

HISTORY

Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre



The new site of the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre (PCHC) in Carlisle United Church in the hamlet of Carlisle, Municipality of North Middlesex, Ont.

By the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre Committee

Since Sept. 29, 2002, the National Presbyterian Museum has been generously hosted in the lower level of St. John's Presbyterian Church in Toronto's Riverdale district. The National Presbyterian Museum was the first denominational facility of its kind in Canada. Since October of 2016, the Presbyterian Church Museum committee speculated that the con-

gregation of St. John's Presbyterian Church in Toronto would be planning to redevelop its 110-year-old building.

In 2017, a team went in search of a new home for the museum. It was not going to be easy to move 400 years' worth of artifacts as well as an outstanding collection of Communion tokens. In our search for a new location, the team visited many churches—some that were closed, and even some without heat or run-

ning water! Some building spaces were perfect...but out of our price range, and many basement areas were damp with mold and mildew. We even had an offer to move the entire museum to the east coast.

In January 2018, we visited Carlisle United Church, in the village of Carlisle, Ont., within the Municipality of North Middlesex and 20 minutes northwest of London, Ont. Since our first meeting we have developed a unique partnership with the hospitable members of this small rural congregation. The fact that the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre will be hosted by the former Falkirk Presbyterian Church (Falkirk being the original name of the village's post office) is good-naturedly acknowledged by members of the congregation and Advisory Committee.

Since that first meeting in Carlisle, the Advisory Committee under the umbrella of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's Committee on History has a new name: the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre (PCHC). Beginning February 2021, we have leased the upper-level sanctuary space in Carlisle United Church for our new Heritage Centre. The congregation of Carlisle United Church will continue to worship and has



Photos of the student work crew, supplied by St. Timothy's Presbyterian Church in Toronto, who worked for two weeks in July 2019 to help pack up the pictorial church plate collection and library of the National Presbyterian Museum.



generously agreed to meet in the church's lower level.

COVID-19 presented challenges as we packed up the old space and we hope to be able to open the new Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre early in 2023. We have extensive renovating to do in the new space. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has approved that we launch a campaign this year. Your financial support to the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre is necessary if we are to continue the legacy of the National Presbyterian Museum that welcomed individuals and group tours for over 16 years.

The National Presbyterian Museum closed in Toronto at the end of 2018. Thank you to our Curator, Ian Mason, for his diligence with the ongoing move and as well the set-up of our new space in the future.

Marilyn Repchuck, Convener of the Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre Advisory Committee, is looking forward to announcing our future opening and dedication. Please visit us at pcheritagecentre.ca or contact us by email at pcheritagecentre@gmail.com.

We value the connection of history and heritage and offer a place for future generations to learn from the past. With your support, it will be possible for us to build for tomorrow.

Please plan to visit the new Presbyterian Church Heritage Centre when it opens.

Presbyterian history begins here... our heritage is our future.