

# History of Maxville-Moose Creek United Church Congregation Church

The Story Of The Community of Faith Known Today As  
Maxville - Moose Creek United Church  
October 2001

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## **MAXVILLE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

The physical roots of the Protestant faiths in Maxville were planted firmly in the gravel ridge south of the village with the building of the Beech Church there. The location was probably opposite the present cemetery. However, the cemetery for the Beech Church was south west, south of the present 17th Concession, Indian Lands road, straddling lots 12 and 13.

By 1824, we assume that the Beech Church became too small and a decision was made to build a new church across the road on a lot offered by John McEwen. Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists joined whole heartedly in the building of the new church which became known as the White Church. Since the majority of the labourers had been Presbyterians, the White Church was deeded to the Church of Scotland. This move was also necessary in order to obtain a legal deed.

A year prior to the building of the White Church the Congregationalists had organized themselves at St. Elmo, in the 19th Concession, Indian Lands. Therefore, the exit of the Congregationalists from the White Church was easily executed.

The Rev. William McKillican was the founder of this church, always known as the Indian Lands Congregational Church. The actual construction of the log

building probably took place around 1835, twelve years after the congregation had been organized.

Mr. McKillican was born in Inverness-shire in 1776, ordained in 1802, and came to Canada in 1816. He was warmly welcomed in Canada by old and new friends. Mr. McKillican lived at Breadalbane, 20 miles to the east of the Indian Lands congregation, but met in the homes for services here as often as possible.

There was plenty of timber and enthusiasm for the building of the new church, but little money, as frost had badly damaged the crops for two seasons. Mr. McKillican had no salary and received from the members of the congregation what each could afford. The building was of rough hewn cedar logs and in 1990 still stands as a functional community building, now taken over by the Gordon Presbyterian Church at St. Elmo.

Among those who were active and liberal in commencing this work were men with names such as McDonald, Kennedy, John J. McEwen, Finlay Sinclair, Peter and Alex McDougall, Thomas Munro, John, Hugh, and Peter Christie, and Angus and Hugh McDermid. The last four were from Martintown and were cousins of Mr. McKillican's wife. There were also staunch Presbyterians who assisted in the project. John Fisher donated land for the building site and John McNaughton, Peter and Alex Fisher assisted in the overall effort.

The second minister was the Rev. John McKillican, son of the Rev. William McKillican, was ordained in the church in December, 1851. His was a successful pastorate until, in 1860, he accepted a call to the service of the Canada Sunday School Union. The third minister, fluent in Gaelic, was the Rev. John Campbell from 1860 to 1869 or '70. The manse across the road to the south west was built during his term and is still in use.

The Rev. William Peacock followed and stayed for five years. During this time, he married a local girl, Jane McDougall. The family was in Kingston for five years but because of Mr. Peacock's failing health, a move was made back to the vicinity in 1880 and Mr. Peacock died in 1883.

One of Mr. Peacock's sons, who later became Sir Edward, wrote: "The church at Maxville was built after our move back. We were living in a little house next door to where the church was built, and I watched its whole construction".

The construction of the new church in Maxville became necessary with the growing congregation, with members from Notfield, Dominionville and later Maxville and with the building of the Canada Atlantic Railway. At a meeting in October, 1878, it was decided to build the new church, whose construction was started in 1879 and not completed until 1881 or 82. The building site was on the farm of Donald McDougall and is the site for the present United Church.

The Rev. Daniel McCallum had followed Mr. Peacock. He stayed until 1898 and saw the growth of the Maxville Church. The two-point charge of Maxville and St Elmo, was served for a year by R. B. Blyth, a student at the Congregational College in Montreal.

In 1899, the Rev. J. T. Daley became the minister and remained until 1914.

The Indian Lands church at St. Elmo survived until at least 1903 (*The historical plaque at the site says, from 1850, "during the next sixty years local attendance*

*diminished, and by 1912 the building fell into disuse. In 1920 it was sold to the nearby Gordon Presbyterian Church").* The Rev. H. D. Whitmore served the congregation until 1924. In 1925, the Maxville Congregational Church entered into the larger fellowship of the United Church in Canada with the Rev. F. W. K. Harris. The new United Church was built on the same site in 1926.

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## **MAXVILLE UNITED**

### **CHURCH**

At a general meeting in the Maxville Congregational Church, February 2, 1925, the following resolution was passed:

"That this Congregational Church at Maxville, in a special meeting duly convened, confirms that action taken by Congregationalists and Presbyterians on Monday, the 12th day of January 1925, in effecting the temporary organization of a United Church on the basis of Union. This church further agrees to enter heartily into the plan of United Action, while in the interests of law and order, maintaining its own identity as a Congregational Church in the fellowship of the Congregational Union of Canada until the consummation of the United Church of Canada shall be made effective, and until such further action may be legally undertaken in relation to property or otherwise."

