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Dedicated to Preserving Our Religious Heritage

Journal

Alberta & Northwest Conference
United Church of Canada Historical Society



Simon, Samuel and Sophie Fraser

In This Edition:

Peace United Church—McDougall Memorial Church—Rundle's Mission—
And More

Message from the Chair

Alberta and Northwest Conference is no more as a court of our United Church. Yet there are still countless stories that could be told of the congregations and pastoral charges that were part of that organization. As we move into new regional identities in Chinook Winds, Northern Spirit, and Pacific Mountain new stories will be written. As we move into these new regions and relationships, the Alberta and Northwest Conference United Church Historical Society will retain our current identity for the next while. This does not mean that we as your society have not gone through our own changes.

Thanks to Paul DuVal who has retired and moved to Manitoba. As such, I am now the Chairperson for the Society. Paul has faithfully led and directed the Board for the past few years—we were sometimes identified as co-chairs, but Paul took the larger portion of the role. Gayle Simonson who has been on the Board has needed to step away from that responsibility, but continues to be part of the Editorial Committee ably led by Austin Fennell. Neville Smith who served on the Board many years ago has returned to the Board and we look forward to his input. We are in need of others who would be willing to serve on the Board as we move forward into our new regional relationships. We are fortunate to have Katy Jones continuing as our Editor—this is her second year with us and she also brings her experience as the last editor for *In Contact*.

As the Regions determine their budgets and how they will apportion them, the Society Board has certain anxieties as we have received financial support from most of the Presbyteries of the Conference in the past. Because of a recent bequest and a couple of extremely generous and faithful donors the financial situation of the Society is stable for the coming two or three years. How we reach out to seek financial support from the Regions is something yet to be determined.

In our new pastoral relations processes every Community of Faith is invited to develop a "Living Faith Story" that helps to identify themes and values that have sustained and nurtured each community through the years and in the recent past. Stories about local congregations and ministries in past issues of *The Journal* offer templates and guidelines that could be helpful in the creation of these stories. When were the critical times in the history and life of your Community of Faith? Did you exist before Church union? Were you a new church development congregation—in which decade? Have you sponsored refugees? How well do you interact with other denominations or faith groups? Do your people travel overseas to experience Christian communities in the developing world? How have you reached outward to be in touch with the community or district within which you are situated? The stories abound and from them themes and values can be identified and reclaimed for the present and the future.

We are living in changing times. It is helpful to know where we have been that informs where we are headed. Through it all we trust that God's story of hope and redemption, reconciliation and grace continues to connect with our personal stories and those of our communities of faith.

-Donald Koots, Chair [don.riverbend@gmail.com]

Message from the Editor

Hello everyone!

If you didn't see my message from last year, my name is Katy Jones. This is my second year with The Historical Society. I've been involved with The United Church of Canada since I was very young. I had the honour of being the last editor of *In Contact* before it was restructured along with the former Alberta Northwest Conference. The position proved to be invaluable to me and I cannot thank the former editorial board enough for the opportunity.

It can be hard to accept change and growth. But I believe they are a natural part of any and all life. I am excited, as always, to celebrate the past of this glorious organization. The changes that are happening will allow us to cry and laugh about places, events, and people who may no longer be with us.

You may have heard of the ominous saying "those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it." But I believe history offers us more than lessons that we can apply to our lives. It also offers us the chance to connect with what makes us human and strengthens our commitment not just to each other but also to God.

I admit to being a little nervous that the articles submitted wouldn't be able to top what was sent to me last year in volume. I am very glad to say I was wrong! From book reviews to profiles, from heartwarming to funny, from analytical to emotional, this organization never fails to surprise and delight me.

Thank you to all who sent in their stories. It is always appreciated.

-Katy Jones, Editor

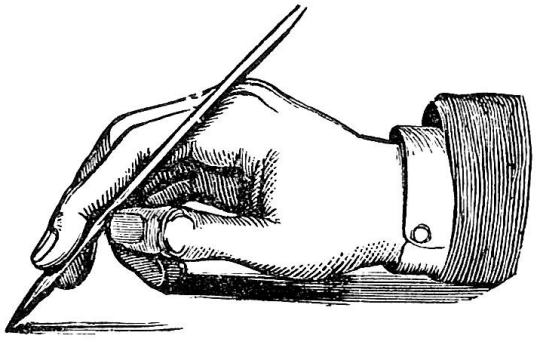


Table of Contents

Memoirs of a Moderator …..5

Knox-Metropolitan……7

Peace United's First 100…...11

Garth Mundle Obituary…….12

Rundle's Mission Society…..13

Leanne Templeton…….14

Joan Victoria Smith……15

100 Years……17

Book Review……..18

An Interview…….19

McDougall Memorial…….21

James Herdmann…….22

Life of a Student Minister…..25

Applying for Membership…...27

The AWNC Journal is intended to provide a forum by which the history of the United Church and its antecedents can be told. It is designed to make readers aware of the contributions our church has made to the spiritual life and to the social development of the area encompassed by the Alberta and Northwest Conference. The Journal seeks to encourage individuals, congregations and presbyteries to bring together human and material resources in the preservation of our religious heritage.

The ANWC Journal is published yearly by the Alberta and Northwest Conference Historical Society of the United Church of Canada. The members of the board are:

Chairs: Don Koots

Secretary: Robert MacDonald

Treasurer: Alex Cooper

Director: Austin Fennell

Director: Michael Dawe

Director: Neville Smith

Editor: Katy Jones

Memoirs of a Moderator

by Bill Phipps

"Do you think that Jesus was God?"

— "No, I don't."

"Is there a heaven?"

— "I have no idea; possibly."

"Do you believe in life after death?"

— "I don't know; I believe that my dead parents are safe in the arms of God."

"Do you believe that Jesus is the only way to God?"

— "No, I don't believe that."

This exchange was part of my infamous interview with the *Ottawa Citizen* newspaper about two months after my election as Moderator of the United Church of Canada in August 1997. It was a long interview with the Editorial Board, resulting in an extensive story and major controversy which followed me throughout my three-year term, and beyond it.

This interview opened the door; I walked through it engaging media wherever I went. The young staff at one television studio said that they never talked about religion, but that now they talk about it every day. For three years, Canadians of all faiths and walks of life were conversing about theology in the public square. I became the only Moderator who faced a petition for removal from office.

With this high profile (including political cartoons in *The Globe and Mail*, *Calgary Herald* and other media), I was able to promote the theme I'd decided to focus on during my term: recovering the Social Gospel for our engagement with the world.

With funding from the Atkinson Foundation in Toronto and the energetic leadership of Executive Director Ted Reeve, and a wonderful steering committee, what we called "The Moderator's Consultation on Faith and Economy" captured the imagination of people of faith and Canadians outside of religious institutions. We hosted public forums from Cape Breton to Port Alberni, which were taped and televised. We gave voice to the compelling economic issues of those communities and addressed them through the eyes of faith, justice and hope. We produced 2 books, *Claiming the Social Passion* and *God and the Market,* and 5 theme booklets, written or edited by Ted Reeve. People still ask me if these are available for study.

The project concluded with an all-day symposium in the Railway Committee Room of the House of Commons in Ottawa. Leadership from all the political parties and commentators from the Council of Canadians to the Conference Board of Canada to theologians and social justice advocates engaged in deep debate and conversation. It was a unique event on Parliament Hill.

Because of the *Ottawa Citizen* interview and the Consultation on Faith and Economy, I had rich conversations with Canadians throughout the country. The United Church of Canada's commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of Creation became well known.

There are many stories, but one stands out.

After the Citizen controversy made people either angry or delighted, I was invited to return to Ottawa to answer questions in a public meeting. I did, in November of 1997. At 7:00 am on a Monday morning, I showed up at Parkdale United Church, expecting about 20 people, coffee, doughnuts and bagels. I was wrong. Waiting for me were more than 400 people gathered in the sanctuary, with cameras from 3 television networks, plus several print journalists. By myself, I stood at the front answering questions of people lined up at microphones. Most, but clearly not all, were angry. After nearly 2 hours, I had to end the proceedings because, along with KAIROS colleagues, I was delivering the first climate change petitions which had been gathered from churches across the country to Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

I told the crowd and the media that they had just seen the United Church of Canada at its best. We do our theological and ethical debating in public. Do you know of any other national institution whose leader would stand in public, live to TV, radio and press, answering controversial questions with no notes or advice?

