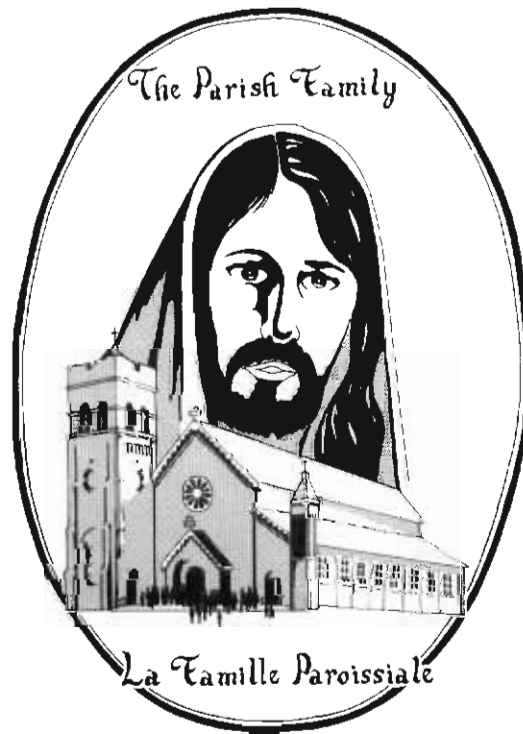


*The Parish Family
of
St. Simon and St. Jude*

1834 – 1984

*La Famille Paroissiale
de
St. Simon et St. Jude*



Our Patron Saints

St. Simon:

St. Simon - Feast Day - October 28th

One of the twelve apostles, he was referred to as 'the Zealot' or 'the Cananean' to distinguish him from Simon Peter. Known for his zeal for the Jewish law, he directed his zeal, fidelity to the service of Christ after his conversion. He became Bishop of Jerusalem in 63 A.D. and died a martyr death in 107 A.D. He is said to have been martyred in Persia while preaching with St. Jude. His martyrdom occurred by being sawn in half and so he is portrayed with a saw.



St. Jude:

St. Jude Thaddeus:

One of the twelve apostles, he is given the name Thaddeus to distinguish him from Judas Iscariot. He is also identified as the brother of St. James. St. Jude is the author of an Epistle and was with St. Simon when he suffered a martyr's death in Persia. The club he holds is said to be the instrument of his martyrdom. St. Jude is venerated as the patron of "desperate cases" and also the patron of hospitals.



Nos Saints Patrons

Leur fête est célébrée le 28 octobre:

Saint-Simon:

apôtre, surnommé le Zélote (le Cananéen) pour le distinguer de Simon-Pierre et de Saint Siméon. Il prêcha l'Évangile en Égypte et en Perse.

Il fut connu pour son zèle pour la loi juive, et après sa conversion, son zèle et sa fidélité au service du Christ.

Il devint évêque de Jérusalem en l'an 63 et il mourut martyr en l'an 107 lorsqu'il fut scié en deux, on le désigne tenant en main une grande scie.

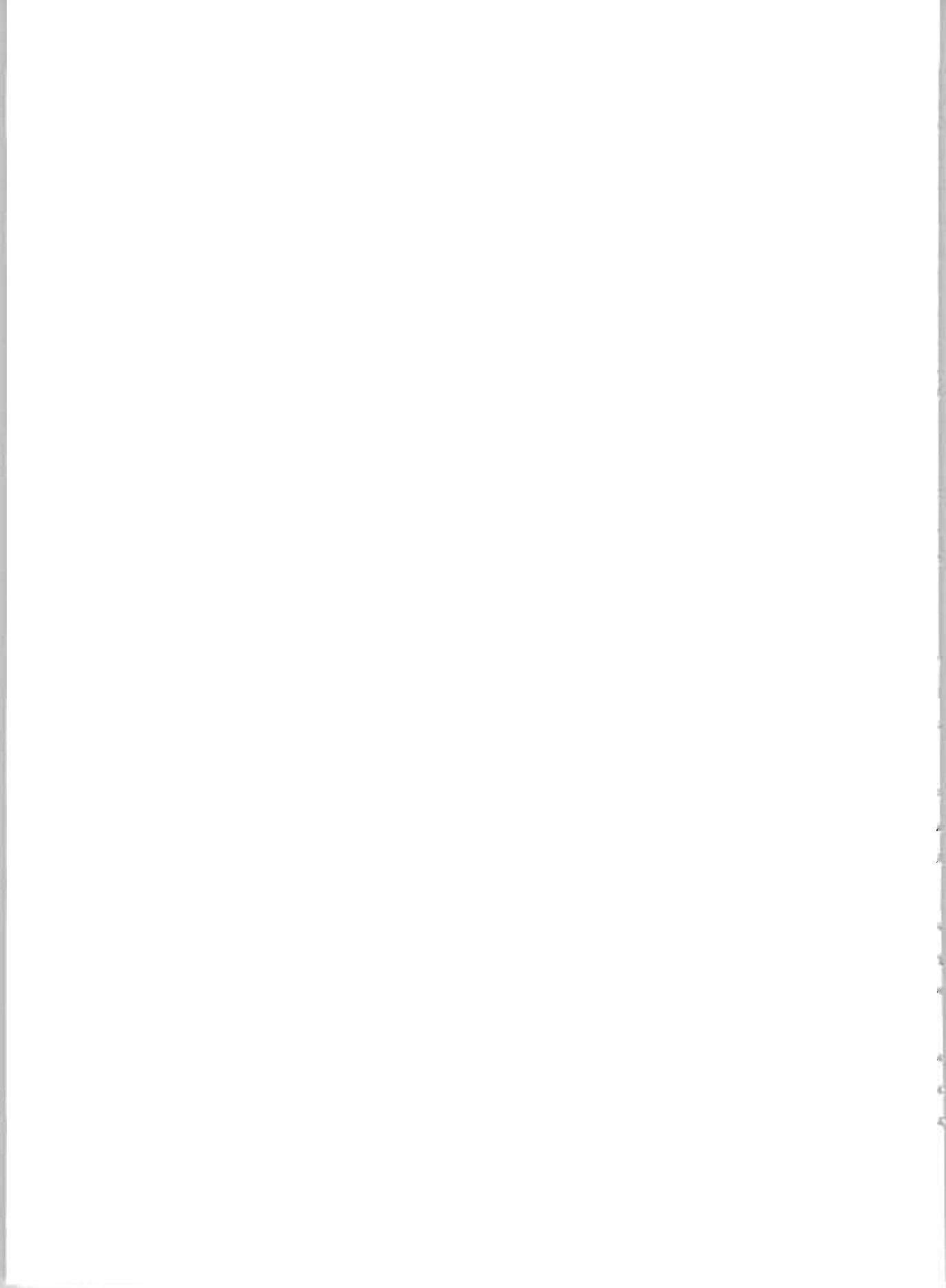
Saint-Jude Thaddée:

cousin de Jésus et frère de Saint-Jacques le Mineur, est aussi un des douze apôtres. On le nomma Thaddée pour le distinguer de Judas Iscariot.

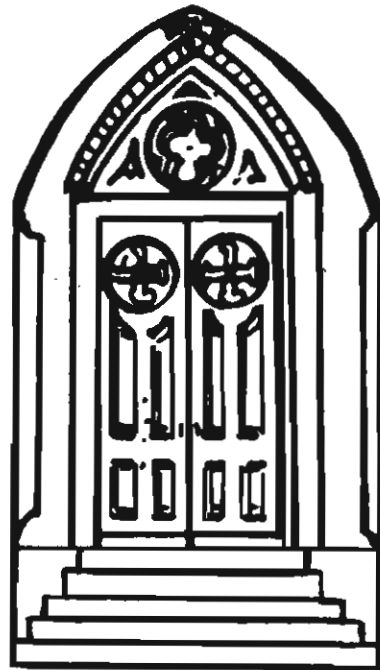
Saint-Jude est l'auteur d'une Epître adressée aux églises d'Orient.

Il souffrit également la mort d'un martyr car il fut bâtonné à mort.

Nous vénérons Saint-Jude comme patron des hôpitaux et l'avocat des causes désespérées.



*To the memory of
all those who passed
through these doors
and
to those who will
enter in the future*



*En hommage à tous ceux
qui ont franchi ces portes
et
à tous ceux qui les
franchiront dans l'avenir*



What is a parish?

One of the first things Jesus did when he began his public life of preaching was to gather around himself people. He chose twelve apostles and then seventy-two disciples and then countless numbers of faithful began to join this small nucleus and the church was established. The church or the parish is basically all those who believe in Jesus, accept his teachings and try to live accordingly to them in order to carry out his work of redeeming the world.

But the church or the parish is much more than a gathering of people around Jesus. Jesus described the Church for us when he said, "I am the vine, you are the branches". (John 15:5). We are actually joined to Jesus. St. Paul went on to say about the church, "Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make our body, so it is with Christ." ... "Now you together are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it." (I Cor. 12:12, 27)

We, the people of God, are the Body of Christ, forming part of him and commissioned by him to, "Go and teach all nations". This is the great mystery of the Church and the parish is simply one small part of the universal church of the Body of Christ.

As we try to recount the history of our parish over 150 years, we are actually reflecting on how God has worked amongst us during this period of time. He had touched each of our lives individually, but also as a community, as the body of Christ. The story of our parish is therefore the story of the struggles, the sacrifices, the joys, the sorrows, the good times, the bad times; in other words the story of our human condition embraced by Christ and redeemed by him.

In a recent encyclical letter Pope John Paul II said, "The parish must rediscover its vocation, which is to be a fraternal and welcoming family home, where those who have been baptized and confirmed become aware of forming the People of God. In that home, the bread of good doctrine and the Eucharistic Bread are broken for them in abundance, in the setting of the one act of worship; from that home they are sent out day by day to their apostolic mission in all the centres of activity of the life of the world." (John Paul II, Encyclical: Catechesis in Our Time)



Father Gerry Duchene

Historical Book Committee

Pride in our past and in our local history, the affection and sense of belonging which we have for our parish family, were the motives which guided us throughout the realization and publication of this souvenir booklet.

Just as our forefathers showed courage, tenacity and perseverance in founding, and developing our parish, we are pleased to have put together and published this booklet. It is the result of many hours of time, effort and good will.

We did everything possible to ensure the authenticity, the exactness and the broadness of this presentation. The volume of facts and figures assembled here will surely enrich your lives with the richness of your heritage.

We are proud to dedicate this souvenir booklet to all our parishioners on the occasion of this 150th anniversary of the St. Simon and St. Jude Parish, 1834-1984.



**Top Row: Harriette Tellier, Bernadette Levesque,
Francis Morand, René Godin, Anita Levesque
Front Row: Sister Mary Pius, Fr. Gerald Duchene,
Lillian Mousseau, Gérald Bezaire**

Comite du Livre Souvenir

La fierté de notre passé et de notre histoire, l'attachement et l'appartenance à notre famille paroissiale sont les motifs qui nous ont guidé vers la réalisation et la publication de ce livre souvenir.

A l'exemple de nous pionniers qui, avec courage, tenacité et persévérance, ont fondé et développé notre paroisse, nous sommes heureux d'avoir réalisé et publié cet ouvrage, conscients de ce que cela a représenté pour nous en terme de temps, d'effort et de bonne volonté.

Soucieux de l'authenticité, de l'exactitude, de la répartition et de la présentation de cet ouvrage, nous sommes conscients qu'il vous fera revivre un riche passé et apprécier un précieux héritage.

Nous remercions tous ceux et celles, qui de près ou de loin, de moins et de beaucoup, ont contribué et collaboré de diverses façons à cette oeuvre paroissiale.

Ensemble comme grande famille paroissiale, nous faisons nôtres cet énoncé de Louis Fréchette:

*"Ils furent grands pourtant ces paysans
Qui, sur ces bords lointains, hardis défièrent jadis
L'enfant des bois dans ses repaires,
Et, perçant la forêt, l'arguebuse à la main,
Au progrès à venir ouvrirent le chemin . . .
Et ces hommes furent nos pères . . ."*

Sur ce, nous vous dédions à l'occasion du 150e anniversaire de la paroisse de St-Simon et St-Jude ce

**Livre-Souvenir
1834-1984**

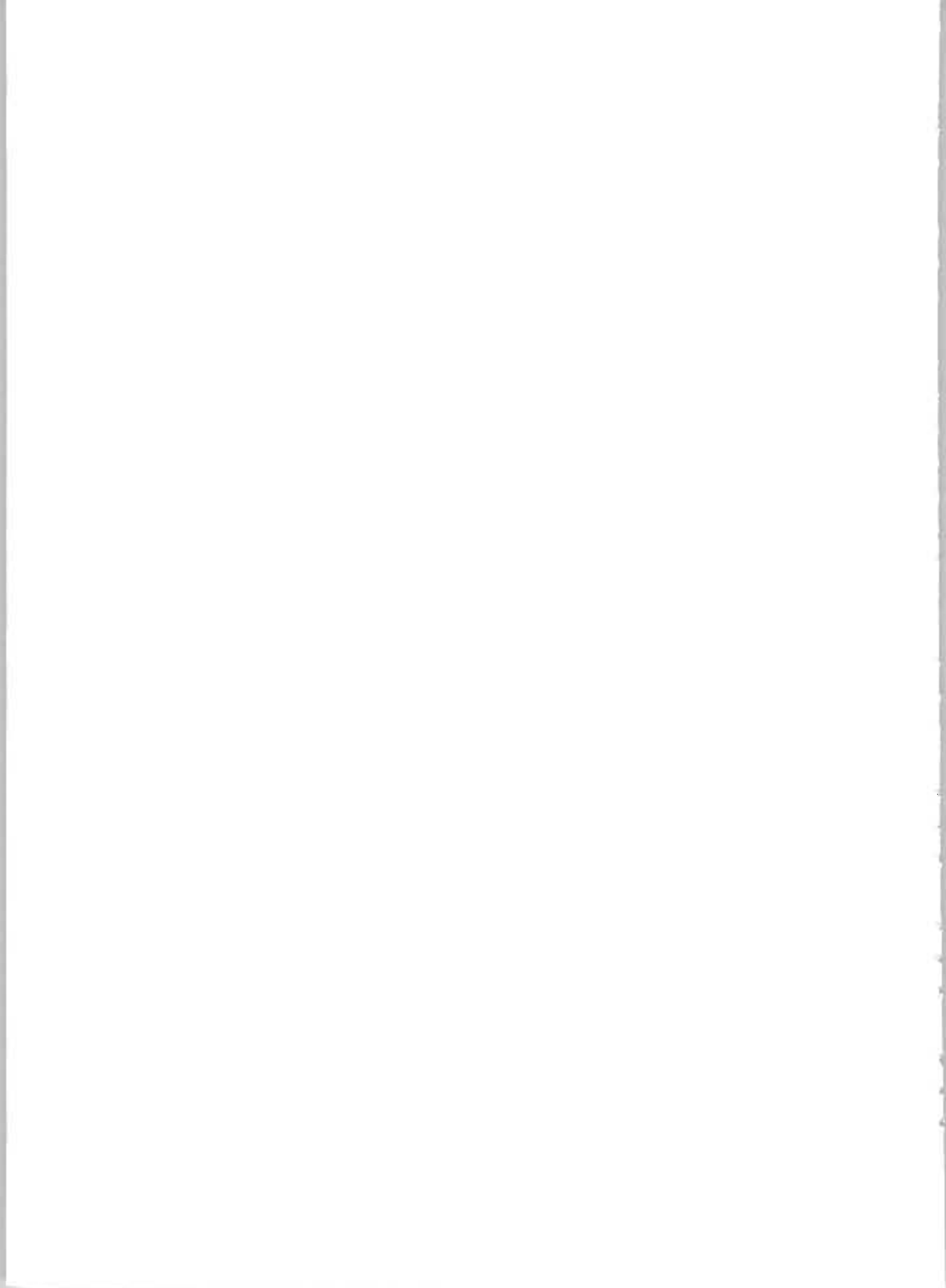
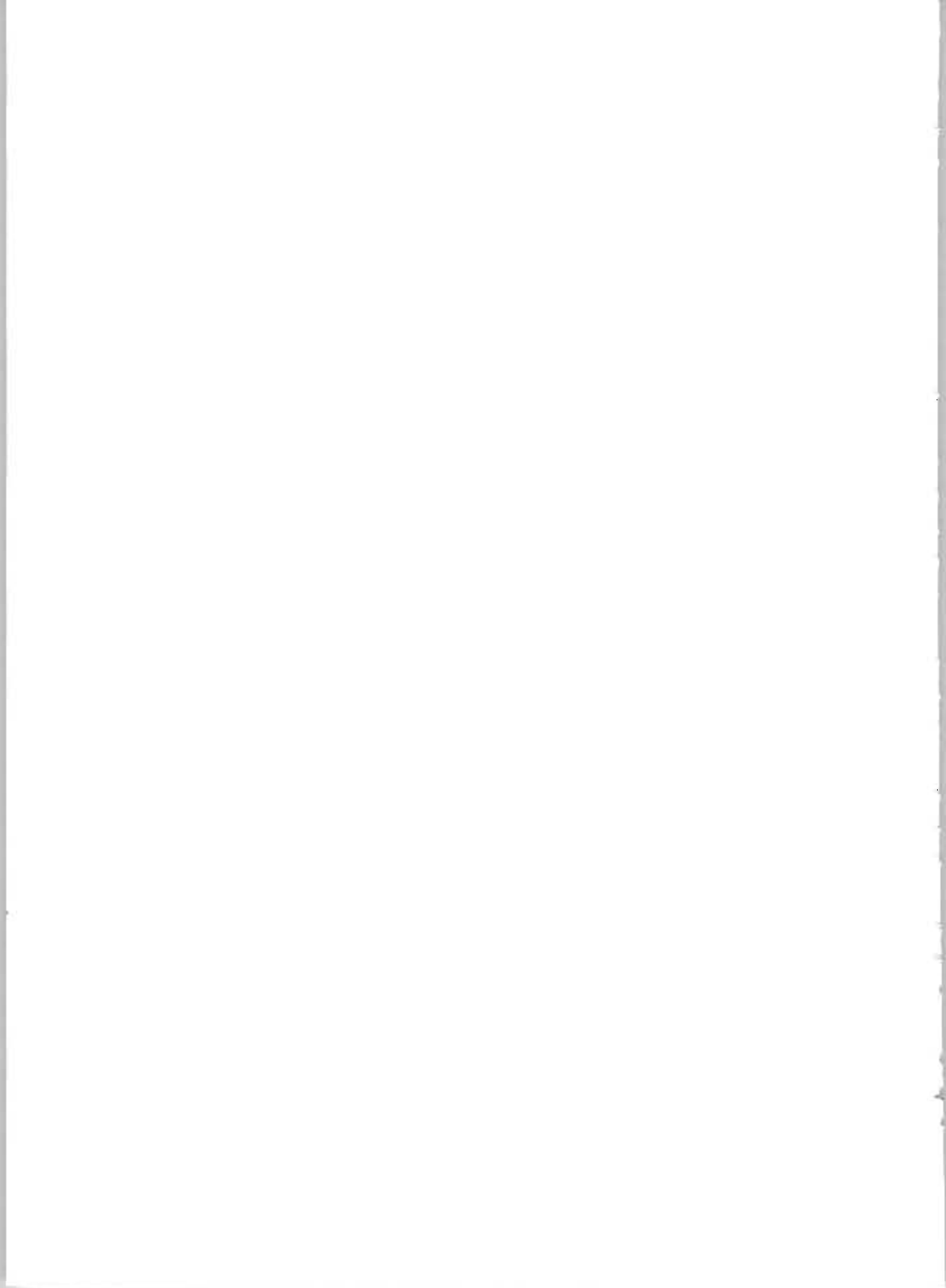


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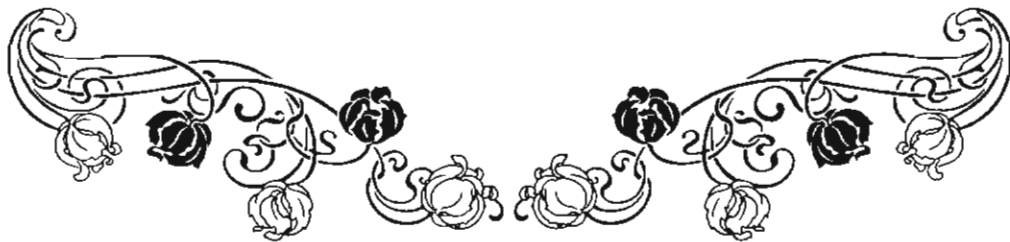
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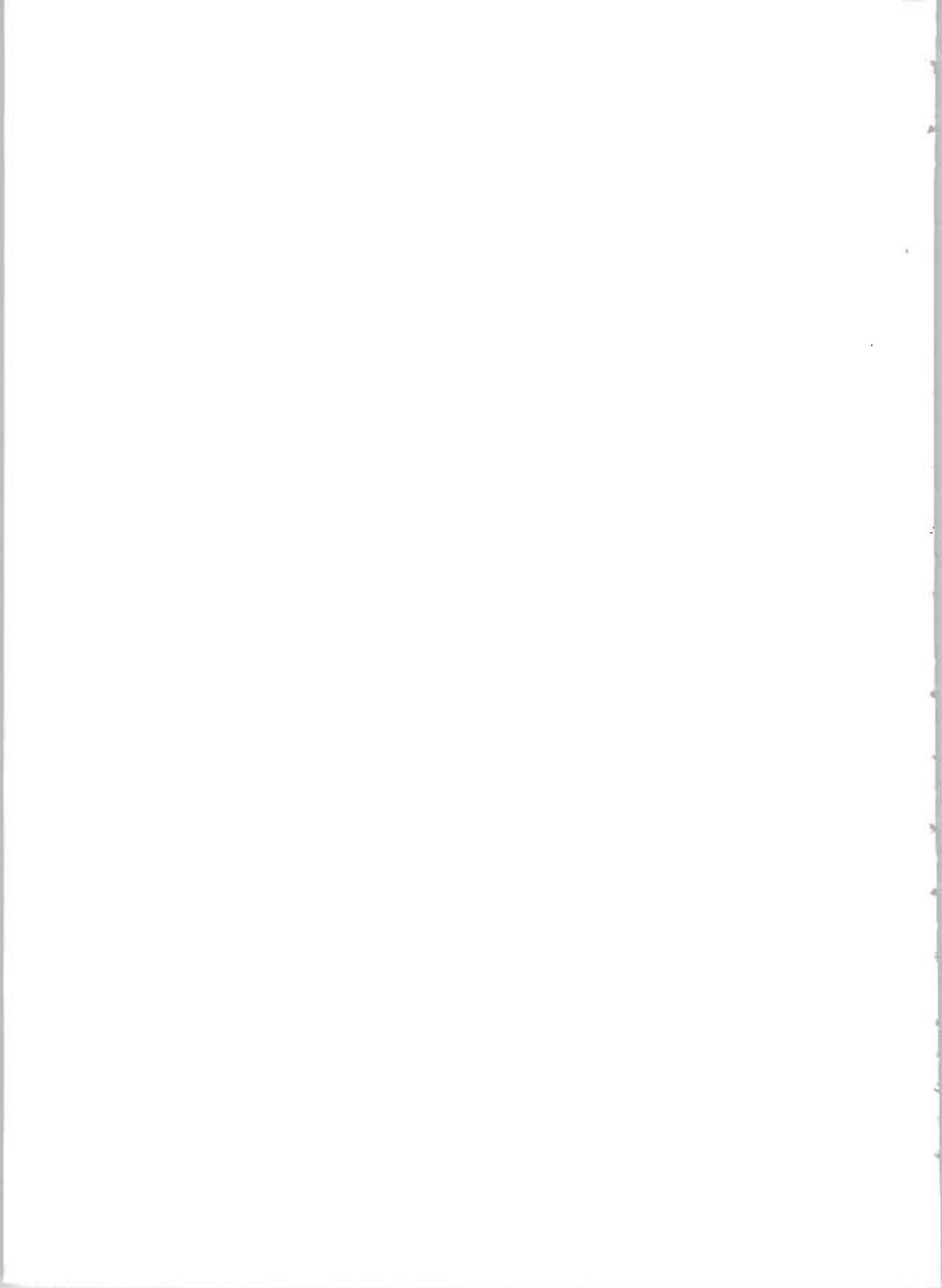
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Chapter I
Official Greetings
Souhails
des
Dignitaires







His Holiness John Paul II

paternally imparts a special
Apostolic Blessing to

Priests & People of the Parish of
St. Simon and St. Jude, Belle
River, Ontario,

on the occasion of its 150th Anniversary
(1834-1984).