While the Maxville Congregational Church went whole-heartedly into the Union, the majority of the local Presbyterians were against it. However, sixty-eight of their members joined with the Congregationalists to form the new United Church.

The Congregational Church was deemed too small for the newly-formed congregation and plans were quickly drawn up to add two wings and a bell-tower. However, as construction began, it was found not stable enough to support the new structure. Consequently, the entire building was demolished and the present building erected on a new foundation at the same site, land which was originally part of the farm of Donald P. MacDougall.

Construction began April 20, 1926. On July 26 of that same year, a crowd of over 1,000 people watched as the cornerstone was laid by the Rev. D. H. McLachlan, D. D. of Toronto. In the stone, Mr. D. P. MacDougall placed the "old jar" containing coins and papers found in the cornerstone of the Congregational Church. In addition, a "new jar" containing coins, papers, documents, and records, was deposited by Mr. J. A. Cameron, the first clerk of session. Built at a cost of approximately \$29,000 the new building was dedicated December 12, 1926 by the Rev. J. L. Stewart, Vice-president of West China Union University. It was a grand celebration - this special service was attended by over 500 people, which taxed the seating capacity of the new church. The following day, a banquet was served in the church hall, to several hundred people, followed by an evening of entertainment.

In 1933, the mortgage was burned. The church was fully paid. Over the years, improvements were made as finances allowed. In 1936, the sanctuary was redecorated a project which was repeated in 1956, 1975, and by necessity, 1990, when extensive repairs were made to the wall and ceiling. The organ was replaced in 1969 and the sanctuary carpeted in 1984. The kitchen was

modernized in the early 1970's and the basement hall in 1982. The hall receives much use for community events as well as church functions.

### Memorials

All of the original windows were of the plain style that still exists in the north wing of the church building. Gradually the ones in the sanctuary have all been replaced with memorial stained-glass windows. The first of these to be installed was in 1950 when Mrs. A. H. Robertson donated the three windows at the back of the choir loft in memory of her daughter, Ada (Mrs. T. W. Munroe), a talented musician who had been choir director for several years.

In 1951, Miss Tena Aird donated the two windows at the front of the sanctuary in memory of her two sisters Margaret (Mrs. Peter T. Munroe), and Annie (Mrs. Alex McDougall). That same year the windows on the west side of the choir loft were installed by the choir in memory of former members.

In 1964, the three windows on the east side of the sanctuary were donated by Mrs. Dora McDougall in memory of her late husband who had passed away the previous year. Mr. McDougall (Bert) had a lifetime record of service to the church rarely equalled, having served as superintendent of the Sunday school for several years, an elder for 50 years, clerk of session for 30 years, and many, many years as usher and offering bearer. Bert was on hand for every service welcoming everyone at the door in his own friendly manner.

In 1987, all the windows on the west side of the sanctuary were replaced with stained glass. This was made possible through a special fund-raising drive. At the dedication service, led by Daphne Craig, president of the Ottawa-Montreal Conference, these windows were dedicated "to the memory of our loved ones".

In 1948, a Schulmerich Music System was installed in the tower in memory of the men and women from our congregation who had served and sacrificed in the Second World War. The dedication service was held on Easter Sunday, and in November of the same year, a bronze plaque was unveiled by Wing Commander Robert Frayne, Chief Chaplain of the R.C.A.F., at an impressive service.

In 1980, new front doors were installed by Unit 1 of the UCW in memory of Dora McDougall, and in 1983 a piano was purchased for the sanctuary in memory of Audrey Thompson.

In recent years a memorial fund has been organized with names and donors recorded in a special book on display in the sanctuary. Money from this fund was used in 1990 to replace light fixtures in the sanctuary.

### Ministers

The first minister in Maxville United Church was the Rev. F. W. K. Harris who came from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in London in 1925. He, with Mrs. Harris and two small children, Margaret and James, took up residence in the Manse. Mr. Harris guided the congregation through difficult transition and building period and got the various adult and youth groups organized. Mrs. Harris started the first Junior Congregation for children aged 3 to 13 and was assisted by Miss Mary Ogden, who was a milliner in the village. Unfortunately, by 1930, Mr. Harris' health was failing and it became necessary to have

substitute ministers throughout that year. On several occasions Mrs. Harris very ably took his place in the pulpit. Owing to his continuing ill health, Mr. Harris tendered his resignation effective June 30, 1931, and he with his family, moved to Peterborough where he passed away in 1940.