Secondly, I was leaving with ecumenical partners to engage in social justice and public policy with our political leaders.

Another major development in which I was involved was delivering the 1998 Apology to Indian Residential School (IRS)

survivors, their families and communities. It was the first IRS apology made by any organization — church, government or otherwise.

As the lawsuits against the churches who operated the schools for the federal government grew in number, there was fear, apprehension and ongoing debate about what to do. Would the church go bankrupt? What does faith call us to do?

When I arrived in Alberta in 1983 to become Executive Secretary of Alberta and Northwest Conference, I had next to no knowledge or experience of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Our true colonial history was unknown to me, so I sought opportunities to fill this huge gap in my awareness. I became involved intimately in the struggle of the Lubicon Cree to be included in Treaty 8. Alberta and Northwest Conference in partnership with others, brought strong solidarity to the Lubicon. (Finally, in 2017, they were successful.)

In the eighties, I took part in an exposure retreat called "The Denendeh Seminar" in the Northwest Territories to learn about the Dene Nation and realities of life in the North. From their inception, I became familiar with the All Native Circle Conference and the All Tribes Presbytery and their unique structures within The United Church. And, I was present at General Council in 1986 when the first Apology to Native Peoples was delivered. I experienced the unique patience, spirituality and humour of Indigenous people. For this I am extremely grateful.

All this and more became part of my personal preparation to be part of the United Church response to the Indian Residential School lawsuits and way forward.

A major catalyst for the United Church was the courageous action of the small congregation down the street from the IRS in Port Alberni, B.C.

After a year of prayer, listening and deep conversation, St. Andrew's United Church decided to make an apology to the Nu chah Nulth people. It was a moment of ethical and spiritual clarity. Then they put relentless pressure on the General Council Executive to apologize on behalf of the whole church. In 1998 we did and have been seeking to live out that apology ever since.

I believe this to be a signature moment in the life of our church, and of Canada. From that moment, the journey of faith towards right relations became real, deeper, and more challenging. I am so grateful for the leadership of our people in local communities leading to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and beyond to this moment.

Although my time as Moderator was characterized by theological debate, the challenge of the IRS legacy, and the Consultation on Faith and the Economy, I carried out my responsibilities to visit every region of our church, chair the General Council Executive, and represent our church abroad.

I travelled to places such as Congo, East Timor, Zimbabwe, Guatemala and El Salvador in solidarity with our partners for human rights, peace and justice. Attending the World Council of Churches and the World Conference of Religions for Peace (now called Religions for Peace) brought the United Church voice to the global ecumenical and interfaith gatherings. This essential part of our work keeps us in partnership with fellow faith travellers advocating for human and ecological rights around the world.

One thing became clear: The United Church of Canada is highly respected in Canada and around the world for its honest approach to growing our faith and its commitment to seeking justice, peace and the integrity of Creation. We show up!

Sometimes we doubt ourselves and worry about our future. Often, we forget how much people of all traditions or no particular faith look to us for ethical leadership. I believe we make significant contributions to the common good. I believe we could be more bold, creative, and confident in what we have to offer in building a more just world in harmony with Mother Earth and all her creatures.

Being Moderator is an enormous honour. I thank all those who surrounded me with support, challenge, vision and love. When the Moderator's term is completed, the honour of representing our church and giving appropriate leadership does not end. So, I am blessed to be part of a remarkable group of former Moderators who continue to share their faith, experience, and vision for our church and for the world God loves. I am so grateful for our church and all it contributes to the world beyond its walls. Truly, we are people of God — people of faith and hope.

Knox-Metropolitan United Church

By Gayle Simonson

A quick look through a listing of historical buildings in western Canada will show a large number of churches, many quite large, which were built at a time when populations were small but expanding. Populations are still increasing but church attendance is dwindling. This has led to closures and amalgamations for many congregations. While the buildings are documented, what inspired small groups to build structures seating 600 or more in 1907 Strathcona and what did these people contribute to the life and progress of their communities over the years? Throughout their histories, they were supported by many names still familiar in the Edmonton area.

The recent demolition of Knox-Metropolitan United Church, long a landmark on 109 Street at 83 Avenue, has brought some of this history to light. Knox-Metropolitan had deep roots in the community. South Edmonton (soon renamed Metropolitan) Methodist Church and Knox Presbyterian Church began with the arrival in 1891 of the Calgary and Edmonton (C&E) railroad to the south side of the North Saskatchewan River, an event now commemorated in End of Steel Park. The railroad provided a link to the new transcontinental CPR in Calgary, encouraging settlers to consider this area as a destination. This rail link decreased travel time from four or five days on a stagecoach to twelve hours.

C&E yardmaster John Shields encouraged Methodists to gather in his home, with some gatherings in the new Strathcona Hotel. Similarly, early Presbyterians used both homes and the hotel for gatherings. Once a month, the minister Charles Procunier from McDougall Methodist Church on the north side would come across the river to lead a service as did David McQueen, minister of First Presbyterian.

Soon plans began for buildings. Two sites were donated by C&E. With cooperation from the Knox Presbyterian congregation and under the leadership of Building Committee Chair Robert McKernan, the Methodists, whose membership included John Walter and ferry-master John McPhadan, soon constructed a small frame building which both used. The Baptists too used the building for a time.

Knox then built a separate building which soon proved inadequate. A new brick building that seated 600 was dedicated in December of 1907, with Premier A.C. Rutherford and Mayor Wm. Griesbach in attendance. This building, the oldest Presbyterian structure in Edmonton, is now home to Knox Evangelical Free Church. Knox was also the driving force behind the establishment in 1910 of Robertson College, a theological school which, following formation of the United Church of Canada in 1925,united with the co-educational Methodist Alberta College South (the first building completed on the U. of A. campus in 1910) to form St. Stephen's College. The Presbyterians also established the Westminster Ladies College.

Metropolitan also began to build in 1907 with the building dedicated in November of 1908. However, that building was destroyed by fire New Year's Day, 1942, an event commemorated in verse by lawyer and board secretary A.M. Marks. Both Knox and Strathcona Baptist churches offered worship space to the congregation and the Sunday School met in Garneau School gym. Despite shortages of labour and materials because of World War II, a new building was dedicated in 1943. When that building was demolished in 2018, the cornerstone contained time capsules from both the 1907 church and from 1942.

The congregations flourished in the post-war period. By 1958, Metropolitan had more than 1300 members. However, as neighbourhoods, and society as a whole, changed, so did church attendance. By 1972, the two decided to amalgamate as Knox-Metropolitan United Church.

Over the years, the congregations provided a spiritual home to a diverse population. However, numbers continued to drop. In June of 2016, a closing celebration honoured the work of those, known and unknown, who had worked to benefit the congregation, the community and the world. Officially the congregation became a part of United on Whyte which now meets in the former Avonmore United Church along with former members of Pleasantview and Ritchie United Churches.

Though early churches had only male ministers, the women of the congregations were responsible for much of the fundraising and social service. In the early days of Knox, the Ladies Aid provided funding, but also community entertainment by providing teas, musical evenings, pageants and plays. Their efforts also supported others. For example, bees in 1907 provided quilts to both the Vegreville mission hospital and the Strathcona Nurses Home.

The men too had groups for both church work and socializing. In 1948, the Men's Club hosted a Remembrance Day Tea attended by 1500 people. (The item doesn't mention whether or not the women did the baking!)

Sunday Schools were always an important part of church life but in addition, many youth groups such as summer day camps operated out of the churches. Explorers and CGIT (Canadian Girls in Training) offered important learning opportunities for girls while Cubs and Boy Scouts, Tuxis and Sigma-C provided boys with group activities. Young Peoples groups offered teens and young adults a chance to meet, socialize and develop leadership skills, though dancing was not considered a church activity and a dance organizer in the early 1920s was nearly excommunicated! However, other activities such as a youth orchestra were much appreciated. None of these were limited to church members.

For a number of years, Knox-Met was home to a day-care facility which has now relocated to Spirit of Hope.

