some 25 miles. Passing through Paradise Valley the mail driver told me of a former student missionary who, on leaving the field, said that the people around here were as near Paradise as they would ever be! Naturally I wondered what sort of people I would have to work among.

After a long slow drive over prairie trails, we stopped at a log shack, and I was told it was the place where I would board and make my headquarters. The landlady told me she had only one small spare room and the Methodist missionary already occupied that, so I would have to sleep with him.

I had to have a horse, of course, and the first animal I got wasn't suitable -- he had little or no life in him. The next animal I purchased was the very opposite -- a bronco the farmers called him, and many a tumble he gave me until we learned each other's idiosyncrasies. I think the best horse I ever rode was called John Knox after the Scottish religious reformer and founder of the Presbyterian Movement. The Methodist student's horse was called John Wesley after the English evangelist and founder of Methodism. When we had occasion to visit the nearest town, and were fortunate enough to borrow a sleigh or a buggy, we used to hitch them together. John Knox and John Wesley pulled well together."

The history of the church really began in 1919 when people of the district met to establish a cemetery. Mr. Wm. Hetherington donated the land for the cemetery, and then four years later he donated another parcel of land next to the cemetery for the church. The church was extremely important for the pioneers. In addition to meeting the spiritual needs of the people, it also met social needs and provided a much-needed break from the long days of hard work. It was only natural that the community soon felt that it should have a "real" church, instead of meeting in schools.

On July 8 1923, Rev. Simons of Vermilion made a proposal to construct a Community Church to serve the school districts of Heatherbell, Willowby, and Autumnleaf. Committees of four men from each of the three districts were elected. Mr. Bruce Gray, student minister, brought the three committees together and a recommendation was made that a Union Church be built at an approximate cost of \$1800. However, the congregation from the Heatherbell School defeated the motion. The Battleview School congregation accepted an invitation to attend a meeting, and on July 30, 1923, a motion

was passed to build a United Church to serve Battleview, Willowby, and Autumnleaf. On September 1, Mr. Bruce Gray reported on the progress of the financial campaign. \$1700 was needed to be raised and the loan agreements to be signed by the members. It was decided to proceed with the building of the church.



This is a recent photo of Rev. Bruce Gray who, as a student minister, was instrumental in starting Auburndale Church.

Construction began the next year. Several of the members hauled the lumber with horses and wagons, from Wainwright a distance of 17 miles. Aubrey Tory constructed the church with volunteer help. The pulpit still used today was the original one built by Howard Green Sr. The communion table was built by a student minister who served there in 1950 and 1951. The first organ in the church was loaned by Mrs. Peter Jensen, a member of the congregation. After Union another organ was donated by the Vermilion Methodist Church. It had originally been used to play background music for the silent pictures shown in the Vermilion Theatre. That organ served for about 43 years and a new electric organ was purchased in 1968. In 1990 another organ was dedicated, a donation by Carl and Donna Eyben.

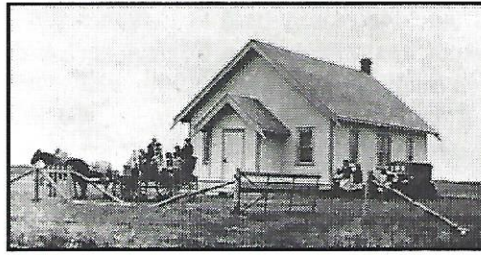
On Sunday, June 14, 1925, the Auburndale United Church was dedicated. It was actual-

ly ready earlier in the summer but it was decided to delay the dedication until after Union. There was such a large crowd that the church couldn't hold them all, so the ladies sat inside and the men and the children stayed outside and watched and listened through the open windows.

Editor's note: this was 1925 and long before public address systems were available.

Auburndale was originally established as a summer mission field. When the mission field system was discontinued, the church obtained ministers through the United Church intern program. As longer internships became more common and students became more reluctant to serve in small rural areas, Auburndale had difficulty obtaining ministers. They were grateful that the Grace United Church in Wainwright shared the ministry of their wintertime theological students, their lay supply person, and their ordained minister. Although the congregation was never large, it remained active and the members of the congregation are very proud of their history and their church. Many of them are direct descendants of the pioneers who built the church. Sunday services have been held there every summer since 1925 and will, no doubt, continue for many years into the future. The position of a part time minister was begun in 1992. As well as attending regular Sunday school classes, the children participate frequently in the worship services. Vacation Bible Schools were started in 1932 and organized every year for the next 71 years until 2003, which was the last one. The vacation Bible School held in 1995 was particularly successful with 21 students enrolled.

In 1992, the St. Paul Presbytery declared Auburndale a pastoral charge. From 1992 to 2001, services were held for eight weeks in the spring and eight weeks in the fall using pulpit supply and student ministers who were doing their training in Wainwright. In the fall of 2001, Auburndale United Church partnered with Irma United Church and shared their minister, Rev. Doug Coubrough. After Rev. Doug Coubrough's heart attack and retirement, the congregation decided to discontinue their association with Irma and to continue on their own. Many decisions had to be made whether to close or not. In the end, it was decided to stay open and continue using pulpit supply.



