

National Presbyterian Museum
Museletter
142nd General Assembly Issue – June 3, 2016

Newly re-designed Website – Launched May 26, 2016

presbyterianmuseum.ca

The Museum Advisory Committee worked with James Laursen, Web Co-ordinator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, who completely re-designed the museum's website. Although the website had been regularly maintained and updated, it was using a platform that dated to the year of the Museum's official opening – in 2002! We are indebted to James, Barb Summers and Michelle Kortinen for their support of this project. A very grateful thank you, James, for your work which facilitated the Museum's 14 year leap into the present!

Doors Open Ontario



Doors Open season in Ontario arrives as reliably as Spring!

This event allows the public to tour, free of charge, architecturally significant buildings that are not normally accessible or ones that do not have regular open hours. Many churches take advantage of participating in it in order to promote their ministry and work.

Al Clarkson is the Museum's "on-the-road representative". His 2015-2016 schedule included:

2015

- Sat. Apr. 25 - **Knox Presbyterian Church, Guelph**
- Sat. May 2 – Sun. May 3 – **St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton**
- Sat. May 23 - Sun. May 24 - **Knox Presbyterian Church, Spadina Avenue, Toronto**
- Sun. Sept. 13 – Kawartha Lakes Doors Open featuring the former Manvers Township at **Ballyduff Presbyterian Church**
- Sat. Sept. 26 – **St. Andrew's Memorial Presbyterian Church, Port Credit** in conjunction with the congregation's 125th anniversary celebration

2016

- Sat. May 7 – Sun. May 8 – Doors Open Hamilton during the 175th anniversary celebrations at **Central Presbyterian Church, Hamilton**

Upcoming Doors Open Visits

- Sat. June 11 – Sun. June 12 – **St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Sarnia, Ont.**, a participating site in Doors Open Lambton County

Offsite Visits

2015-2016

Al Clarkson, the Site Liaison, represented the Museum by visiting with our display board the following:

- Sat. Mar. 7 - annual meeting and conference of the **Renewal Fellowship Within The Presbyterian Church in Canada held at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Barrie, Ont.**
- Sun. Mar. 8 – **Westminster Church, Barrie**
- Apr. 18 - **W.M.S. Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda Synodical at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Scarborough, Ont.**
- Sun. July 19 - **Rockway Presbyterian Church** in a combined summer service with its sister church on the charge -- namely, **First Presbyterian Church of North Pelham, Ont.**
- Sat. Nov. 7 – **Synod of Central, Northeastern Ontario and Bermuda at Trinity Presbyterian Church, York Mills, Ont.**

2016

- Tues. Jan. 19 - **Presbytery of Pickering at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Scarborough**

Site Visits by Groups in 2015

- Tues. Jan. 27 – delegation from the **Presbyterian Church in Taiwan**
- Sun. Dec. 6 – **Erindale Presbyterian Church, Mississauga, Ont.** – visit to the Museum by the youth Communicants' Class, Rev. Jennifer Sokolowsky, elders and adults

Site Visits to Closing Churches

Members of the Museum Advisory Committee have been able to assist congregations which are downsizing to another building or closing. In many cases, congregations are not sure what to do with some of their furnishings. Occasionally, an item will be obtained for the Museum's permanent collection. Sometimes we know of a congregation which is interested in acquiring an item which will upgrade one which they already possess. Museum "staff" recently successfully found a home for an early 20th century reed organ -- no mean feat. Reed or pump organs are not presently in demand!

We can provide names of organizations which accept Bibles, hymn books (*with music*), old Sunday School and Christian education materials, devotional material, etc.

As Museum Advisory Committee member, Ian Mason, visits historic churches which are closing, he photographs them to document the rich architectural history of Canada's Presbyterian churches.

Site Visits to Closing Churches

Apr. 14, 2015 – St. James Presbyterian Church, Thamesville, Ont. – established in 1866; closed in Nov. 2014

Feb. 18, 2015 - Bethel Presbyterian Church, (London Township) Middlesex Centre – established in 1830; closed in Jan. 2015

Oct. 15, 2015 - Knox Presbyterian Church, Drayton, Ont. – established in 1883; closed in Sept. 2015

May 20 & June, 2016 - Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Whitechurch, Ont. – established in 1864; closed in June 2016

**Former Bethel Presbyterian Church, Proof Line, Middlesex Centre, Ont.,
corner of Highway 4 and Ilderton Road**



Photo credit: Ian Mason

**Bethel Presbyterian Church, Proof Line, Middlesex Centre, Ont. (in the former London Township)
Aug. 1, 2009**

Bethel Presbyterian Church held its closing service on Sun. Jan. 30, 2015 concluding 185 years of Christian witness and service to its surrounding community. It was established in 1830 in London Township and soon became associated with the Missionary Presbytery of the Canadas in connection with the United Associate Synod of the Secession Church in Scotland. This was a denomination which had secured a solid base in the London, Ont. area through the work of its pioneering and indefatigable Rev. William Proudfoot who had emigrated from Scotland in 1832. Known as Bethel Church, Proof Line, it was located by itself at a crossroads intersection where no community has ever existed. It is located just 5 kms east of the former Ilderton Presbyterian Church which was active from 1895 to 1961. The building pictured, built in 1862, is a rare surviving example of Greek Revival church architecture in Ontario.