Outreach

Churches everywhere try to extend support beyond their own walls with activities and projects far too numerous to list here. They also offer meeting space for many community groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous. United Churches have always been particularly supportive of Bissell Centre which traces its history to a 1910 Methodist mission. Over the years they have supported other important initiatives, one of the earliest, prior to World War I, being classes which helped Chinese immigrants learn English. In the late 1950s, Knox members helped found Jellinek House, a hostel for men recovering from addictions.

The Edmonton Journal (April 30, 1970) noted that Knox was hosting entertainment and a display of crafts "to improve understanding between white and native people." An uncredited newspaper clipping in the Knox scrapbook (c. 1970) describes weekly powwow clubs hosted by the church so that elders from Hobbema could teach those living in the city. "It is this kind of reservoir of indigenous Albertan folk music that … native leaders are becoming increasingly concerned about preserving and reviving."

Church people are often among the first to respond to an international crisis. Like many churches in the 1970s, Knox-Met sponsored refugees from Vietnam. In June of 1979, a nineteen-year-old boy and his six-year-old sister arrived and were supported by the congregation while they adjusted to a new life in Canada. Since then, sponsorships have included a young man and his mother from El Salvador, a young man from Zaire and a Somali mother with her four children, refugees from a camp in Nairobi.

In 1995, funds were raised for the Horn of Africa appeal and also for the resettlement of Rwanda refugees. The congregation also hosted a concert of the Eritrean Aid Society which raised funds to provide computers and textbooks for a university in Asmara.

Over the years, the buildings hosted many concerts, plays and other entertainments. In early years, they offered social occasions when few entertainment options were available. Some, such as most recently, the 9th Street Players (1990-2016 and continuing at Spirit of Hope), were church projects while for others, the church simply supplied a valuable venue.

In 1978, seniors housing was an issue in the city. The Knox-Met Housing Society was established to build and manage a 79-suite building where, for low income seniors, rent was a percentage of income. Management is now the responsibility of the Greater Edmonton Foundation, but the Friends of Knox-Met Manor provided an informal connection.

Windows

Many familiar Edmonton names are remembered in the dedications of the many stained-glass windows that were part of Metropolitan United Church. The first, "The Good Shepherd," was installed at the front of the sanctuary in Metropolitan United Church in 1950 in memory of John Wesley Fry, Edmonton Alderman (1932-1937) and Mayor (1937-1945.) This and eight other windows were installed by Robert McCausland Ltd, of Toronto, the oldest stained-glass company in North America.

Following amalgamation in 1972, two windows created by Paul Winter Art Glass Studio were donated to remember the work of the United Church Women of Knox United Church.

"A Sower Went Forth to Sow" was installed in 1966, donated by the family of Rev & Mrs. R.E. Finlay and dedicated "In grateful memory of the pioneer ministers and their wives who served God and ministered to the people in the early days of Alberta."

Finlay had arrived in Alberta in 1901 and was the first to organize an archive for the United Church in Alberta, a task subsequently undertaken by Florence Scoffield, a member of Knox and then Knox-Metropolitan.

Edmonton stained glass artist Brenda Malkinson created installations between 1979 and 1987, including eight panels forming the "Gift of Life" octagon facing 109 Street. This and several others will be installed in a new Canadian Reformed Church in St. Albert and will be dedicated there in the spring. "Mother and Child" now greets those entering the Grey Nuns Hospital. "A Sprig of Hope and Joy" is located at Knox-Met Manor.

Warren Mack, long-time organist and choir director at Knox-Metropolitan, also designed and created two windows to honour those who had served the church.

Eight windows have been installed at Pilgrim United Church and some have been sold to individuals. "The Good Shepherd" and five others are now stored at Spirit of Hope.

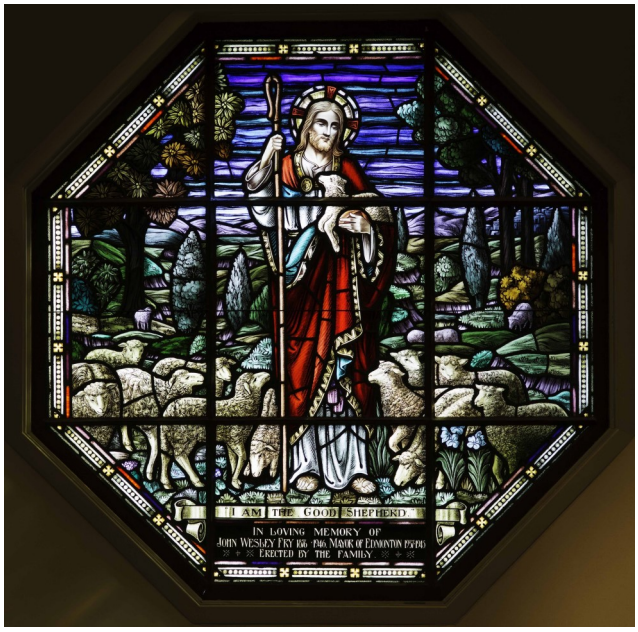
Photos of the church and the windows can be found on-line at the Institute for Stained Glass in Canada website, www.glassincanada.org.

Memorial Garden

In 1981, Knox-Met created a memorial garden for the interment of ashes. With the closure of the church, the names of the 135 people remembered there have been inscribed on a monument which was dedicated in Beechmount Cemetery in October 2018. The four plaques from Knox and Metropolitan that commemorate those killed in the world wars are to be installed in Light Horse Park in Old Strathcona which pays tribute to Alberta's military history.

Since 1892, the spiritual communities of Knox and Metropolitan have contributed significantly to the life of Edmonton's south side and abroad. Some will feel the loss deeply. In a "Memory Book," a collection of writings by members of Knox-Met to recognize its closing in 2016, the significance of the church is perhaps best summarized by Lesley Robertson, who wrote, "Though just a shell – this building has housed a village, serving as the hub of community for generations and the locus of life-long connections. We will feel "her" absence keenly but we look ahead with gratitude and optimism knowing the community, the heart and soul of Knox-Met, will continue to nourish and flourish in a new home."

Pictures of the Stained-Glass Windows from Knox-Metropolitan



'The Good Shepherd'

Photo taken by Rick Bramm



'A Sprig of Hope and Joy'

Photo taken by Rick Bramm



'Gift of Life'

Photo taken by Rick Bramm



'Mother and Child' Photo taken by Rick Bramm

Peace United's First 100 Years

By Charmain Wood

Peace United Church in Irvine, Alberta began life in 1917 as a group of German Christians who gathered for worship in homes until a church was built. The congregational "Friedens Gemeinde Kirche" was opened on August 19th, 1918, with Rev. Henry Triese as the first minister. Services were conducted in German until the 1940's.

In 1925, the Irvine Congregational Church became part of the newly-formed United Church of Canada and was re-named "Peace United Church."

Peace United Church has been part of various pastoral charges, which also included many surrounding churches with ministers sometimes holding three services per Sunday. Originally, travel between preaching points was long and challenging.

At the present, in 2018, Peace United Church shares ministry with Gordon Memorial United Church in Redcliff and Westminster United Church in Medicine Hat. The regular ministers are Rev. Jan Stevenson and Rev. Chelsea Masterman.



'Peace United Church' photo taken by Beth Noble

Highlights in the early days included the annual three-day tent meetings hosted by various churches and attracting attendees from far and wide. Also important was Confirmation. Classes based on the catechism were held for four weeks; culminating in a special event on Palm Sunday. Confirmation still takes place, although the process may have changed somewhat. Over the years, a favorite occasion has always been the well-attended Christmas services.

In 1960 a decision was made to build a new church particularly because the Sunday School was large and needed more space. With community help this vision was accomplished. In 2017, the process of kitchen renovation to health certification standards was completed.

In recent years, a highlight of the church's activities continues to be the always-enjoyed Christmas celebration, now with a special participatory worship service, turkey supper and secret-pal gift exchange.

Spring and fall suppers serve to bring the wider community together. As well, the church workers bake for cookie and tart sales and participate in 20-mile post days – Irvine's exhibition and rodeo, with a parade float and sales table. The church for some years has been the meeting place for the Irvine and District Lions' Club, suppers catered by the church's cooks.

Recently the church has begun to use modern telecommunications to supplement the ministry.

A special celebration marking 100 years for service and fellowship took place on February 11, 2018.

