

## History of North Caradoc Presbyterian Church

*(excerpt from Historical Sketches written by Rev. C. W. Middleton, 1978)*

Most of the settlers in this area were Highland Scots with names reflected in this directory today (McGugan, McLean, Lamont, Thompson). Earliest history relates that Mr. Wm. Clark conducted the first meetings in both English and Gaelic, in this district during the year of 1850. A log building was built between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> concession on the 16<sup>th</sup> sideroad, and Mr. Clark continued services till 1855 when North Caradoc and Melville (Lobo) merged services and Rev. J. Ferguson became the first settled minister. He ministered till 1867 with Rev. Duncan McMillan taking position and serving till 1874 thereby ending the Gaelic services. In 1868, the session vetoed the introduction of instrumental music for the service with an argument ensuing and presbytery was left to decide. During the next four years, pulpit supply filled a vacancy and strangely the double charge was omitted from the list of churches joining the Presbyterian Church of Canada when the union of churches took place in 1875. In 1876 the log Church was replaced by a brick Church on the same lot, the NE corner of the 8<sup>th</sup> concession and 16<sup>th</sup> sideroad. Around this time an organ and choir joined the service with Miss Kate McNeil as the first organist. For the next 39 years the services of the church and its congregation changed with a separate session forming in 1889 and much service to mission both local and foreign. In March 1913, a terrible wind storm blow the brick church apart. St. Andrew's in Mt. Brydges offered their church building to North Caradoc for the usual services till a new building could be erected. The ill wind which wrecked havoc to North Caradoc united the two congregations. North Caradoc detached from Melville, Lobo after 58 years and joined with St. Andrew's for a 2 point charge.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of May 1914 a new building was completed on the McNeil site for a lease of the property as long as the building was used for Church purposes. Total cost of the building was \$4110.10. North Caradoc Garden parties first held in 1894 were a popular feature and continued till 1952. In April 1921 The bounds of the presbytery were rearranged and Knox in Komoka was added to the congregations of North Caradoc and St. Andrew's to form a 3 point charge.

Many ministers and pulpit supply filled the service requirements till 1960. In this year an Interim Moderator, Rev. D MacDonald suggested the name of Rev. Charles Middleton, a minister in the Church of Scotland had been brought to his attention and a call was communicated to request his agreement to fill the vacant charge. Unheard, unknown, and unseen on June 11 1961 the minister elect conducted his first service and was inducted on June 20 at Knox, Komoka.

In the following years the activities of the church included, building a manse, installing a bathroom in the lower hall with funds from the Ladies Aid, Women's Mission Society (first formed in 1898), drilling for a well, forming a couples club, and forming girls and boys choirs, songfests, and Sunday school enrolments climbed to 45 students.

## **History of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Mt. Brydges**

The church building and property was first owned in 1864 by the Methodist Episcopal Church of Caradoc. The building and contents were sold by auction in April 1900 to Mr. T. A. McEoy for \$201.25. The property was sold to Mr. C. Lispit for \$86, being transferred later to Mr. McEvoy who then turned it over to the new forming Presbyterian congregation. On May 22 the new group was formally recognized as a Presbyterian church and declared their church as St. Andrew's.

The first minister, Rev. R. Leitch agreed to a stipend of \$150 yearly to conduct fortnight services. A formal opening held on July 1 1900 found the accounts for new books and the price of the land paid for, with gifts of an organ and new stove for heating offered. Area people with the surnames of Trott, Buchanan, Wyatt, Curtis, Forbes and Forsythe operated and became officers of the Church. Rev. Leitch continued his service till 1907, then stating that during the year he made 307 pastoral calls, conducted 228 Sunday and other services, and travelled 3,397 miles in horse and buggy doing his pastoral duties. With many ministers taking their time to fill the call to minister at St. Andrew's to a number of 72 on the roll in the 1920 but dropping to 54 in 1941. The Hungarian Presbyterians in the area were permitted then to use the Church to have services in their own tongue, sharing the cost of the upkeep of the building. Other family names appeared on the roll of St. Andrew's, such as Baker, Crawford, Deacon, Smale, Stuart, Waters and Whitbourn.

Rev. Charles Middleton made his move with family from Scotland to take the 3 point charge of Knox, St. Andrew's and North Caradoc and shortly after a new manse was built with funds from the sale of the old manse. New funds and gifts of generosity (praise hymnals, an oak cross, hours of work to clean and maintain) from the congregation saw many improvements to the church then in the next 15 years. Newer session members and officers named Arnold, Davis, Erskine and Langford helped in managing the funds as well as doing the building or installation of a new cement floor, a new organ, carpet, and a new washroom. Many of the Ladies of the church supported many of the endeavours throughout the years with garden parties, special luncheons, dinner parties, Ladies Aid meetings, mission projects, Sunday school, and office support.

In 1999, the three point charge of North Caradoc, St. Andrew's and Knox had been without a minister for some time. It was suggested by a presbyterial committee that a 2 point charge would be better able to attract a minister. At that time, St. Andrew's had a small but faithful congregation who had worked hard together for many years.

## Growing Together

The decision was made to close St. Andrew's and free its membership to attend the church of their choice. After almost 100 years of worship, service and fellowship, a final congregational meeting was held on August 29 1999. Members chose to join with the sister congregation at North Caradoc. The Hungarian congregation had closed their church a few years earlier, and had been worshipping at St. Andrew's. They moved here at the same time. On October 3, a service was held welcoming St. Andrew's to North Caradoc. Participating in that service were Bob Buchan, moderator of the presbytery, Rev. Dennis Carrothers, interim moderator of the charge, Rev. Gloria Langois, minister North Yarmouth and Knox, Belmont and Clerks of Session Bill Sutherland, North Caradoc and Jean Middleton, St. Andrew's. On December 10 1999, the St. Andrew's church building was sold.



*Larry Langford, Duncan McGugan, Ray Henderson, Don McLean and Kathy Fraser cut the ribbon for new addition, Nov. 18 2001.*

Kathy Fraser preached for the call on April 16 2000. She was ordained to the Lord's ministry on June 11 2000 at a service at Elmwood, and inducted at North Caradoc—St. Andrew's on September 24 2000. With much deliberation and thought, knowing how the congregation was growing and newer updated facilities were wanted, the session of NCSt.A requested approval for an addition to be built to the church building. In January 2001 this approval was received from presbytery and after groundbreaking in May 2001 and construction throughout the summer of 2001 the new addition was completed and blessed on November 18 2001.

As our growth and change continues, we celebrate and honour all those who with the Grace of God, have laboured to provide a place for the Lord's service to be done.



*Some of the church family celebrating the opening of the new addition on Nov. 18 2001.*

*Anniversary Cake Cutting 2009  
( Rev. Kathy Fraser, Noah Skinner,  
Cameron Gillard, Shaylyn MacLeod,  
Roland Acheson and Johnny Aarts)*

