

Skipness Presbyterian Church

The Skipness Church was built in 1884 and the Presbyterians and Methodists used the same building, each having their own minister and separate services.

The Presbyterians bought the land from Mr. Smithen and Sarah Hand for fifteen dollars; and an agreement was written April 18, 1888. The trustees were: David Porter, Malcolm MacDonald and David Morton.

The first organist was Miss Annie Chambers, the late Mrs. Hamilton Kain. Miss Ethel George, the late Mrs. Robert Elliott, was also organist for many years.

The first minister was Rev. Mr. Moore who came from Allenford. He was followed by Rev. Mr. Mowatt and Rev. Mr. Boyle.

Skipness Church then joined Grey Presbytery and the minister came from Hepworth or Shallow Lake. These included Rev. Mr. Wallace Johnson, 1913-1919, and Rev. Mr. Wm. J. Patton from 1919 until Church Union in 1925.

Later the Presbyterians re-opened the church and services were held until 1934. Following Church Union Rev. Mr. Boyle of Southampton conducted services for a

short time. Other ministers supplying the pulpit were Rev. Mr. Mills of Warton, Rev. Mr. MacAvoy Chesley, Rev. Mr. Reith of Tara and Rev. Mr. Nichol Southampton. For a few years services were conducted only in the summer months.

The church property is now owned by Alvin ^{BW} who bought it in 1944. A few years after this, the church was gutted. Some church pews went to Hepworth ^{WORTH} Second Presbyterian Church, erected after Church ^{CHURCH} Union. Some seats, flooring and some windows went ^{WENT} Stokes Bay to be used in a church.

For many years the church stood as a skeleton. Hay stored in it and Russell Gibbons packed ice in summer trade for several years.

In 1974 Maurice Hammond tore it down to girders and joists and dry timbers. All that is still to be seen are old cemetery steps and rubble. The cement-^{WALL} church shed that was built after the frame shed still stands on the property. A steel roof was put on it and Alvin ^{BL} uses it for storage. Several cottagers from ^{LAKE} Gould Lake store their boats in it.



Rev. and Mrs. Moore, first resident minister

Pioneer Memories

Many happy times were enjoyed at the Skipness Church garden parties.

Mrs. Oliver Stewart (nee Reta Hunt) remembers that Miss Maggie McDougal always made the tea and Mr. Alex Cunningham of Hepworth always had a booth. A concert was held in the evening with local talent. Sunday School picnics were held over at Gould Lake down from the bend in the road in a grove of trees beside the lake.

Mrs. Stewart also remembers vividly a very sad day at a Skipness garden party. On the afternoon of June 17, 1912, Mrs. William Forbes (nee Sarah McFarlane), daughter of the late Joseph and Jane (White) McFarlane of Zion Amabel, was sitting on a plank seat visiting with the ladies just before the supper. She fell backwards off the seat and died of a heart attack at the age of fifty-four.

Mrs. Stewart says everything stopped at the garden party and people went home. Mrs. Forbes's two daughters, May and Della, were at the garden party and many remember two broken-hearted girls sobbing all the way home in the democrat from the church.