Garth Mundle (1935-2019)

By Gayle Simonson

Many United Church members in Alberta were saddened to learn of the death of Garth Mundle in January 2019. A native of Nova Scotia, Garth and his partner Dorothy Naylor spent many years in ministry in Alberta before moving to Ottawa. Garth served as the principal of St. Stephen's College in Edmonton from 1979 to 1994.

After ordination in 1959 in Maritime Conference, he served in New Brunswick for three years where he met and married Dorothy Naylor. He pursued graduate work in the United States where they remained for eight years. Following a six-year ministry in Cobourg, Ontario he was called to be principal of St. Stephen's College in Edmonton. During his tenure there from 1979 to 1994, Dorothy, a diaconal minister, served at several Edmonton churches. Following retirement from St. Stephen's, Garth served, often with Dorothy, in intentional interim ministry (or transition ministry) for a number of Alberta churches in Edmonton, Calgary and Balzac. In 2007, they moved to Ottawa and did further interim work, before becoming a part of First United in Ottawa.



Garth Mundle

Garth saw his work at St. Stephen's as a time to explore "new possibilities" and indeed many new programs began during that time. Fred Tappenden, the current principal, wrote that, "Principal Mundle was a visionary within the history of St. Stephen's College."

In an interview during the publication of *Ever-Widening Circles: A History of St. Stephen's College*, Garth outlined the goals he had had for the college, putting theological education into a more global context and making it "a place for innovation, both for methodology and theology, especially in the areas of feminist, liberation and radical theologies."

Garth saw it as a place for ongoing theological education for both ordered and lay people. The faculty hired Fran Hare as its first female academic and introduced such programs as the Master of Theological Studies and study tours to destinations that included Israel and Cuba. Tappenden believes that Garth's time was "marked by vibrancy and ambition, all of which flowed from the Principal himself."

Why did Garth feel so strongly about the church? In an interview with the *Victoria Times Colonist* in 2016, he stated that, "I am both a physical and a spiritual being and I need to be reminded of that periodically." When asked "Why the United Church?" he replied, "Because it allows the kind of thinking I do."

Our sympathy is extended to Dorothy and to their daughter Carol, son Jim and their families. He was predeceased by son David and granddaughter Tina.

For those who knew Garth, in the words of the message from First United Church in Ottawa, "Garth's spirited ways will continue to dance among us."

Rundle's Mission Society

By Gayle Simonson

In response to the research of Rev. Gerry Hutchinson on early Methodist missionaries in the area, the Rundle's Mission Society was established on Mission Beach at Pigeon Lake to develop a "useful living memorial on an important historic site." Its importance is related to its use for many years as an indigenous meeting place and the 1847 establishment of a Methodist Mission by Rev. Robert Rundle and his Metis assistant Benjamin Sinclair. Though Rundle spent very little time there, Sinclair and his wife Margaret spent a number of years maintaining the mission before other missionaries, including John McDougall and Henry Bird Steinhauer spent time there.



Historical Site Sign

The location was designated a national historic site by Parks Canada in 1963 and a monument unveiled September 12, 1965. It was later developed by the Alberta Government and named the Benjamin and Margaret Sinclair Historic Site in 1997.

Since 1957, the non-profit Rundle's Mission Society has operated a lodge that has served as a meeting place and retreat centre. The property also includes two large cabins to provide extra accommodation. Recently two separate entities have been defined – the Rundle's Mission Society and the Rundle's Mission Retreat Centre.

The Society will celebrate National Indigenous Day Friday June 21 with a plaque dedication, a feast and the raising of the Tipi for the summer. The day will focus on Metis settlers Simon and Sophie Fraser, both of whom had been born at the HBC base at Jasper House and who first arrived at Pigeon Lake in 1879.

In 2005, the society first developed curriculum units to introduce students to "the history of Alberta as it related to the story of Aboriginal people, missions, fur trade, treaty signing, government land surveys and subsequent settlement." Field trips are available to supplement social studies programs in Grades 4, 7 and 10.

For further information, check the website at www.rundlesmission.org, email info@rundlesmission.org or phone (780) 389-2422

Leanne Templeton, Archivist for United Church Regions 2 and 3

By Gayle Simonson

Last year's Journal introduced us to a new Conference archivist, Angie Friesen. Angie was with us for about a year. She did a wonderful job, organizing files and working with churches and volunteers. However, when offered a full-time job with the Provincial Archives of Alberta, she accepted. We were sorry to see her go but wished her well in her new position. We also appreciated her ongoing transitional assistance as we welcomed a new archivist, Leanne Templeton, to work with the evolving structure as Conferences gave way to Regions. Leanne has worked diligently to understand church structures past and present and to handle the influx of records that the changes are causing. These changes include learning to cope with split administration between Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver. You had a steep learning curve, Leanne, but we appreciate your dedication and the hard work you have done. We are delighted to work with you.

Leanne's Story (written by herself)

I grew up in the northwest of Calgary. As a child, I wanted to become a mystery novelist. My mother would sign me up for writing workshops and send me to book-making classes. I remember in grade two, we did a temperament/personality exam and the computer told me that my ideal career would be "priest or nun". This was a very bizarre result for a seven-year-old tomboy who at the time didn't even attend church! I think that I have wrestled a bit with that computer prediction ever since and wondered what answers I gave that caused it to spit out such an obscure occupation; it certainly wasn't the fireman, nurse or postal worker that everyone else in the class seemed to get.

After that, a friend's mom started inviting me to attend Sunday School at St. David's United Church with her sons. I went a few times, often enough to get my own nametag, but my parents were not fans of organized religion and so the invitations stopped. However, my parents did allow me to attend a church camp in Cypress Hills one week every summer. This to me was heaven. At the age of fifteen, I began attending a Protestant church about one km away from my home. The congregation was warm and welcoming and this led to my attending the North American Baptist College in Edmonton where I met my husband. We will be celebrating our 20th anniversary this August and have two beautiful and crazy kids, Violet is four and Ezekiel nine.

I have a BA degree in economics and German studies from the University of Alberta and a Master of Science Degree in Archives and Records Management from the University of Dundee, Scotland. A confirmed bibliophile, philatelist and genealogist, it seems inevitable that I would pursue a career caring for paper records. I began my master's studies while working as the executive director of the Leduc #1 Energy Museum. By the time I finished, I was living in Montreal and working with the Jewish community as assistant to the executive director of the Montreal Holocaust Museum. Upon returning to Alberta, I had my first baby and became the Librarian for the Sisters of Providence in western Canada. I still work for the Sisters part time. I've found it very rewarding to work with diverse religious groups and value the opportunity to learn about and witness how others worship and connect with the Divine. Incorporating new viewpoints and weighing the theology of others helps to inform my own walk; sometimes I wrestle with things that are 'different' and sometimes I find myself in agreement. Regardless, it keeps my faith fresh and my journey with the Lord active. I feel very blessed to join the staff of Chinook Winds and Northern Spirit. This work fulfills my need for a spiritual connection to people and to the importance I place upon preserving and translating history for future generations.

An Extraordinary Lady, An Extraordinary Life

By Neville Smith

*"Spiritual Light reveals, shows us the way we should live, love, care, serve and share the Light with others." (*From Joan's Notes*)*

An Extraordinary Lady, *An Extraordinary Life* is the title of a booklet I recently published in memory and honor of my late spouse Joan who passed in March 2018. I wrote a snapshot of her person and life because her positive impact on the Church, the community, and individuals is an inspiration to anyone wanting to live a meaningful, spiritual, and motivating life. Joan was a light to all who knew her, and I wanted to share that light further. She was wise, uplifting, and caring—a woman of amazing faith, hope, and love. I first met Joan when she came to the United Theological College of the West Indies in Jamaica in 1967 as a candidate from the Presbyterian Church in Trinidad to train for the Diaconal Ministry. She was one of the very few women who came to train for the active Ministry of the Church in the service of God. She was certainly a trail blazer for women in the 1960's entering Ordered Ministry. Throughout her life, she would encourage people from all walks of life and backgrounds to collaborate and contribute to the wellbeing of all.