Ex Aedibus Vaticanis die 22. 12. 83

+ Antonius M. Travia Aedif.

Memoriaris S. S.



Office of the Bishop - 1070 Waterloo Street - London, Canada

July 1, 1984

Priests and Parishioners
St. Simon and Jude Parish
488 St. Charles
Box 130
Belle River, Ontario.

My Dear Friends in Christ:

When the first log church was established 150 years ago to serve the needs of the residents of the Belle River area, your ancestors had been pioneering that territory for nearly 50 years. Their faith was so precious to them that they travelled long miles to Assumption Church or to St. Peter's in Tilbury East. There were no cars, no roads but forest paths over which they journeyed in faith to hear the word of God and to receive Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. The hardships which they endured proved beyond a doubt how they prized the gift of faith.

Today, your faith is not only God's gift but a precious inheritance preserved for you by your courageous forefathers. They took seriously the exhortation of Sacred Scripture "seek the Lord while He is still to be found, call to Him while He is still near."

My warmest wish for you as you celebrate 150 years of faith in the parish of Belle River, is that your hearts will overflow with gratitude to God for the gift of faith. It has given meaning to the lives of your forefathers and to your own. It has created and sustained your parish. It has inspired many vocations to the priesthood, religious life and the missions. It has united families, created a spirit of prayer in your homes and sustained you in joy and in sorrow. It is the one gift that this celebration should prize and strengthen.

May your celebrations fill your hearts with joy, deepen your love for God's holy word and bring you more devoutly around the altar to share once more the body and blood of Christ and to go forth to bear witness to Christ in your community.



Fraternally in Christ,

Most Rev. John M. Sherlock, D.D.
Bishop of London.

BISHOP'S HOUSE

1672 VICTORIA AVENUE - WINDSOR, ONTARIO NBX 1P7 - (519) 254-2854

Priests and Parishioners
of Sts. Simon and Jude Parish.

My Brothers and Sisters:

An anniversary provides an occasion to reflect on all the good which the Lord has accomplished through His Church during the 150 years of your parish. Together we give thanks for the love, the hope, the faith, the fidelity and the forgiveness that He has made possible in your great parish.

This celebration also invites us to look to the future when the parish will develop further the gifts it already has. Even now we see that the parish of Sts. Simon and Jude, like so many parishes throughout the world, is becoming more aware that it is a family, a community which is the special presence of the Lord in the territory entrusted to it.

That your fine parish should grow more and more one, with priests and people united in praise and service, this is my prayer for you in your anniversary year.



Yours in His Service,

+ [Handwritten Signature]

Auxiliary Bishop of London.

Dear Parishioners:

As I reflected on the 150 year history of our Parish of St. Simon & St. Jude, the words of the Preface dialogue that we recite at the celebration of the Eucharist came to mind, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God" and the response "It is right to give Him thanks and praise."

It is surely right for us "to give Him thanks and praise" for His presence among us over these 150 years. The history of our parish is the story of the faith, of the love and of the devotion to the Lord by countless numbers of the People of God in Belle River. The story of the struggles, the sacrifices and the determination of our ancestors to establish a community and a parish here in Belle River is something to be cherished deeply by all of us.

The many blessings, the many good things that we enjoy today are directly attributable to our ancestors. To us is entrusted the sacred responsibility of keeping alive the Catholic faith we have received and of passing it on to future generations.

May the Lord continue to bless our parish and make us worthy of the responsibility entrusted to us.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Gerry Duchene

Chers Paroissiens:

“Rendons grâce à Dieu”, entonne le prêtre et le peuple de répondre: “Cela est juste et bon”. Ces paroles de la préface me rappellent les grands dons que Dieu accorde à la paroisse Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude depuis 150 années d'existence.

Alors, il est tout juste et bon de lui rendre grâce pour tous ces bienfaits. L'histoire de notre paroisse est un témoin de la présence de Dieu parmi nous. La foi ferme et l'amour de Dieu manifestés par le peuple de Dieu sont surtout évidents par le courage et la détermination de nos ancêtres.

Les récits que nous trouvons dans l'histoire de la paroisse sont remplis d'exemples des luttes et des sacrifices qu'ils ont endurés.

Si nous nous réjouissons cette année par de grandes fêtes, c'est surtout grâce à eux.

Et maintenant, c'est à nous qu'incombe la grande responsabilité de préserver ces dons précieux que nous avons hérités afin de les transmettre, à notre tour, de génération en génération.

Que le Seigneur continue à bénir notre paroisse et à nous rendre digne de cette confiance.



Bien à vous en Jésus Christ,

Père Gerry Duchêne



A. J. Anderson



CANADA

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER - MESSAGE DU PREMIER MINISTRE

Je suis heureux de rendre hommage aux pionniers de la paroisse Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude, à l'occasion du cent cinquantième anniversaire de fondation de cette paroisse.

One can only be filled with admiration by the courage and tenacity of those who founded our towns and cities, and the determination with which their descendents continued the work begun by their forebears. Your one hundred and fifty years, Saints Simon and Jude parish is an embodiment of the spirit of those pioneers.

A toute la population de la paroisse, j'adresse mes cordiales salutations et souhaite la plus heureuse des célébrations.



O t t a w a
1 9 8 4



The Premier
of Ontario

Parliament Buildings
Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1A1

1984

On the occasion of the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Sts. Simon and Jude Parish of Belle River, it is my pleasure to extend the congratulations of the people and the Government of Ontario.

Founded in 1834, the history and heritage of Sts. Simon and Jude Parish are a reminder of our historic origins and of the integral role that our Churches have played in the lives of generations of our people and in the building of our province and country.

In times of war and peace, poverty and plenty, tragedy and joy, your Parish has served as a source of solace, strength, inspiration and guidance for its faithful while nurturing within its youth abiding beliefs and strong moral values to sustain them throughout life.

Today your Parish stands as a tribute to the faith and devotion of all its Clergy and parishioners through the long passage of time and as an example to all Canadians that Anglo and Franco-Canadians, the co-founders of our country, can live, work and grow together, practising the generous ideals of respect and justice for all.

As Sts. Simon and Jude Parish commemorates its 150th Anniversary in the year which marks Ontario's Bicentennial, may I express the sincere hope that your Parish will continue to serve well the spiritual and temporal needs of those committed to its care.



A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William G. Davis".

William G. Davis



The Premier
of Ontario

Parliament Buildings
Queen's Park
Toronto Ontario

1984

À l'occasion du 150^e anniversaire de la fondation de la paroisse Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude de Belle Rivière, j'ai le plaisir de vous présenter mes sincères félicitations au nom de la population et du gouvernement de l'Ontario.

L'histoire et le patrimoine de la paroisse Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude, fondée en 1834, nous rappellent nos origines historiques et le rôle important qu'a joué l'Église dans la vie des générations qui nous ont précédés et dans l'épanouissement de notre province et de notre pays.

Que ce soit en temps de guerre ou de paix, de disette ou d'abondance, de tragédie ou de joie, votre paroisse a consolé, encouragé, inspiré et guidé ses fidèles, et elle a su entretenir chez les jeunes une croyance solide et leur inculquer des principes moraux élevés qui les accompagnent leur vie durant.

Votre paroisse représente aujourd'hui le témoignage vivant de la foi et de la dévotion qui ont animé son clergé et ses paroissiens au fil des années; elle sert d'exemple à tous les Canadiens en leur montrant qu'à la manière des cofondateurs de notre pays, d'origine anglo-saxonne et française, nous pouvons tous vivre, travailler et nous épanouir ensemble, forts des principes qui reconnaissent le droit de tous au respect et à la justice.

En cette année où vous célébrez le 150^e anniversaire de la fondation de la paroisse Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude et l'Ontario fête son bicentenaire, je tiens à vous réitérer mes vœux les plus chaleureux. Puisse votre paroisse continuer à répondre aux besoins spirituels et temporels de ceux qui se sont engagés à la préserver.

William G. Davis
William G. Davis

2021 Ontario Street
Windsor, Ontario
N8Y 1N3

Telephone: (519) 254-0066

January 17, 1984

Mr. René Godin
Souvenir album committee
Sts. Simon & Jude Parish
488 St. Charles
Box 130
Belle River, Ontario
N0R 1A0

Dear Mr. Godin:

It was good of you to write about plans for your parish anniversary celebration!

I am pleased that you and your committee are preparing the publication of a St. Simon and Jude Parish souvenir album to mark this great occasion. As requested, I am happy to enclose a photo and message for your booklet.

My wife Nell joins me in wishing you and your group every success in your effort.

Yours sincerely,

Merci beaucoup

p.m.

Paul Martin

PM:rq

Paul Martin

Le 23 décembre 1983

Monsieur,

La paroisse de Saints Simon et Jude a l'honneur de célébrer cette année ses cent cinquante ans d'existence.

Je me joins aux membres du clergé et de la paroisse à l'occasion de la commémoration de cet anniversaire historique.

La venue de cette grande fête suscite en moi un vif intérêt car elle me rappelle le privilège qui m'a été accordé pendant plusieurs années de représenter au Parlement les membres de la paroisse, à titre de député d'Essex est.

C'est avec immense joie et honneur que j'offre mes meilleurs voeux aux fidèles de cette église et paroisse fondée il y a plus d'un siècle. Ce sera un grand plaisir de prendre part aux manifestations qui se dérouleront dans l'église et le village historique de Belle Rivière pour marquer cet événement mémorable.

Depuis sa fondation, la paroisse a bénéficié d'une longue suite de prêtres dévoués et de paroissiens sincères dont le zèle a largement contribué à faire de Saints Simon et Jude le centre des dévotions et pratiques religieuses issues des traditions chrétiennes.

Paul Martin
Paul Martin



An industrious society draws from nature its daily bread. This is but a small reflection of your region, as well as mine, in many respects. One hundred and fifty years have passed -- 150 years of working the land, ceaseless labor and, praise God, of success.

I am certain that each page of this magnificent souvenir album relating the life of the people of St. Simon and St. Jude Parish will be an ever-lasting history of the many happy occasions and special events that have taken place over the years. As Minister of Agriculture, I cannot wish for anything better for all of us.

May this 150th anniversary not become lost in the past, but be ever-present in our minds and provide a renewed burst of prosperity and happiness for everyone.

My sincere congratulations on your 150th anniversary,



Eugene F. Whelan, M.P., C.P.

Ministre de l'Agriculture

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5



Population industrielle, tirant de la nature son pain quotidien. Voilà un peu l'image de votre coin de pays qui est aussi le mien sous bien des aspects. 150 ans se sont écoulés, 150 ans de travail de la terre, 150 ans de labeur incessant et aussi, Dieu merci, de réussite.

Je suis certain que chacune des pages de ce magnifique livre souvenir relatant la vie des habitants de St-Simon et St-Jude de Belle Rivière, perpétuera pour toujours la véritable histoire des nombreux événements heureux qui s'y sont déroulés au fil du temps. En ma qualité de ministre de l'Agriculture du Canada, je ne pouvais espérer davantage pour nous tous.

Que ce 150ième anniversaire ne soit pas un arrêt dans le passé, pourtant toujours aussi présent à nos esprits, mais qu'il se traduise par un nouvel élan de prospérité et de bonheur pour chacun.

Bonnes célébrations à tous.

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0C5


Eugene F. Whelan, M.P., C.P.
Ministre de l'Agriculture



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Parishoners,
St. Simon & Jude Parish,
488 St. Charles,
Box 130,
BELLE RIVER, Ontario.
N0R 1A0.

Dear Parishoners:

As your representative in the Ontario Legislature, I am delighted to have this opportunity to offer my sincere congratulations and best wishes to St. Simon & Jude Parish on the occasion of your 150th Anniversary.

The citizens of Belle River and surrounding area are justifiably proud of their history - one which illuminates the accomplishments of a people committed to the Christian way of life and the development of a growing new country through hard work, faith and perseverance.

Having been born, raised and very involved in this area, I can recall my forefathers describing the sincerity and dedication of the people of Belle River and their determination to provide a better way of life for their community - a community which has traditionally served as the focal point of the surrounding countryside and thereby enriched the life of the entire area.

Your sesqui-centennial celebrations honour not only the achievements of the Founders of the Parish but also the contributions of all of you who have followed in their foot steps. The spiritual needs of your Congregation - diverse in background and culture - are well served by the Parish and will leave a firm foundation for continued service to the Community.

It is my hope that St. Simon & Jude Parish of Belle River will continue to be blessed with success and tranquillity in the coming years. May I express my earnest wish to the present Clergy and to each and every Member of the Parish that your faith will continue to sustain and guide you.



Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Ruston".

Richard F. Ruston, M.P.P.
Essex North.

RICHARD RUSTON, M.P.P., ESSEX NORTH, Parliament Buildings, Toronto M7A 1A2
Constituency Office: 1199 Front Road, La Salle N9J 2A7 • 519 734-1487
Toronto 416 965-4298 • Woodslee 519 /829-2071 • Zenith 80510



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Paroissiens de Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude
488, St. Charles
Boîte 130
BELLE RIVER (Ontario)
NOR 1A0

Mesdames, Mesdemoiselles, Messieurs,

En tant que député de votre circonscription à l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario, j'ai le grand plaisir de présenter mes sincères félicitations et meilleurs voeux à la paroisse de Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude à l'occasion du cent cinquantième anniversaire de sa fondation.

Les citoyens de Belle River et des environs peuvent à juste titre être fiers de leur histoire, qui illustre bien les réalisations d'un peuple qui s'est consacré à l'épanouissement de la vie chrétienne et au développement d'un nouveau pays en s'appuyant sur son dur labeur, sa foi et sa persévérance.

Étant né et ayant grandi dans cette région et y étant très actif, je me rappelle mes aïeux faisant état de la sincérité et du dévouement des citoyens de Belle River et de la détermination de ces derniers d'améliorer la vie de la collectivité qui sert depuis longtemps de chef-lieu à la campagne avoisinante et qui, par conséquent, veille aux intérêts de la région tout entière.

Vos célébrations du cent cinquantième anniversaire soulignent non seulement les réalisations des fondateurs de la paroisse, mais aussi la contribution de tous ceux qui ont suivi leur exemple. Votre paroisse répond particulièrement bien aux besoins spirituels de la collectivité - dont les antécédents et la culture sont variés - et ces besoins représentent une base solide au maintien de votre mission au sein de la collectivité.

J'espère que la paroisse de Saint-Simon et Saint-Jude, à Belle River, continuera de connaître le succès et le calme dans les années à venir. Permettez-moi de vous souhaiter sincèrement, membres du clergé et paroissiens, que votre foi continue de vous soutenir et de vous guider.

Recevez, Mesdames, Mesdemoiselles, Messieurs,
l'assurance de mes meilleurs sentiments.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Ruston".

Richard F. Ruston, député
provincial d'Essex-Nord



Dear Parishioners,

On behalf of the citizens and Town Council of Belle River, I wish to extend our congratulations to the clergy and parishioners of Sts. Simon and Jude Parish on the occasion of your one hundred and fiftieth anniversary.

One cannot research the history of Belle River without recognizing the vital role Sts. Simon and Jude Parish has played in the development and progress of our community.

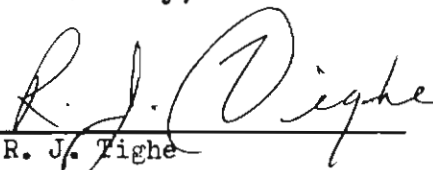
Further recognized is the outstanding character of the parishioners of Sts. Simon and Jude Parish. Their vigorous participation in the many service clubs and organizations who are committed to help others through community endeavors certainly displays a true Christian attitude.

Belle River is recognized as an ideal community in which to raise a family. There is no question that Sts. Simon and Jude Parish is largely responsible for this reputation.

Again congratulations on a hundred and fifty years of outstanding history and best wishes in the future.



Yours truly,



R. J. Tighe
Mayor



TOWNSHIP OF MAIDSTONE

Telephone 727 6666

OFFICE OF THE REEVE

R.R. 5 Essex, Ontario

November 14, 1983.

Sts. Simon & Jude Parish,
488 St. Charles Street,
Box 130,
BELLF RIVER, Ontario.

NUR 1A0

Attn: Rene Godin,
Souvenir Album Committee.

Dear Mr. Godin:

On behalf of the Council of Maidstone Township,
I congratulate the Parish and Clergy of St. Simon and
Jude on this very important and historic occasion.

How can a person begin to list the contributions
a church makes to a community? To be a beacon in a
Community for 150 years requires a tremendous amount of
leadership and dedication of a lot of people.


We thank God for a Country that allows Freedom
of Worship - may it always be so. A country without
religious conviction and morals taught by Jesus Christ,
is a country in constant turmoil.

Sts. Simon & Jude Parish has had a great moral
impact on our people and Maidstone Township has been a
better place to live because of this. Our hope is that
our residents will continue to benefit from the Parish
and what it has to offer.

May God continue to bless everyone involved in
these celebrations, and the future of the Parish.