Auburndale Church in 1932 or 1933, showing the vacation Bible School. The front of the picture, believe it or not, is Highway #41.



Auburndale Church in the winter, 2002. The trees were planted in 1936.

The contribution made by the women of the congregation is recognized in these few examples. The Ladies Aid, a women's group originally formed to help pay the minister's salary in 1924, also paid most of the debt on the pews. This amount of \$306.12 was raised by the sales of sewing and meals, with prices set at .15 for a handkerchief, \$1 for a pair of hand knit socks, .80 for a child's dress, 1.50 for a lady's dress, 1.40 for two hand embroidered towels, and .25 for a bean supper. The first women's group disbanded after a few years but another one formed in 1939, eventually became the United Church Women (UCW) in 1962. Every June for many years the women put on an anniversary picnic and bazaar to raise money for the church. In 1989 they bought new drapes and made new altar and pulpit cloths. In 1990 the UCW updated and enlarged the original 100-recipe book which had been published in 1940. It is interesting to note that the first recipe book was typed, copied on a hectograph (a gelatin pad used for making copies), and then put together with loose-leaf rings. It was entitled "Kitchen Kraft" and sold for 35 cents. The 1990 version contained a brief history of the church and a biography of each of the ladies who had contributed recipes for the original book of 50 years ago and for this one.

A few alterations to the church have been made over the years. In 1955 the Sunday School rooms were added. This addition

was dedicated in a special service conducted by Howard Plant and Lindsay Lawson. Electricity was installed in 1958. The church light fixtures were donated by Jack Morgan of Wainwright, who was renovating his store and thus had surplus lights.

In a letter to Mrs. Anne Warrington, Rev. Ernie Shurman describes his memories of Auburndale Church in these words: "I am quite familiar with the Auburndale Church. The first time of seeing it was when we went on a trip to the Wainwright Buffalo Park which is now an army camp. This was in 1926. Later, sometime near the end of the '50's my business of that time had the job of electrifying this church, and not long after that I took part in a church service conducted by Rev. Chauncey MacKay and the Secretary of Home Missions for the United Church, Rev. Dwight Powell. Chauncey MacKay, and later Rev. Carlton Miller of Medicine Hat, served that area every other week during the winter months. I accompanied both ministers and took part in the worship services as a lay reader. Still later I became a lay minister and was stationed at Vilna, Alberta and served the Saddle Lake Indian Reserve as missionary. During that time a kind hearted couple brought a car loaded with vegetables to the Indian Church and distributed them to my congregation. These people were from the Auburndale Community."

It would appear that Auburndale still holds a special place in Rev. Shurman's heart just as it does for many others -- both those who remained in the district and those who are far away. What makes the church special is that it is a community in the larger sense and a united church spelled with a small "u". That celebration of community and a way of life has allowed people to stay together and to support a church that was frequently not of their chosen denomination.

Auburndale has always recognized its significant anniversaries. The 70th anniversary in 1995 was special in that a plaque, commemorating the church as a county historic site, was unveiled on June 11. A complete description of that anniversary celebration was printed in the fall 1995 edition of the Auburndale United Church Newsletter.

Because it includes so many important local details, it is quoted verbatim as follows:

"Auburndale United Church has a very successful celebration for its 70th anniversary, June 10 and 11, 1995. There were over 200 people in attendance, many of them former church and community members. Saturday, the annual bazaar and picnic was held much like it has been for over 50 years. Later in the evening an old-time dance was held with an orchestra made up of local members and visitors."

It was wonderful to see Auburndale Church full on Sunday morning. A tent from a Vermilion machinery agent was erected beside the church to accommodate the overflow. Key 83 provided a sound system so the service could be heard by all. The service was conducted by former intern (1987) the Rev. Cecile Fausak, who is currently an Alberta and NW Conference Staff Minister for the Christian Development and Communications Division. Her sermon, 'Summer for the Soul' stressed the joy in true Christian service. An impromptu choir, made up of former choir members, added greatly to the service.

Following the service, Richard Van Ee, Councillor for the County of Vermilion River #24 unveiled the plaque commemorating the church as an historic site, the first in the County. The congregation then moved to Buffalo Coulee Community Hall for a catered lunch. The master of ceremonies, Dick Eyben introduced Beverley Green, Chairperson of the Auburndale Church Board, who welcomed the guests. After lunch, Donna Eyben began the program with several selections on the piano. Ruth Everett outlined the history of Auburndale United Church and read a bit from the original minute book. Rev. Fred Tinio, the guest speaker, wished the congregation another 70 years of faithful service. Ellenor Cleland read excerpts of the replies received from former student ministers. The letters, together with addresses, are available for anyone interested. Raleigh Kett, chairman of the Intern Support Committee, spoke about the relationship between Auburndale and Grace United Churches.