Joan Victoria Smith

We fell in love in College, and although some wondered how it would work out (a Presbyterian and a Methodist), it worked. We embarked after marrying on a 46-year adventure in Team Ministry encompassing different areas of the world such as the English and Dutch Caribbean, Europe, as well as Western and Eastern Canada. Also, besides living in various countries and places, Joan and I travelled extensively and ministered in some form everywhere we went. It did not matter if Joan was employed or volunteering, she was always dedicated to kindly serving others, to improving things, and to bringing God's love to everyone. She saw potential and value in every person and was never weary to humbly step forward to help where she could. She contributed an enormous amount (whether behind the scenes or in leadership roles) to all the congregations we worked in: large ones—small ones, struggling ones—expanding ones, and so many other ones.

I will give some examples of our journey in Team Ministry. It was consistently a heavy workload, but with much fulfillment for both of us. We saw our hard work build Churches, strengthen congregations and the community, and bring people together in faith, hope and love. We were happy that what we put into our work led to wonderful achievements. In one situation, Joan pastored three congregations in St. Vincent while I was assigned to six other congregations. Altogether we balanced the needs of nine congregations with their own unique circumstances, and we managed for each one to grow and thrive. In Curacao in the Dutch Netherlands Antilles, I served as the second minister born in the Dutch Antilles to serve the United Protestant Church in nearly 350 years. I later became the Moderator of the United Protestant Church in the Netherlands Antilles; and The United Protestant Church (knowing that Joan was theologically trained), recognized Joan's credentials and commissioned her to serve as the first Diaconal Minister of the United Protestant Church in 350 years. Joan was the first woman to formally serve in a long line of male ministers.

Along with all the Church work between us, we served in numerous groups and regional ecumenical organizations as well e.g Joan served as Secretary of the Curacao Council of Churches, and later I as Chair of the Curacao Council of Churches and a member of the Broad Executive (Continuation Committee) of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (that encompassed multiple denominations and languages of the region) Joan was able to effectively balance Church work, community activities, family (we had two children), while at the same time navigating through diverse cultures and situations. When we were in The Netherlands in Europe, I was called to serve as the first Circuit minister of the Holland Methodist Church. It was a pioneering assignment. As a United Church of Canada minister at that time, the United Church allowed me to be there owing to my Dutch background and knowledge. There were two congregations—one in Amsterdam, the other in Rotterdam. They were just starting up and there was much to be done. Again, Joan was actively supportive (doing work behind the scenes and taking leadership in what was needed); she worked long days and nights alongside me, and we successfully accomplished a strong foundation for that mission to build upon.

In Canada, we wanted to work in the United Church of Canada since that denomination had given both Joan and I scholarships to further our education. We were first called to two congregations (Stony Plain and Mewassin) in Western Canada (Alberta). It was a different environment for us—small towns and vast prairie lands—but we felt welcomed. Joan and I knew that we wanted to help the churches grow and thrive, and the congregations were resilient and willing to think forwards. In our time there we saw both congregations really grow numerically, spiritually and in outreach work, as well as in infrastructure. It was a congregational, community and Team Ministry accomplishment that brought us great satisfaction. Joan never expected any accolades for what she was doing or helping with. Joan's motivation to be a supporter/helper came from within. She believed that supporters/helpers were crucial. Without supporters and helpers, churches and organizations would lack the sustenance to survive. When I was called to the Barrhead Pastoral Charge (now Grizzly Trail Pastoral Charge in Alberta) comprised of Barrhead, Fort Assiniboine, and Mosside congregations, it was again about ensuring the churches developed nicely. Joan and I pulled our sleeves up and got to work, and we saw great results. For example: the Barrhead Church fully paid off its debt for the new Church building that had been built before we came, the Sunday School space at the back of the Fort Assiniboine Church was expanded, and the small Mosside congregation progressed. Joan was as usual very active in the work of these congregations in so many different ways. For example: since Joan was licensed, she preached in several of the churches during the summer months when the regular ministers were on holidays. In Ontario where I served as General Council staff (United Church of Canada), Joan availed herself of an opportunity to study further at Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto. Joan always sought to expand her knowledge, and she was an advocate of ongoing learning. We both saw learning and self-development as important at every stage of one's life. After working as General Council staff, I was called to serve Cooksville United Church (Ontario). We spent 14 years there and accomplished phenomenal growth for the Church that was about to close its doors before we came. For example: the congregation added about 250 new members and adherents. Cooksville United Church became a model for other churches in Ontario.

I was also able to serve at all levels of Church Governance—for example as Chair of Halton Presbytery, Member of Hamilton Conference Executive, Commissioner to General Council and Member of Permanent Committees of General Council—and also at the same time serving on a number of fraternal organizations. Joan also continued to serve in several groups, including fraternal organizations doing community work. Joan and I were able to raise significant funds for charity. Joan saw challenges as opportunities, and what some consider limitations/impossibilities she looked at as incentives to push beyond, to open the heart and mind to God's Goodness and Grace, trusting in God's power to overcome.

The United Church of Canada recognized Joan's contribution to Team Ministry in the various parts of the world. Our Team Ministry internationally and in Canada was very productive, reviving, and elevating for people, churches, and organizations.

When we retired at the end of 2016, we hoped to continue serving albeit not in the same way as we had in the active ministry. We reflected on all the groups Joan and I had founded (for example: seniors groups) books written and the initiative taken to have pioneers such as Obed Anthony and Johannes Bakhuis (Pachi Jan), who respectively established English- and Papiamentu speaking congregations in Curacao, all the Churches we worked hard to move forward, all the community activities we undertook to aid community, and all the people we helped. Together we always did our best to promote growth, fairness, equal opportunity, justice for all, mercifulness, understanding and compassion. We reflected also on all that we learned from others, and we were thankful for the people working with us to do nurturing and constructive things.

One of Joan's favorite hymns was *It Only Takes a Spark*. In its words, she would truly say: "I wish for you my friend, this happiness that I've found—on God you can depend, it matters not where you're bound. I'll shout it from the mountain top; I want my world to know: The Lord of Love has come to me, I want to pass it on." May everyone pass God's love on!

One Hundredth Church Anniversary in Irvine

By Beth Noble

The Peace United Church in Irvine was founded as a German Congregational Church in 1917 and became part of the newly formed United Church in 1925. The congregation celebrated its 100 years of history on Feb 11, 2018. A crowd of members and guests gathered in the ballooned-decked church to worship together and honor times past. Former minister Blaine Schaufele was present to give words of greeting and reminiscence.

Following the service all partook of a delicious lunch. Certificates were presented by Drew Barnes. An excellent pictorial display brought back many memories.

The members of Peace United Church are now looking forward to the future which God has in store.

'100 Years!' Picture taken by Beth Noble





'100 Years!' Picture taken by Beth Noble

Book Review

Peter Bush, Western Challenge: The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Mission on the Prairies 1885-1925, Watson Dwyer Publishing Limited, 2000

By Robert MacDonald

Starting from a paper in his studies at Knox College, this book, written by a Presbyterian minister, discusses the development and influence of the Presbyterian Church in Canada beginning with the work of the first Superintendent of Home Missions, the Rev. James Robertson until Church Union in 1925. It describes the challenges of bearing witness in a new land. And with the experience of mass migration including the impact of non-British immigrants and their situation both rural and urban. The author suggests in the first part of the Twentieth Century, church leaders made a significant shift in thinking away from simply preaching the Gospel to more social service and indicates how the shift played out to 1925. And as the Presbyterian Church expanded in this context, bureaucracy often came into conflict with missions and congregations. In his treatment, the author diverges from other works such as John Moir's *Enduring Witness*. Moreover, unlike *Prairie Spirit* (an anthology of essays largely focussed on Manitoba), the study is not a series on people but rather, it attempts an overall but detailed and thematic approach to the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the west during this time.