The Rev. J. H. Hamilton accepted a call and began his ministry in Maxville on the first Sunday in August, 1931. He, with Mrs. Hamilton and their six children Hugh, Chalmers, Elizabeth, Walter, Ross and Louis - came from Sydney, Nova Scotia, and moved into the Manse. Mr. Hamilton stayed for twenty-two years and during that time the Manse was always open to the various church organizations. In order to avoid having to heat the church, many meetings were held in their large, comfortable living room with Mrs. Hamilton always the gracious hostess. Mr. Hamilton guided the congregation through the difficult war years when many of our young folk, including some of his own family, were in the service. Following the war, the two younger sons, Ross and Louis, entered the ministry. On leaving Maxville in 1953, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton took up residence in Ottawa where he was Assistant Minister in Dominion United Church for several years (later Dominion Chalmers).

The Rev. Donald C. Munro came to Maxville United in 1953 from Carleton Place where he had served for almost 21 years. Although single when he came to Maxville, he married shortly thereafter, and with his wife, Catherine, took up residence in the Manse. Although Mr. Munro, like his father and other family members, started his career in journalism, he soon decided to enter the ministry and studied extensively both in Canada and abroad. Mr. Munro's ministry in Maxville lasted for twelve years during which time he and Mrs. Munro formed many close friendships. They were avid gardeners and Mrs. Munro enjoyed exhibiting the products of their garden and of her baking skills at the local fairs. Mr. Munro took his retirement in 1965 and they went to live in Kingston.

The Rev. W. E. Henderson accepted a call and came from Central Butte, Saskatchewan, to begin his ministry in Maxville in August, 1966. Both Mr. and Mrs. Henderson were originally from Ireland and had retained their delightful accent. They had two small children when they took up residence in the Manse - a son Steven, and daughter, Noreen. The Hendersons remained in Maxville till 1975 when he accepted a call to the United Church in Waterford, Ontario. Shortly after his departure, he wrote, "Our move to Waterford has only severed the contractual ties of ministry; the spiritual and emotional ties can never be broken, and we shall cherish every fond memory of our ministry among you". Following Mr. Henderson's departure, we were fortunate in being able to have the dedicated services of the Rev. Arnold McDonald of Summerstown, while searching for a new minister.

In March 1976, a call was issued to the Rev. Paul Grassie of Bideford, P.E.I. Mr. Grassie accepted the call and arrived with his wife Heather and small son, Matthew in July. Unfortunately their stay was short and in 1977, Mr. Grassie accepted a call to Sundridge, Ont. During their stay there another son "Mark" was added to the family. They are presently serving in Omeme, Ont.

Once again Mr. McDonald filled the vacancy until the arrival of the Rev. Harold Alston. Mr. Alston, with his Japanese wife, Hiroko, and one little daughter, Francine, arrived at a very difficult time when there was much dissension within the church and wounds to be healed. His ministry lasted till 1980 when, for the sake of Francine, he felt it advisable to be closer to a good medical facility. He accepted a call to Roxboro, Que. Hannah was born while the Alstons were here.

The Rev. E. Eaton, a retired minister from Chesterville, filled the void during yet another search for a new minister.

The Rev. Frank Bailey came to Maxville United from Quyon, Quebec, in 1981. He and his wife, Felicia, natives of the Barbados, brought a sincere dedication to the work of the ministry. Felicia, a faithful and talented choir member, is equally capable of taking over the pulpit, and has done so on several occasions. Recently completing a degree in pastoral counselling, Frank has put his training to good use in the community.

The support of laypersons within the church should not go without mention. To all the elders and stewards who have performed their duties faithfully, the congregation is indebted.

*(List of ministers at the back of the book)*

### Choir

The original choir loft had seating for 34 singers and it was not unusual to have it filled for special services such as Anniversary Sunday. It was a choir which might have been the envy of many larger churches, with a very strong male section of a dozen or more voices evenly divided in bass and tenor. Under the leadership and training of the very talented Mrs. T. W. Munroe, ATCM, this choir gained a fine reputation. The men especially were always in demand for taking part in concerts, lawn socials, etc., and frequently the whole choir were invited to other neighbouring churches.

With the lowering of the choir loft in 1959, one row of 11 seats was lost, but there is still more than enough room for the present choir. Although smaller in number, the current choir is a very faithful and enthusiastic group and give good leadership in the musical part of the services.

Doug Munroe, organist, in his involvement with the church music seems to be fulfilling a family tradition. Both of his parents and several uncles were choir members at one time. His uncle, Charles Munroe, was organist for over 20 years. Both grandfathers - Peter Munroe and Gordon McKillican, a grand uncle Tom Munroe, and his great grandfather, William McKillican, were all choir members.