Presentations were made to Ingwald Samuelson, the first baby baptized in the church, and to Ruth and Lloyd Everett, the first couple married in the church (1935). (This couple, who recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary, have been very active in the whole life of this church.) Also thanked were Bill Arthur for his care of the cemetery, Lil Eyben for organizing Sunday School, Henry Eyben as organist, Ab and Ellenor Cleland for handling registrations, Beverley Green and Audrey Eyben for the photo display, and many others for their hard work in organizing the anniversary celebration. Henry Eyben entertained us on the piano and later accompanied the hymn sing which ended the program."

Some of the above information was obtained from a hand written history of Auburndale

Church written by Ruth E. Everett in 1995. Ruth had attended the original dedication ceremony in 1925. At the 60th anniversary of the building of the church, she was presented with a plaque in recognition of her many years of service as organist and secretary-treasurer. Her written history of the church ended with this tribute:

"I feel we should all be most grateful to our parents and grandparents, who had the vision and the faith to build a church in our community at that time. I am sure it has been a great asset to us all."

A further description of the 70th anniversary was contained in an editorial which appeared in the newsletter of the Auburndale Church as well as being reprinted in the Wainwright United Church. Again because it so accurately describes the events and ties the past to the present, it is reprinted here in its entirety:



"SUMMER FOR THE SOUL"

The title for my editorial is taken from the sermon title given on Sunday, June 11, by Rev. Cecile Fausak, a former student minister in the Auburn Charge. It adequately summarized the inward feelings of those many people, who not only gathered for the church service, but for a weekend of remembrance and fellowship. As they shared together the memories of 70 years of building.

Yes, this was the 70th Anniversary of Auburndale' United Church. It was two days of reminiscence, of joy, of dedication, of laughter, games, fun and fellowship.

As Aileen and I (Washburn Laird, the part time lay minister) went out on Saturday afternoon to register for the event, how very pleased I was to see the many motorhomes from far and near, camped on the grounds at the hall. There was laughter and joy all around, and you know, I was happy within my soul, to be a part of this.

Balloons were floating around, children were running races, and baseball games

were in progress. Bazaar items were on sale - just like a wonderful summer fair - but also in the background, the memorials to the pioneers who were dedicated to Christ to the extent of building this little country church, where they could find peace of mind, and they could worship their God in their own fashion.

On Sunday, I had the pleasure of attending the Church Service and the subsequent 'Unveiling of the Plaque'. I chose to hear the service in an outside setting. There was a large tent with benches on the church grounds; it was peaceful just sitting there, and hearing the service from within the sanctuary, rebroadcast, courtesy of CKEY 83 van. How true the words of the guest speaker, that such an event was like a rebirth - a time of sunshine and positive thinking when the light of the Word is in every heart, and there is a bond connecting even generations. I saw this in the smiles on people's faces, and their greeting to one another. It was carried into the air on the balloons which said, 'I Love You' - and other messages of faith and truth.

It might be my sense of history coming into play, but as the Plaque was unveiled and the speaker mentioned the great effort of pioneers to build this church, as a sense of unity within the community - I could picture in my mind the volunteer labourers carrying lumber, hammering nails and within their hearts praising God that they had a place to worship on the pioneer prairie. These are just a few thoughts I pass on to you, as I was a participant in this memorable event. Let the words found in one of the announcements in the Church Bulletin be the inspiration for your own summer. Take these words with you whether you camp, visit, or simply sit on your own patio enjoying nature:

**'MAY YOU KNOW THE JOYFUL,
LOVING PRESENCE OF GOD,
OUR CREATOR, REDEEMER
AND COUNSELLOR,
DEEP IN YOUR HEARTS, HERE
AND WHEREVER YOU GO.'"**



Rundle's Mission Society

Report from the Chair

The historical presence of Rundle's Mission on the shores of Pigeon Lake is more than a fact: it is the ever-present reality that shapes what we do as a community organization and a board of directors.

One of the results of having facilities to host guests at Rundle's Mission is that we can temporarily forget that the historical legacy of the site is integral to what we do. Rev. Dr. Gerald Hutchinson has continued to be the key researcher in relation to the story of Methodist missionaries, closely studying the development of syllabics and also the relationship between burial sites near Sundre and those at Rundle's Mission.