The book is divided into seven chapters, each with a central focus. It begins with an analysis of the larger factors which the Church operated within. These include the National Policy of John A. Macdonald, the Northwest Rebellion (1885), the drive to provincehood, immigration, the farm movement, and the First World War and the recovery. A number of Presbyterians who played roles in some of these developments are indicated such as James Walker in Calgary, Donald Macleod in Edmonton, Thomas Tweed in Medicine Hat, and the Galts in Lethbridge. The study then looks at the missions, through the work of James Robertson and his successors such as the Revs. James Herdman and John Carmichael. In southern Alberta there was the challenge of the Mormon immigration. During this time, various models of mission were chosen: use of students, women, lay leaders, the ordained, even immigration chaplains. An aspect of Presbyterian history often forgotten is the response to 1885 and the attempt to develop native personnel and the evangelisation to First Nations. The example of Prince Albert is given. A central chapter focuses on "Work Among the Foreigners", that is the evangelistic attempts with respect to the non-British (often labelled as non-Anglo -Saxon). The vision of Robertson and the reaction of congregations are cited, followed by discussion of groups such as Hungarians, Scandinavians (such as at Castor or Rocky Mountain House), Doukhobors, Ukrainians (such as at Vegreville), and francophones (for example the work of the Rev. John Duclos). The urban challenge is noted as well as a shift in philosophy. An issue was to balance the mission and cultural norms. In the north, northern B.C. and the Yukon are treated as well as the opening of the Peace Country (the Rev. Alexander and Agnes Forbes). The shift in philosophy mentioned earlier occurs with the Evangelism and Social Reform Movement which included the Sabbath Preservation (Lord's Day Alliance), Temperance, and social services in the cities including Edmonton's Bissell Centre. Laymen's Associations and the Forward Movement are indicated. In the latter development, the author disagrees with Moir's assessment on its failure or success. Finally, the whole issue of the question of Church Union is related--the votes, the proposals including federation, the debates in which people like the Rev. W.G. Brown of Red Deer and the Rev. David McQueen of Edmonton took leading roles. McQueen became the first Moderator of the continuing Presbyterian Church.

The volume provides a 'companion' to one on the Methodists (George Emery, The Methodist Church on the Prairies 1896-1914, reviewed in Volume 21). Well -researched, it uses the archive collections of the Presbyterian Church in Canada and the United Church of Canada, as well as memoirs and a number of secondary sources, both background and focus on church history. And while many of the references are in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, there are a number of Alberta ones such as the Forward Movement in Manyberries, or the Germans around Medicine Hat. Thus helping to put into balance how Alberta developments fit into an overall pattern and context.

An Interview

The following is an interview with our very own Robert MacDonald about the formation of the Historical Society. The questions were created by Rev. Austin Fennell (Ret.)

1. How did discussion begin for the formation of a Historical Society?

Stephen Wilks had an interest in church history as seen in his B.D. thesis and book on the early church in the Airdrie area. He was also chair of the Historic Sites and Archives Committee of Calgary Presbytery which had oversight of the Provincial Historic Resource, the McDougall Memorial Church, and its development (including a proposal), and which had developed an "Inventory" of Calgary churches including some historical sketches. In conversations with Rev. Ernie Nix, a former minister in Alberta including Hillhurst (whose history he wrote as well as one on the McDougalls) and then with national archives. Stephen learned that the United Methodist Church in the US had an Historical Society which had time allotted at the annual Conference. Stephen took the idea to the Conference Archives Committee, chaired by Bruce Peel, which 'authorised' the creation of the Society.

2. Who was involved in the planning?

In planning the Society, Stephen Wilks called a meeting at Renfrew United Church. It consisted of Rev. Gerald Hutchinson, Bruce Peel (University of Alberta Librarian and editor of a western Canadian History bibliography), Rev. Herman Miller (representing Red Deer at Conference Committee), and himself. He invited me to be part of the Planning Committee (as I was part of the Presbytery Committee). The Interim Board would consist of Bruce Peel representing the Conference Committee, Gerald Hutchinson the Rundle Mission, Stephen and myself. As well, Paul Gibson, who was related to an early pioneer clergy, was named and served for a short time. When the full Board was selected, it would include the representative of the McDougall Stoney Mission Society whose name was Len McDougall.

3. How did the decision to produce a journal come about?

It was felt that if a Society were to be formed, there should be some way to encourage writing about the United Church (and its precedents) history as well, as getting people to read it. Hence a Journal was decided. It was hoped, of course, there would be a lot of interest, especially as fees were low. As well, with the idea that for some credibility it should be modelled after academic journals, it was hoped that there would be more issues per year, hence early numbers indicate 'issue 1'.

Large numbers were initially produced. These hopes never came to fruition. The title was chosen by Stephen who was editor and I was assistant editor. Together, we put things together at his house--often initially cut and paste, then put into a computer by a printer. Before final printing, the Board proof-read the result. Initial issues reprinted material, with permission, on Victoria Mission. As well, for a brief period, newsletters were produced for the members. But the mailing cost was too high.

4. How was the conference consulted?

In the formation, because the name The United Church of Canada was in the official title, permission was sought, with the General Secretary sending us to Alberta and Northwest Conference Executive Secretary to get permission to use the name in the title.

5. What was regarded as essential for the formation of the society?

It was essential to have the name and bylaws registered by the province and federal government (for tax purposes). An executive or board with representation from local historic sites (McDougall, Rundle, eventually Victoria) and liaison with the Conference Committee, and a Journal as the voice were two items. An official mailing address was needed (where the books were). Furthermore, a bank account was set up with ATB through the initial Secretary-Treasurer Rev. Herman Miller, who had done this sort of work in Carstairs.

6. Was there a cost involved? If so, where did the funds come from?

Funding would come from several sources. Initially, of course, it was from membership (individual and corporate) fees, and possibly from Conference since copies of the Journal would be distributed to congregations through Conference. In early years, money was provided by the Conference Committee, especially when there was money left over from the budget. It was hoped Presbyteries would contribute. And some did. Donations from individuals were important. Stephen used contacts to get some, as well he got some from Chapelhow Legion where he was chaplain. It was hoped that a Foundation could be established to sustain the Society.

7. Who was chosen to be the first officers?

The first officers were Stephen as President, myself as Vice-President, Rev. Herman Miller as Secretary-Treasurer (until his death at which point I took over). Stephen was the editor, and I was the assistant editor. Sites of meetings of the Board initially varied (Calgary and Edmonton especially, but also Victoria Mission and Lethbridge), and travel allowances were based on Conference rules. AGMs took place in Edmonton--Museum, Grace, Red Deer--Museum, Rundle Mission, and Calgary--Renfrew, Chapelhow. Sometimes the Executive Secretary sat in meetings in Edmonton.

8. There were bylaws in place. Did the society have a model in place for the creation of the bylaws?

It was difficult crafting bylaws acceptable to the province, and in the end the model chosen was that provided by the province.

9. What else would you like us to know about the creation of the society?

In an effort to encourage both the writing of history and interest in church history, early issues included a 'spread' on how to write local history. A brochure was produced to promote this and made available at Conference meetings as part of a display. In addition, a brochure was produced informing people about the Society. And a 'spread' was added to encourage donations. Stephen, as well as myself, did advise some groups thinking of publishing a history or applying for historic resource or site status. Letters were sent in support. He tried to get retired clergy to write memoirs, using his own as an example. Stephen hoped the Society could publish a history of the United Church in Conference, something for which I was initially asked to check on sources. A committee, including someone who had helped with a volume on Manitoba's church history, looked into it but it was a question of whether to follow a model of vignettes or overall history. Eventually it became something I have been attempting to do. I was partly successful in articles in the Journal and in Annual Reports of the Archives Committee of Calgary Presbytery. Included in this work would be a small booklet on the McDougall Stoney Mission for that organisation. Some work was done trying to put an existing paper on early Methodism in southern Alberta into suitable form. There is still a bit of work to be done on this. The Artifact Project grew out of an AGM at the Provincial Museum when Stephen asked why a display by David Goa on religious traditions in Alberta did not have one on the United Church. In discussion with Goa, the project developed, with help from people like Dorothy Hodgson, and a researcher employed. In addition, there was a publication on aspects of Conference history., including articles by Stephen and myself. Funding came from one of Stephen's many contacts. On two occasions, the Society hosted the Canadian Methodist Historical Society, at Wesley and Trinity, and later at Renfrew.

10. Was there a policy or declaration about what should or should not go into the journal?

There was no explicit policy except that we encouraged articles on individual churches. There would be a book review if possible and statements from Conference Presidents and the Conference Archivist. It was decided that at the AGM, so that it wouldn't be merely business (motions and reports), there should be a 'talk' after business and lunch. These would be printed or summarised in the Journal wherever possible. The first of these dealt with some of the dos and don'ts in dealing with historical designations/renovations and the resources of the provincial government.

