

United Empire Loyalist Outing, continued...

St. Alban the Martyr (UEL) Memorial Church

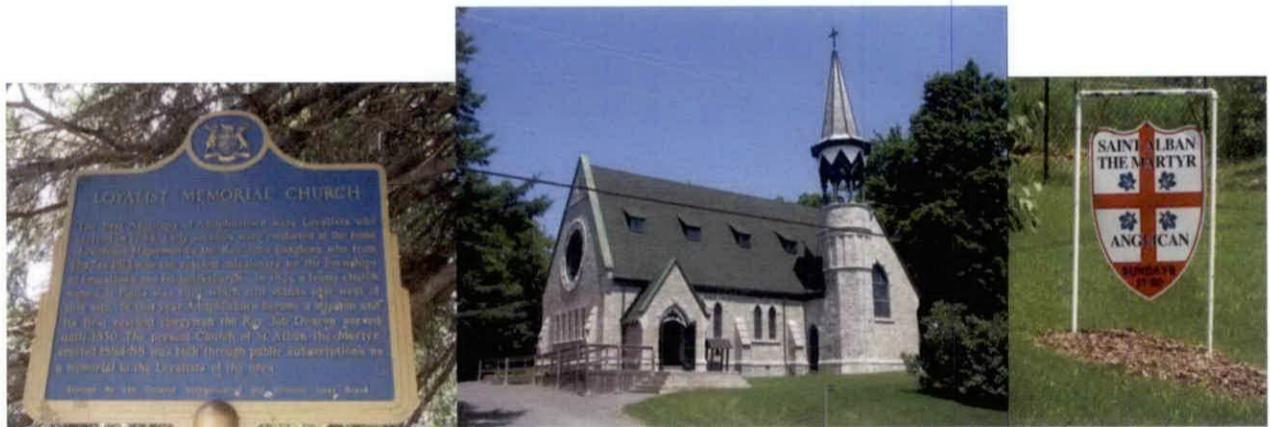
Our second stop was at the St. Alban the Martyr (UEL) Memorial Church. This important UEL site is only a short distance from Old Hay Bay Church. Both churches are part of fourth town contingent, then known as, the Township of Adolphustown. Our volunteer guide was Diane Berlet. She provided a very informative tour of this beautiful Church and pointed out the many unique features found within. The St. Alban Church stands close to the landing site of the 72 (UEL) families on June 16, 1784. The church was build through public subscription to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the landing. It is a Gothic revival stone church. The construction began in 1884 and the first service was delivered six years later on June 25, 1890. Rev. Forneri, oversaw all aspects of the building of the church including the encaustic tile fundraising scheme.

Among the many features pointed out by our guide included the marble baptismal font, the flags that are replicas of the colours that the Queen's Rangers American Regiment carried during the American Revolution (1775-1783), the very unique bell tower, and the 64 memorial tiles dedicated to Loyalists families and their children. The bell was crafted in Bristol, England and believed to be the oldest church bell in Ontario. It was gifted to the church and is now housed in a small wooden protective structure on the front lawn of the church.

The impressive 64 memorial encaustic tiles that encircle the interior of the church were made between 1894 and 1909. The tiles bear inscriptions to honour the historical significance of the early UEL families that arrived in the area 100 years ago. Each tile was sponsored by descendants of the initial UEL from the parish. They paid seven dollars for a buff tile and twelve dollars for a blue tile. Amazingly, that covered the production cost of the tile, the transportation by land and sea and the installation in the church. These hand-made tiles were crafted by the renowned ceramics factory "Minton's Ltd." in Stoke-upon-Trent, Staffordshire, England. Our guide Diane Berlet and Graem Coles have published a book entitled *The Loyalist Tiles of St. Alban's: Encaustic Memorial Tiles of the 19th Century* that compiles the biographies of the sixty-four "Tile People" and includes a full-page colour photo of each tile and illustrations of the Christian symbols and other details found on the tiles. It is a good resource for someone interested in the history of the tiles.

Diane finished the tour with the newest addition to the church - the large Rose Window - on the west wall. It was designed and produced by Robert McCausland stained glass studio in Toronto and completed in 2008. Diane added that the McCausland artisans have been making windows for St. Alban's for generations. The first three stained glasses windows were installed in 1890. Unfortunately, we were running late and did not visit the St-Alban's Cemetery.

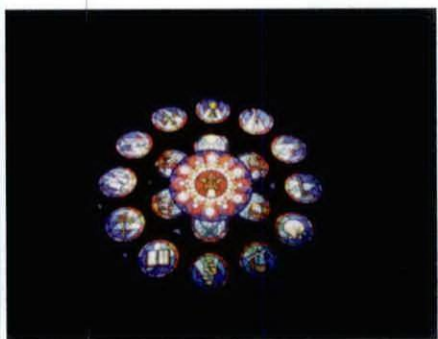
St. Alban the Martyr (UEL) Memorial Church



Sample of the encaustic tiles.



Flags replicas of the colours of the Queen's Rangers American Regiment.



Large Rose Window on the west wall designed by the Robert McCausland stained glass studio in Toronto.