The Society has been successful over the past year in reissuing *The Meeting Place: Rundle's Mission at Pigeon Lake*, published in 1990 and written by Gerald Hutchinson. With the launch of the Methodist Missionaries in Alberta website and the recent publication of the regionally popular *Touring the Circuit: Exploring the Trails and Tales Around Rundle's Mission*, the Society continues to put the story of the Mission before a larger public. Along with this, the Society's active involvement in the Land Underfoot



Network and presenting the story of Rundle's Mission on our home website, we are mindful of this legacy and its continuing importance to our guests and members. The consultation and site development recommendations released well over a year ago continue to be an important force in the evolution of the organization, although no definitive decisions have been made in this regard. Besides this, here are key endeavours addressed by the board over the past year:

Establishing an administrative and coordinating office at the Mission after years of having off-site administration and services, the board took the step of construct-

ing an office in part of the lower dormitory. This finally gives the Society a central location for its work and coordination. We have been fortunate in having Colleen Lomas work with us as Society Coordinator, staffing the office part-time. Her work has also resulted in creating a computerized approach to facility bookings and will increase our ability to welcome guests and develop programming on the site.

Organizational development- Bylaws revision, policy and committees.

Although the Society has existed for 50 years as an organization, it had not developed a policy manual in the key areas of its work and operation. The Board began this task in the past year. While not usually a matter of great celebration, a policy manual is in effect the organizational memory that ensures continuity and an awareness of practice, as well awareness when new approaches are required. Importantly, these policies will include board governance and framework policies that state the mission and vision of the organization. Policy will continue to be drafted and reviewed so that a working policy manual will be in place by the end of 2004. As well, terms of reference were updated to guide board committees in their work. Finally, we will adopt revised bylaws at our March 2004 AGM, which more accurately reflect our self-understanding and current relationship to the United Church of Canada.

Community programs and networks.

The board continues to develop ways of serving the local community and region. Along with the Society's activity as a member of the Land Underfoot Regional Museums Network, we also presented educational events that addressed lakeshore ecological concerns, such as the symposium on the use and philosophy of water in October, *A Mirrored Heaven*. We are exploring opportunities in adult learning related to the history of the site and its relevance in rural Alberta.

In ending my term as chair of the Society, it has been a pleasure to serve in association with those other member organizations of the United Church Historical Society.

- David Ridley

MEMORIAL SALEM UNITED CHURCH 1907 - 1998

This article was written by Grace Roth with some information from the book, "We Were Never Big - Memorial Salem United Church" written by Grace Roth.

A. Presbyterian roots

Memorial Salem United Church in Medicine Hat, Alberta had its beginning as the East End Presbyterian Mission. The congregation's first church in 1907 was a salvaged derelict building that had previously served as St. John's Presbyterian Church, the first and only Presbyterian Church in Medicine Hat until its congregation moved to a new church on the south side of the tracks.

The earliest records of this congregation are dated October 26, 1907. However, prior to that date, Rev. Archie E. McLaren of Owen Sound, Ontario came to Medicine Hat as a missionary. He is believed to have organized the East End Presbyterian Mission. Services were held in private homes before a building was acquired.

The deserted, former St. John's building was moved in the spring of 1907, to the corner of Allowance Avenue and Queen Street. The Scottish Home Missionary, Rev. Archie McLaren had bought it for a sum of \$150. A loan of \$700 from the Church and Manse Building Fund financed the purchase of the necessary lot for \$450 and other expenses. During the summer, it was outfitted with chairs, new rug, lighting fixtures, a pulpit, and a silver communion set donated by Rev. Dr. Somerville of Division Street Church, Owen Sound, Ontario.

Following is a quote from notes of Mrs. Hench, the minister's wife:

"It was on October 9th, 1907, a beautiful day in autumn, when the first little group of women, members and adherents, of what was then known as the East End Mission, gathered in the first little church building on Allowance Avenue, corner of Queen Street."

Its first minister, Rev. A. McLaren, and Rev. A. McWilliams of Calgary solemnly dedicated the church to the service of God.

In the autumn of 1907, the ladies organized the Women's Missionary Society for Home and Foreign Missions. The WMS had as its aim the raising of the mission to an augmented charge. They were successful and as a result Rev. E. E. Hench was installed as their new minister in 1910. Rev. Hench remained until 1915.

The need for larger quarters soon became evident and the little building was sold. A lot at the corner of Dominion Street and East Allowance Avenue was purchased in 1912, and the new Knox Presbyterian Church was erected in 1913. Immigrants from the British Isles came in numbers to Medicine Hat, many of them to locate in the flats area of the city. These families swelled the roll of Knox Sunday School to such an extent that it was simply impossible to conduct the school in one session, so arrangements were made for the Primary and Junior children to meet, after the older boys and girls and the adult members were dismissed. This plan worked fairly well until the building of the hall which was completed in September 1913.

The need for a new larger building became apparent, but the construction was put off until 1920 because of financial difficulties at the end of World War I. In 1920 Knox Presbyterian became Knox Memorial Presbyterian, "in honour of the boys who had given their lives in the great war." The congregation moved into a new church building that same fall. The sanctuary, with the addition of the hall in 1929, a parlour



This and the following view of Memorial Salem United Church were taken in 1995.



and a kitchen in the 1950's, served the memorial Salem since that time.

