



Dixon Club float for Milford Fair
(l.to r.) Floral Minaker, Jack Clark, Wrex Hicks, Quentin Minaker

Dixon Club Celebrates 60 years of Community Service

The first meeting of the Community Club, which later became the Dixon Club, was held in the South Bay Church Sanctuary on October 22nd, 1934.

During the winter months, meetings were held on alternate Mondays rotating among the four churches, Black Creek, Milford, South Bay, and Carmen Union, in South Marysburgh. On December 8th, 1936, the members, many of whom are still active, began to meet at the Milford vestry and the organization was renamed the Dixon Club, after a former minister, the Reverend Sford Dixon.

The first president was Benton Goodman of Black Creek. The club continued to meet in the Milford vestry until 1941, when during the war years and with declining attendance, it began to meet in members' homes. When the South Bay Church Sunday School Hall was completed in 1953, the Dixon Club began to meet there and has done so ever since.

The Dixon Club is, as it was when it began 60 years ago, a community service organization, ecumenical and inclusive of members who may or may not have church connections. Its purpose and format have always been Christian oriented, doing good in the community by personal effort and charitable means.

In the early years, money was raised for various community enterprises by presenting plays, musical programmes and variety shows. Latterly the club has raised money by holding auctions and catering to dinners as well as various other small projects.

But, according to Madeline Rose and Floral Minaker, it was the three act plays and variety shows that brought the greatest satisfaction to both performer and audience alike. Some of the three act plays performed by the group were: "Uncle Josh Perkins" by Henry Rowland, in 1941; "The Big Surprise" by Robert St. Clair, between '41 and '46; "The Big Surprise" by Walter Ben Here, in 1946 and although Madeline Rose's copy was in her words "worn to smithers" the date and title were still legible "Silas Smidge from Turnip Ridge" by Jay Tobias, in 1948.

Both Floral and Madeline recall the variety shows with much laughter and wistful nostalgia. They recall one in particular, when Kathryn Head, who had rehearsed the musical accompaniment to all the numbers, took ill before the performance and had to be replaced. Mrs. Clark, Jack Clark's mother, stepped into her shoes and played the music as if she had been doing it all along, much to the relief of the performers. One of these shows was the original Shantyman's Concert that was reprised by a group of local performers and some of the originals, at Mount Tabor Playhouse last fall.

The programmes for the meetings have been every bit as varied over the years as their public performances. The members have enjoyed card parties, guest speakers, videos and films, bus tours, suppers and an annual BBQ. Over the years the group entered a float in the Milford Fair Parade. Although this practice was discontinued for a few years, it was started up again two years ago. The