*(list of organists and choir directors at the back of the book)*

### Sunday School

During the early years of the United Church, there was a very large Sunday School which differed to that of today in that the average age of the pupils was much higher. Mrs. D. C. McDougall taught a large adult Bible class for many years, and at that time, many more teenagers and fewer tiny tots were

attending. An example from attendance records - In 1927, there were nine classes with a total of 135 members. The largest attendance for the year was 111, and the average was 85. Sunday School for many years was held at 10 a.m. When one considers that a large percentage of the members were living some distance outside of the village on roads that were not kept open all winter, the average attendance was remarkably high.

The Sunday school hall at the back of the sanctuary contained five class "cubicles" divided by folding partitions, and curtains across the front. There were also the two enclosed rooms on either side of the secretary's office. The smaller children met in the two rooms back of the stage downstairs. Needless to say, in close quarters there wasn't the activity that is prevalent today. All classes met together in the Sunday School hall for an opening service led by the superintendent. One Sunday per month was dedicated to missionary study. A particular highlight of the year was the Christmas concert where each class took part, no matter what the age. In 1960, Mrs. Wilkinson's class organized a lawn social to raise funds for the building of one cabin at Camp Kagama. The Sunday school plays an important role in the church, for it is as true now, as ever, that the Sunday school builds the church of the future.  
*(List of Sunday School superintendents at the back of the book)*

#### United Church Women (UCW)

The Young Women's Missionary Society was organized in 1925. As well as holding their regular meetings with worship services and study of missionary work, they packed bales of clothing and hospital supplies for Western Canada and Africa. In December of that same year a 'Ways and Means' Committee was appointed to raise funds for the church and a bazaar and supper were held that month.

The Women's Missionary Society was reorganized in 1925 and by 1926 boasted a membership of 57 in the afternoon auxiliary and 54 in the evening auxiliary. In 1962 the women reorganized into one group - the U.C.W. They continue to hold regular meetings and while their numbers are declining, they work very hard for the church.

#### Youth Groups

Youth groups have played an important role in the church. In 1926, the Annual Report records the organization of the Baby Band, King's Own Mission Band, Willing Workers Mission Band, The Beavers, Canadian Girls in Training, the Young Men's Club, and Young Women's Missionary Society.

In 1932 a unified programme for Young People's Society and Boys and Girls Groups was introduced. They all met in different areas of the church on Monday evening, and then joined for a social hour afterwards led by Mr. Hamilton. These meetings were much enjoyed and largely attended. Groups from other area churches were invited occasionally for a social evening. In winter there was usually a skating party and a sleigh drive and a taffy party in the spring. In summer, the fine, lighted tennis court at the back of the church was open to young folk of any denomination and saw lots of action. In the later

thirties, there was a Y.P.S. softball league in Glengarry-Stormont. Each team was made up of six boys and three girls. Some of the Maxville players recalled were: John W. Grant, "Red" John McEwen, Charles Munroe, Gerald McEwen, Delbert McKercher, Donald Munroe, Herb McKillican, Donald Grant, Ken Jamieson, Jean Grant, Bernice Scott, Grace McKercher, Elizabeth Hamilton, and Margaret McKillican.

The Maxville United Young People's Society remained j active in varying degrees until 1968 when it was reorganized into a Hi-C Group under the leadership of W. E. Henderson and Lorna Winter.

This was an enthusiastic group who met regularly and participated in activities similar to the "Young People's" of the 1930's. Explorers, Messengers, Tyros, and Sigma C groups were popular with young people in the 1960's and C.G.I.T. was re-introduced in 1969 by Mrs. Henderson and Mrs. K. Jack.

Fading interest in youth work was renewed in late 1970's when a group of teens was organized by Ken and Sharon Johns, and Carolee MacIntosh. In the mid 1980's youth work was incorporated into the Seaway Valley Youth Council, in which representatives from Maxville United are respected for their leadership roles.

Not to be forgotten in mention of youth work is the success of Vacation Bible School. In 1990, under the direction of Marjorie Munroe, over 60 children from all denominations attended a one-week session.

The spirit of fellowship between the denominations has been demonstrated throughout the years. While the church was under construction, the Baptists welcomed the newly-formed United congregation to worship with them. Since 1933, joint summer services have been shared with St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and in 1990, while renovations were in progress in the sanctuary, the United Church was again welcomed "across the road". Considering the declining numbers in congregations, the need for inter-denominational co-operation can only continue to grow.