B. Methodist Roots

Washington Avenue Methodist Church was

established in 1913. There was another Methodist Church in town, established in 1883. The ministers of Washington Avenue Methodist Church were Rev. Elmore J. Hodgins (1913-1917), Rev. Austin D. Richards (1917-1923), and Rev. Alfred E. Lloyd (1923-1925)

C. Amalgamations

The Washington Avenue Methodist Church and Knox Memorial Presbyterian Church had been holding joint summer services for some time. Therefore with the formation of the United Church in 1925, it seemed a very natural move for Washington Avenue and Knox Memorial to unite. The new church became Memorial United Church. Rev. J. A. Claxton was the minister when the new Presbyterian Church was built in 1913. He was also there when the foundation of Memorial United Church was laid by the Presbyterians and the Methodists in preparation for union in 1925. The new church used the sanctuary of the former Presbyterian Church and some of the furnishings from the Methodist Church. Washington Avenue Church was sold in 1919, but the manse was retained for the use of the minister of Memorial United Church. Rev. Robert McGowan was the first minister of the new United Church. His immediate successors were Rev. Joseph Lee and Rev. Rowan Benning.

As a result of the depression in the 1930's Memorial United in Medicine Hat and Gordon Memorial in Redcliff found themselves in financial difficulties. They were unable to pay their minister without the assistance of the Mission Board of the United Church. Presbytery made arrangements for one minister to serve both churches. This arrangement lasted from 1938 until 1948. The first minister to serve both congregations was Rev. H. Ellison who served from June 1938 to July 1940. The other minister that ministered to both churches was Rev. H. M. Horrocks, from July 1940 to July 1948.

D. Congregational Roots

"Salem" was a Congregational Church in the city and its congregation was part of a large pastoral charge that included Irvine, North Irvine, Josephburg, Ebenezer, and points

around Hilda and Schuler. Records for this German Pastoral Charge go back to 1914. It became the pastoral charge of Salem United at the time of church union in 1925. The Salem Church was organized in April 1928. A former grocery store and lot, 1023 Queen Street, was bought for \$475. The expenses for the church building were \$1437. Two years later (1930) improvements to the church were made. The Salem Pastoral Charge was served by the following ministers: Rev. W.E. Sieber (1928), Rev. T. Schulteiss (1928-1930), and Rev. G. F. Rieker (1930-1939). Rev. Paul Hediger (1939-1948), Rev. George Spady (1948-1958).

Salem was a German speaking congregation, and it wasn't until 1946 that English was allowed to be used in Sunday School. During this time from 1928 to about 1946, many rural churches were served by the ministers from Salem. Some of the districts included Surprise, Schuler, Hilda, North Irvine, Walsh, Ebenezer, and Tothill. In 1944, Rev. Paul Hediger travelled about 14,000 miles in eight and a half months. The two ministers that are fondly remembered today by senior German-speaking individuals are Rev. G. J. Reiker and Rev. Paul Hediger. Rev. Hediger arrived at Salem just after St. George's Anglican Church in Irvine was moved into the country north of Irvine to be renamed North Bethel United Church. It was in operation until 1955. Today it stands on the Museum grounds of Irvine.

A parsonage, on 5th Street, for Salem was completed in 1942. Rev. Hediger was on the building committee, and did most of the work himself. It eventually became the manse for the ministers of Memorial Salem until it was sold in the mid 1980's.

E. Further Amalgamations

In 1947, the German congregation of Salem United sought Presbytery's approval to build a new church. Approval was denied with the suggestion that the congregation of Salem United discuss union with Memorial United, which was located only a couple of blocks away. The Salem congregation had used the hall at Memorial on a couple of occasions when their building was too small for their needs. In 1948, the two congregations, Memorial United and Salem United began to use the same building, Memorial United Church. The name merger, Memorial Salem United, took place over several years. Both

the congregations worshipped in the same building, but at different times, and each in their respective languages. They maintained their own Board of Stewards and Session, and each held their own annual meeting. The congregations were ministered to by a young bilingual minister Rev. George Spady, who had quite a task, to work with both German and English speaking congregations, so soon after the end of World War II. Rev. Spady remained there for ten years. He and his wife still live in Edmonton, and correspond occasionally with the writer of this article. An official amalgamation never took place but the church eventually became known as Memorial Salem United.

The use of the German language became less common as the next minister Rev. Bill Wright (1958-1963) was succeeded by Rev. Wm. Morrison. The era of a bilingual min-

Memorial Salem United Church was the only church in the former Alberta Conference that had roots from the three original uniting churches: Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational.

istry at Memorial Salem ended with the departure of the last German speaking minister, Rev. Horst Seliger.

When Rev. Graham Dickie became the minister, the congregation shifted gears and replaced the Board of Elders and the Board of Stewards with a Combined Board of Elders. Rev. Dickie was shared with Fifth Avenue United Church and was at Salem only one year (1973-1974).