Report on McDougall Memorial Church

By Robert MacDonald

Despite the disastrous fire of the McDougall Memorial Church in the spring of 2017, a new Board of Directors, selected in the fall of 2017, has been active. In 2018, the Board was busy in lining up events. In February, a members' meeting was held to hear from several people, the provincial government, and an individual involved in conservation. They discussed possible scenarios for the site, now that the church, a central piece of the site, had been destroyed. Among the information provided were federal and provincial guidelines for conserving historic places. A lively Q and A session followed. With the church gone, the board decided to keep the significance of the site alive with several events. In the spring, there was a cleanup of the site. And at the end of May, a pipe ceremony was held, symbolising the journey together with the Nakoda. The first Saturday in June, there was a botanical walk and talk at the site. At the end of the month, there were presentations by an historian and an elder from Maskwacis (Hobbema). In July, there was an elders' lunch with discussions on the building of the church in the first place. A few days later there was a presentation on the archaeological investigation of the settlement area near the church. A further talk dealt with the importance of the bison with an update on the Banff reintroduction. Nakoda people talked about their relationship with the bison. In August, people were invited to come and watch an artist sketching the church as it was using charcoal from the burnt timbers. It should be noted that in June the square logs of the church, which were only charred on the surface, were documented, numbered and catalogued, and placed in storage to be used if the church is restored in some fashion. The new Rev. George McDougall cairn in northwest Calgary was dedicated, while the cairn at the entrance to the site was repaired.

There was participation in Historic Calgary Week and Banff Days. Also, members from the Board attended several cultural events an unveiling of a Chiniki plaque for the 150th Birthday of Canada, the dedication of the rebuilt Stoney Nakoda Trapping and Cultural Centre, and some elders' meetings, all for the purpose of building bridges. In September, another members' meeting was held in which a report on the options for the site was given. The options ranged from a simple cleanup to partial restoration of a modern church. Provincial representatives and a conservation expert were present. At the AGM in November, members opted to restore the church in a three-phase process: determining how to incorporate fire protection and other modernisations with minimal intrusion into restoration; restoration with salvaged logs and new materials; and an enhanced interpretation with stories from the Stoney Nakoda First Nation, the McDougall experience, and the reconstructed church. The provincial government has approved the plans to restore the church in an historically accurate way and at the same time, enhance the interpretive walk.

A meeting was held in May 2019 to update members. Some grants have been applied for, and some funds are available for the 2019 season. Some logs which could be used in the repair of the log cabin and for rebuilding the church were offered free. The traditional spring and autumn services were held inside a tent. In June, the theme was Forward Together, with stories and songs. In the fall the focus was on the bison and the relationship between the Rev. George McDougall and the Stoney. Tony Snow of a well-known Stoney family was involved in putting the services together. In 2019, plans are underway for several events. The regular June and September services, the second Sunday of the month at 3:00 p.m., are scheduled. For more information on summer events see www.mcdougallstoneymission.com

Rev. James Herdman, Peace Maker

By Robert MacDonald

James Chalmers Herdman was born 13 February 1855 in the manse of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Pictou, Nova Scotia, where his father the Rev. Andrew Walker Herdman was minister for thirty years. He was named for an uncle who was also a clergyman. In his youth, he demonstrated piety, often found in his room, alone and in prayer. Though he enjoyed outdoor games, he would not allow foul language or unfair play. By age twelve, he showed his natural artistic gifts with pencilled sketches of characters in Pilgrim's Progress. At his mother's death, she asked him to read one of her favourite selections from Pilgrim's Progress. Educated at Pictou Academy, he was discouraged by his father from entering the ministry (because of a lisp) in favour of a mercantile career. But he got his father's consent by obtaining a bursary by which he received the B.A. at Dalhousie. He then studied theology in Edinburgh, supporting himself by working in the public library. He received the M.A. and B.D. When he was about to leave, his classmates gave a dinner in which lemonade, not the usual spirits, were consumed, adhering to his request. Before he left Scotland, he preached at his uncle's church at Melrose, a rare occasion when two clergy of the same name occupied the pulpit at the same time. On his return to Canada, he preached for his father with the text "If I will be lifted up, I will draw old men unto me."

In 1878 he was called to Campbellton, New Brunswick. During his time there he built up a strong congregation as well as made trips to the lumber camps to preach to people out of the way. At that time, he married Miss Loudon of Chatham. In 1885 he was called to Calgary Knox. Initially he served outside the town, travelling to places like High River, Okotoks and Canmore, while the Rev. Angus Robertson served Calgary. When the latter left to minister to those on the railways and mines to the west, Herdman became the minister of Knox. The prominent businessman and one-time school trustee, James Short, an elder at Knox, said Herdman was known for "his ripe scholarship, well-balanced judgment, his wisdom and knowledge of men and affairs and his modesty all combined to make him an ideal counsellor and teacher of men." Short continued "As an interpreter of Scripture, Dr. Herdman had few equals. He left an impress upon his hearers and particularly upon his classes for Bible study, that makes his name amongst them still a household word." Bible classes and prayer meetings were part of his ministry. As with other clergy of this period, he was fearless in his public utterances on issues of the day. For example, while the Superintendent the Rev. James Robertson commented on the Boer War and recruitment that "plenty of young men volunteered for service in South Africa, have we no religious imperialists?" Herdman opposed the Boer War as unjust and unnecessary.

One thing that impressed people was his energy. The Rev. Hugh McKellar noted his self-sacrifice and faithfulness that in visiting settlers' districts around Calgary, he did not spare himself in ministering to the "spiritual well-being" of the pioneer settlers. McKellar, who met Herdman at a Toronto meeting, remarked Herdman knew settlers who originally came from McKellar's area in Manitoba. This ministering included officiating at a wedding in the Airdrie area. His ministry expressed a concern for the Chinese, and he helped organise classes for them, ultimately leading to the mission there. In addition, like many of his time, he was concerned about young women whose home was not originally in Calgary, such as the Mrs. John McDougall.

As well, while at Knox he conducted services with the Methodists in east Calgary, a development which eventually led to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (in Inglewood). In brief he enhanced the mission of the church and was often giving advice to students and other missionaries, and it was said he often gave from his "slender" resources to students, often not being recompensed in return.

While James Robertson spoke of railway workers' rights and immigration policy, theologically Herdman was more evangelical. He wrote "while it is proper and worthy to emphasise the national role of our work, and the importance of welding of the classes into one loyal Canadian nationality, yet we dare not forget first principles, that the Church exists for the bringing of men to the Saviour." Personal conversion was basis of his work as pastor and Superintendent.

In Presbytery, he was the Home Missions Convenor and assisted the Rev. James Robertson in the appointment of missionaries such as John Fernie into Gleichen and Cochrane and points in between, and Gavin Hamilton to Macleod.

The Rev. R. Simpson said that on his arrival as a student from Scotland in 1900, Herdman gave him the choice of four fields. Initially, he was at Gleichen, then Springbank, East Calgary and then Cochrane, after which he returned to college to become ordained. When James Buchanan was ordained in 1891 in Medicine Hat by Calgary Presbytery, the latter was described as 'the ruling spirit of which was the noted personality, the Rev. James Herdman." The Rev. William Simons described him as a "peace-maker who poured the oil of moderation for any difference of opinions in the Presbytery." In 1901 he was conferred with the D.D. by Knox College.

Under the Rev. James Robertson, some 393 churches and 82 manses were built in Western Canada and the fifteen self-supporting charges and twenty-nine aid-receiving points expanded to 141 and 258 missions by 1901. As settlement proceeded and more missions were required, and perhaps recognising that the work was no longer possible for one man to do, the General Assembly decided, on the death of James Robertson in 1901, to divide the responsibilities with three people. A General Secretary in Toronto responsible for grants, applications for Augmentation Funds, loans and applications for missions. As well as two Superintendents of Home Missions. The Rev. John Carmichael from Regina who had served as Robertson's assistant since 1896 and who had intimate knowledge of the prairies, was appointed for Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Herdman was responsible for British Columbia Synod (which included Alberta at the time).

