

Evening Wedding at the Black River Chapel

By Deborah Hudson

October 10th, 1969 was the scene of a unique country wedding at the Black River Chapel. Two years previously the Chapel had closed to regular services so when my mother, Nora Grimmon, approached her brother-in-law, Stirling Grimmon (a member of the Black River Chapel and Cemetery Board), about an evening wedding at the Chapel he was delighted to help.

The Chapel was (and still is) without electricity so Uncle Stirling had to dig out the kerosene lanterns from the attic in the Chapel. This required using a ladder to gain access to the attic from the outside. Uncle Stirling cleaned and polished the lanterns then filled them with oil.

Mom asked me to play the old pump organ for the event. Her favourite song was Offenbach's Barcarolle from the *Tales of Hoffman*. In September and October I practiced diligently, coordinating my pumping feet with my fingers until one day there was a small bang and a strap broke leaving one peddle useless. Uncle Stirling came to the rescue. He used a strap from an old pair of overalls to repair the broken piece. I remained leery about that old organ hoping it would not let me down during the ceremony.

October 10th arrived and was a beautiful autumn day. As evening approached the little Chapel was aglow with the soft light from the old lanterns. The guests arrived as the sounds of the Barcarolle wafted out into the warm, quiet evening.

The Reverend Neelands united Nora Grimmon and Harold Bartman in marriage but not before the last "guest" arrived. As the vows were about to



be exchanged I saw from my vantage point at the organ that my gray tomcat, Mickey, was sauntering down the aisle. He proceeded to the wedding party rubbing up against my Aunt Yvonne Grimmon's leg. Next he hopped up on the chair behind the pulpit to casually clean himself.

Now, weddings are serious affairs but an uncontrollable hilarity simmered under the surface of those familiar with my crazy cat. You could almost see the oil shaking in the lanterns on one side of the Chapel. Mickey descended from behind the pulpit and my Cousin Bruce whisked him outside to the great outdoors. With great effort I shut out the shaking laughter inside so I could once again coordinate my feet and fingers and play the wedding recessional as Uncle Stirling's overall strap held steadfast.

The Prince Edward Historical Society presents



Two Days About Yesterday
November 7 & 8, 2015

A Celebration of History & Heritage at
the Wellington Community Centre

**View Displays, Take Tours,
Listen to Speakers,
Watch Presentations**

**More information coming soon but please
mark your calendars to attend**

Minaker's Auto Parts

Since 1925

3073 County Rd. 10, PO Box 100, Milford, Ont. K0K 2P0
Tel: (613) 476-4547 Fax: (613) 476-3290

Specializing in Hard-To-Get Parts

Auto Wreckers, New and Used Parts, Auto Service
www.minakersautoparts.ca