For the next year, Rev. Dr. Lawrence Anderson was named an interim moderator. Rev. Bruce Fyke served Memorial Salem from 1975 to 1979, when he received a partial disability pension. Then Dr. Anderson was called upon again for a year. Memorial Salem then, for the next seven years, experienced the services of a 3/4-time minister in the person of Rev. Sydney Vincent. Don't ever believe that a part time minister works only part time!

By 1987 the board and congregation decided they could pay for a full time minister and Rev. Bert Ramsay served until 1991. Richard Bristo succeeded him and stayed until 1993. The congregation carried on for a year with guest ministers under the supervision of Rev.

Carlton Miller from Fifth Avenue United.

Then a ray of hope for Memorial Salem in the form of Rev. Allan Hunt. He agreed to be a part time minister on one condition that the congregation would go along with relocation. Allan also returned his paycheck to the church. After many meetings and a survey of 5000 residents in the southeast part of the city, the small congregation relocated to the Southview School in October 1944. The church building was still used for meetings and other functions. There was enough work for another person, so Heather Carlson, a daughter of Rev. Don Reid and Rev. Helen Reid and a candidate for the ministry, was hired as Staff Associate in September 1995. Just as membership was increasing, Fifth Avenue and Memorial Salem Joint Pastoral Relations Committee called Dorothy Naylor to work with both churches. Dorothy and Heather worked together until June 1997 when Heather left to attend Theological School in Vancouver.

A joint Amalgamation Committee was set up between Fifth Avenue and Memorial Salem. The Memorial Salem building and its contents were sold in preparation for a possession date of August 15, 1997. Much of the larger pieces of memorabilia were donated to the Medicine Hat Museum and some of the more precious articles went to Fifth Avenue United Church. The Harvest Church moved in and used the building until the fall of 2002.

The last United Church service was a "Ritual for Leaving" held on August 3, 1997. In November 1997, Memorial Salem celebrated its 90th anniversary with a supper, displays, music, and dramatic presentations. The Memorial Salem congregation amalgamated with the Fifth Avenue congregation on February 8, 1998. The new congregation became the Fifth Avenue Memorial United Church (FAM) and worships in the former Fifth Avenue Church. The 1913 building, which had been variously named Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Memorial Church, United Memorial Church, and finally Memorial Salem United Church was demolished in 2003.

Memorial Salem United Church was the only church in the former Alberta Conference that had roots from the three original uniting churches: Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational.



Vignettes from the McDougall Stoney Mission Society Volunteer Newsletter Summer 2003

There's Gold in Them Thar Hills (or perhaps, not!)

The following is an excerpt from *Eastern Slopes Wildlands: Our Living Heritage*, published in 1986 by the Alberta Wilderness Association.

"According to local folklore, a character named Blackjack, apparently a pioneer of the Caribou gold rush, and his partner Lemon, from Montana, were following an old Indian trail along the Eastern Slopes of southern Alberta in the 1860s when they accidentally discovered gold. Predictably, an argument over the gold ensued. While Blackjack was sleeping, his partner murdered him with an axe and fled. Two Stoney who had witnessed the event returned to their reserve at Morleyville to tell Chief Bearspaw. The chief insisted on keeping the story a secret in order to save their hunting grounds from gold prospectors, and decreed that a curse would befall anyone involved with the gold.

Meanwhile, insane with guilt, Lemon confessed to a priest, who sent John McDougall to bury Blackjack's body. McDougall is said to have piled stones over the corpse but Bearspaw's braves returned later to obliterate all evidence of the grave and the crime. Although many people have searched the headwaters of the Highwood and the Livingstone Range area for signs of the camp or the gold, it has never been found. Skeptics believe the tale was fabricated in the 1860s to encourage people to finance prospecting parties."

Memories of Morley

By John W. Niddrie

Edited by J.W. Chalmers

From *Alberta History* 1992 Vol 40 No 3

[J.W. Chalmers writes in an introduction to this article: "This manuscript appears as the author wrote it. . . . The manuscript is dated February 3, 1938, and was written at Berens River, Manitoba, the year Niddrie retired. He died at the mission two years later, in his seventy-seventh year."]

[John Niddrie was born in Scotland in 1863 and became a Methodist preacher. He moved to Canada in 1885 and five years later he went to Morley to be a teacher among the Stoney Indians.]

Calgary, at the time of which we write [1885], was in its embryonic state. The population might have been between five and six hundred souls, and was a floating one at that, made up of freighters, teamsters and prospectors. Everything connected with this frontier village was in a pioneer and primitive condition. Police barracks, three or four trading stores, one or two saloons, with a complement of a few gambling dens, a few shanty-roofed dwellings, and you have it all.

Those were the days of the prospector, miner and cowboy regime. Much of the land where the city of Calgary now stands was unoccupied. Along the river banks amongst the willow scrub gringings might be found a few mud-roofed shacks, the dwellings of some of the more adventurous of the "squaw men" and their families.