#### The Manse

The United Church manse located on Spring Street, was built in 1882-83, one year after the completion of the building of the Congregational Church, and also built on land donated by Donald P. MacDougall. Because of the number of large of elm trees on the property, it was named "Elwood Manse". These elms provided a natural habitat for the beautiful Baltimore Orioles which built their "pouch-like" nests on the ends of the swaying branches and filled the air with their beautiful song. Unfortunately the trees are all gone and the orioles with them.

The Manse, although now well over one hundred years old is still in use. Over the years much work has been done to keep it comfortable and more in keeping with modern life and times.





The church prior to the building being sold in 1999.

From The Beginning 1925 - 1975

It seems that God used the Pioneer Days of Canada to work out His glorious purpose of a larger fellowship of Christian believers. From the beginning there was "One in Hope". By a series of little steps, and then in one gigantic step taken on June 10, 1925, the marching song became real. Young Canada stood at one of its peaks of achievement - The United Church of Canada was born. In June 1925, upon inauguration of Church Union, Sunday services for the Moose Creek United Church congregation were held in the Community Hall. The Reverend J. R. Urquhart was Moderator, and supply pastors from Ottawa took charge of these services with Mrs. Hugh McGillivray as organist.

In the Spring of 1926 a 'Call' was extended to the Reverend N. McLaren, who had previously ministered at Bishop Mills, Woodlands, and as missionary along the Gatineau, and was Secretary for the British and Foreign Bible Society in the Quebec district. This Call to Moose Creek was accepted, and in 1926 the Reverend N. McLaren was inducted into the pastorate of Knox United Church, Moose Creek.

For some time the McLaren family occupied the home of Mrs Phillips (later Mr. and Mrs. Amos). Later the house owned by Mr. J. D. Grant of Maxville was rented for a United Church Manse. Repairs were made, and this was the home of the McLaren family for many years.

In the Fall of 1927, at a congregational meeting held in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Nelson McRae, it was unanimously decided to build a church.

Subscriptions for a Building Fund were solicited, and many substantial donations were received from former residents who were interested in the project. Due to Mr. McLaren's prestige among members of the Presbytery, a used church building at Limoges was placed at their disposal. Accordingly, under the leadership and organization of Mr. McLaren, the men of the congregation volunteered their time and labour. Outside and inside furnishings were brought, to a very suitable corner lot on the McLennan farm. This lot was generously donated to the congregation by the owners, Mrs. J. M. McLennan and her son, Mr. J. A. McLennan.

Early in 1928 work on the new church began; the foundation and cement work being done by Mr. D. J. McIntyre and helpers; the stone being donated by Mr. John B. McRae.

At a public ceremony, at which about two hundred and fifty, people attended - including many ministers from the surrounding area, the corner stone was laid by the Reverend Dr. Woodside of Ottawa. The silver trowel was presented to Dr. Woodside. Under the direction and supervision of Mr. William Valley Sr. the church building was rapidly erected.

#### First Service In The New Building

The Willing Worker's Society bought choir chairs and fifty-one basement chairs, also kitchen equipment, pulpit, carpet and hymn books. Many contributions were made by friends. The pulpit chairs were donated by Mr. Dave Valley. The collection plates were donated by the Grant family. The communion table was donated by the Women's' Missionary Society. The communion set plus a \$1,000 Bond was donated by Mr. Robert Shanks. Drapes for the windows were donated by Mrs Claxton of Ottawa. The Baptismal font was donated by Mrs. McLaren. The matting for the entry of the church was donated by Mr. P. E. Campbell. The piano for the church hall, stage furnishings, choral music and money donations to the church treasurer was the involvement of the Young Peoples Society.

In 1929 the church was wired for electricity. The work of the congregation was now firmly established and the various organizations were rendering faithful service. These included the Women's' Missionary Society, Willing Workers Sunday School, Mission Band, Young Peoples' Society, C.G.I.T., and a active choir group.

A Summer Camp on Sheik's Island was organized and named Kagama. Mr. McLaren took a very active part in this Camp in both its organization and functioning.

The first Session of Knox United Church was comprised of the Reverend N. McLaren, moderator, with Elders Mr. Dan Bennett, Mr. James McKillican, Mr. Duncan McRae Sr., and Dr. J. M.. Pollock. The first president of the Women's Missionary Society was Mrs. Sarah Begg, and the first president of the Willing Workers was Miss Cassie Munro.

