

Churches of Normanby Township

Normanby Township, located on the southern edge of Grey County with Egremont Township to the east, Bentinck Township to the north and Carrick Township to the west, was named after the Marquis of Normanby. It was opened to settlement in 1850, and settled by a diversified population.

Information about many of the churches in the Township can be found in Normanby Reflections: A History of Normanby Township, published in 1989. In previous columns I have covered the churches of Mount Forest (July 3 to 25, 1997); Neustadt (October 16, 23, 1998); Ayton (February 5, 12, 1999); Alsfeldt Evangelical/ United Church; two St. James Lutheran congregations and St. Paul's Lutheran Church (August 27 and September 3, 1999); and Letter Breen Methodist/United (September 22, 2002).

Today I begin a series on the remaining rural congregations in the Township by providing a list of several about which I have very limited information. Perhaps history buffs in the Normanby area might help fill in the picture.

NENAGH BLACK CHURCH

T. Arthur Davidson in *A New History of Grey County*, 1972 (p. 207) reported the existence of an early "Negro settlement just south of Nenagh. They were largely escaped slaves coming to Canada via Buffalo and Detroit. They built a small church and there are still marked graves in a small cemetery nearby." Further details were given in *Normanby Reflections*: (pp. 101-102): "On the East Part, lot 50, concession 3, they built a little log church and fenced in a small cemetery. There are still two white slab tombstones ...inscribed to: Jenet Gant (d. 1851), Thos. Gant (d. 1855), Ann Gant (d.1856) Wm. Henry (d. 1856)." The Township history also describes the mistreatment these black settlers experienced at the hand of some unscrupulous Canadians.

BACHINS METHODIST CHURCH

Davidson also reported (p. 213) that this early Methodist Church was

ChurchStory



REV KEN BARKER

located on lot 19, concession 1. Did he confuse it with Buchans Methodist Church in nearby Egremont Township?

ORCHARDVILLE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Davidson reported (p. 213) that "French and Irish Roman Catholics built a log church in the 1840s on lot 13, concession 1." Normanby Reflections located it at Division 1, lot 12, concession 1. Which is the correct site?

BACHUS METHODIST CHURCH

In 1850 Richard Bachus, an itinerant Methodist minister, came from Brampton and settled on the townline between Normanby and Bentinck Townships. He held services in the living room of his house until a small church, named Bachus, was built on the north-west corner of lot 4, concession 2. Members of this congregation were instrumental in building a Methodist Church in nearby Varney. The Bachus congregation was eventually absorbed by the Varney Church although I have been unable to ascertain the process..

GLENEDEN METHODIST CHURCH

Early Methodist services were held in the Gleneden School, lot 64, concession 2. The 1884 map shows a church building on this site. Did the Methodists erect a building in Gleneden?

UNNAMED METHODIST CHURCH

Dr. Jack A. S. Kell listed an early Methodist Church which met in an Or-

ange Hall on lot 24, concession 4. Can anyone name it and provide other details? This congregation may have been closed around 1900.

KNOX PRESBYTERIAN, NORMANBY

Presbyterian services were held in central Normanby as early as 1859. In 1861 Patrick Greig was inducted into a charge which had four preaching points: East Normanby; North Normanby (Hampden); Orchardville; and Middle Station (Knox, Normanby). A stone church was erected in Middle Station (Knox) on the south-east corner of lot 14, concession 3. On December 31, 1878 Knox, Normanby was separated from East Normanby and North Normanby; and linked with Amos, Dromore, an arrangement which lasted for eighty years. In 1884 a new Knox Church, costing \$1200, was built of white brick.

In 1925 Knox, Normanby declined to enter The United Church by a vote of 49 to 20. It continued to be linked with Amos, Dromore. In 1958 Knox, Holstein was added to the charge.

Over the years Knox, Normanby has been served by the following ministers and students: Donald MacLean; Patrick Greig (1861-77); David Forest; David P. Niven (1879-92); Donald H. McVicar (1892-97); David Lachlan Campbell (1898-1906); George Kendali (1906-14); Benjamin M. Smith (1914-20); William James Burnett (1921-26); Frank Gilbert Purnell (1927-29); Robert Honeyman (1930-37); Horace Kaye (1938 to chaplaincy 1940); George M. Young (1940-43); P. Gordon MacInnes (1943-47)

Wilfred A. McLeod (1947-50); David Knechtel Perrie (1950-56); Donald Stewart Paterson (1957-60); Archibald Newton Reid (1962-66); Joseph Edward Taylor (1966-72); Gerald Earle Thompson (1974); J. Morrison Campbell (1975-78); David Charles Kettle (1978-81); Victor Jamieson (1982-84); Milton Tulley (1985-90); Ian Raeburn-Gibson (1991-93); and Pearl Vasarhelyi (1993 to present).