Communicants' Class Tours

Museum Site Liaison, Al Clarkson, and some of the Communicants' Class of Trafalgar Presbyterian Church, Oakville, Ont. during their evening tour on Nov. 14, 2014 closely examining the stone plaque commemorating Archibald MacDonald, a praying stalwart member of St. James Square Presbyterian Church, Toronto. The site of the former church was later absorbed by Ryerson University.



Photo credit: Rev. Kristine O'Brien

On Friday evening, Nov. 14, 2014, the Communicant's Class of Trafalgar Presbyterian Church, Oakville, Ont. along with their minister, Rev. Kristine O'Brien, and some parents toured the Museum, then toured St. John's Presbyterian Church with its 1908 sanctuary in nearly original condition.

A comparison of the Museum's 1850s replica chapel and St. John's 1908 sanctuary along with Trafalgar Church's 1991-built sanctuary allowed for some important illustrations as to how The Presbyterian Church in Canada's worship styles have changed over the course of two hundred years. The tour included a walk in the dark

through the upper level of the Akron plan Sunday School Hall. The upper level, which has been unused for the last four decades, no longer has any working light fixtures. The Akron plan, so named for its first appearance in the Sabbath School Hall design of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Akron, Ohio (built 1866-1870) swept across the North American continent and was enthusiastically adopted by the Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational and Baptist Churches. It was regarded as the architectural style most suitable for teaching age-segregated classes the Uniform Lesson Plan.

Delegation from the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan



Taiwanese delegation examining the steamer trunk used by the Rev. Dr. George and Margaret Malcolm, Presbyterian Church in Canada missionaries to Taiwan. The trunk was filled with items such as Taiwanese clothing and shoes used by the Malcolm's to describe life in Taiwan while they visited Canadian churches during their furloughs. Left to right: Rev. Dr. Cheng Yang-en; Rev. Huang Che-Yen; Albert Lin, Toronto; Rev. Hsia Wen-Hsueh

In conjunction with the construction of the new archives of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, representatives of the Church History Committee of the denomination visited several archives and museums in their recent North American tour.

On Tues. Jan. 27th, 2015, a delegation from Taiwan visited the Museum after visiting the Presbyterian Archives in the morning. Our visitors included: Rev. Dr. Cheng Yang-en, Professor of Church History at the Taiwan Theological College and Seminary in Taipei; Rev. Huang Che-Yen, Program Secretary of the Church History Committee and Director of the

Research and Development Centre of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan; Rev. Hsia Wen-Hsueh, Senior Pastor of Yan-Chen Presbyterian Church of Kao-hsiung; and Albert Lin, a member of Taiwanese United Church in Willowdale, Ont. Their tour continued with a visit to the United Church Archives, Royal Ontario Museum, the homestead of the Rev. Dr. George Leslie Mackay in Zorra Township and Woodstock, Ont. In the United States, they visited the Days Library at Yale University, the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia and the Library and Archives of Princeton Theological Seminary.

Heritage Sacred Music Concert, Thamesville, Ont. – May 29, 2015



Former St. James Presbyterian Church, Thamesville, Ont.



Heritage Sacred Music Concert – Fri. May 29, 2015

In Apr. 2015, Ian contacted Bob Siddall, last Clerk of Session of the former St. James Presbyterian Church, Thamesville, Ont. which had been closed by Essex-Kent Presbytery on Nov. 30, 2014. Bob served as the custodian for his former church between the time the church was closed and the time the building was transferred to the purchaser. Ian had gone with the intention of taking photos of the historic sanctuary. While there, he spotted the church's historic 2-manual pipe organ which had been installed on Christmas Sunday in the year 1900. Other than its restoration in 1995, the Karn-Warren organ (Woodstock, Ont.) was in original condition. The idea of a final concert leaped to mind!

Permission was granted for the use of the building and a fund-raising concert for the benefit of the Museum was quickly organized.

It was a sacred heritage music concert featuring solos, hymns and organ music of the type that would have been played in a Presbyterian Church in Canada in the year 1900. From the singing of *God Save the Queen*, Canada's national anthem in 1900, at the beginning to the singing of the *Doxology (Old Hundredth)* at the end, it was intended that the concert was as faithful as possible to the format of a 1900-era

concert. With one exception, the Psalms and hymns were sung using selections found in the 1897 edition of the *Book of Praise*. Dr. Roger Bergs, organist of Knox Presbyterian Church, Spadina, Toronto, played the organ. Soprano soloists were Suzanne Schaafsma, section leader of Knox Church, Toronto and Karianne Pasma, section leader of Bishop Cronyn Memorial Anglican Church, London, Ont.