In his capacity as Superintendent, Herdman was involved in the expansion of the Presbyterian Church. In 1907, for example, he tasked the Rev. C.A. Mitchell to look at the possibility of erecting new congregations in Calgary. Accordingly, surveys were conducted in Bankview, Hillhurst and Crescent Heights areas. Hillhurst was constituted in 1907 with Mitchell as the minister. Bankview and Rosedale followed in 1908 and 1910 respectively with Mitchell initially serving there also. On the other hand, sometimes, the attempts failed. In 1906 in Airdrie, he, along with a committee from Calgary Presbytery, came to the conclusion there was insufficient support to authorise Church and Manse Funds for a manse there. In Edmonton, already there were a number of new churches, such as Queen's Avenue. The growth of First Presbyterian under the Rev. David McQueen led to the creation of Robertson Presbyterian Church in 1909. Congregations were established in areas such as Valley Centre, Evarts, Edwell and Lousana (in the Red Deer area). Camrose was established in 1904. Furthermore, the growing rural population required improved health-care facilities.

At the request of local people, he petitioned the recently-organised Women's Missionary Society (Western Division) for support for a hospital at Vegreville (part of the mission to the Ukrainians or Ruthenians). Money was obtained from Mrs. B.M. Boswell as a memorial to her husband, and as a result the Board and the General Assembly approved the construction in 1906. The WMS in Edmonton held a 'shower' to donate for the furnishings. Over 125 people gave things like pillows, sheets, spreads, towels, flannelette, mattresses, even tea. The Rolland M. Boswell, a two-storey structure with dormers and a dozen or so beds, predated the Methodist efforts at Lamont to the west and in 1925, remained in Presbyterian hands. Initially Dr. Blumberg was there but Dr. George Arthur came, having been earlier recruited by Carmichael to serve at Wakaw, Saskatchewan, also in a Ukrainian area.

Herdman continued the recruitment of clergy and students. These included the Rev. Hugh McKellar in 1905 to Foothills Mission Field and William Hamilton at Alix. The Rev. John Kennedy described getting his "marching orders" from Herdman, with a roving mission to the plains east of High River and Stavely, especially in the Little Bow area where he had eight preaching points to which he ministered with understanding and good cheer. In this work, Herdman was supported by the local Home Mission Convenors such as the Rev. W.G. Brown of Red Deer and the Rev. David McQueen of Edmonton. When the Synod of Alberta was created in 1907, McQueen, who had been appointed Moderator of the Synod by the General Assembly, nominated Herdman to be the first elected Moderator.

The role of the Superintendent also required ceremonial functions. In Edmonton, in July 1903 when First Presbyterian Church built at Jasper and 103rd, Herdman was the guest speaker. He referred to the occasion as the opening of his work as a newly-appointed Superintendent. When a private, largely Presbyterian, boys' school, Western Canada College (now a public high school) was opened, Herdman was one of those officiating.

And when Knox Calgary dedicated the so-called third church at Centre and Seventh Avenue, in the morning Herdman gave the address. "For every house is builded by the same man but He that build all things is God." Shortly afterwards when the new Grace Presbyterian Church in Calgary was dedicated in 1905, Herdman was a featured speaker.

This was also a time of the discussions with the Methodists regarding Church Union. As Superintendent, Herdman was acutely aware of the unsustainability of multiple denominations seeking to save souls in the small communities. On the other hand, he maintained loyalty to the Presbyterian ideal. In 1904, when discussions were held in presbyteries, he opposed an organic union. The time was not yet ripe. What he appeared to favour at that time was some sort of linkage, which in the end resulted in the 1911 agreement of cooperation between the two denominations in dividing the mission fields. Something already in effect in the Peace River area.

By 1909 it was clear that the strain of the work was telling, and there were suggestions about replacing him. His eventual successor being the Rev. W. Reid who would serve only Alberta Synod. In June 1910, his health finally gave way, news of which reached the General Assembly meeting in Halifax. A resolution expressing heart-felt sympathy, appreciating his Christian character and noble work, was sent to his widow and family. Knox Calgary Session also meeting sent condolences to her and decided to attend the funeral as a body. In his honour Knox would erect a plaque in the sanctuary, citing "A faithful shepherd greatly beloved in sparing of self and abundant labor he left behind him the memory of a high task nobly performed." His brother, the Rev. A. Herdman, indicated he was an avid alpinist, so it was natural that the funeral and burial would be at Banff, officiated by the Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Miller. Marking his memorial were the words "I to the hills will lift mine eyes from whence doth come my aid." His brother cited as a tribute, lines he often used, "Servant of God, well done. Rest from thy loved employ. The battle fought; the victory won. Enter thy Master's joy."

He left behind his widow, two sons and a daughter. Mrs. Herdman suffered grief again a few years later when she lost two sons in The Great War.



The Life of a Student Minister

By Austin Fennell

The United Church and its predecessors have always required that its ministers have some experience in church work before they licenced or ordained them. It was one of the ways to determine if they were suitable for ministry.

I was no exception. When I decided to enter the ministry in 1950 at age eighteen, I knew that I was required to earn a Bachelor of Arts and then enter St. Andrew's College for three years of theological training. I also knew that I was expected to serve in two student mission fields before I could be ordained.

The process by which one became a student minister was for church (Pastoral charge) to declare its willingness and ability to host a student minister. The church must have some financial resources and accommodation to have a student, usually for a period of about four months. A presbytery approved the church or site for the student to be appointed, and a Home Missions Superintendent did the appointment. Usually, the presbytery named a minister in the area to have oversight of the student. The late Rev. Jack Bray of Wapella was my supervisor. The cost (housing, travel expenses, and weekly salary) of the student minister was shared by the local church and the Board of Home Missions.

My first appointment was to be sent to Vandura, Sk., in 1954. Vandura was located southwest of Moosomin, north of Wawota and south of Wapella. Vandura was a small village with approximately 75 residents, one grocery store, one grain elevator, and a handful of homes. The manse, un-painted frame, in which I was to live was the largest residence in the village. There were four bedrooms upstairs with no furniture in them. The main floor consisted of a living room, dining room, and kitchen. The dining room was made into a bedroom. The kitchen was about 8' square with a wood and coal burning stove. The basement was quite empty except for four feet of water which was never drained away the four months I was there! There was no electricity in the building; I used coal oil lamps for light at night. I had never radio nor T.V.

The student missions field consisted of three churches: Iona, Fairemede, and Vandura. I was expected to do my pastoral visiting on a bicycle, and on Sundays people would drive me to the churches: Fairmede in the morning, Iona in the afternoon and Vandura in the evening. Someone would provide me with lunch.

Normally a bicycle would be quite all right to get around on except that it rained and rained and rained. Good for the farmers but not good for me! So, I was provided with three horses. The one in Vandura was an eighteen-year-old horse who had been used to deliver the mail; the second was a six-year-old gelding; and a horse in Iona that had been used for racing at country fairs. Boy, could she run! I really enjoyed riding her. My predecessor didn't know how to ride horses and the locals had a great time telling me tales of his misadventures on a horse. Hopefully that was not a test for his final report.

One afternoon out visiting, I was chased by a hawk. It kept swooping down on me from behind, just clipping the cap on my head. I must have been near her nest. I think I raced down the road faster than the horse!

The church in Vandura had no electricity and was lit for the evening service by a gas lamp. To light it, one had to be sure that there was gas in the tank and then pump up the tank. One Sunday night, the pin suddenly blew out and drilled a hole right in the centre of my right lens. Fortunately, there was no damage to my eye.

I had little experience preparing meals. I bought some sausages at the store. Either they were old or just not good. I'm not sure. But later that night, I got up and threw them out. For years afterwards, I would not eat sausage. But I often made a point of calling at a home near supper hour. People were very accommodating, and I got some good meals.

One of the farmers was very generous to me and lent me his truck to go Wapella to practise in a choir preparing for the upcoming provincial celebration. I came back quite late one night and had to look for a bedroom. His hired maid –a woman with three children—occupied one bedroom; another had four hired men asleep in it. I could hear Tom snoring in another bedroom. The remaining bedroom had a small child's bed. It was covered with the ironing of the day. So, I carefully piled up the ironing and slept corner to corner on the bed.

Having learned to play the piano during younger years, I was never without a pianist at the church services. I still have copies of the sermons I wrote at Vandura. I remember the appointment with a great deal of pleasure.

Other student appointments took me to Chaplin and Dummer-Parry in later years.

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Photo taken at Rundle's Mission

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