

A L B U R Y C H U R C H

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Solid oak seats were installed by a firm from Walkerton at a cost of \$500. The settee and two chairs which today stand behind the pulpit cost \$25, donated by five ladies from the Church.

Besides the name Albury Church on a signboard outside the church, there is an inscription higher up on the north wall of the building which reads Methodist 1898. At the time of the dedication, the word Methodist was filled in with plaster, because there was a dissenter in the congregation, and the notice in the paper read simply "The Albury Church" The plaster was later removed.

The church was dedicated on Wednesday, November 9, 1898, by Rev. W. J. Joliffe, Belleville, Rev. W. J. Young was pastor at the time. At dinner time each family was allotted a table and was expected to provide a full course meal, no matter how many sat down.

The original trustees were W. T. Dempsey, Stephen Dempsey, Thomas D. Onderdonk, John Williamson, Albert Sager, William Peck, Charles Dempsey, John Ryerson Onderdonk and George S. Bonter.

Although church records prior to March 26, 1926 were accidentally burned, it is known that in earlier years plays and concerts were held in the upper part of the Church, often to a full house. On such occasions it was customary to remove the church rails and the pulpit and erect a large platform as a stage. An orchestra from Belleville used to provide the music. Mrs. Bonter recalls one such occasion when young ladies were trained to go through a drill which lasted 20 minutes. The girls were required to carry three-legged milk stools which were made by her father William Peck. Two of these are still used as small tables.

Other events during the early years were the annual fowl suppers in the basement which has a seating capacity of 200.

It was not until 1943-45 years after the Church was dedicated, that the first marriage took place there. That was when Howard Homes married Evelyn Bonter. Both received the traditional white Bible.

The last funeral service in the old church was for Nancy Jane Weese, wife of William Randall Weese, in February 1898, and his mother Phoebe Ann Weese was the first person for whom a service was held in the new Church, in January 1899.

Miss Leo Fones was pianist in both the old and new churches for many years. Anglican Church services were held during the early years of the Church, and a resolution passed at a meeting in May 1959, was for a Mormon wedding ceremony to be held there.

The first caretaker of the Church was William Allison, who worked as a farm hand for William Peck. When he later married Effie Peck, and moved to his own farm, his brother Joseph Allison was appointed and he became caretaker for many years.