Soon after we left Calgary we began to climb the steep grade between us and the Rockies. The rolling rounded hills through which we had been passing for nearly one hundred miles now began to merge into more precipitous hills, which in turn gave way to timber crowned ridges, ever growing higher and higher as we proceeded westward. Almost exactly nine hundred miles west of Winnipeg, we reached the historic spot known today as "Morley", lying amongst the foothills, and at an altitude of 4,078 feet, on the direct route of the Canadian Pacific Railway on its way to the western terminus.

Prior to the 1870s, very little was known of this beauty spot. True, it was frequently visited by nomadic bands of Indians who named it *Mun-u-chaben*, signifying the place from which wood is taken for the manufacture of bows and arrows, which at that time were extensively used in tribal war and in buffalo hunting. The Douglas fir tree supplied the wood for bows as it was tough and fibrous, while the saskatoon bushes supplied the wood for the best arrows.

It must be remembered that a hundred years ago the whole area was in the throes of tribal war, and conditions were distinctly different from those of the present day. The Red Men were constantly in quest of scalps and often those beautiful hills and valleys echoed with the revolting war whoop.

During the months of June and July, the foothills were seen at their best. The beautiful rounded grassy hills in many places variegated with the

western wild rose bush gives to the hill tops and sides a beauty all their own. As one would ride along on horseback, the chief mode of travel, the aroma would strike the face, inflate the lungs, and create an atmosphere difficult to describe to those who have not enjoyed a like experience.

The first Methodist mission premises at Morley were away in the foothills north of the Bow. At that time it was unsafe to move about in the open on account of the warlike condition of the Blackfoot Indians who were constantly prowling about in search of scalps. Here in the fringing of timber the work was begun and progressed most favourably for about two years. Later, after the advent of the North-West Mounted Police, and also other favourable conditions, the church and mission house were moved to the banks of the Bow River, and near the creek which now forms the boundary between the north-east end of the Stoney Reserve and the white settlement.

Here a great work was carried on. Still later, after incoming of white settlement, two services were held each Sabbath day, one for the Indian people, and one for the white settlers, who in the meantime had come in. The old McDougall church still stands today, a mute witness to a great and good work of the bygone days. To us, the building is sacred as we think of the many Indian people who worshipped within its walls and are now gone on, and have crossed the great frontier.

[The remainder of this article goes on to give brief, but sympathetically written biographical sketches of some of the more significant elders and leaders of the Stoney first nations people.]



A structure near the McDougall Stoney Mission site, thought possibly to be the laundry for the orphanage.

ANWC Archives

2003 was busier than usual for ANWC Archivist Jane Bowe-McCarthy and the staff of the Provincial Archives of Alberta. After many years in a wing of the Provincial Museum of Alberta, the Archives moved to a separate facility in the summer. Imagine packing, moving and unpacking tons of records dating back into the 1800s!

The United Church section of the archives contains records of congregations and events, including many that predate church union. While not all congregations have yet deposited their records, individuals researching church history or seeking personal information such as baptismal, marriage or death records may find what they are looking for. If you have ever wanted to do some detective work, this is a good place to start. Volunteers are always welcome!

Just ask Jerry Alexander. After the move, Jerry was one of the first through the door. As they approached the 50th anniversary of the Banff Men's Conference, organizers decided to put together a history of the event. Who better than Jerry to do the research? After all, he figures he has attended about 46 of them!

Jerry approached with trepidation, not sure what to expect. He was surprised that, in the end, he had access to a file for every conference. Initially working with the index, Jane helped identify files to 1989. For more than four months, Jerry visited the archives weekly, filling out little yellow file request forms. Retrieval aide Connie Yaroshuk always greeted him with a smile as she brought out the requests from the vaults. During this time, while dealing with some of the accumulated backlog, Jane located the recent files so that the years were complete.

Slowly Jerry worked his way through nearly 50 years of records. And what did he find? Minutes, attendance numbers and costs, brochures, pictures and biographies of guest speakers, workshop descriptions, menus, evaluation summaries and much more.

Attendance numbers varied from a low of 114 in 1956 to a high of 709 in 1967. For the first four years, wives could stay with their husbands at the Banff Centre but as attendance grew, accommodations became limited and wives, if they traveled with their husbands, had to find a bed elsewhere. In 2003, attendance was 160. Of course costs have changed too – from about \$20 for the first conference to about \$400 today.

One feature Jerry found of interest was the donation of an organ. Originally housed at the Banff Centre, it was moved in 1983 to the Banff United Church, then loaned to the Anglican Church in Banff. It was returned to the Centre but by the late

1980s, it was no longer functional.

No history is complete without pictures. Jane helped Jerry locate and select appropriate pictures; then she arranged to have prints made available for publication. In this regard, Jerry helped complete the archival record. Jane had located pictures of all the guest speakers with years but no names. Jerry returned to the files and identified each.