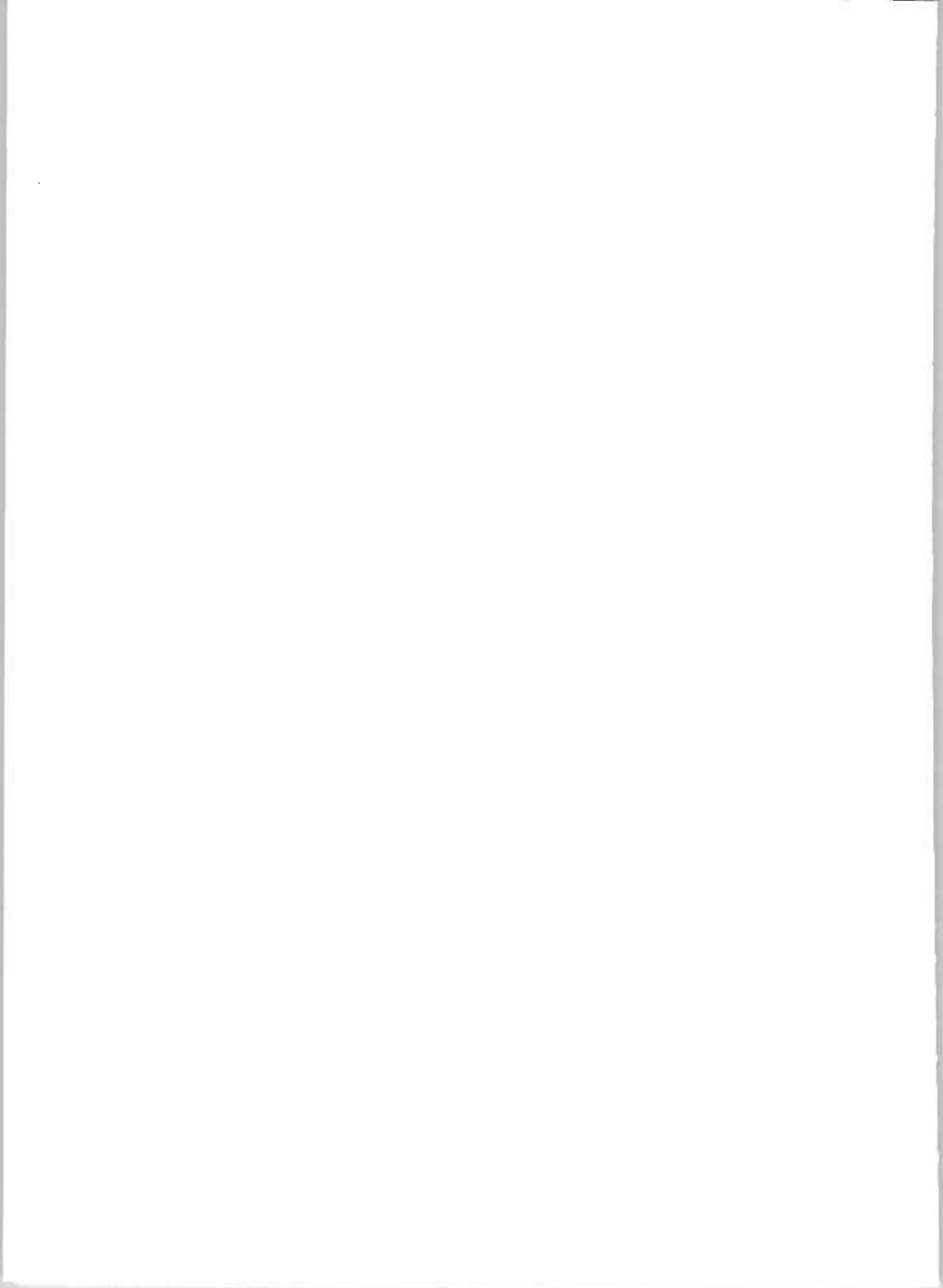
Thank you for allowing me to bring greetings from
myself and Maidstone Township.

Yours very truly,


George Kennedy,
Reeve.

GK:PB







*At The Roots
Of
Our Parish History*

*Aux Sources
De
Notre Histoire
Paroissiale*



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From A Small Mission To A Great Parish

The history of the Belle River Parish is a summary of numerous events, writings, works, tragedies, anecdotes, testimonials, successes and life experiences of the past.

Many pioneers left their native countries of France, Ireland, Quebec and other world centers to establish a new life for themselves in Essex County. They travelled by canoe, by horseback and even by foot to this land of promise. In spite of dangers, sufferings and sacrifices, these immigrants brought with them all kinds of provisions, merchandise, tools, their families and above all, they persisted in bringing with them their social, cultural and religious institutions.

In 1701, Master La Mothe Cadillac established the Fort of Detroit to protect the Great Lakes area. The Belle River region benefitted from this influx of new settlers. There were merchants, pioneers, adventurers, military people and missionaries. The latter played a major role in assuring the continued existence and growth of the fragile Belle River Mission. The Jesuit fathers visited it often to satisfy the christian needs of the faithful and ambitious pioneers. As the region prospered economically, more immigrants arrived to test the new opportunities.

As the small community grew into a larger village, so did the small mission develop into the larger parish. The travelling missionary was replaced with the resident priest and the church itself was subjected to many physical changes and additions. It makes sense then that all historical data should evolve through the lives and contributions of all the pastors and their assistants who laboured to the benefit of the local people. Each one of them gave this parish a particular direction, a unique spirit through his personality, his motivation and his sense of devotion.

From 1834 to 1984, the Belle River Parish continued to flourish through the heroics and the relentless efforts of both the clergy and the faithful parishioners. In fact, it became the focal point from which other neighbouring parishes were born and nurtured along. It became one of the largest parishes in the south of the Province.

1984 will mark the 150th anniversary of the existence of St. Simon & St. Jude Parish. Let's take advantage of this memorable year to recognize the importance of our parish history and let us celebrate together our rich religious and spiritual heritage. Let us pay homage to those who preceded us and to those who continue to dedicate themselves to our betterment. Let us recognize those people who set the base for our present day community. It is their efforts, their sacrifices, their foresight, and especially their belief and their religious convictions, transcended from generation to generation, that have formed and shaped our present day parish.

René Godin

D'une Petite Mission A Une Grande Paroisse . . .

L'histoire de la paroisse de Belle Rivière est le résultat de nombreux événements, récits, travaux, tragédies, réalisations, anecdotes, témoignages et autres qui remontent très loin dans le passé de cette région.

Des pionniers, venus d'abord de la France, de l'Irlande, du Québec et, plus tard, de d'autres milieux, avaient quitté leurs foyers et leurs régions pour venir, au cours des années, en canot, à cheval et parfois à pied, entreprendre une vie nouvelle dans ce coin de pays. Au milieu des dangers, des souffrances et des privations, ces premiers arrivants amenaient avec eux leurs provisions, leurs marchandises, leurs outils, leurs familles et, de plus, et surtout, leurs institutions culturelles, sociales et religieuses.

L'établissement de Détroit par Sieur La Mothe Cadillac en 1701, en vue de protéger la région des Grands Lacs à l'époque de la Nouvelle France, amena un établissement dans la région de Belle Rivière. Cette présence démographique, lente mais graduelle est l'oeuvre d'aventuriers, de commerçants, de militaires, de colons et de missionnaires. Ces derniers, pendant presque un siècle jouèrent un rôle prépondérant et assurèrent l'existence de la fragile mission de Belle Rivière.

Cette mission, éprise de l'oeuvre constant des Pères Jésuites qui la visitèrent régulièrement en vue des services religieux divers et des colons ambitieux et fidèles à leurs aspirations chrétiennes, s'agrandit sans cesse. Le développement et l'agrandissement de la région en matière économique et commerciale suscita la venue d'immigrants qui vinrent s'ajouter à eux pour entreprendre une vie nouvelle.

L'essor d'une petite communauté à un grand village fut aussi l'essor d'une petite mission à une grande paroisse. Le missionnaire ambulant est remplacé par un prêtre résident et la structure de l'église connaît au cours des années des changements, des transformations et des agrandissements. Par conséquent, le récit historique et religieux de la paroisse tourne davantage autour de

la vie et de la présence des curés et de leurs assistants qui y ont séjourné et oeuvré. Chacun, par sa personnalité, sa motivation, son devoir et son dévouement, a donné à cette paroisse une orientation particulière et une âme rayonnante.

De 1834 à 1984, en cent cinquante ans, ces curés, appuyés par les membres du clergé et par leurs fidèles paroissiens, réussirent, non sans héroïsme parfois, sans souffrances et sans difficultés, à soutenir et à diriger cette destinée paroissiale jusqu'à nos jours. La paroisse de Belle Rivière, en plus de donner naissance à bien d'autres paroisses avoisinantes, est devenue une des paroisses les plus grandes dans le sud de cette province.

1984 marque le cent cinquantième anniversaire d'existence et cette oeuvre longue et lointaine est donc un moment significatif dans l'histoire de la paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude.

Au cours de cette année mémorable, reconnaissons l'importance de notre histoire paroissiale et célébrons ensemble notre riche héritage religieux et spirituel. Rendons hommage à tous les membres de cette famille paroissiale des temps passés et des temps présents. Reconnaissons les personnes qui ont jeté les bases de notre communauté actuelle. Ce sont leurs efforts, leurs sacrifices, leur prévoyance et surtout leurs croyances et leurs convictions religieuses, transmises de génération en génération, qui ont formé et façonné notre paroisse actuelle.

"C'est une très grande avance pour marcher dans le chemin de la vertu, a écrit Mgr. Baunard, de Québec, que de pouvoir suivre la trace de ceux de notre sang qui ont marché avant nous en éclaireurs et en pionniers".

René Godin

1790 – 1820 History Of The Mission Of St. Simon & St. Jude

Belle River parish is situated on the south shore of Lake St. Clair in the village of Belle River. The location is picturesque, being one of the most fertile in Essex County, for beauty and natural growth.

In the winter of 1639 – 1640 Father St. John de Brébeuf stopped along the shores of Lake St. Clair in the neighborhood of Belle River, on his way to plant the Cross of Christ at La Pointe du Detroit, where he founded the Mission of the Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary, now Sandwich.



In the spring of 1670 Dolier de Casson and Galinée, after a short sojourn near Amherstburg, returned to the Mission of the Assumption to destroy a large stone, the Idol of the Indians in the district.

In 1697 Le Chevalier de Tonty waited with five compagnies near the Cross planted by St. John de Brébeuf, for Griffon, and was joined later by Le Chevalier de la Salle, who was on his way to the country of the Illinois Indians. Thus we see that the Mission of the Assumption was already a known Post.

In 1701 Antoine de la Mothe Sieur de Cadillac arrived from Quebec to found a trading-post on Lake St. Clair with one hundred men, 25 canoes loaded with provisions, merchandises, munitions and uten-



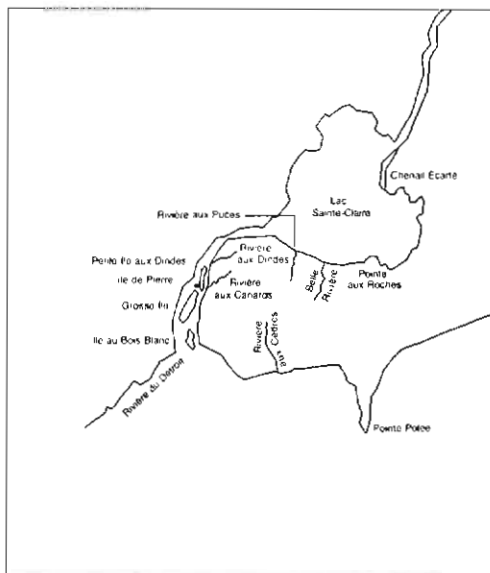
sils. He chose a spot, where the Detroit River is the narrowest. On this spot Cadillac built a fort, which he named Ponchartrain, now the city of Detroit. Part of his men settled on the West bank of the river, the other on the East bank. On this voyage, Cadillac was accompanied by Father Shale, a Recollet priest, as Chaplain to the fort and Father Vaillant de Gueslin.

Shortly after the founding of Detroit, one of Cadillac's traders, Joseph Papineau, was sent out with a party on a fur trading expedition along the Great Lakes. He passed by where Walkerville, East Windsor and Riverside are now located and continued up the river, staying close to shore.

As the party passed Puce river, a storm arose. Papineau, wondering what his leader would say if he turned back, decided to push on. One of his main reasons for moving

1790 – 1820 Historique De La Mission St. Simon & St. Jude

La paroisse de Belle Rivière est située sur la rive sud du lac Ste-Claire dans le village de Belle Rivière. L'endroit est pittoresque et est l'un des plus fertiles du comté d'Essex grâce à sa beauté et à sa croissance naturelle.



En 1701, Antoine de La Mothe, Sieur de Cadillac arriva de Québec, avec cent hommes composés de soldats et de colons, 25 canots chargés de provisions, de marchandises, de munitions, et d'ustensiles dans le but de fonder un poste de traite sur le lac Ste-Claire. Il choisit un endroit où la rivière Détroit était la plus étroite. A cet endroit, Cadillac construisit un fort qu'il nomma Ponchartrain et qui est maintenant la ville de Détroit. Une partie de ses hommes s'établirent sur la rive-ouest de la rivière, l'autre partie sur la rive-est. Pendant ce voyage, Cadillac fut accompagné par le Père Shale, un prêtre Récollet qui servait comme aumônier du fort et par le père Vaillant de Gueslin.

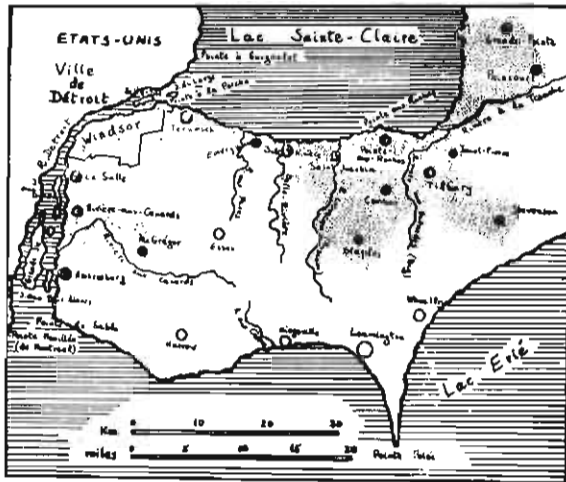
Durant l'hiver de 1639 – 1640, le Père Jean de Brébeuf s'arrêta le long des rives du lac Ste-Claire dans les environs de Belle Rivière, en route pour planter la Croix du Christ à la Pointe du Détroit, là où il fonda la mission de l'Assomption de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie, maintenant Sandwich.

Au printemps de 1670, Dolier de Casson et Galinée, après un bref séjour près d'Amherstburg, retournèrent à la mission de l'Assomption pour y détruire une grosse pierre, devenue l'idole des Indiens de la région.

En 1697, le Chevalier de Tonty, accompagné de cinq compagnies, attendit près de la croix plantée par le Père Jean de Brébeuf pour s'embarquer sur le Griffon avec Chevalier de la Salle qui faisait route vers le pays des Indiens Illinois. De fait, nous voyons que la mission de l'Assomption était déjà un poste bien connu.

Peu de temps après la fondation de Détroit, un des commerçants de Cadillac, Joseph Papineau fut envoyé avec un groupe d'hommes dans une expédition de commerce des fourrures le long des Grands Lacs. Selon la légende, il passa près des endroits où se trouvent aujourd'hui Walkerville, Windsor-Est et Riverside et continua son chemin le long de la rivière, tout en demeurant près de la rive.

Comme le groupe passa près de la rivière Puce, une tempête s'éleva. Papineau, se demandant ce que son chef dirait s'il rebrous-sait chemin, décida d'aller plus loin. Une



des raisons majeures pour pousser plus loin fut la présence d'une meute de sangliers qui avait pris place dans cette région. Ces animaux avaient apporté des mouches. Il semblerait que c'est la raison pourquoi la rivière Puce fut nommée ainsi. Elle fut anciennement appelée "La rivière aux puces".

Sur la route, Papineau trouva une autre baie qu'il n'avait jamais vue auparavant. Ordonnant aux canots d'y pénétrer, il y vit un ruisseau étroit bordé et voûté de gros arbres. Touché par la beauté de cette vue splendide, Papineau par la suite faisait allusion à ce ruisseau comme "la belle rivière". C'est de là qu'est venu le nom "Belle Rivière" traduit à "Belle River" après 1874. Comme ces groupes voyageurs étaient pratiquement accompagnés par des missionnaires, il semblerait que c'est à cette occasion que la première messe communautaire dans la région fut célébrée un peu plus haut en amont de cette rivière, à l'angle d'une rue maintenant appelée "West Belle River Road".

Dès les années 1745 - 1750, quelques colons avaient déjà pris possession des terres dans les environs de Belle Rivière. Parmi ces familles, il y avait les Rennault, maintenant Renaud; cette famille avait dix frères qui s'étaient établis dans différentes parties du comté d'Essex; Les Ouillette, maintenant Ouellette; les Marontot, maintenant Marentette; les Langlois, les Dabé, les Baby; les Ménard, tous venus de France ou du Québec.



De 1790 à 1800, d'autres colons sont venus de la province de Québec et de l'Irlande. Ils voyageaient par la vieille route qui s'échelonnait à travers la vallée de l'Outaouais et la baie Georgienne jusqu'aux lacs Huron et Ste-Claire.

Après leur long et pénible voyage à travers les forêts et les mauvais chemins de l'Ontario d'autrefois, et les difficultés rencontrées lors de ces jours précoces du trajet, ils trouvèrent enfin un lieu, où ils pouvaient construire leurs maisons dans la paix et dans l'abondance. Ils se mirent immédiatement à l'oeuvre avec toute l'ardeur connue des pionniers Canadiens Français qui défrichaient une place pour leurs cabanes en bois rond.



Parmi ces familles pionnières, nous trouvons les noms tels que: les Campeau, les Charron, les Chauvin, les Dubé, les Dupuis, les Durocher, les Girard, les Goyeau, les Rhéaume, les Trépanier et d'autres: venus de paroisses du Québec; Joliette, St-Paul, St-Anaclet, St-Barthélemy, St-Jacques l'Achigan, Chambly, Napierville et Montréal.

About the same time, we also find the names of Irish families coming from Ireland, the Butlers, the Cotters, the Byrnes, the O'Rourkes, the Martins, the Mullins, the McMahons, the Crofts and the McDonnells. These names are still the most common in the parish. The favourable reports which the early pioneers sent to their relatives and friends caused many to follow in their trails and make for themselves a home in the new Community.

For several years those pioneers stayed faithful to their family traditions and the homelike love of their ancestral customs. Meanwhile, the hardships these newcomers had to endure in the practice of religion were great. To attend mass and to receive the sacraments, they had to journey 20 miles to Assumption Church in Sandwich. Later, they had another choice, to journey east (another trip of 20 miles) to go to St. Peter's church in Raleigh Township, on the Thames River. Some managed the journey in two-wheeled carts, many more travelled afoot, which meant at least two days for a round trip to mass on Sundays.

After some years of such hardships, the Jesuit Fathers, who were then in charge of the parish at Sandwich, seeing the number of Catholics increasing in this section, kindly consented to send a Father to minister unto them first once a month, then twice a month, thus establishing a mission at Belle River.

Not having any particular building wherein to say mass, the Fathers said mass in private homes. From 1810 to 1834 Father Joseph Marchand said mass in the homes of Messrs. André Durocher, Antoine Goyeau and Jacques Marentette.

The missionary, as the priest, had great influence on people. Most of the settlers turned to the priest because they felt he had a higher level of education and was closer to God. When the settlers were faced with a major decision, or in need of advice pertaining to the construction of a business, they consulted him. If a dance was to be held in the village, permission from the priest was mandatory. Dances at this time were considered immoral. The more ambitious priests started a farming co-operative. Its purpose was to better organize farming activity for the settlers.

The Fathers, such as Father Marchand, generally came out on Fridays and remained until Monday or Tuesday. This enabled them to better administer the needs of the people: teaching Catechism, baptising children, marrying people and burying the dead. This continued for some years.

On January 17, 1814, Father Marchand celebrated a mass in the house of Antoine Goyeau, one of the biggest in the area, for soldiers who served in the War of 1812 and who were stationed in Belle River.



A peu près en même temps, nous trouvons aussi les noms de familles d'origine irlandaise telles que: les Butler, les Cotter, les Byrne, les O'Rourke, les Martin, les Mullins, les McMahon, les Croft et les MacDonnell. Ces noms sont encore les plus communs dans la paroisse. Les rapports favorables que les pionniers d'antan envoyaient à leurs parents et à leurs amis encourageaient plusieurs de ces derniers à suivre les sentiers de leurs prédécesseurs et à venir prendre racine dans cette nouvelle communauté.

Pendant plusieurs années, ces colons pionniers restaient fidèles à leurs antécédents familiaux et étaient imprégnés d'un amour patriotique envers leurs traditions ancestrales. Cependant, ces nouveaux arrivants eurent à surmonter bien des difficultés, surtout celle concernant la pratique de leur religion. Pour assister à la messe et recevoir les sacrements, ils devaient parcourir vingt milles pour se rendre à l'église de l'Assomption de Sandwich. Plus tard, ils eurent un autre choix, celui de voyager vers l'est, un autre parcours de vingt milles, pour se rendre à l'église St-Pierre, dans le comté de Raleigh, sur la rivière Thames.

Les difficultés que ces premiers colons supportèrent dans la pratique de leur religion furent immenses. Pour certains, ils durent voyager avec des charrettes à deux roues, pour beaucoup d'autres, ils durent faire le trajet à pied, ce qui signifiait au moins deux jours pour un trajet aller et retour pour assister à la messe du dimanche.

Après quelques années de pénibles efforts, les Pères Jésuites qui étaient alors en charge de la paroisse à Sandwich, voyaient le nombre de catholiques augmenter dans cette région et consentaient avec bonté à envoyer un missionnaire pour y exercer l'apostolat. Au début, c'était une fois par mois, ensuite deux fois par mois, ce qui amena ainsi l'établissement d'une mission à Belle Rivière.

N'ayant aucun endroit en particulier pour dire la messe, les missionnaires devaient dire la messe dans des maisons privées. De 1810 à 1834, l'abbé Joseph Marchand célébra la messe dans les résidences d'André Durocher, d'Antoine Goyeau et de Jacques Marentette.

Le missionnaire, tout comme le prêtre, avait dans ce temps une grande influence sur la population. La plupart des habitants avait une confiance profonde envers le prêtre en raison de son haut niveau d'éducation et sa relation étroite avec la Providence. Lorsque les pionniers faisaient face à une décision majeure où qu'ils avaient un besoin d'avis ou de conseil concernant la construction d'une entreprise, ils consultaient le prêtre. Si une danse devait avoir lieu dans le village, la permission du prêtre était obligatoire. A cette époque, les danses étaient considérées immorales. Les prêtres les plus ambitieux avaient établi une coopérative agricole. Le but était de mieux organiser l'activité agricole pour les colons. En fait le prêtre d'antan était un personnage qui exerçait plusieurs fonctions: prêtre, professeur, juge, notaire, économiste, etc . . .