It was a truly ecumenical event that was abundantly blessed with the work of many kind volunteers. The choir of Trinity Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, Chatham offered an ad-hoc choir under the leadership of Mrs. Lorna Harangozo. Her son, Tyler, served as the precentor who led the 23-member choir in a choral demonstration of the way Canadian Presbyterians would sing exclusive Psalmody without musical accompaniment prior to 1875. Don Pole, a pipe organ builder and an Anglican organist, as well as Harry Roffel, organist of the Free Reformed Church, Chatham, made sure that the pipe organ was working flawlessly. Harry also served as the audio engineer so that there would be a recording of this historic organ (for the first time in its history). And, neighbours Ron and Bonnie VanRabaeys of St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church, Thamesville spent several hours before and after the

concert cleaning through the entire building. Bonnie sold tickets from B's Hive, her downtown store. The members of the volunteer choir contributed all the baked treats which were enjoyed by the 180 or so people who attended.

All the former members of St. James Presbyterian Church, Thamesville received complimentary tickets as a way of acknowledging their many years of serving Christ in their community.



Photo credit: Avian Bartsch

Some of the male members of the adhoc choir: (l to r): Jonathan Nauta; Matthew Bartsch; Micah Bartsch; Tyler Harangozo, precentor; Matthew VanTil

See the concert program on the Museum website: presbyterianmuseum.ca. "Resources" tab. "Farewell Concert for St. James Presbyterian Church, Thamesville"

Artefact Arrivals

19th Century Canadian Presbyterian Communion Tables



Early Presbyterian Communion Table, ca. 1850-1860s
Former Bethel Presbyterian Church, Proof Line (London Township), Middlesex Centre, Ont.
Donated by Bethel Church for use in the 1850s replica chapel of the National Presbyterian Museum.

19th Century Canadian Presbyterian Communion Tables

Ian Mason, the Museum's volunteer cataloguer, is always on the hunt for this very common type of table whenever he visits Presbyterian Churches and United Churches (which were former Presbyterian Churches). When he asks his hosts, and usually long-time members, the question, "do you know what this table is?" he is usually disappointed with their answer.

But, not so, when he visited Carl Crossett, the last Clerk of Session of the former Bethel Presbyterian Church, Proof Line (London Township) in Middlesex Centre. Carl confidently responded, "that's our congregation's first Communion Table".

Out of four visits Ian has recently made to historic churches, Bethel Church, Proof Line was the only one that was able to identify its original Communion Table. Keeping in mind that the majority of Presbyterian Churches in 19th century Canada were associated with Biblically conservative and sober-minded "Free Church" Presbyterianism, its austere simplicity made this an appropriate and common design for a Canadian Presbyterian Communion Table.

Have a closer look at that plain table in the church hallway, vestibule, Sunday School room, corner of the dining hall, etc.!

(Note: A drawer is likely a feature added a few decades later.)

Pictorial Plate Collection



Just a sampling of the Museum's Pictorial Plate Collection featuring plates (as well as mugs and ceramic bells) with drawings of historic Presbyterian Churches and United Churches (those which were Presbyterian and built before 1925).

Are there any Presbyterian Church (or United Church, formerly Presbyterian) plates in your possession that the Museum does not have -- and that you would be willing to donate?

Volunteer Opportunities – Researcher/Writer

The Museum Advisory Committee has begun to publish articles which highlight an artefact within the collection, along with a photograph of it, and describe its significance in the context of who used it, when, why, where and what for. Each issue of *Museum Musings* provides insight into what one artefact can tell us about the belief and actions of people who responded to Jesus' call to follow Him as Lord. Each article attempts to track one or more notable episodes in the lives of those who contributed to the national or international ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The advantage of this volunteer position is that the work does not need to be done on-site. Research can be done at other archives/libraries and online. Submissions (two-page minimum, no maximum) become the property of the Museum Advisory Committee with acknowledgement being given to the author. The position can also be short-term. Even if you have time just to research and write one article, the Committee would be pleased to accept this contribution.

“The past lives with us and we must live with the past. The only way we can do that is to learn about that past and think about it in our present.”

- Dr. Bruce Gordon, Ph.D., D.Phil., Winnipeg-born, Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Yale Divinity School, Yale University, about the relevance of Church history

Thank You to Our Donors

The Museum Advisory Committee extends its very grateful appreciation to our donors who allow us to continue to tell the stories of earlier generations of Presbyterians who responded to the call to obey, follow and serve Jesus Christ. We are indebted to the many congregations and individuals who have contributed financially. Congregations which have supported the Museum's work in the past are gratefully acknowledged on our website. (See "Donate" page and "Our Donors" tab)

If you would like to receive print copies of the Museletter for your congregation, please contact the Museum to place an order. Newsletters will be mailed free of charge, including postage.

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