

Dr. Davidson Macdonald

Museum display recalls life of county-born missionary

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Staff Reporter

WELLINGTON - The life of Dr. Davidson Macdonald, a pioneer overseas missionary born in Prince Edward County, is detailed in a new display at the village museum, this summer.

Dr. Macdonald was born in 1837 on a farm near Wellington and is buried in the

village cemetery. He was the first of two overseas missionaries of the Wesleyan Church in Canada and spent many years in Japan.

Educated in Picton, he was converted in 1858 and spent 18 months as an exhorter and local preacher in a number of country charges in Ontario.

From 1862 to 1864, Dr. Macdonald was at Victoria College as a probationer, per-

forming ministerial functions. He was ordained in 1864 and obtained a medical degree in 1873.

Dr. Macdonald and his wife went to Shizuoka, Japan by special request from an influential Japanese who wanted an English teacher for his school. While there, the Macdonalds lived in part of a Buddhist temple.

In 1878, Dr. Macdonald left

Japan for further study and on his return was settled in Tokyo. He gave free services

to the sick of the Methodist mission and paid from his own pocket for medicine for Japanese pastors and others to poor to pay.

Dr. Macdonald died in Canada, on Jan. 4, 1905, while on a holiday. He had planned

to return to Japan at the close of his vacation.

On June 19, 1927, a memorial service was held for the pioneer missionary at his gravesite in the village. He is again remembered in the museum display which includes letters of gratitude to him from his Japanese students and a tribute in Haiku, 17-syllable poetry of the Japanese.

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