Les Missionnaires, tel l'abbé Marchand, venaient généralement le vendredi et restaient jusqu'au lundi et mardi leur permettant ainsi de mieux répondre aux besoins de la population: enseigner le catéchisme, baptiser les enfants, marier les gens et enterrer les morts. Cette pratique continua ainsi pendant quelques années.

Le 17 janvier, 1814, le Père Marchand avait célébré une messe dans la résidence d'Antoine Goyeau, la plus grande de la région, pour les soldats qui servaient dans la Guerre le 1812 et qui étaient cantonnés à Belle Rivière à l'époque.

1820 – 1835 The Beginning Of St. Simon & St. Jude Parish

As the number of settlers increased, the needs for a church and a priest became more urgent. Quite often, a priest had to be sent for from Sandwich to Belle River.

In the early seventeen thirties, many new settlers came to Belle River. Among these we find the Lalondes, the Gauthiers, the Dumouchelles, the Lalibertés, the Parents, the Grondins, the Telliers, the Sauves, coming from Quebec City, Three Rivers, Verchères, Contrecoeur, St. Hyacinth, St. Paul, St. Rosalie, Province of Quebec. The Diesbourgs, the Beuglets, the Brabouts and others from Alsace Lorraine. Also the Grahams, the Murrays, the Markhams, the Morans, the Ellwoods and the Hogans.

In the early part of 1834, the Most Rev. Joseph Signay, Bishop of Quebec, later first Archbishop, gave his Vicar General in Ontario orders to establish a permanent Mission at Belle River, to be known as the Mission of St. Jude. At last, God had granted to these courageous pioneers the one desire they sought. This occasion marked the true beginning of the Parish.

A rude log chapel was built in 1834 on a plot of ground, the gift of Joseph Reaume, at the corner of Belle River Road and the Baseline, which served as a church till 1849.

The pieces of wood which served for construction, came from surrounding lands with the approval of people of the area. The altars were fabricated in Montreat and transported by river routes to the church of Belle River.

Now, mass was said more frequently at the Mission of St. Jude. Still there were no resident priests. The resident priest at Assumption parish in Windsor, Father Angus MacDonnell, and the one at St. Pierre, Father Morin, alternated in visiting the Mission of St. Jude at Belle River and the newly established mission at nearby Maidstone, where several Irish families had started to establish.

This small plot of ground where the chapel was built, is now included in the Cemetery of Belle River Parish. The first to be buried in it was the donor, Joseph Reaume, who was buried in May 1825, and his wife, who was buried in November 1825. Both were over 80 years of age.

1835 – 1845 First Years Of St. Jude Parish

The mission of St. Jude continued to flourish and the inhabitants increased yearly. To the great plasure of the settlers, another large group of setters came in the early eighteen forties. The Blanchards, the Ladouceurs, the Lesperances, the Poissons, the Papineaus, the Moisons, the Nouvions, the Neveux, the Cotes, the Lachapelles, the St. Pierres, the Thiberts, the Strongs, the Archibalds, the Millers and the Desbiens.

In 1843 three Jesuit Fathers came to Sandwich. Besides the gigantic task in this region, they also took charge of the outlying mission in the county. In the same year, Rt.

Rev. Michael Power, first bishop of the Diocese of Toronto, of which southwestern Ontario was a part, made an episcopal visit to the Mission of St. Jude. As there was no rectory, he stayed at the home of Joseph Papineau for three days. The Bishop visited the people, administered the sacrement of confirmation to adults and children; and did other missionary work. He returned again in 1845 and instructed the Jesuits to build a better and more permanent church at the Mission of St. Jude. Father Point, Jesuit, was in charge of St. Jude Mission.

1820 – 1835

Origine De La Paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude

Comme le nombre de colons augmentait, les besoins d'une église et d'un prêtre devinrent plus pressants. Un prêtre devait souvent être envoyé de Sandwich à Belle Rivière.

Durant les débuts de 1730, plusieurs nouveaux colons vinrent s'établir à Belle Rivière. Parmi eux, nous trouvons les Lalonde, les Gauthier, les Dumouchelle, les Laliberté, les Parent, les Grondin, les Tellier, les Sauvé, en provenance de la ville de Québec, Trois-Rivières, Verchères, Contrecoeur, St-Hyacinthe, St-Paul, Ste-Rosalie dans la province de Québec. Les Diesbourg, les Beuglets, les Brabant, et d'autres vinrent de l'Alsace-Lorraine. Aussi, il y eut les Graham, les Murray, les Markham, les Moran, les Ellwood et les Hogan.

Au tout début de 1834, le Très Révérend Père Joseph Signay, évêque de Québec, plus tard premier archevêque, accorda au Vicaire-Général en Ontario l'ordre d'établir une mission permanente à Belle Rivière connue sous le nom de mission St-Jude. Enfin, Dieu avait comblé à ces courageux pionniers le désir cher à leurs coeurs. Ce moment marquait véritablement la naissance de la paroisse.

Une chapelle rustique en bois rond fut érigée en 1834 sur un lopin de terre, cadeau donné par Joseph Réaume, au coin du chemin Belle Rivière et Base Line. Les pièces de bois qui devaient servir à la construction, venaient des terres avoisinantes avec l'approbation des gens des alentours. Les autels furent fabriqués à Montréal et transportés à l'église de Belle Rivière par voie d'eau. Cette chapelle n'était qu'un abri et elle servit tout de même d'église jusqu'en 1849. La messe était maintenant dite plus souvent à la mission St-Jude. Par contre, il n'y avait pas encore de prêtre résident. Le Curé résident de l'Assomption, le Père Angus MacDonnell et celui de St-Pierre le curé Morin, alternaient à la mission St-Jude et aussi à la nouvelle mission établie à Maidstone où plusieurs familles d'origine irlandaise avaient déjà commencé à s'établir.

Ce petit lopin de terre, où fut construite cette chapelle fait partie maintenant du cimetière de la paroisse de Belle Rivière. Les premiers à y être enterrés furent le donateur, Joseph Réaume, qui fut inhumé en mai 1825, et sa femme, inhumée en novembre de la même année. Tous deux étaient âgés de plus de 80 ans.

1835 – 1845

Premières Années De La Paroisse St-Jude

La mission St-Jude continua à prospérer et les habitants augmentaient en nombre d'année en année. A la grande satisfaction des colons, un autre grand groupe de colons se joignirent à eux au début des années 1840. Ce furent les Blanchette, les Ladouceur, les Lespérance, les Poisson, les Papineau, les Moison, les Nouvion, les Neveu, les Côté, les Lachapelle, les St-Pierre, les Thibert, les Strong, les Archibald, les Miller et les Desbiens.

En 1843, trois pères Jésuites vinrent à Sandwich. En plus de leur tâche immense dans la région, ils s'occupèrent aussi de d'autres missions dans le comté. Durant la

même année, le Révérend Père Michael Power, premier évêque du Diocèse de Toronto, dont le sud-ouest de l'Ontario y faisait partie, fit une visite épiscopale à la mission St-Jude. Comme il n'y avait pas de presbytère, il demeura à la résidence de Joseph Papineau pendant trois jours. L'évêque rendit visite à la population, administra le sacrement de confirmation aux adultes et aux enfants et exerça d'autres travaux missionnaires. Il revint en 1845 et ordonna aux Jésuites de construire une meilleure église et de nature plus permanente à la mission St-Jude. Ce fut le Père Pierre Point, Jésuite, qui fut mis en charge de la mission St-Jude.

1845 – 1857 The Work Of Father Pierre Point And Of Father Joseph Grimot

Father Point was born in Recroy, France on April 7th, 1802 and was ordained priest by Cardinal Latil on May 16th, 1826. Immediately after his ordination, he became Canon of the Cathedral of Rheims. In 1843, he was sent by his superiors to the Missions of Canada. He sailed from France on June 3rd, 1843 and arrived in Toronto on July 5th of the same year. A few days after his arrival, Bishop Power placed him in charge of the Missions at Sandwich and Detroit, where he arrived on July 9th. Sandwich, his new parish, then had about 3,000 souls. It was the oldest and most Catholic Mission of Western Ontario.

The most important tasks to Father Point were the conversion of the Indians, the preservation of the Faith among the early pioneers, and the teaching of Christian Doctrine in the schools. He was the founder of Catholic Schools in the counties of Essex and Kent.

In October 1844, Father Point was named Vicar General of the Diocese of Toronto. Nevertheless, he continued to labour in the Sandwich Missions, especially in the Mission of St. Jude. Late in the autumn of 1845 Father Point was placed in charge of the Mission at Belle River by Bishop Michael Power of Toronto with orders to build a new church and a residence for the priest. The log chapel was already too small to accommodate the increasing population of the mission which included the Parishes of Stoney Point, St. Joachim, Staples, Leamington, Woodslee, and parts of Maidstone and Tecumseh.

Father Point, with the help of the people, built the frame church and residence on the same site near the old chapel. This site is now the Cemetery of the Belle River Parish. This frame church, whose construction was completed in 1848, served as Parish Church until 1868.



Afterward, Father Point was delegated by the Bishop of Toronto to open and bless the new church. This great event took place on February 7th, 1849, in the presence of the Rev. A.M. Billon, pastor of St. Peters of Raleigh, Antoine Goyeau and Francis Chauvin and a large gathering of all the faithful of the mission and elsewhere. This church was entirely built with the money and the zeal of the inhabitants of the mission.

On November the 4th, 1850, duly authorized by the Bishop Charbonnel, then Bishop of Toronto, Father Point erected in the church the Stations of the Cross in the presence of Antoine Goyeau, Janvier Ouellette, Amedee Quenneville, Andre Durocher, Jacques Marentette, Leon Lesperance, Xavier Casot, Francis Chauvin, Father Grimot and a large concourse of people.

During his sojourn in the mission of St. Jude, Belle River, Father Point left valuable information. All the Records of Baptisms, marriage and deaths for the ten years previous to 1844 can be found at Assumption Church, Sandwich or at St. Peters, Raleigh.

1845 – 1857 L'oeuvre Du Père Pierre Point Et Du Père Joseph Grimot

Le Père Point est né à Recroy, en France, le 7 avril, 1802 et fut ordonné prêtre par le Cardinal Latil le 16 mai, 1826. Immédiatement après son ordination, il devint chanoine de la Cathédrale de Rheims. En 1843, il fut envoyé par ses Supérieurs aux Missions du Canada. Il navigua de France à partir du 3 juin 1843 et arriva à Toronto le 5 juillet de la même année. Quelques jours après son arrivée, l'évêque Power le mit en charge des missions de Sandwich et de Détroit, là où il arriva le 9 juillet 1843. Sandwich, sa nouvelle paroisse, avait environ 3,000 âmes. C'était la mission catholique la plus vieille et la plus à l'ouest de l'Ontario.



Les tâches les plus chères du Père Point furent la conversion des Indiens, la préservation de la foi parmi les pionniers de ce temps et l'enseignement de la doctrine chrétienne dans les écoles. Il fut le fondateur des écoles catholiques dans les comtés d'Essex et de Kent.

En octobre 1844, le Père Point fut nommé Vicaire-Général du Diocèse de Toronto. Néanmoins, il continua à oeuvrer dans les missions de Sandwich, spécialement à la mission St-Jude. Tard à l'automne de 1845, le Père Point fut placé en charge de la mission de Belle Rivière par l'Evêque Michael Power de Toronto avec l'ordre de construire une nouvelle église et une résidence pour le prêtre. La petite chapelle de bois rond était déjà trop petite pour accommoder la population croissante de la mission qui comprenait les paroisses de Pointe-aux-Roches, St-Joachim, Staples, Leamington,

Woodslee, et des parties de Maidstone et de Tecumseh.

Le Père Point, avec l'aide de la population, construisit la charpente de l'église et la résidence sur le même emplacement près de la vieille chapelle. Cet emplacement est maintenant le cimetière de la paroisse de Belle Rivière. Cette église, dont la construction se termina en 1848, servit comme église paroissiale jusqu'en 1868.

Par la suite, le Père Point fut délégué par l'Evêque de Toronto pour faire l'ouverture et la bénédiction de la nouvelle église. Ce grand événement eut lieu le 7 février 1849 en présence du Père Billon, curé de la paroisse St-Pierre de Raleigh, d'Antoine Goyeau, de Francis Chauvin et d'un grand nombre de gens de la mission et d'ailleurs. Cette église fut construite entièrement grâce à l'argent et au zèle des habitants de la mission.

Le 4 novembre 1850, dûment autorisé par l'Evêque Charbonnel, alors évêque de Toronto, le Père Point érigea dans l'église les Stations de la Croix en présence d'Antoine Goyeau, Janvier Ouellette, Amédée Quenneville, André Durocher, Jacques Marentette, Léon Lésperance, Xavier Casot, Francis Chauvin, le Père Grimot et d'un grand nombre de gens.

Lors de son séjour à la mission St-Jude de Belle Rivière, le Père Point avait tenu une information de grande valeur. Tous les records de baptêmes, de mariages et de décès des années 1834 à 1844 sont situés présentement à l'église de l'Assomption à Sandwich ou à l'église St-Pierre à Raleigh.

Le premier baptême enregistré dans les registres de la mission St-Jude est celui de Jude Thaddée, fils de Jacques Goyeau et de Marie Durocher, né le 15 novembre 1845 et baptisé par le Père Jaffre le 1er décembre 1845. Le premier mariage enregistré à la mission St-Jude est celui entre Daniel Sheridan, fils de Patrick Sheridan et

The first baptism recorded in the Registers of the Mission of St. Jude is that of Jude Thaddee, son of Jacques Goyeau and Marie Durocher, born on November 15th, 1845, and baptized by Father Jaffre on December 1st, 1845. The first marriage registered by the Mission of St. Jude is that of Daniel Sheridan, son of Patrick Sheridan and Catherine O'Donnell of the County of Langford, Ireland, and Florence Dame, daughter of Michel Dame and Marie Vannier, of Belle River. This marriage was officiated by Father Jaffre in the presence of Michael Dame, Baptiste Vannier and Antoine Dupuis, on February 11th, 1846.

Father Point still continued his missionary work at Sandwich after he had left the Mission of St. Jude. He founded the mission of St. Alphonse and built the first church in Windsor. He began the construction of Assumption College in Sandwich. He spent his last days on earth in the house of his order in Montreal, where he died on September 19th, 1896, in his 95th year.



Since 1850, Father Joseph Grimot was placed in charge of the Mission of St. Jude. He was born in Verdun, France, September 22nd, 1808. In 1846, his superiors sent him to the Missions in Canada. He came to Sandwich in 1847, but he was recalled to Montreal by his superiors in 1848. In 1850 he returned to Sandwich and was placed in charge of the Mission of St. Jude. With much hard work and sacrifice, Father Grimot was able to purchase a bell for the Mission. On March 25th, 1855, duly authorized by the Bishop, Father Grimot, solemnly blessed the new bell, named Angelique. The sponsors were Francis Chauvin and Angelique Mailloux, spouse of Charles de Quindre.

In the summer of 1855, Bishop Charbonnel of Toronto made an episcopal visit to Belle River. Ten years had elapsed since the last visit of the Bishop. Bishop Charbonnel was the guest of the Antoine Goyeau family during his stay at the Mission. There was much work for the Bishop to do in the Mission, as it was now flourishing greatly. Its population had been greatly augmented by the arrival of several new families: the Ducharmes, the Brackens, the Mousseaux, the Denommes, the Lefebvres, the Sauves, the Desjarlais, the Walshs, the Lavoies and the Wilkinsons.

Father Grimot left the Mission of St. Jude in 1857. He was sent by his Superiors, with Father Joseph Jaffre to found the Mission of St. Joseph at Chatham. In 1860 he was stationed at Paincourt. Worn out by his apostolic labours, he was recalled to Montreal and after six months of ill-health, he died on March 16th, 1862 at the Jesuit House in the Sault au Recollet near Montreal.

From 1845 to 1857, the Mission of St. Jude was attended alternately by Father Point, Grimot, Jaffre, Billon, Marigny, Girard, Ferreol, all Jesuit missionaries stationed at Assumption Parish, Sandwich.

When the Jesuits left Sandwich in 1856, Father Point noted that since their arrival, they had organized 13 mission schools in Assumption parish, six in the Belle River and four near Maidstone.

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de Catherine O'Donnell du comté de Langford, en Irlande, et Florence Dame, fille de Michel Dame et Marie Vannier de Belle Rivière. Ce mariage fut célébré par le Père Jaffre, en présence de Michel Dame, de Baptiste Vannier et d'Antoine Dupuis, le 11 février 1846.

Après son départ de la mission St-Jude, le Père Point continuait encore son travail missionnaire à Sandwich. Il fonda la mission de St-Alphonse et construisit la première église de Windsor. Il commença la construction du Collège l'Assomption à Sandwich. Il alla finir ses derniers jours à la Maison-mère à Montréal. Il rendit l'âme le 19 septembre 1896 à l'âge de 95 ans.

Depuis 1850, le Père Joseph Grimot avait été mis en charge de la mission St-Jude après le départ du Père Pierre Point. Le Père Grimot est né à Verdun, en France, le 22 septembre 1808. En 1846, ses Supérieurs l'envoyèrent aux Missions du Canada. Il vint à Sandwich en 1847, mais il fut rappelé à Montréal par ses Supérieurs en 1848. En 1850, il retourna à Sandwich et, à cette occasion, il fut mis en charge de la mission St-Jude. Grâce à son dur travail et à son noble effort, le Père Grimot fut capable de procurer une cloche à la mission. Le 25 mars 1855, le Père Grimot, dûment autorisé par l'Evêque, bénit solennellement la nouvelle cloche, nommée Angélique. Les bienfaiteurs furent Francis Chauvin et Angélique Mailloux, épouse de Charles de Quindre.

A l'été de 1855, l'Evêque Charbonnel de

Toronto fit une visite épiscopale à Belle Rivière. Dix années s'étaient écoulées depuis la dernière visite de l'Evêque. L'évêque fut invité de la famille d'Antoine Goyeau durant son séjour à la mission St-Jude. Il y eut beaucoup de travail à faire pour l'évêque dans la mission, qui était à l'époque dans une condition florissante. La population avait augmenté considérablement de par l'arrivée de plusieurs nouvelles familles: les Ducharme, les Bracken, les Mousseau, les Dénommé, les Lefèbvre, les Sauvé, les Desjarlais, les Walsh, les Lavoie et les Wilkinson.

Le Père Grimot quitta la mission St-Jude en 1857. Il fut envoyé par ses Supérieurs, avec le Père Joseph Jaffre, pour fonder la mission St-Joseph à Chatham. En 1860, il s'établit à Pain Court. Mais épuisé par ses labeurs apostoliques, il fut rappelé à Montréal et après six mois d'une santé débile, il mourut le 16 mars 1862 à la Maison des Jésuites à Sault-aux-Récollets près de Montréal.

De 1845 à 1857, la mission St-Jude était alternativement assistée par les Pères Point, Grimot, Jaffre, Billon, Marigny, Girard, Ferreol, tous des missionnaires Jésuites établis à la paroisse de l'Assomption à Sandwich.

Lorsque les Jésuites quittèrent Sandwich en 1856, le Père Point avait noté, que depuis leur arrivée, ils avaient organisé 13 écoles de missions dans la paroisse l'Assomption, six dans la région de Belle Rivière et quatre près de Maidstone.

1857 – 1876
Father Eugene M. Jahan
First Pastor Of Belle River

The Jesuit Fathers ceased ministering to the needs of Belle River around 1857 – 1858 when the Rev. Father Eugene Jahan was named first resident parish priest by Bishop Pinsonnault of London.

Father Jahan was born in Alsace-Lorraine, France in 1827. He came to Canada in 1854 and offered his services to the Bishop of Toronto, who sent him to the Missions of Essex County. He became the first pastor of the Mission of St. Jude. Not long after he arrived, he realized that the church should be more centrally located and nearer the village. This was the time when talk of a railroad along the lake brought many new settlers here. Among these were the Brossoits, the Murphys, the Plantes, the Cryas, the Grosjeans, the Shahans, the Cloutiers and the Larivieres.

Father Jahan personally bought the present site in 1861. In June 1868, he proceeded to lay the cornerstone. The average cost of the construction was \$12,000 and the church was completed at the end of the same year. At the blessing of the new church, the name of St. Simon was added to that of St. Jude and the Mission became the Parish of St. Simon & St. Jude of Belle River. The new church was opened and blessed on January 11, 1869 by Bishop Walsh of London, assisted by many priests from the neighbouring parishes, and a large congregation of the parishioners and their friends. The beautiful main altar was designed by Father Jahan. Antoine Lemoine and Joseph Legace, residents of the Parish, executed and carved the designs. The interior of the church was majestic and of great beauty.

The 1860's and 1870's saw a new flood of French Canadian settlers from Québec come to the shores of Lake St. Clair. The population of the area swelled by some 200 per cent. It was inevitable that the parish would be divided to form others. Annunciation parish in Stoney Point was founded in 1867. St. John the Evangelist at Woodslee was established in 1863. St. Anne's in Tecumseh reached the parish status in 1871. St. Joachim Parish in St. Joachim also took part of St. Simon & St. Jude parish in 1882. Thus the church of Belle River became Mother Church of six parishes, which have today, developed into nice, prosperous, and well-organized parishes. His work completed, Father Jahan was moved to River Canard in May 1876.



