

Stone Congregational Church Later Became Public Library

By Mary Blehn

The first minute book of the Georgetown Congregational Church, dating back to 1846, gives some interesting glimpses of local history. The church which became the public library in later years, was hard to join, and hard to leave, as our first two articles showed.

The concluding instalment of the series follows:

The Minute Book reveals how, in spite of their good intentions, members frequently strayed from the high standards of behaviour set by the church. Usually a committee of two was appointed to visit and talk with an offender before any further

disciplinary action was taken.

The majority of expulsions were made because of excessive drinking.

One prominent churchman was brought to task, however, on August 8th, 1841, because he did entertain a number of circus men and their horses during the whole of one Sabbath, for which he received pay.

That he allowed said circus men to leave their wagons and appendages on his farm for the whole of one Lord's Day, for which he received pay.

That he did allow his wagon horses and man to take a number of persons to church on the Sabbath, for which he received pay.

As a result of these charges, the whole family, which incidentally were heavy contributors to the church membership at their own request, several years later, they applied to be re-installed, and they again became members. Sometimes when members left the church, they got to return articles belonging to the congregation, such as sacramental vessels, or altar linens. The matter was dealt with very frankly at the church meeting, and a committee appointed to visit the offender to Sarah and Samantha. The little boys' names are still the old-time favourites of today.

The list of church members is stand on a dubious point by half spelled by 1851 to include staling in the Minutes. "It was William Barber, George and Elizabeth considered that any gathering of people, and where footed and such as

like exhibitions were seen and heard, were what the church understood in its discipline by 'circuses.'

The taking of the Lord's name in vain sometimes appeared in the minutes as an offence which brought on an investigation by the church committee. Even 'suspicion of intemperance' and 'irregular attendance' warranted a visit by the ever-vigilant committee, with subsequent reports made to the congregation.

It would seem that the original severity was starting to soften slightly, when in 1857, members decided to give themselves the pleasure of mingle with their hymns by bringing a melodeon into the church.

An important part of any church record is the Baptismal Register. This venerable minute book discloses that Mary, the daughter of Robert and Mary McKonny, was the first child baptised by Rev. David Powell, on September 18th, 1840, one day after she was born. The service took place at her parents' home.

Baptism in the home was common, according to the church register. The last baptism recorded in the book took place on October 21st, 1858, when Rev. John Unsworth performed the service for Duncan Stalker, son of Daniel and Catherine Stalker. The names given to the little girls over a century ago have a quaint old-fashioned sound - Marylet Angeline, Jerryusha Nancy, Selinah, Albina, Althea, Margrate, Evelline, and a committee appointed to visit the offender to Sarah and Samantha. The little boys' names are still the old-time favourites of today.

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Jan Barber, Robert and Eleanor Maw, Henry Vance, John Duncan, William Anderson, Hugh Frame, Eleanor McClellan, Catherine Anderson, Margaret Vance, Mrs. Mary Denny, Emma and Mary Denny, Thomas Denny and John and Ann Pickard so that the time had come to build a chapel. Contributions from the members are listed in pounds shillings and pence. When they totalled one hundred and forty-three pounds sterling, a frame chapel was built at the corner of Park and Church Streets. The congregation paid their part for Rev. Hynam Denny, 75 pounds a year. John Harvey was engaged to ring the chapel bell for ten o'clock service Sundays for one quarter. The frame chapel was used until 1877, when the stone church which now houses our public library was built at a cost of \$6,500.

The last entry in the Minute Book was made on December 30, 1862. In the twenty years, or so spanned by the Minutes, there are several gaps in time when notes of meetings were not taken so that the picture we gain is not quite complete. But it is clear enough to let us formulate an answer to the question of whether our ideals have changed much over the century.

It is this reading between the lines of the old Minute Book, that makes it doubly interesting.

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Their 56th Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. Bert McLaughlin of McLaughlin Road Northampton, recently celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary. Present for the occasion were their son Norman, who is their next door neighbour, and their daughters Isabel (Mrs. Emmerson Dale) of Georgetown, Jean (Mrs. Howard Bunsch) of Kitleigh, and Josephine (Mrs. Robert Kilroy) of McMurchy Avenue South, Brampton. Their grandchildren, Nancy and Jackie Dale, and Betty Jean and Russell Kilroy, Mrs. Norman McLaughlin and grandchildren Larry, Gary and Cindy-Lou and Sandra Barber, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bunsch and Ricky Dale were away on vacation at the time. Mrs. McLaughlin was born in Brampton and her husband in Grahamsville, Ont. The McLaughlins were married on Church St. E. in the home of Mrs. McLaughlin's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Burt. The house is now a hair salon. "I should have my hair done there sometime," said Mrs. McLaughlin. "It would be just like home again."

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