At the Annual Congregational meeting in 1931 the following report of historical interest was given:

*"We are pleased to report that the 'note' on the church has been fully paid, so that after three years we are free from debt ... Bringing the meeting to a close, Mr. Nelson McRae, chairman of the Building Committee, burned the Note on the church. While the Note was burning the members joined in singing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow'."*

On August 18, 19369 a very enjoyable social evening was held in the church for the congregation and friends to honour the Reverend and Mrs. McLaren on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary. The church hall was beautifully decorated in ruby and white, and a three-tier wedding cake centered a attractive tea table. An address was read and a purse presented, also a bouquet was given to Mrs. McLaren. The Reverend Mr. Eastcote of Avonmore

and the Reverend J. H. Hamilton of Maxville were present and expressed congratulations. Several of the men from our own congregation expressed their good wishes and appreciation.

Two years later, in 1938, we were saddened by the sudden illness of Mrs. McLaren which necessitated her removal to Cornwall General Hospital where she died. The funeral service was held in Moose Creek United Church on Saturday, September 24th, and conducted by the Reverend G. S. Lloyd of Cornwall, who was an intimate friend of the family. Burial was at Woodlands in the family plot, which was close to their former home.

Mr McLaren. carried on the work of the church for nearly seven more years. Two silver spruce trees, planted by Mr. McLaren on the front lawn of the church, are a living memorial to the memory of the lives of the Reverend and Mrs. McLaren. In 1943, the McLaren family went to their former home at Woodlands, from which place he came to Moose Creek to conduct Sunday Services.

At the Easter Sunday Service in April 1945, Mr. McLaren's text was, "He is not here: He is risen", and the following Thursday, after two days illness, he passed away at his home. His congregation and his many friends were shocked and saddened.

On the following Saturday the church was filled to overflowing with sorrowing friends and members of his congregation for the funeral service, which was conducted by the Reverend C. R. Rudd of Cornwall, Chairman of Glengarry Presbytery, and assisted by the Reverend J. H. Hamilton of Maxville, Chairman of Montreal and Ottawa Conference; the Reverend C.H. Ferguson of Avonmore, leader of Youth work, and the Reverend Robertson Millar of Finch, represented the Presbytery of Glengarry of the Presbyterian Church.

Burial was in Woodlands cemetery. The service at the grave was conducted by the Reverend Mr. Rudd, following which the Masons, under the leadership of Frank Shaver, conducted a brief service. A large representation of the Glengarry Presbytery and the various organization with which Mr. McLaren was connected, was present.

Besides the many floral tributes, several cheques were received for the purpose of establishing a memorial at Camp Kagama. This project was carried out and McLaren Hall was built and sustained. Our church makes a yearly contribution to the camp in memory of Mr. McLaren.

The Reverend J. H. Hamilton, interim moderator, voluntarily became our pastor, and was gratefully welcomed by everyone. For eight years this ministry continued, and he was beloved by all for his inspiring sermons, and his help in time of sickness and trouble, as well as being our capable leader and overseeing the church organizations.

During the summer of 1945 the church, through the generosity of the Willing Workers, was re-decorated.

On Sunday evening, October 7th, 1945, a large congregation assembled for our church anniversary services, and special Thanksgiving service. Under the leadership of the Reverend J. H. Hamilton a touching memorial service for Mr. McLaren was conducted. He made sympathetic and appreciative reference to

the work of Mr. and Mrs. McLaren. He quoted from the records of the Montreal and Ottawa Conference, references which showed the wide-spread esteem in which Mr. McLaren was held throughout his long ministry, and life of great usefulness and purpose. In Moose Creek United Church he had ministered for nineteen years.

The Reverend Hamilton paid a personal tribute to their faithfulness emphasising that two worthy memorials would perpetuate their memory - the United Church in Moose Creek, and Camp Kagama on the St. Lawrence. Mr. Hamilton then asked senior elder, James McKillican, to unveil a bronze plaque which had been placed in the church by the congregation and many other friends. A wreath of beautiful flowers, from the congregation, was given to the McLaren family to carry to the cemetery at Woodland. The Reverend Mr. Reid of Glen Robertson was the guest speaker. His text was, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." He exhorted all the congregation to prize this goodly heritage and not throw it away.

During the following years improvements were made in the church by the Willing Workers. The aisles were carpeted, and communion racks and two stained glass windows were installed. They also installed a new memorial organ in 1950 with the help of contributions received from various organizations. A dedication service was held and was largely attended.

The same year the first quarter century of the United Church was observed by special services, a birthday party, and renewed dedication to the service of Christ and His church. Since then, outside lighting of the church lawn has been installed, and the floors of the church have been refinished.