1857 – 1876 Le Père Eugène M. Jahan Premier Curé De Belle Rivière

Les Pères Jésuites cessèrent d'exercer du ministère à la paroisse St-Jude vers les années 1857 – 1858 alors que le Révérend Père Eugène Jahan en fut nommé le premier curé résident par L'Evêque Pinsonnault de London.



Le Père Jahan est né à l'Alsace-Lorraine, en France, en 1827. Il vint au Canada en 1854 et offrit ses services à l'Evêque de Toronto qui l'envoya aux missions du comté d'Essex. C'est dans cette circonstance qu'il devint le premier curé de la paroisse St-Jude. Peu après son arrivée, il réalisa que l'église devait être située plus au centre et plus près du village. C'était l'époque où l'on parlait de la construction du chemin de fer près du lac, ce qui attira beaucoup de nouveaux colons; parmi lesquels on trouve les Brossoit, les Murphy, les Plante, les Crya, les Grosjean, les Shahan, les Cloutier, et les Larivière.

Le Père Jahan acheta lui-même l'emplacement actuel en 1861. En juin 1868, il procéda à la pose de la pierre angulaire. Les coûts de construction s'étaient élevés à environ \$12,000 et l'église fut terminée vers la fin de 1868. A la bénédiction de la nouvelle église en 1869, le nom de la paroisse

devint désormais St-Simon & St-Jude de Belle Rivière. L'ouverture et la bénédiction de la nouvelle église eut lieu le 11 janvier, 1869 et fut faite par l'Evêque Walsh de London, en présence de plusieurs prêtres de paroisses environnantes et d'un grand nombre de paroissiens et d'amis. Le magnifique maître-autel avait été dessiné par le Père Jahan. Ce furent Antoine Lemoine et Joseph Legacé, résidents de la paroisse, qui en avaient exécuté et sculpté les dessins. L'intérieur de l'église était d'une beauté majestueuse.



Les années 1860 et 1870 virent une nouvelle vague de colons Canadiens-Français du Québec venir s'établir sur les bords du lac Ste-Claire. La population de la région de Belle Rivière s'éleva alors d'environ 200 pourcent. Il fut inévitable que la paroisse soit divisée pour en former d'autres. La paroisse l'Annonciation de Pointe-aux-Roches fut alors fondée en 1867. St-Jean l'Evangeliste dans la paroisse de Woodslee fut établie en 1863. Ste-Anne de Tégumseh attint son statut de paroisse en 1871. La paroisse St-Joachim dans St-Joachim devint partie à part de la paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude en 1882. L'église de Belle Rivière devint ainsi l'Eglise-Mère de six paroisses, qui aujourd'hui, se sont développées en de belles paroisses bien organisées et sans cesse prospères. Après la réalisation d'une oeuvre de grande dimension, le vénérable curé Jahan fut déménagé à Rivière-aux-Canards en mai 1876.

1876 – 1891
Father Joseph Gérard
Second Pastor Of Belle River

Father Joseph Gérard was nominated to succeed Father Jahan. Born in Bremenil, France, on December 15th, 1837, he was ordained priest on September 2nd, 1860. Shortly after his ordination he came to Canada, and began his work in the Diocese of London. He was appointed Pastor of Belle River in June 1876 by Bishop Walsh.



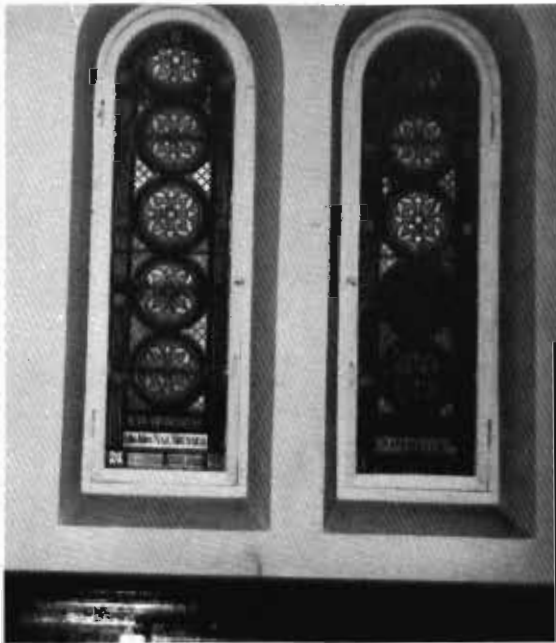
Father Gérard died on November 24, 1891. Sixty priests and a large number of parishioners and friends attended his funeral and his body was buried in the crypt under the main altar.

Among the works of this zealous priest, was the establishment of a brick school in 1899, constructed, paid and held by himself with the Sisters of St. Joseph. In 1883, Father Gérard returned from a two month trip to France with beautiful stained glass windows, the same windows that adorn the walls of our present day church. Meanwhile, he had the church completely decorated. Father Gérard witnessed the growth of the population and the expansion of the village which was incorporated in 1876.

1876 – 1891
Le Père Joseph Gérard
Deuxième Curé De Belle Rivière

Pour succéder au curé Jahan, on nomma le Père Joseph Gérard. Né à Bremenil, en France, le 15 décembre 1837, il fut ordonné prêtre le 2 septembre 1860. Peu après son ordination, il vint au Canada et commença son travail dans le diocèse de London. Il fut nommé curé de Belle Rivière en juin 1876 par l'Evêque Walsh.

Parmi les oeuvres de ce prêtre zélé se trouve l'établissement, en 1889 des Soeurs de St. Joseph dans une école en brique, construite, payée et appartenue par le Père Gérard lui-même. Au retour d'un voyage de deux mois en France, son pays natal, il apporta avec lui, en 1883, les magnifiques verrières qui ornent notre église. En même temps, il fit décorer de nouveau l'église entière. Le Père Gérard fut témoin de la croissance de la population et de l'expansion du village qui fut incorporé en 1876.



L'abbé Gérard rendit l'âme le 24 novembre 1891. Soixante prêtres et un grand nombre de paroissiens et d'amis assistèrent à ses funérailles et sa dépouille mortelle fut ensevelie dans une crypte sous le maître-autel.



1891 – 1901
Father Edmond Meunier
Third Pastor Of Belle River

Father Joseph Edmond Meunier was appointed pastor after the death of Father Gérard. He was only 31 years old.

He was born in St. Rose, Laval County, in the Province of Quebec, on June 23rd, 1860. He was ordained priest in Montreal, on July 15th, 1885, by Bishop Edward Charles Fabre of Montreal. Immediately he was sent as Curate to St. Jean d'Iberville, Province of Quebec. He was appointed Pastor of Havre-qux-Maisons, Magdalen Islands, 1886 to 1889. In 1889, he was recalled to Montreal by Bishop Fabre who sent him to serve Bishop Walsh of London. He was sent to be assistant to Father Gérard at Belle River, he was there only a short time when Father Gérard died. In early December 1891, Bishop O'Connor immediately appointed Father Meunier pastor of Belle River.



During his ten years as pastor of Belle River, Father Meunier accomplished great feats. Schools which had been public schools for years were switched to the separate school system. The religious sisters had taught in these schools for 10 years even though they were public. Under Father Meunier, the Sacred Heart School became permanent. In 1894, he obtained from Bishop O'Connor the promise that the next ordination would be held in Belle River.

However, after only 10 years in Belle River, he soon had to leave. In January, 1901, Bishop McEvoy appointed him pastor of St. Alphonsus Church in Windsor, where he did much for the separate schools. He was very popular in Belle River and his departure was keenly regretted.



Father Meunier did not seek honours, but they came to him. He was Vicar General of the Diocese of London from 1901 to 1908; Administrator of the Diocese from 1905 to 1906 and from 1908 to 1910. Father Meunier was named a Domestic Prelate of the Household of his Holiness, Pius X in March 1908.

Monsignor Joseph Edmond Meunier died in Tecumseh on Sunday evening September 13th, 1914 at the home of his life long friend, Monsignor Pierre Langlois, in the 55th year of his life. His life was short, but full in the eyes of his Beloved Master. The numerous tributes rendered on that day were very deserving and touching. Over 125 priests were present to pray for the eternal repose of his soul, and to pay their last respects to one, whom they greatly esteemed. His body was taken to St. Therese, Province of Quebec where it was buried in the crypt of his beloved Alma Mater on September 19th, 1914.

1891 – 1901
Le Père Edmond Meunier
Troisième Curé De Belle Rivière

L'abbé Joseph Edmond Meunier fut nommé curé après le décès du curé Gérard. Il avait été vicaire ici depuis 1889 et n'était âgé que de 31 ans quand il devint curé.



Né à Ste-Rose, dans le comté de Laval, province de Québec, le 23 juin 1860, il fut ordonné prêtre le 15 juillet 1885 par l'Evêque Edward Charles Fabre de Montréal. Aussitôt, il fut envoyé comme desservant à St-Jean d'Iberville, province de Québec. Peu de temps après, il fut nommé curé de Havre-aux-Maisons, aux Iles de la Madeleine de 1886 à 1889. En 1889, il fut rappelé à Montréal par l'évêque Fabre qui le dirigea ensuite au service de l'Evêque Walsh de London. Il fut envoyé comme assistant du Père Gérard à Belle Rivière et cest ainsi que le Père Meunier se trouvait déjà peu de temps à Belle Rivière après le décès du Père Gérard. Par conséquent, en décembre

1891, l'Evêque O'Connor le nomma immédiatement curé de la paroisse.

Durant ses dix années comme curé de Belle Rivière, le Père Meunier fit un magnifique travail. Pendant son pastorat, il changea les écoles en écoles séparées, quoique les religieuses avaient enseigné pendant dix ans dans ces mêmes écoles alors que celles-ci étaient encore publiques. Sous le curé Meunier, l'école du Sacré-Coeur, devint elle aussi permanente. En 1894, il obtint permission de l'Evêque O'Connor que les ordinations annuelles aient lieu à l'église St-Simon & St-Jude.

Cependant, le curé Meunier n'était à Belle Rivière que depuis 10 ans, quand l'évêque McEvoy constatant ses grands talents, le nomma à St-Alphonse de Windsor, où l'on sait qu'il fit beaucoup pour les écoles séparées. Il était beaucoup aimé à Belle Rivière et son départ fut vivement regretté.

Le Père Meunier ne cherchait pas les honneurs mais ils vinrent à lui. Il devint Vicaire-Général du Diocèse de London de 1901 à 1908 et administrateur du diocèse de 1905 à 1906 et de 1908 à 1910. En mars 1906, le Père Meunier fut nommé prélat Domestique et fut élevé au rang de Monseigneur par Sa Sainteté le Pape Pie X.

Monseigneur Joseph Edmond Meunier mourut à Tégumseh le dimanche soir le 13 septembre 1914, à la résidence de son ami de longue date, Monseigneur Pierre Langlois. Il n'avait que 55 ans. Sa vie fut de courte durée mais elle fut pleine aux yeux de la Providence. L'hommage rendu à ce prêtre dévoué, le jour des funérailles, fut d'une beauté grandiose. Environ 125 prêtres furent présents afin de prier pour le repos éternel de son âme et pour rendre les derniers respects à celui qui fut hautement estimé. Son corps fut transporté à Ste-Thérèse, province de Québec, là où il fut enterré dans la crypte de son Alma Mater, le 19 septembre 1914.

1901 – 1904
Father Paul Andrieux
Fourth Pastor Of Belle River

Paul Andrieux was born in Lagniole, France, 1825. He joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in France, and he came to Canada before his ordination. He was ordained priest in Ottawa in 1850 by Bishop Guigues of Ottawa. He spent the first years of his priesthood in Maniwaki in the missions of that district, among the Tetes-de-Boule Indians. The poverty and misery among these Indians was so intense, that Father Andrieux lived for weeks on fish only. After ten years of this strenuous life, his health failed. He was obliged to renounce the life of a missionary.



Father Andrieux came to London Diocese in 1860, and Bishop Pinsonnault gave him charge, as missionary priest, of all the mis-

sions in the Toronto and London Diocese, where there were no resident priests. In 1863, he was sent to Paincourt. In 1873, he became the first pastor of the newly erected parish of Tecumseh, where he built the fine Gothic Church of St. Anne and organized the parish.

In 1888, Father Andrieux returned to Paincourt as Pastor, and he remained there until 1901. In September 1900, he celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination. On his Golden Jubilee Day, Bishop McEvoy appointed Father Andrieux Archdeacon of the Diocese of London. In January 1901, Father Andrieux was named Pastor of the Belle River Parish by Bishop McEvoy. When he took charge of the parish, Father Andrieux was almost an old man, worn out by the troubles and hardships of his long ministry.

In October 1903, Father Andrieux realized that his health was failing, and that work in Belle River was too heavy for an old priest. In April 1904, he resigned his parish and he retired in Windsor, where he died on December 15, 1915 in his 95th year of his life and 70th year of his priesthood. He was buried in Tecumseh, and at his own request his body was laid in the graveyard among his first parishioners whom he so dearly loved.

1904 – 1928
Father Peter L'Heureux
Fifth Pastor Of Belle River

Father l'Heureux was born in Ancienne Lorette, Province of Quebec. He came to Windsor with his parents when he was very young. He was educated in the schools of Windsor and Assumption College. He attended the Grand Seminary in Montreal, where he prepared himself for the priesthood.

On December 21st, 1894, Father l'Heureux was ordained priest in London by Bishop O'Connor. He was secretary to his Excellence the Bishop and Chaplain of Mount Hope.

He was pastor of Raleigh and Simcoe, where he remained till his move to Belle River in May 1904. He was the first pastor of Belle River who was educated and ordained for the Diocese of London.

Father l'Heureux added the tower to the church built in 1868. He renewed the roof of the church and presbytery, and he had the altars of the church redecorated in white and gold.

1901 – 1904 Le Père Paul Andrieux Quatrième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Paul Andrieux est né à Lagniole, en France, en 1825. Il se joignit à l'Ordre des Oblats de Marie Immaculée et il vint au Canada avant son ordination. Il fut ordonné prêtre à Ottawa en 1850 par l'Evêque Guigues d'Ottawa. Il passa les premières années de sacerdoce à Maniwaki dans les missions du district, parmi les Indiens appelés Têtes-de-Boule. La pauvreté et la misère qui sévissaient parmi ces Indiens furent si intenses que le Père Andrieux ne mangea que du poisson pendant des semaines. Après 10 années de cette vie énergique, sa santé fléchit. Il fut forcé de renoncer à la vie de missionnaire.

Le Père Andrieux vint dans le diocèse de London en 1860 et l'évêque Pinsonnault lui accorda la charge, comme prêtre missionnaire, de toutes les missions dans le diocèse de Toronto et de London, là où il n'y avait pas de prêtre résident. En 1863, il fut envoyé à Paincourt. En 1873, il devint premier curé de la nouvelle paroisse de Têcumseh, là où il fit construire la belle église gothique de Ste-Anne et organisa la paroisse.

En 1888, le Père Andrieux retourna à Paincourt comme pasteur, où il y demeura jusqu'en 1901. En septembre 1900, il célébra son 50e anniversaire de prêtrise. Le jour de son Jubilé d'Argent, l'Evêque McEvoy le nomma Archidiacre du diocèse de London. En janvier 1901, le Père Andrieux fut nommé curé de la paroisse de Belle Rivière par l'évêque McEvoy. Lorsqu'il prit la charge de la paroisse, le Père Andrieux était âgé et épuisé, suite aux difficultés et aux misères de son long ministère.

En octobre 1903, le Père Andrieux réalisa que sa santé déclinait et que le travail à Belle Rivière était trop lourd pour un vieux prêtre. En avril 1904, il abandonna sa paroisse et il se retira à Windsor, où il mourut le 15 décembre 1915, dans sa 95e année de vie et sa 70e année de prêtrise. Il fut enterré à Têcumseh, et à sa propre requête, son corps fut inhumé dans le cimetière parmi ses premiers paroissiens qu'il avait tant aimé.

1904 – 1928 Le Père Pierre L'Heureux Cinquième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Pierre L'Heureux est né à l'Ancienne-Lorette, province de Québec et il vint à Windsor avec sa famille lorsqu'il fut très jeune. Il fut éduqué dans les écoles de Windsor et au Collège de l'Assomption, à Sandwich. Il fréquenta ensuite le Grand Séminaire de Montréal, où il se prépara pour la prêtrise.

Le 21 décembre 1894, le Père L'Heureux fut ordonné prêtre à London par l'Evêque O'Connor. Il fut secrétaire de Son Excellence l'Evêque et aumônier de Mount Hope. Il fut prêtre de Raleigh et de Simcoe, où il y demeura jusqu'à son déplacement à Belle Rivière en mai 1904. Il fut le premier curé de Belle Rivière à avoir été éduqué et ordonné dans le diocèse de London.



Le Père l'Heureux ajouta la tour à l'église construite en 1868. Il rénova les toits de l'église et du presbytère et il avait fait décorer à nouveau les autels de l'église en blanc et en or.

On November 30, 1919 a tornado swept over Essex County and the Belle River area. The tall spire of the church was demolished and the west side of the convent was destroyed. The damages both to the church and the convent were considerable. In the spring of 1930, both buildings were repaired.

Father l'Heureux always took an interest in the children of the Parish. In 1922, through the generosity of James Cooper and the

untiring zeal of Sister Geneviève, a High School was obtained for Belle River.

On December 20th, 1919, Father Pierre l'Heureux celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his ordination. In November 1928, Father l'Heureux ended a quarter of a century as pastor of St. Simon & St. Jude. He was appointed to the River Canard Parish and he was succeeded by Father Charles Laliberté.

1928 – 1945 Father Charles H. Laliberté Sixth Pastor Of Belle River

Father Charles Laliberté was born in Worchester, Massachusetts, on September 8th, 1875. His parents moved later to Tilbury, Ontario. His classical studies were made at the College of Montreal from 1891 to 1897 and he studied his philosophy at the Philosophy Seminary on the Mountain from 1897 to 1900. Between those dates he taught one year. He studied theology at the Great Seminary from 1901 to 1904. He was ordained by Bishop McEvoy in London on December 17th, 1904. He became assistant pastor at St. Alphonsus Parish in Windsor from 1911 to 1912. He succeeded Father Courtois at St. Joachim till December 1st, 1928, when he became pastor of Belle River during the great turmoil.

As pastor of Belle River, Father Laliberté installed a new heating system in the church, remodelled and redecorated the church and installed new Stations of the Cross. Numerous parish organizations were founded and other reorganized. Among these were the Ushers' Club, the Altar Society, and the Catholic Women's League.



In 1934 the parish celebrated its centennial. This historic and grand celebration took place from July 1st to July 4th. Two bishops attended this memorable event: Bishop Kidd of London and Bishop Kelly, who had



Le 30 novembre 1919, une tournade s'abattit sur le comté d'Essex et sur la région de Belle Rivière durant laquelle le clocher de l'église s'effondra et détruisit le côté ouest du couvent. Les dommages causés à la fois à l'église et au couvent furent considérables. Ce n'est qu'au printemps de 1930 que les deux édifices purent être réparés.

Le Père l'Heureux manifesta un intérêt constant envers les enfants de la paroisse. En 1922, grâce à la générosité de James

Cooper et au zèle infatigable de Soeur Geneviève, il obtint une école secondaire pour Belle Rivière, école qui porta le nom école St-James, en l'honneur du bienfaiteur.

Le 20 décembre 1919, le Père l'Heureux célébra le Jubilé d'Argent de son ordination sacerdotale. En novembre 1928, il termina un quart de siècle d'apostolat comme curé de St-Simon et St-Jude. Il fut nommé à la paroisse de Rivière-aux-Canards et remplacé par le Père Charles Laliberté.

1928 - 1945

Le Père Charles H. Laliberté Sixième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Charles Laliberté est né à Worcester, Massachusetts, le 8 septembre 1875. Ses parents vinrent s'établir plus tard à Tilbury, Ontario. Il fit ses études classiques au Collège de Montréal de 1891 à 1897 et sa philosophie au Séminaire de Philosophie sur la Montagne de 1897 à 1900 ayant fait un an d'enseignement dans l'intervalle. Sa théologie fut faite au Grand Séminaire de 1901 à 1904. Il fut ordonné à London par

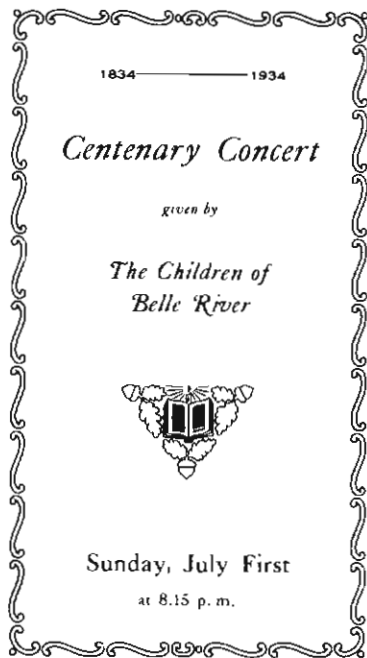
Monseigneur McEvoy, le 17 décembre, 1904. Vicaire à Saint-Alphonse de 1901 à 1911, à l'immaculée Conception de Windsor de 1911 à 1912, il succéda au Père Courtois à Saint-Joachim le 12 avril 1912 pour y rester jusqu'au 1er décembre 1928, l'année du grand dérangement, alors qu'il devint curé de Belle Rivière.