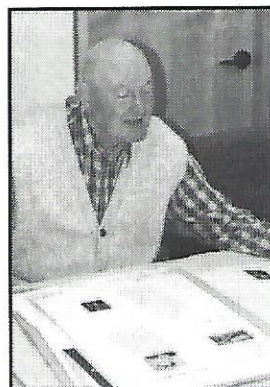
Jerry's story emphasizes the importance of safeguarding our church history. All congregations and church committees should be depositing appropriate records in the Conference Archives. Jane is always willing to help a group determine what is appropriate.

Of course, the church is always changing and some congregations now exist only in the archives. One of these is the little congregation of St. Paul's Shared Ministry in Tumbler Ridge, northern B.C. For about 15 years, this small community tried to maintain a church presence. It was a shared ministry – Presbyterian, Anglican, United and Lutheran. Imagine keeping the bureaucracies of four different denominations happy! What a paper trail! Regrettably, as the economy of this town declined, so did the church. Yet its story – the dedication of its members and the work of its ministry – lives on for those who want to explore it in the archives.

There are many such stories locked away in the vaults. If you have an interest in any area of Alberta United Church history, be sure to contact Jane or visit the archives:

Jane Bowe McCarthy, Conference Archivist
The United Church of Canada Alberta and
Northwest Conference Archives
c/o Provincial Archives of Alberta
8555 Roper Road
Edmonton, AB Canada T6E 5W1

Ph. 780.427-8687
Fax 780.427-4646
Voice mail: 780.435.3995 Ext. 230
E-mail: Jane.Bowe-McCarthy@gov.ab.ca
Website: <http://www.united-church.ca/archives/alberta/home.shtm>



*Jerry Alexander
March 5, 2004 at
Provincial
Archives of Alberta
working on history
of Banff Men's
Conference.*

OOPS! WHO'S ON FIRST?

By Jim George

In the 2002 issue of the journal, there is an article entitled, "The Story of Pincher Creek United Church" and a sub-heading "The first church built as a United Church".

A quotation from that article, written by me, Jim George, states in part,

"Congregations in other communities had taken over Methodist or Presbyterian places of worship when union occurred, but Pincher Creek was the first one built as a United Church." My source for that information was the Pincher Creek weekly newspaper, "The Echo", which describes the dedication of the Pincher Creek United Church and refers to it as "the first United Church in Canada". The construction of the church was begun in May of 1925 and the dedication ceremony was held on October 4, 1925.

However, recently I have learned that another United Church was dedicated prior to that date. In correspondence with the Auburndale United Church, I am able to quote from an article printed in the Wednesday, June 17, 1925 issue of The Standard, Vermilion, Alberta. The article reads as follows:

"FIRST EDIFICE DEDICATED TO UNITED CHURCH - District of Cummings, South of Vermilion, Opens New Church
Vermilion, June 15- To the District of Cummings, about 20 miles south of Vermilion, probably belongs the honor of having the first church building in Canada opened and dedicated to the United Church of Canada. The dedication services took place on Sunday afternoon and were conducted by Rev. C. Bishop and Rev. M. S. Kerr of the United Churches in Vermilion."

Historians will remember that the United Church of Canada officially came into being on June 10, 1925. Auburndale Church was dedicated on June 14, 1925, which, according to the information I have at hand, makes it the first church dedicated after Union.

Can anyone beat that claim?

My apologies to both Pincher Creek United Church and Auburndale United Church for misinformation. I hope this clarifies the situation. A brief history of the Auburndale United Church is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Editor's Note: Elsewhere in this edition of the Journal, the Auburndale United Church, lays claim to dedication on June 14, 1925 at 3:00 pm (indicating also that another United Church in Ontario was dedicated that same date, but at 7:00 pm).

THE ALBERTA & NORTHWEST CONFERENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Society was incorporated in 1988 and is governed by a Board of Directors of 10 people who meet approximately five times per year. All members are invited to attend the annual meeting in November. During the last fiscal year, that ended September 30, 2003, there were 92 individual members and 16 corporate members. The Society maintains a communication link with the Alberta & NW Conference through the Heritage Resources Committee. The Society has representation from the sister societies of Rundle Mission, McDougall Stoney Mission, and the Victoria Home Guard. The main activity of the Historical Society is the publication of the "Journal" whose purpose is the preservation of the history and heritage of the United Church of Canada. The Journal is distributed free of charge to:

- a) all individual and corporate members
- b) every pastoral charge in the Conference
- c) the Provincial Archives and the Calgary Public Library
- d) each person who writes an article
- e) each church whose history appears in that issue.

Boxed sets of all 17 issues of the Journal are available from the treasurer @ \$25.00

If you are interested in joining the Historical Society and thus supporting the work of recording and preserving church history, please complete the form below and send to:

Jim George, Treasurer, 79 Tudor Cres. Lethbridge, T1K 5C7.

ALBERTA AND NW CONFERENCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

United Church of Canada
79 Tudor Cres. Lethbridge, AB. T1K 5C7

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Enclosed is a donation of \$.....Please send me a receipt.