In the summer of 1953 our congregation was deeply touched by the Reverend J. H. Hamilton's decision to retire from the active ministry. The congregation gathered in the church hall to say farewell to Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton, who had then been so intimately bound with us, and had given us such loving efficient service for eight years. Our best wishes followed them to Ottawa, where Mr. Hamilton became assistant pastor in Dominion United Church. The interim moderator, the Rev. J. J. Brownlee of Apple Hill, took charge of our services, and obtaining supply pastors for us.

In January 1954 the Reverend D. C. Munro, minister in Carleton Place for many years, accepted a Call to the Maxville church, and arrangements were made to have him in charge of our afternoon services on the same basis as the Reverend Hamilton. The induction service was held in Maxville, and we extended a hearty welcome to Moose Creek United Church. Mr. and Mrs. Munro served our congregation loyally and faithfully for twelve years, less two months. Mrs. Munro taught the boys class in Sunday School, and to this day, these young men reverence her dearly.

In 1958 three oak pulpit chairs were presented by Mrs. Alex Buchanan in memory of her late husband, Alex Buchanan. An entrance canopy to the choir room was built from contribution left by the late Mrs. James McIntosh. Small hymn books were purchased with a contribution left to the church by the late George McIntosh.

It was a sad day when Mr. Munro told our congregation that he was retiring in September, and that he and Mrs. Munro would be moving to Kingston. Following our anniversary service presentations were made to both Mr. and Mrs. Munro in sincere appreciation for their dedicated work in our church. The Reverend John Hurst of Kirk Hill was appointed interim moderator, and a pulpit supply and pastoral relations committee was appointed to secure a new minister. This committee met in Maxville United Church to consider several applications. The application of the Reverend W. E. Henderson was given consideration. Mr. Henderson was serving the United Church in Central Butte, Saskatchewan. A phone call was made to a member of that congregation he lady's reply was, "Surely you are not going to take our minister from us". This was a good recommendation and so Mr. Henderson was invited to come and preach for a Call. In 1966, Mr. and Mrs. Henderson, Stephen and Noreen came to Maxville to live.

In 1966, on Mr. Henderson's suggestion, the Every Family Plan was adopted for placing the Observer in all homes of our congregation.

In 1968, Mr. Duncan McRae and Mr. Keith Grant were appointed new elders.

In 1972, two sets of the newly published Hymn Book were purchased. The first through a donation by Mr. and Mrs. Douglas McGillivary in memory of the late Christie McGillivary and Hugh McGillivary. The second set was purchased with funds bequeathed to our church by the late Mr. and Mrs. James Shanks. A new Pulpit Bible, in memory of the late Mr. and Mrs. James McKillican, was presented to the church in 1974 by the McKillican family.

As we write these notes, preparation is well in hand for the celebration of our Fiftieth Anniversary. This will take the form of a congregational pot-luck dinner on the church law for all our families, their relative and friends, to be followed by a short indoor program.

A fiftieth anniversary deserves reminiscing and reflection of the past. We are grateful for this heritage and let us go into the next fifty years with renewed confidence that the Spirit of God is still at work within His church

*(To this point the greater part of this history of Knox United Church Moose Creek, was written by the late Mr. Neil McIntosh. The more recent items being contributed by Mrs. Gordon McKercher.)*

**The Last Chapter 1993-1999** - prepared by Gordon McKercher

In 1993, due to the costs of heating and snow removal, services were suspended for January, February and March, this became the norm as we tried to cut costs during the winter months.

On August 24, 1975 Rev. & Mrs. Henderson were presented with a silver tea service in appreciation of their services as a farewell gift from the congregation. Rev. Arnold McDonald agreed to fill in occasionally during the next three years as we struggled to find a minister. Rev Paul Grassie came in 1976 but only stayed briefly and Arnold filled in again until Rev. Harold Alston came in September of 1978.

Under the leadership of Rev. Alston from 1978 to 1980 church attendance remained fairly constant and a full complement of elders was again

established. A tradition of having a potluck Christmas dinner before we closed for the winter months became a favorite and was always well attended.

Rev. E. Eaton from Winchester provided us with leadership until Rev. Frank Bailey accepted our call as a minister in May of 1981.

Frank and Felicia Bailey added a new enthusiasm for music in our choir and our small group enjoyed them thoroughly. During the winter of 1986 we met in the basement of the community hall, as Rev. Bailey did not want to lose contact with his people.

In 1990 Knox Presbyterian Church was destroyed by fire and the session agreed to share our building with them and this also allowed their minister Rev. Garry Van Bruchem to complete his doctorate by preaching ten sermons. The new Presbyterian Church was completed in January 1992 and once again we closed for the winter months.