Comme curé de Belle Rivière, le Père Laliberté fit installer un nouveau système de chauffage, remodeler et rédécorer l'église et installer de nouvelles stations de la Croix. Durant son séjour plusieurs organisations paroissiales furent fondées et d'autres furent réorganisées. Parmi ces organisations, il y avait le Club des Placiers, la Société de l'Autel et la Ligue des Femmes Catholiques.

En 1934, la paroisse de Belle Rivière célébra son centenaire. Cette fête grandiose et historique pour la paroisse se déroula pendant quatre jours, du 1 au 4 juillet. Pour cette occasion mémorable assistèrent deux évêques, Mgr. Kidd de London et Mgr. Kelly d'Oklahoma, qui durant la semaine précé-



just preached the annual retreat to the clergy of the Diocese of London, the week before at St. Peter's Seminary. Bishop Kelly was the invited guest of Bishop Kidd and went to Belle River as such. There were also many priests and sisters and over 4,000 people.



The Sunday ceremonies started with a Pontifical High Mass celebrated by Bishop Kidd and the sermon was delivered by Father Laliberté. The pastor had succeeded in having Belle River host the diocesan convention of the Catholic Women's League during this year.

Prior to his departure in 1945, Father Laliberté had laid the ground work for a publicly supported high school in the area. St. James High School became a public high school in 1948. The pastor's work and piety are also revealed in the fact that a large number of young parishioners became active in the religious life. The work of Father Laliberté in the parish of Belle River was great and his departure in 1945 was sad.

1945 – 1946 Father Magloire Baillargeon Seventh Pastor Of Belle River

Father Magloire Baillargeon was born in Tecumseh on July 12, 1891 and was ordained to the priesthood on June 14, 1918. In 1935, he was named the first pastor of the new parish of La Salle and 10 years later became pastor of Belle River.

Soon after his arrival, Father Baillargeon started preparation for the construction of a new rectory and a parish hall. He would not see his dream happen for, he died suddenly on the 13th of November 1946 while saying mass. His sojourn as pastor in Belle River was a very short one. Father Baillargeon had a reputation of being a great builder in all the parishes he had served.



dente, avait prêché une retraite au clergé du diocèse de London, au Séminaire St-Pierre et qui avait été invité à Belle Rivière par Mgr. Kidd. Y assistaient également plusieurs prêtres et religieuses et au-delà de 4,000 personnes.



Durant les cérémonies du dimanche, qui débutèrent par une messe pontificale célébrée par Mgr. Kidd, le Père Laliberté prononça le sermon de circonstance. Durant cette année du centenaire, il avait réussi à faire tenir la convention de la Ligue des Femmes Catholiques à Belle Rivière.

Avant son départ en 1945, le Père Laliberté avait initié le travail préliminaire pour assurer un support en vue d'une école secondaire publique dans la région. L'Ecole Secondaire St-James devint une école publique en



1948. Le travail et la piété du curé se sont aussi illustrés par le fait qu'un grand nombre de paroissiens devinrent actifs dans la vie religieuse. L'oeuvre du Père Laliberté dans la paroisse de Belle Rivière fut grande et c'est avec tristesse que son départ eut lieu en 1945.

1945 – 1946

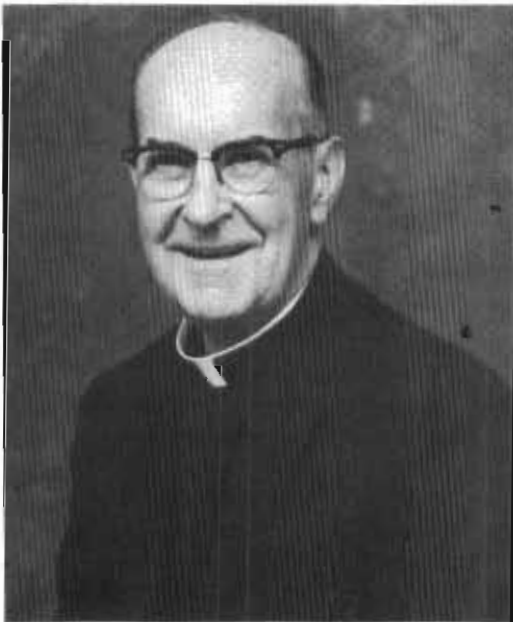
Le Père Magloire Baillargeon Septième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Magloire Baillargeon est né à Tégumseh le 12 juillet 1891 et il fut ordonné prêtre le 14 juin 1918. En 1935, il devint curé fondateur de la paroisse de La Salle et c'est par la suite, qu'il fut nommé curé à Belle Rivière en 1945 après le départ du Père Laliberté.

Peu après son arrivée à Belle Rivière, le Père Baillargeon commença les préparatifs pour la construction d'un presbytère et d'une salle paroissiale. Mais avant de pouvoir réaliser son rêve, il décéda subitement alors qu'il célébrait la messe, le 13 novembre 1946. Son séjour dans cette paroisse fut l'un des plus courts, mais il fut connu comme un grand bâtisseur dans les paroisses où il avait séjourné auparavant.

1946 – 1969
Father Alvin Marentette
Eighth Pastor Of Belle River

Father Alvin Marentette was born in Windsor on May 18th, 1908. After completing a course of philosophy and theology at St. Peter's Seminary, Father Marentette was ordained to the priesthood June 6, 1936. He was assigned as parish assistant to Tilbury for the next six years, and in 1942 joined the armed forces as military chaplain. He served overseas one year, June 1943 until November 1944. On his return, he became chaplain of Military Hospital in London. In 1946, he became assistant pastor in Belle River and at the death of Father M. Baillargeon, Bishop Cody named him administrator until June 1951 when he was made pastor of St. Simon & St. Jude.



His outstanding Christian charity and kindnesses are known by the people of the parish. These qualities were so well known by his fellow priests and bishops that a number of priests in poor health asked to take residence with Father Marentette. Likewise Bishop Cody named him Diocesan Director of the St. Vincent de Paul Society since it was revitalized in the diocese in 1956.

During his term of office in Belle River, Father Marentette attended the deaths and administered the last rites to Father Marchand, Father Emery, and Father Doe, and administered their respective parishes, such as Stoney Point, St. Joachim and Woodslee, until such time as the bishop appointed pastors to these parishes. He also said Sunday Mass at Riverview Hospital for six months during a vacancy of chaplains.

During the 20 years in Belle River, Father Marentette renovated and enlarged the parish facilities to better serve the community. Among his achievements were the redecoration of the church in 1947, the new parish hall in 1949, the new rectory in 1951, and overlooking the new parish of St. Williams in Emeryville. Moreover, Father Marentette's pastorate has been marked by the upsurge in activity of parish organizations and he encouraged religious and priesthood vocations in his parish.



The three schools which formerly existed in the parish: St. John the Baptist, Sacred Heart and St. Therese, have been reduced to one, St. John the Baptist School adjacent to the church.

The 1960's saw the beginning of the Second Vatican Council with its far reaching efforts throughout the universal church. Under the leadership of Bishop Carter, the mandates of the Second Vatican Council were quickly promulgated and put into effect throughout our Diocese.

1946 – 1969

Le Père Alvin Marentette

Huitième Curé De Belle Rivière

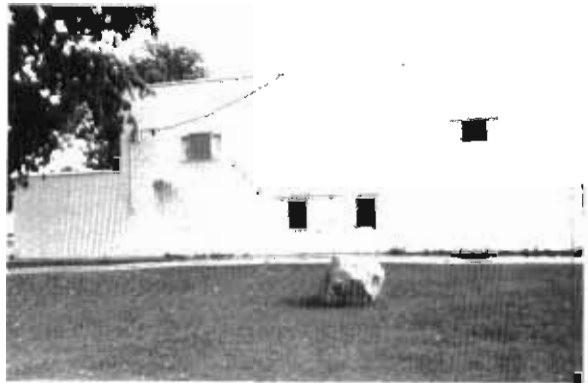
Le Père Alvin Marentette est né à Windsor le 18 mai 1908. Après avoir complété ses études de philosophie et de théologie au Séminaire St-Pierre, il fut ordonné prêtre le 6 juin, 1936. Il devint prêtre assistant à Tilbury pour les six années suivantes et en 1942, il s'enrôla dans les forces armées comme aumônier militaire. Il servit outre-mer pendant un an, de juin 1943 à novembre 1944. A son retour au pays, il devint aumônier de l'Hôpital Militaire à London. En 1946, il devint curé assistant à Belle Rivière et à la mort du Père Baillargeon, l'évêque Cody le nomma administrateur jusqu'en juin 1951, alors qu'il devint curé de St-Simon & St-Jude.

Très tôt, le Père Marentette se fit connaître, grâce à sa profonde charité chrétienne et à sa bonté ineffable. Ces qualités furent bien reconnues par ses prêtres collègues et par l'évêque, de sorte qu'un certain nombre de prêtres en mauvaise santé demandaient pour prendre résidence chez le Père Marentette. De même, Mgr. Cody le nomma Directeur Diocésain de la Société St-Vincent de Paul.

Pendant son terme d'office dans la paroisse de Belle Rivière, le Père Marentette avait assisté aux décès et administré les derniers sacrements aux Pères Marchand, Emery et Doe en plus d'administrer leurs paroisses respectives, telles que Pointe-aux-Roches, St-Joachim et Woodslee. Il célébrait aussi la messe à l'Hôpital Riverview pendant six mois durant l'absence de curés.



Pendant ses 20 années à la paroisse de Belle Rivière, le Père Marentette a entrepris la rénovation et l'agrandissement des facilités et des installations paroissiales afin de mieux servir la communauté. Il y eut la redécoration de l'église en 1947, la construction d'une nouvelle salle paroissiale en 1949, un nouveau presbytère en 1951, et la formation de la nouvelle paroisse St-William d'Emeryville. De plus, il a donné un élan à plusieurs organisations paroissiales et encouragé les vocations sacerdotales et religieuses de sa paroisse.



Les trois écoles qui existaient dans la paroisse: St-Jean-Baptiste, Sacré-Coeur et Ste-Thérèse furent combinées en une seule école, l'école St-Jean-Baptiste située à proximité de l'église.



Les années 1960, de par le Deuxième Concile du Vatican, apportèrent de grands changements à travers l'église universelle. Sous la direction de l'évêque Carter, les mandats du Deuxième Concile furent vite annoncés au public et mis en fonction dans le diocèse.

The mass was to be said facing the people and the sacraments were to be celebrated in French and in English. The sanctuary of the church had to be renovated in order to celebrate the new liturgy in a fitting manner.

A programme of saving of Parish funds was undertaken to effect the necessary changes in the church. Early in 1968 the renovations of St. Simon & St. Jude church began. It was necessary to remove the old floor and to rebuild the foundation under the walls and columns. A new cement floor was laid and a new heating system was

installed at the same time. The old, familiar, sanctuary with its high altar, was removed and a new altar was established facing the congregation. A small altar was constructed to one side of the main altar for the Blessed Sacrament and on the other side of the main altar a shrine to Our Lady.

At the end of many years of service to the parish of Belle River, Father Marentette was named pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Maidstone on June 1969. Father Laurent Paré was asked by Bishop Carter to succeed Father Marentette.

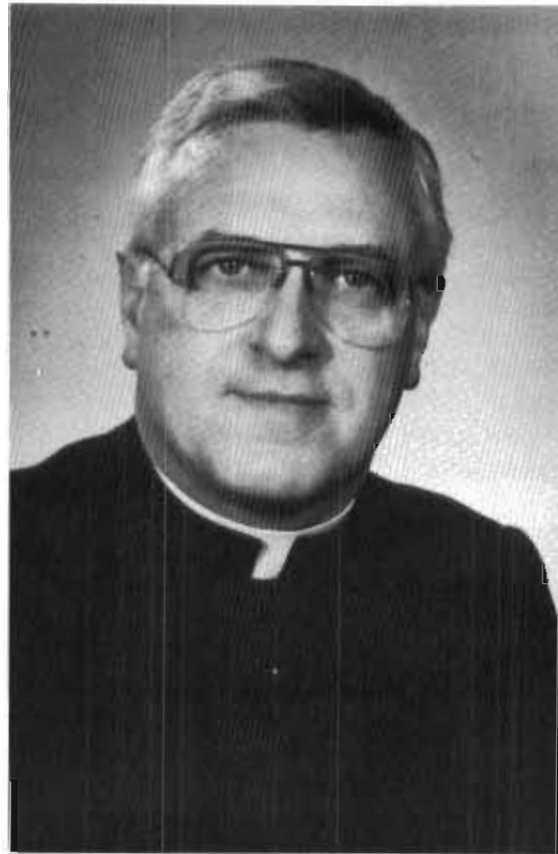
1969 - 1974
Rev. Lawrence Paré
Ninth Pastor Of Belle River

Father Lawrence Paré was born January 7th, 1931, in Windsor, Ontario. He attended Assumption High School in Windsor and was ordained a priest June 2nd, 1956.

After serving as an associate pastor for several years, he was appointed secretary to Bishop Carter in 1962. From 1964 to 1965 he did Post-Graduate studies at Lumen Vitae in Belgium and returned to resume his duties with Bishop Carter. In 1969, he was appointed pastor of St. Simon & St. Jude.

Father Paré came to Belle River at a time of great turmoil and confusion in the Church in the wake of Vatican II. He was faced with the task of trying to implement the many changes in the Church brought about by the Vatican Council, especially in the area of Liturgy and Catechetics. He saw to the renovation of the Church according to the new liturgical thinking and hired a lay person to implement the catechetical changes in the parish, especially in regards to the High School Youth.

In 1974, Father Paré was transferred to St. Rose de Lima Parish in Riverside, where he still serves as pastor.



La messe devait être célébrée avec le prêtre faisant face à l'auditoire et les sacrements administrés en français et en anglais et d'une manière différente. Ceci nécessita que le sanctuaire de l'église soit renouvelé pour permettre de célébrer d'une manière plus digne la nouvelle liturgie.

Une caisse spéciale fut formée pour prélever des fonds paroissiaux dans le but de défrayer les coûts de ces changements dans l'église. Tôt dans l'année 1968, on entrepris la rénovation de l'église St-Simon

et St-Jude. Il fut nécessaire d'enlever le vieux plancher et de rebâtir les fondements sous les murs et les colonnes. Un nouveau plancher de ciment fut posé, et un nouveau système de chauffage fut installé simultanément.

A la fin d'une oeuvre considérable accomplie à la paroisse de Belle Rivière, le Père Marentette fut nommé en juin 1969 curé de la paroisse St. Mary's de Maidstone. Pour lui succéder, l'évêque Carter nomma le Père Laurent Paré.

1969 – 1974

Le Père Laurent Paré Neuvième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Laurent Paré est né à Windsor le 7 janvier 1931. Il fréquenta l'école secondaire l'Assomption à Windsor et fut ordonné prêtre le 2 juin, 1956.

Ayant servi comme curé assistant pendant plusieurs années, il fut nommé secrétaire de l'évêque Carter en 1962. De 1964 à 1965, il fit des études post-secondaires à Lumen Vitae en Belgique et revint au Canada pour compléter ses responsabilités avec l'évêque Carter. En 1969, il fut nommé curé de la paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude.

Le Père Paré arriva à Belle Rivière à un moment de grand tumulte et de confusion dans l'Eglise amené par la perspective de Vatican II. Il dû faire face à la tâche d'implanter les nombreux changements dans l'Eglise apportés par le Concile du Vatican, spécialement dans les domaines de la liturgie et du catéchisme. Il vit à compléter l'oeuvre du Père Marentette dans la rénovation de l'église selon la nouvelle liturgie tout en pensant et en engageant une personne laïque qui implantera les changements cathéchitiques dans la paroisse, spécialement envers la jeunesse d'école secondaire.

L'ancien sanctuaire connu par tous avec son autel élevé fut enlevé et un nouvel autel fut construit, celui-ci faisant maintenant face à l'assistance.

En 1974, le Père Paré fut transféré à la paroisse de St-Rose de Lima dans Riverside là où il sert encore comme curé.

1974 – 1977
Rev. Louis Herman Rivard
Tenth Pastor Of Belle River

Father Louis Rivard was born May 24th, 1927 in Romney Township. He attended Assumption High School and was ordained a priest May 30th, 1953. He said his first mass at St. Charles, Stevenson, Ontario. He served as an associate pastor with Father A. Marentette from 1964 to 1969 at St. Simon & St. Jude, and he was appointed pastor of St. Simon & St. Jude Parish in 1974.

A quiet, gentle priest, Father Rivard served the people of St. Simon & St. Jude parish over a period of nine years. He was a

special friend to Father Marentette, and was especially kind to him during his many sicknesses. Father Rivard organized the people of the parish during his time as pastor to put on a very successful Parish Barbeque Picnic and through this was able to pay off the parish debt. During this period he also completely remodelled the interior of the Parish Hall, making use of a Senior Citizens grant and a great deal of volunteer help. In 1977, Father Rivard was appointed pastor of St. Philippe's Church in Grande Pointe, where he still serves today.

1977 – 1981
Rev. Daniel Armand Morand
Eleventh Pastor Of Belle River

Father Daniel Morand was born September 23rd, 1931, in Tecumseh, Ontario. He attended Assumption High School and was ordained a priest May 31st, 1959. He said his First Mass at St. Anne's Parish, Tecumseh.

After serving as an assistant in several parishes, Father Morand volunteered to join the Diocesan Mission Team in Peru, where he served from 1966 to 1973. Returning to Windsor in 1973, he served as Pastor at St. Joseph's Church from 1973 to 1977, when he was appointed pastor of St. Simon & St. Jude Parish.

Known for his tireless energy, Father Morand did much to establish the Lay Ministeries in the parish. Under his guidance, many lay people became actively involved in the work of the Church. During his time much was done to continue the renovation of the Church and to improve the grounds around the Church and Rectory.

In 1981, there was a shortage of Missionary Priests in Peru and Father Morand again volunteered to return to Peru where he now serves.



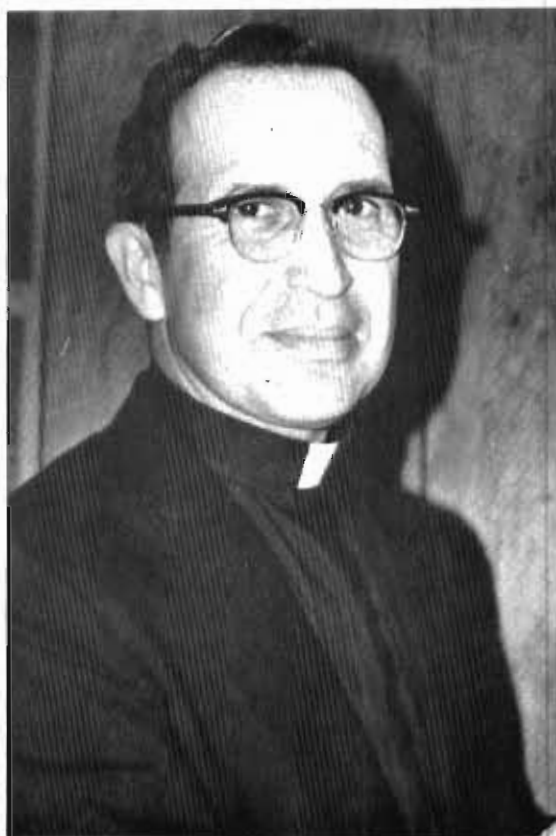
1974 – 1977
Le Père Louis Rivard
Dixième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Louis Rivard est né le 24 mai 1927 dans le comté de Romney. Il fréquenta l'école secondaire l'Assomption et fut ordonné prêtre le 30 mai 1953. Il célébra sa première messe à la paroisse St-Charles, Stevenson, Ontario.

Il servit comme vicaire avec le Père Marentette de 1964 à 1969 à la paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude et il devint curé de Belle Rivière en 1974.

Prêtre gentil et calme, le Père Rivard a servi la population de la paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude pendant neuf ans. Il était un ami intime du Père Marentette, et fut spécialement dévoué à lui durant ses nombreuses maladies. Le Père Rivard, comme curé, organisa pour la paroisse, un heureux et célèbre pique-nique paroissial annuel et grâce auquel il fut capable de payer la dette de la paroisse.

Durant cette période, il remodela complètement l'intérieur de la Salle Paroissiale, en employant un octroi du Club d'Age-d'or et un grand appui volontaire. En 1977, le Père Rivard fut nommé curé de la paroisse St-Philippe de Grande-Pointe, là où il est encore en service aujourd'hui.



1977 – 1981
Le Père Daniel Morand
Onzième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Daniel Morand est né à Tégumseh le 23 septembre, 1931. Il fréquenta l'école secondaire l'Assomption et fut ordonné prêtre le 31 mai, 1959. Il célébra sa première messe à la paroisse Ste-Anne de Tégumseh.

Après avoir servi comme assistant dans plusieurs paroisses, le Père Morand se porta volontaire pour faire partie d'une équipe de Mission Diocésaine au Pérou, là où il servit de 1966 à 1973. De retour à Windsor en 1973, il servit comme curé de la paroisse St-Joseph de 1973 à 1977, alors qu'il fut nommé curé de la paroisse de St-Simon & St-Jude.

Connu pour son énergie infatigable, le Père Morand fit beaucoup pour établir les Ministères Laïques dans la paroisse. Sous sa conduite, plusieurs membres laïques devinrent activement impliqués dans le travail de l'église. Pendant son séjour, beaucoup fut fait pour continuer la rénovation de l'église et pour améliorer les terrains avoisinants de l'église et du presbytère.

En 1981, il y avait une pénurie de prêtres missionnaires au Pérou et le Père Morand encore fut volontaire pour retourner au Pérou, là où il oeuvre présentement.

1981 – 19
Rev. Gerald Henry Duchêne
Twelfth Pastor Of Belle River

Father Gerald Duchêne was born August 27th, 1928 in Windsor, Ontario. He attended High School at Chatham Collegiate and Assumption High School. Ordained a priest on May 30th, 1953, he said his first Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church, Chatham, Ontario.

Father Duchêne served as an Associate pastor in Stratford, Windsor, London. He served as pastor at Blessed Sacrament, London, for 4 years and St. Michael's Leamington, for 10 years. He was appointed to St. Simon & St. Jude in May, 1981.

Father Duchêne is responsible to coordinate and direct the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the parish.

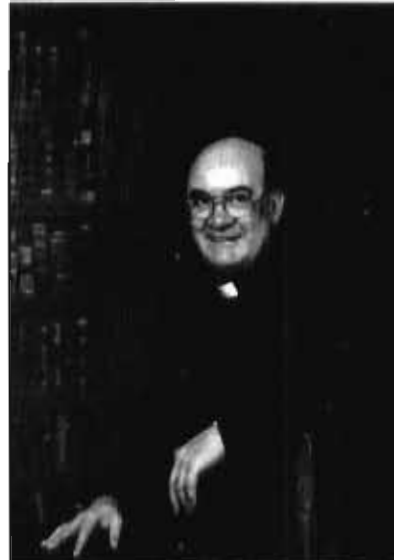
1981 – 19
Le Père Gérard Duchêne
Douzième Curé De Belle Rivière

Le Père Gérard Duchêne est né à Windsor le 27 août, 1928. Il fréquenta l'école secondaire au Collegiate de Chatham et l'école secondaire L'Assomption. Ordonné prêtre le 30 mai, 1953 il célébra sa première messe à l'église Saint-Sacrement à Chatham.

Le Père Duchêne a servi comme vicaire à Stratford, à Windsor et à London. Il fut curé à la paroisse Saint-Sacrement de London pendant 4 ans et de la paroisse St-Michael's de Leamington, pendant 10 ans.

Au mois de mai 1981, l'évêque Sherlock le nomma curé de la paroisse St-Simon & St-Jude.

Le Père Duchêne a pour tâche immense de coordonner et de diriger les fêtes du 150^e anniversaire de la paroisse en 1984.



Our Pastors

Our parish has been served by many priests since its establishment as a permanent mission in 1834. From the time of the first mass in until 1857, the Mission of St. Jude was served by the Jesuit priests from Assumption Church in Sandwich. Amongst these early Jesuit missionaries were:

Fr. J. F. Jaffee
Fr. P. Point
Fr. Billon
Fr. J. Grimot
Fr. J. Ferery
Fr. A.A. Vervais
Fr. J. M. Monmigny

Pastors

The first resident pastor was appointed to Sts. Simon and Jude Parish in 1857.

1857 – 1876 — Fr. Eugene Jahan
1876 – 1891 — Fr. Joseph Gerard
1891 – 1901 — Fr. Joseph Edmond Meunier
1901 – 1904 — Fr. Paul Andrieux
1904 – 1928 — Fr. L'Heureux
1928 – 1945 — Fr. Charles Laliberte
1945 – 1951 — Fr. Magloire Baillargeon
1951 – 1969 — Fr. Alvin P. Marentette
1969 – 1974 — Fr. Lawrence Pare
1974 – 1977 — Fr. Louis Rivard
1977 – 1981 — Fr. Daniel Morand
1981 – — Fr. Gerald Duchêne

Associate Pastors

Fr. J. A. Meunier	1889 – 1891
Fr. A. Béchard	1901 – 1903
Fr. A. P. Marentette	1946 – 1951
Fr. I. C. Levack	1947 – 1948
Fr. M. Quenneville	1948 – 1954
Fr. Reusser	1952 – 1953
Fr. Isadore J. Poisson	1953 – 1954
Fr. Paul Schiller	1954 – 1957
Fr. L. Larivière	1957 – 1959
Fr. I. C. Levack	1957 – 1962
Fr. Léo Beaune	1959 – 1963
Fr. Louis Rivard	1963 – 1968
Fr. Lionel Bélanger	1968 – 1968
Fr. R. W. Reeves	1968 – 1969
Fr. Laurent Masse	1969 – 1973
Fr. Bernadus Ros	1969 – 1974
Fr. Bill Kornacker	1974 – 1974
Fr. Eugene Bugala	1974 – 1975
Fr. R. J. Guilbault	1975 – 1975
Fr. James Drouillard	1976 – 1981
Fr. Dwayne Adam	1981 –



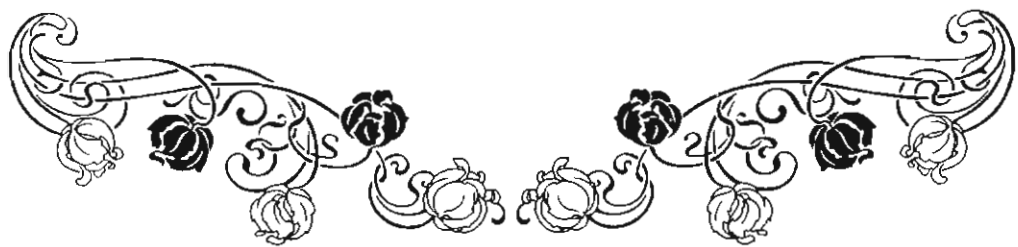
Chapter III

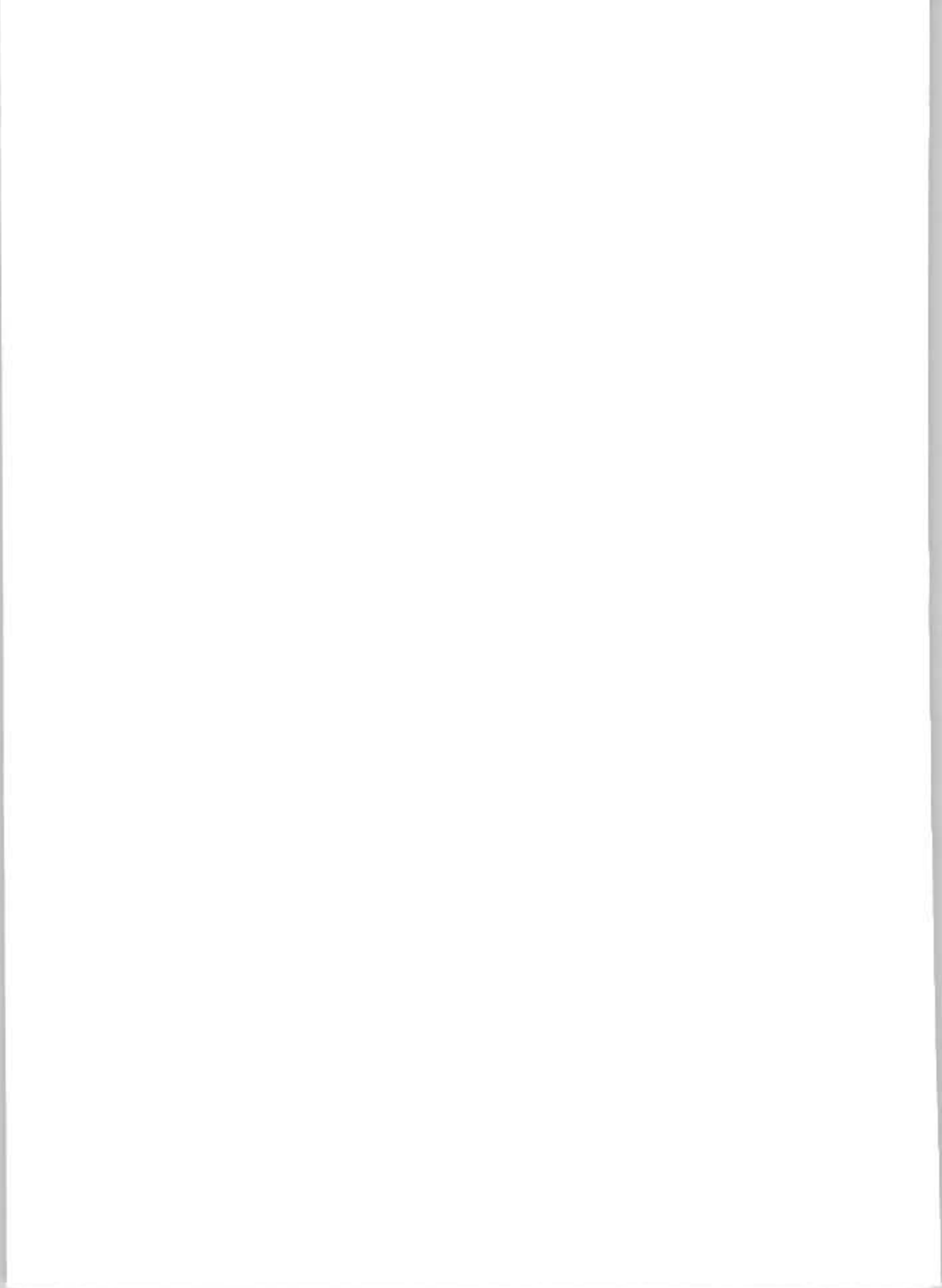
Sons

Of The Parish

In The Service

Of The Lord







Rev. Felix Bezaire

Rev. Felix Bezaire was born in Windsor on September 17, 1918, the son of Arsene Bezaire and Lucy Strong. His family moved to Belle River and he attended school at St. Jean Baptiste and St. James High School. He then entered St. Peter's Seminary and was ordained a priest on May 26, 1945. He celebrated his First Mass at St. Simon and St. Jude Church, the following day.

He then served as an assistant at St. Alphonsus and Immaculate Conception in Windsor, at St. Francis Church in Tilbury, Precious Blood Church in Windsor and Sacred Heart Church in LaSalle.

In 1955 he was appointed pastor of St. William's Parish in Emeryville and afterward served as pastor in Staples, Comber, St. Peter's on the Thames and St. Clement in McGregor. He has also been chaplain at Hotel Dieu Hospital, associate pastor at St. Anne's in Tecumseh and is presently chaplain at Glengarda School.

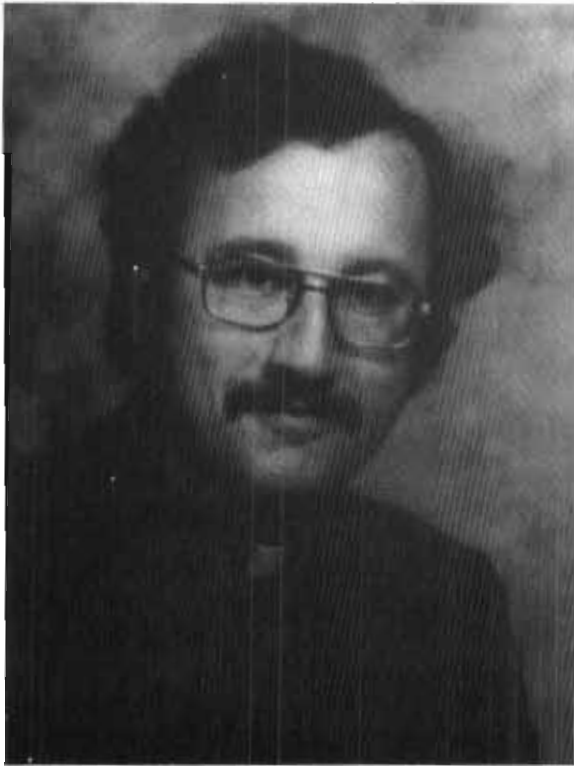
Rev. James Harold Chaseley

Fr. James Chaseley was born on September 8, 1939 in Windsor and is the son of Harold Chaseley and Audrey Dumouchelle.

He attended primary school St. John the Baptist, Belle River then Assumption High School. He studied at St. Peter's Seminary in London and was ordained to the priesthood on May 30th, 1964 and celebrated his First Mass the following day, May 31, 1964 assisted by Frs. A.P. Marentette, J.J. Carrigan, L. Poisson, and M.L. LeBoeuf.



He ministered in various parishes of south-western Ontario namely St. Peter's, London, Sacred Heart, Sarnia, St. Joseph's, Corunna and Holy Cross, London. He also served as director of the Christian Renewal Centre, Sarnia. Fr. Jim is involved with Cursillo, Parish Renewal and Ministries. He is presently pastor at St. John's the Evangelist Church in Woodslee.



Fr. Walter Bracken

Fr. Walter Bracken is the youngest son of Edward Bracken and Bertha Derdaele, born April 25, 1945 in Belle River.

He attended St. Jean Baptiste School, then went on to high school at Divine Word Seminary in Perrysberg, Ohio. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Divine Word Seminary in Epworth, Iowa and a Master of Arts from the Catholic University, Washington D.C. He was ordained into the Society of Divine Word on December 18, 1971. His first assignment was parish work in Jackson, Mississippi. Then he went on to teach High School, while doing parish work in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. He is now a vocation director for a college seminary also in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

Rev. Père Léo Charron

Rev. Père Léo Charron est né à Foleyet, Ontario, le 5 février, 1917, fils d'Henri Charron et Maria Anna Labbé. Il commence ses études primaires à Foleyet et il y continue ici lorsque ses parents déménagent en 1928. Ensuite il poursuit ses études au Collège Sacré Coeur à Sudbury. En 1941, il étudie la Théologie au Séminaire Saint Pierre à London et est ordonné prêtre le 25 mai, 1945. Sa première messe est célébrée à la paroisse St. Simon et St. Jude, le lendemain.



Après avoir servi comme vicaire à l'église Notre Dame du Rosaire, Windsor, il est nommé curé de la paroisse de Notre Dame de Lourde à Comber. Ensuite il devient curé de la paroisse St. William à Emeryville où il construit l'église, le couvent et le presbytère Deux ans plus tard, l'évêque lui donne la tâche de fonder la paroisse St. Jérôme de Windsor. Il devient ensuite curé de l'Immaculée Conception à Pain Court, suivi de la cure dans la paroisse de l'Annonciation à la Pointe aux Roches.

A présent le Père Charron est retiré et demeure aux C.N.R. (Charron, Noel, Robert) à Belle Rivière.



Fr. Victor C. Cote

Fr. Victor C. Cote was born February 10, 1917 in River Rouge, Michigan, the son of Henry Cote and Josephine Rose. He was the fifth oldest of 10 children. He obtained his primary and secondary education in Belle River. In 1932 he attended the University of Ottawa where he obtained his B.A. and M.A. degrees. In 1938 he entered St. Peter's Seminary in London, and was ordained a priest on May 30, 1942. He celebrated his First Mass at St. Simon and St. Jude Church.

After serving as an assistant at Immaculate Conception, Windsor, St. Francis Xavier, Tilbury, St. Rose de Lima, Riverside, he was appointed to establish St. Christopher's parish in Windsor in 1950. Later he was called upon to begin the new parish of St. Gregory's in St. Clair Beach. He also served as pastor at Immaculate Conception and Holy Rosary in Windsor. In 1968, he was transferred to St. Joseph's Church in Port Burwell where he died on November 12, 1974. He was buried in the Cote family plot in Belle River.

Father Denomey

Ernest Denomey, son of Joseph Denomey and Libby (Desjarlais) Denomey was born in Belle River July 27, 1911. He attended the old St. John the Baptist School - continued his studies at the Sacred Heart Jesuit College for boys in Sudbury.

After graduation he entered the French Speaking Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The Novitiate was at Ste Agathe Des Monts, Quebec.

He was ordained May 23, 1937 in the beautiful church at Ste Agathe Des Monts.

His missionary ambition was completed when he was sent to work with the Indians and others in Alberta. Many stories could be related from his experiences with Schools, snow and cold weather, riding and meeting wolves on the way to different missions for Indians and his flock. His health failing, he taught in St. Joachim's College, Edmonton, and helped at the North Star Retreat House at St. Albert's, Edmonton. Later he was stationed at Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Maillardville, B.C. and had charge of the spiritual welfare of Senior Citizens on Alderson Avenue in Maillardville, B.C. Leukemia captured his strength. He died in British Columbia on November 28, 1972.

The Oblates of the West had a funeral Mass for him at St. Albert's, Edmonton. After Mass the remains were flown to Windsor. Mr. Melady met the plane and brought the casket to the church in Belle River. A Mass was celebrated the next morning for the family, relatives, and all the people of Belle River gathered to pay their last respects to a Belle River boy.

The body was flown to Ste Agathe Des Monts where he had made his Novitiate. He was buried in the beautiful cemetery on the same grounds as the building. It is now an infirmary for infirmed and retired missionaries.





Rev. Père Laurent Poisson

Rev. Père Laurent Poisson est né à Belle Rivière le 27 juin, 1921, fils d'Alfred et Hélène (Laliberté). Il fit ses études primaires à Belle Rivière, ensuite se dirigeant à Sudbury.

Il fut ordonné au sacerdoce le 22 mai, 1948 par l'Evêque J.T. Kidd, et s'achemina vers la paroisse St. Alphonse à Windsor. Il enseigna au séminaire à London. A son retour à Windsor, il est placé à Sacré Coeur, ensuite à Immaculée Conception et doit repartir pour Blue Water, Sarnia, dans la paroisse St. Thomas d'Aquin.

Il obtient son brevet d'enseignement et enseigne à Regina Mundi tout en étant à St. Rosaire. Il devient curé à Alvinston ensuite à St. Peter's en Tilbury Est. En 1970 il devient curé à St. Grégoire, à St. Clair Beach. De là à la paroisse Ste Anne de Tecumseh et en mai 1981 il devient curé à St. Martin de Porres où il est présentement.

Il est aussi reconnu par son travail avec des chorales de garçons dans le passé. Il aime bien se reposer au chalet C.P.R. (Chevalier, Poisson, Rivard).

Rev. Père Isidore Poisson

Ce fut le 14 avril 1898 à Belle Rivière que naquit Isidore Poisson, fils de Damase J. et Hélène (Diesbourg) Poisson.

Il a fréquenté l'école des voisinages au primaire, ensuite se dirigea au Collège de Sainte Thérèse au Québec et est revenu au Séminaire à London. Il fut ordonné au sacerdoce le 14 juin, 1924, et célébra sa première messe à l'église St. Simon et St. Jude, le 15 juin, 1924.



Il a servi à plusieurs paroisses telles que Sacré Coeur et Ste Thérèse, Windsor, Ste Anne à Tecumseh, et à Stevenson où il était en charge de la construction de l'église St. Charles de Stevenson.

Il est décédé le 19 juillet, 1961, à l'âge de 63 ans et est enterré dans le cimetière de notre paroisse.



Fr. Clifford Girard

Fr. Clifford Girard was born in Belle River Ontario on November 12, 1915, the son of John Girard and Lena Parent. Fr. Girard obtained his primary and secondary education at St. John's School in Woodslee. He then went on to the University of Ottawa where he obtained his B.A., M.A. and L.Ph. degrees. He studied theology at St. Peter's Seminary in London and was ordained a priest on June 12, 1943. He celebrated his First Mass at St. Simon and St. Jude Church.

After post-graduate studies at the Catholic University of America, he was appointed professor at St. Peter's Seminary and Brescia College where he taught from 1946-1949. From 1949-1956 he served as a chaplain in the R.C.A.F. In 1956 he was appointed pastor of St. Vincent de Paul parish in Windsor, and then pastor at St. Agnes, Chatham, St. Thomas Aquinas, Sarnia, and St. Francis Xavier, Tilbury.

Fr. Girard retired in 1976 and is presently living in Belle River.

Father Lacharite

Father Lawrence Lacharite, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene (Cora Ouellette) Lacharite. He was born on August 13th, 1914 in Belle River. He attended St. Jean Baptiste Grade School and St. James High School in Belle River where he was very interested in sports.

He attended St. Peter's Seminary in London where he was ordained to the priesthood on June 7th, 1941 by Bishop J.C. Kidd. He celebrated his First Mass at St. Simon and St. Jude Church in Belle River the next day.

He was assistant at Ste Anne's Church in Tecumseh for a number of years, then went to Immaculate Conception Church in Windsor. In 1951 he was assigned pastor of the Alvinston St. Matthew's Church. A disastrous fire destroyed this fairly new church and Fr. Lacharite was in charge of rebuilding this parish church and its rectory. He then was pastor at Stoney Point's Annunciation Church until he went to River Canard.

Father Lawrence came from a family of 7 children, four brothers Edmond, Maurice, Arthur and Ernest and two sisters Mrs. Eddie Marentette (Marie) and Mrs. John Arvan (Stella).

Father has now retired and is living in River Canard but he is still a visitor to Belle River to visit his remaining relatives.





Fr. Peter Joseph McKeon

Fr. Peter Joseph McKeon, is the first native son to be ordained from St. Simon and St. Jude Parish. He was born November 28, 1862, the son of James McKeon and Ann Finn. He received his primary education in Raleigh Township. He attended high school and college at Assumption College in Sandwich Ontario.

His ordination and First Mass took place at St. Simon and St. Jude Church on December 23, 1894.