Rev. Frank Bailey's dream was that our congregation would grow numerically and spiritually. The numerical growth did not happen, as promised housing developments did not materialize. Frank often said that Knox United Church survived only because of the dedication of the faithful few.

On July 25, 1993 Rev. Bailey conducted his last service in our Church as he was retiring. His endless enthusiasm and inspirational sermons along with his gift of music will not be forgotten.

When Rev. Ed Gratton became our minister in the spring of 1994 services were held in the Senior Citizens Room in the community hall as the severe winter had caused structural damage to our building.

At a congregational meeting on May 23, 1994 it was decided to repair the plaster and begin discussions with the Official Board and the Seaway Valley Presbytery to remain open only for one anniversary service per year. Several congregational meetings were held with discussions concerning our finances, as the furnace had been declared unsafe and water and sewer costs had yet to be paid. The congregation was now down to a handful with little prospect for future growth and therefore it was not feasible to continue. The choices to be made included joining with the other point on our charge, in Maxville, joining with the Presbyterians in Moose Creek, or going to any church of our choice.

In January 1998 the ceiling was severely damaged by the ice storm and the Church was not structurally safe to be used. On August 14, 1999 at a congregational meeting a resolution was passed stating the property was no longer necessary for the purposes of the congregation and authorizing the trustees of Knox United Church to sell the land and premises. This was a difficult decision as the remaining few had relatives or ancestors who were involved in the building and operation of this church since its beginning. The congregation was encouraged to continue to go a church of their choice.

On August 20, 1999 the Church was sold and the assets were distributed among other Churches and charities in the area, or returned to the people who donated them:

Gold cross - returned to Menzies & Viola McRae family who had donated it.

Collection plates - returned to the Grant family who had donated them.

Communion table & 3 pulpit chairs - given to the Knox Presbyterian church

Pulpit & blue hymn books - donated to Munroe & Morris Funeral home, Maxville.

Red hymn books - given to Maxville-Moose Creek United Church

Electric organ - given to Maxville-Moose Creek United Church

Communion set - donated to Maxville Manor

Several pews - given to families who requested them

Large Bible - given to Maxville-Moose Creek United Church

#### APPENDIX A

##### Ministers

###### Maxville

Congregational Church

1851-60 William McKillican

1860-69(?) John Campbell

1870-75 William Peacock

1876-98 Daniel McCallum

1898-99 R. B. Blyth (student minister)

1899-1914 J. T. Daley

1914-24 H. D. Whitmore

###### Maxville United Church Knox United, Moose Creek

1925-30 F. W. K. Harris 1926-45 N. McLaren

1931-53 J. H. Hamilton 1945-53 J. H. Hamilton

###### Maxville-Moose Creek Pastoral Charge

1953-65 Donald C. Munroe

1966-75 W. E. Henderson

1976-77 Paul G. Grassie

1978-80 Harold Alston

1981-93 Frank Bailey

1994-99 Ed Gratton

1999-2000 Stanley Ralph

2000- Howard Clark

##### **Organists & Choir Directors - Maxville**

1925-26 Organist; R. J. Hoople, Assistant: Gladys McEwen

Choir Director: Ada Munro

1927-32 Organist: Gladys McEwen

Choir Director: Ada Munro

1933 Organist: Lillian McEwen

assistants: Annie McDougall, Gladys McEwen

Choir Director: Ada Munro

1934-35 Mrs. Lorne McLean

assistants: Annie McDougall, Charles Munroe

Choir Director: Ada Munro

1936 Organist: Lillian McEwen

1937-39 Organist & Choir Director: Angus MacQueen

1940 Organist: Lillian McEwen,

1941 Organist & Choir Director: Queenie Glover

1942-43 Organist: Lillian McEwen, Assistant: Aida Winter  
1944-68 Organist: Charles Munroe  
1969-71 Organist: Catherine McEwen, Assistant: Betty Blair  
Director: Stewart Arkininstall  
1972-83 Organist: Catherine McEwen, organist.  
1984-90 Organist: Douglas Munro  
Choir Director: Ken Johns

**Sunday School Superintendents - Maxville**

1925-39 Tom W. Munroe, Dan Robertson, Mrs. Duncan McEwen  
1940-47 G. H. McDougall  
1948-50 C. B. McDermid  
1951-53 Arthur Campbell  
1955-56 C. B. McDermid  
1957-68 Gordon Winter  
1969 Eileen Henderson  
1976-84 Carole Williams  
1985 Sue Stelmach  
1986 Marjorie Munroe  
1987-90 Diane Jaggassar

*(The histories of the Congregational Church and United Church in Maxville are based on "Maxville - It's Centennial Story - 1991", pub. Centennial Book Committee)*