Fr. McKeon served as pastor at St. Augustine, Ontario and at St. Mary's, St. Peter's Cathedral and St. Martin's in the city of London. In 1899, he was appointed Chancellor of the Diocese by Bishop McEvoy and held that position for 39 years.

Fr. McKeon died in London on September 23, 1938.

Father Michael Parent

Father Michael Parent was born January 13, 1942 in Hotel Dieu Hospital, Windsor; delivered by Doctor Edward Dupuis of the Parish. His father and mother were Leo and Susan (Blanchette) Parent. He has one sister Betty Jane and a brother Robert.

Father attended St. John the Baptist School from 1948-1955 and the University of Ottawa High School from 1955-1959. It was upon the advice of the then Pastor of Belle River Father A.P. Marentette that he entered Sacred Heart Junior Seminary in Delaware, for his Grade 13.



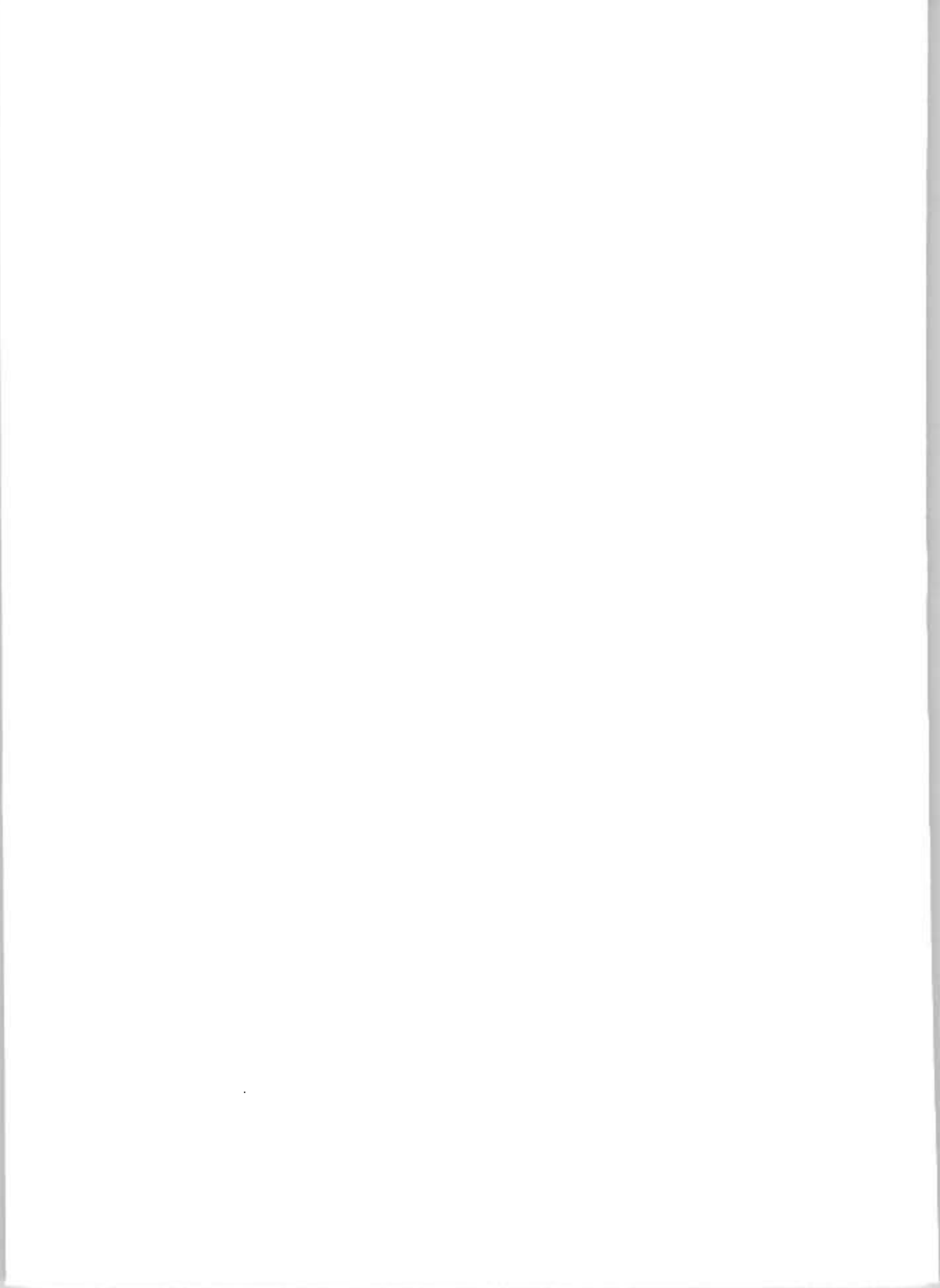
After this he was off to St. Peter's Seminary in London from 1960-1967. He was ordained to the priesthood on May 27th, 1967 at St. Peter's Basilica by the then Bishop of London, Bishop Emmet Carter. This was followed by the very festive First Mass and reception at St. Simon and St. Jude Church Belle River on May 28, 1967.

He served as an assistant at St. Gabriel's, St. John Vianney Parish, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, all of Windsor. In 1980 he was appointed pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Port Lambton where he is now presently stationed.



Chapter IV
Daughters
Of The Parish
In The Service
Of The Lord





Sisters of St. Joseph in the Parish of St. Simon & St. Jude Belle River, Ontario

Belle River Parish of St. Simon and St. Jude celebrates a century and a half of life in 1984. The Sisters of St. Joseph have shared the life and history of that parish for almost a century and through the years – 95 to be exact – have grown to know and love its dedicated Pastors, its devoted parishioners, its vibrant young people and wonderful children.

The joys and sorrows of our mutual history are precious. So too, is the history of each family in the parish. Precious also is the history of the little family of the Sisters of St. Joseph who over the years have been the C.S.J. presence in their Belle River Convent Home.

Belle River was to be home for the Sisters of St. Joseph from the day that Father Gerard's request through Bishop Walsh was conveyed to Mother Ignatia at the Mother House in London. It was to be our first convent in Essex county and the first among French people. Mother Ignatia gladly acceded to the proposal that a little group be mandated to accept the responsibility of teaching children who would soon be enrolled in a new 4-room brick school already erected in the Village of Belle River. The Sisters assigned were Mother Angela McKeough, Superior, Sisters Agatha McCarthy, Bernard Howell, Colomba Overend and Herman Murphv.

The appointed staff accompanied by Rev. Mother Ignatia left London December 29th. They brought trunks and boxes laden with bedding and linen and necessaries which must be provided for a new foundation. They arrived at 5:30 PM and were met by Father Gerard who conducted them to their little Convent on St. Charles Street, about a block from the Church.

Several ladies of the Parish, among them Josephine and Marie Gerard, nieces of Father Gerard, welcomed them warmly and treated them to a festive meal prepared by their new friends; among them were Mrs. Arpentigny, Mrs. Parent, Miss Taylor and 'Aunt Mary'.



In the morning, after Mass, and breakfast in the Parish Rectory, Father Gerard spoke of his feeling that his work was nearly finished and of his joy at welcoming those with whom he would work "for the welfare of my people". He looked forward "to the wide scope of work that your zeal and charity will enable you to accomplish".

From the outset we found that a great zeal and charity existed in the Pastor's people. They wanted to be sure that the Sisters had all their needs supplied. Many a well-filled basket was brought to the convent by generous donors and discovered by the Sisters on their return from Mass.

The Sisters lived in the original convent on St. Charles Street from 1889 until 1892 with Mother Angela as Superior. A new red-brick convent (2 storey) built at a cost of \$5,500.00 was completed at that time and the move was made with Mother Patricia Mallon as Superior.



This convent required an addition in 1926 and a great parish involvement saw a splendid project completed. Much of the work was gratis as skilled volunteers gave their service. They papered walls, painted floors and woodwork, provided eavestroughs, erected clotheslines, prepared the garden and planted rosebushes. School boys were generous helpers. It was a labour of genuine love. In a feeble effort to make some little return, the Sisters arranged "an evening in the Convent". To their great chagrin, an electrical storm left their guests to be entertained in the light of a few candles. A Glee Club concert later netted some funds for the building's construction cost.

The Sisters lived in the St. Charles Street Convent for eighty-eight years but when the Sauvé's home, 503 St. Charles Street, became available, it was considered suitable and the transfer was arranged November 1978. The original St. Charles Street Convent was demolished.

The same generous parish spirit was demonstrated on December 29th, 1978 as was demonstrated December 29th, 1889 when our first Sisters came to Belle River. Our annals describe that spirit.



"Great preparations had preceded the moving day. Boxes were labelled and piled high in the front rooms and halls. Our good parishioners and friends began about 9:00 AM. Two trucks belonging to Mr. Donat Gagnier and Mr. Joe Byrne were used. Father Dan Morand used his pick-up truck and he and his assistants helped with the moving until it was completed about 12:00. Others helping were Mr. R. Drouillard, Mr. Emery Comartin, Mr. Bob Byrne, Mr. George Deschaine and Marty Lanoue. Sister Bernadette Boyde came from Windsor to assist us and she served the men lunch in our new home." The following day the Lord came to our chapel.

Our Teaching Apostolate in Belle River

Our call to establish a Convent in Belle River in 1889 was "for a staff of Sisters of St. Joseph to take charge of the village school". Our annals record this and also provide an insight into the zeal of the Pastor, Father Gerard.

"He had built at his own expense a splendid four-room brick school not yet used, and the highest hope of his heart was to place his children under the guidance of religious teachers."

The school opened after the Christmas Holidays with the new staff installed January 1890. They were Sisters Agatha McCarthy, Bernard Jordan and Herman Murphy.

Cement sidewalks had not yet been laid in the village, so a walk of bark and boards from the Convent to the school made the passage much shorter than if one had to traverse the whole village.

The children were obedient and eager to learn. They were talented and had musical ability as was evidenced in their first presentation, a children's concert. Songs and recitations were featured and the concert was well received.

In 1896 Sacred Heart School was built and opened with two teachers named there, Sisters Beatrice Coughlin and Rosalie Joly.

In 1897 Father Meunier, the Pastor, began proceedings to legalize the existing school as a Separate School, under the new name of St. John the Baptist. The Separate School Act of 1863 provided for this, but not all schools had proceeded to formal status. There were now two Belle River schools in which Sisters taught – Sacred Heart and St. John the Baptist.

Father Meunier, faithful to Bishop McEvay's directive, moved through the process of establishing a Separate School Board and of making it responsible for the two schools.

Teachers were encouraged to professional improvement; higher qualification was available for those who wished to take advantage of courses offered in Summer School.

A further educational step was taken when the Board decided to offer continuation school – Grades IX and X to those students wishing to avail of it rather than travel a distance after Grade VIII. Thus in a small beginning, St. James High School began its history. Mr. James Cooper, generous benefactor of all educational and charitable causes backed this project.

Sister Ambrosia was the first teacher of the first 'continuation class' called 'Grade IX'. Sister Anna Marie taught French.

Beyond academic training, the Teachers encouraged public speaking and debates as a challenge to the students. The first public debate was in 1929.

In 1930 the Junior 4th and Senior 4th classes were divided for French improvement. Annual Separate and Public School Conventions continued to be a source of assistance and a valuable help in the interchange of educational information.

Participation in the Annual French Contest kept students challenged. Belle River candidates were always contestants to be reckoned with.

In our human history and experience we know that time changes our outlook and circumstances require a re-assessment of our position and of our future focus. Duplication of educational facilities, availability of human resources are facets of Education always under review. It was in this area of examination that the decision was made to bring to a close the history of St. James High School in June 1948. At the closing Exercises, Father Marentette distributed diplomas to six Graduates and to eight Intermediate (Grade 10) students.

Sister Antonia Gignac was principal at its closing; Sister Ambrosia Durkin was principal at its opening.

The rooms vacated were filled by students of St. John Baptist Separate School; St. Theresa's Separate School sent 22 students also.

The Elementary Grade 8 students received their diplomas in a separate ceremony. St. John Baptist School was able to receive three classes of students while the new St. William's School was being built in Emeryville.

The new North Essex High School under the principalship of Mr. O'Gorman was to be ready in September 1948.

By 1955 St. John Baptist School was in need of replacement; the sod was turned in November 1955 and the new school opened September 1956 with Sister Marie Cecile Janisse in charge. Sustained interest in Public Speaking and excellent quality of the student candidates brought many awards to the school.

The numbers of students steadily increased and by 1965 the enrolment was 720 in twenty-one classrooms under the capable principal Mr. René Bisnaire. While new classrooms were nearing completion, the overflow classes were taught in the Parish Hall.

During these years – the late 60's and following, the Sisters of St. Joseph were experiencing what happened to be a world-wide Church experience – a shortage of vocations. This had, of course, an impact upon our various Apostolic works, notably upon Education.

Through many years, the Sister Teacher's role was almost synonymous with Administration, Principalships. That was throughout a period of time when Lay Teachers were not numerous; the Team concept always part of the Staff's approach to school mothers remains to-day, changed only by a reversal of positions and numbers. Lay teachers are usually Principals and in majority; Religious Teachers are at classroom or subject category and in minority. This is an almost universal pattern.

**Mother House of the
Sisters of St. Joseph
London, Ontario**



Music Education

An area of education that formed a valuable part of the Apostolate of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Belle River was the teaching of Music over 65 years.

Mother Angela McKeough, first Superior of Belle River, was a great lover of Music and many an evening was brightened by her playing of the piano. She was gifted in imparting her love for Music to her students. Mother Patricia Mallon who followed her as Superior was also a talented musician.

The village school, later named St. Jean Baptiste, was the centre of many social events and concerts. The combined leadership of Mother Patricia and Sister Rosary who

came from London to assist in preparing the children produced some fine children's concerts. These were enthusiastically received by grateful parents and parishioners.

Through the years, the Sisters endeavoured to have a Sister Music Teacher in the School Community. Some Music students elected to qualify for certificates and so took Music examinations at progressive grade levels.

Under the direction of Sister Loudres and of Sister St. Louis Bondy, the Music Department grew. Some of their students received degrees in Music from the Toronto Conservatory of Music. Having met examination and performance standards, it was usual for the new A.T.C.M. to give a public recital. In a recital October 27th, 1953, Miss Sylvestre and Miss Ladouceur treated a large audience to a taste of their musical expertise.

The Western Conservatory of Music under Dr. Harvey Robb, also conducted examinations at all levels to degree work for all students who wished to qualify.

The year 1957 found the Community unable to provide a Music teacher for Belle River and reluctantly the decision to close the department was made. The students in many cases were able to be accommodated by Music Teachers in the area.

The Spiritual Dimension

From the day Mother Ignatia and the Sisters named to Belle River arrived in their new home, the work of building spiritually was the primary goal. Hence Religious Education at all levels was the concern of Teachers in school and of parents at home. Their mutual support was effective in the spiritual growth of the children so sensitive to the things of God.

First Communion and Confirmation were memorable days on which the whole family celebrated in a Parochial setting. Collaboration with dedicated lay teachers who share the responsibility in Christian character building and sacramental instruction has been enriching.

There were societies that appealed to youth and helped them to put their ideals into practice. The Altar Boys, the Ste Theresa's Society and the Sodality of Our Lady were means of spiritual animation. Sisters played a part in directing the activities of the latter two. At times all three collaborated to present a concert for the Parishioners.

Every year the Corpus Christi Feast brought the Catholic Community into total participation. The outdoor Mass, the Procession through the streets, the three-fold Benediction were inspiring. This special day of honour to our Eucharistic Lord was under the direction of the Holy Name Society.

The Sisters shared in the genuine joy of parish and individual family when a member was called to follow Christ in a vocation to the Priesthood or Religious Life. St. Simon and St. Jude's has been blessed in a goodly number of vocations through the years and has cause for thanksgiving.

The Sisters are happy at the 'home visits' of these former students and are proud when their 'boys' offer Mass in the Convent Chapel. Significant parish anniversaries have brought us into the very heart of the celebration. Such a joyful occasion was the 100th Birthday, July 1, 1934. Preparation involved everyone; participation was stupendous - 5,000 visitors beyond the parish. It lasted three days. The students presented two plays.

The tempo of Convent life and of Parish Community life was changed by Pope John XXIII's announcement of the calling of Vatican Council II. Our attention focused upon the subjects to be discussed, the debate, the implication of forthcoming documents and many other unanswerable queries.

Following the Council, London Diocese was fortunate in the speed with which Bishop Carter set out to make the whole diocese and its people aware of the issues that had been discussed and the meaning that they would have for the People of God if they grasped the riches contained within the Documents.

It was with this in mind that he announced a Diocesan Synod and set it in motion, first with study of Documents through Commission and then with Parliamentary Session. Involvement of Clergy, Laity and Religious was a very valuable experience.

Implementation of Vatican II recommendations was, therefore, carried through with reasonable speed. The ground work was carefully laid, and careful instruction preceded each innovation.

In our parish an appropriate date was selected for the first Concelebrated Mass, June 24th, 1966. On that day we were present when Father A. Caron as chief celebrant with 11 priests of the area offered the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

The same care was taken with the implementation of Liturgical Music in the Parish. An opportunity to attend Regional Workshops on Church Music offered at the Pines February 5th, 1965, was taken by our representatives and was instructional.

Another 'first' accorded to the Sisters was our sharing in the Parish Mission. It was given by Redemptorist Fathers Levesque and Schwartz, March 5-18th, 1967.

The Parish celebrated the Centennial of the coming of the Sisters of St. Joseph to London Diocese, October 10th, 1968.

Mass was offered at 7:00 PM. A pot-luck supper followed, then entertainment in the Parish Hall. Next day, a Parish gift of a new Chevrolet was presented to the Sisters. Sister Marie Patrice became the driver. Later the Sisters held a Centennial Tea at the convent.

Our desire to be in harmony with the Liturgical changes led us to the re-arrangement of our Convent chapel and Sanctuary for Mass facing the people, September 1970.

One of the special ways in which we have been involved with youth in Apostolic, spiritual work in the parish is through COR. Sister Mary Diane has taken part in the Team effort that characterizes this very effective experience.

An unbroken succession of very dedicated pastors and assistants at St. Simon and St. Jude parish has been one of the greatest blessings God could give. From Father Gerard to Father Duchene, each one has been sensitive to and supportive of the role of Sisters among the People of God.

Since Vatican II, the Pastors have tried to implement every facet of the Renewal called for in the Council Documents and to make operative the Diocesan applications flowing from them. The Sisters have been asked to act on the Apostolic Committee and also on the Liturgy Committee.

Sister Mary Diane and Sister Mary Philomene were inducted as Auxiliary Ministers of the Eucharist. It sends them as delegated representatives from the Parish church after Sunday Mass to shut-ins who have to be absent from the Eucharistic liturgy but who are not forgotten in the Breaking of Bread.

Another example of Sister participation in parish life came with the name of Sister Mary Pius as Parish Assistant. In announcing this appointment, Father Duchene read Bishop Sherlock's letter authorizing her ministry as Assistant in the Parish of St. Simon and St. Jude.

In order that all have opportunity to become more informed upon the area of new ministries, Diocesan Sisters' Council has sponsored workshops upon the subject in Windsor and London. The educative process continues and is appreciated.

As we look back over St. Simon and St. Jude Parish relationship with the Sisters of St. Joseph, we note a history of mutual sharing. Occasionally this was in a dramatic way as in the 1917-1918 flu epidemic. All able-bodied persons, pastor, Sisters, parishioners, spent themselves in caring for the sick and dying as well as for the stricken families. It was demonstrated again in the Tornado experience of November 13th, 1919, in which Christ-like charity eased what was humanly speaking a deadly disaster. Yet it is in the undramatic day-to-day ordinary sharing that relationships grow. For example, Sister Mary Calvary, Sister Scholastica and Sister Brenda, 'Parish Visitors' during their terms in Belle River, have helped form bonds that continue to unite us.

May God bless this parish and its people as with them we celebrate St. Simon and St. Jude's 150 years of life.

Sisters Who Served in Belle River

Mother Angela McKeough	1889-1893	Sister Maura McGuinness	1926-1927
Sister Agatha McCarthy	1889-1893		1928-1929
Sister Bernard Howell	1889-1894	Sister Alphonse Givlin	1927-1928
Sister Columba Overend	1889-1893	Sister Joachim Bourassa	1927-1928
Sister Herman Murphy	1889-1894	Sister Mildred Henry	1927-1930
Mother Patricia Mallon	1893-1896	Sister Edith Walsh	1927-1928
Sister Vincent Hallord	1894-1901	Sister Patrick Clancy	1928-1931
	1932-1933	Sister Lourdes Jordan	1928-1930
Sister Hilda McParland	1894-1901		1939- ?
Sister Rosalie Joly	1894-1904	Sister Holy Cross Coté	1928-1938
Sister Beatrice Coughlin	1894-1903	Sister Alexandrine Callam	1929-1930
Sister Regis	1896-1896		1971-1974
Sister Joseph Clancy	1892-1902	Sister Theresa Jordan	1929-1930
Sister Delphine Farmer	1894-1902	Sister Fidelis	1929-1930
Mother Magdalen McCarthy	1897-1900	Sister Edmond	1929-1930
Sister Rose Bondy	1902-1911	Sister Isabel Tobin	1930-1932
Sister Fidelis Fortune	1928-1938	Sister St. Louis Bondy	1930-1931
Mother Helen Lyons	1900-1902		1935-1936
Mother Emerentia Regan	1902-1904		1947-1953
Sister Hildegard Brosnahan	1902-1905	Sister Lutgarde Stock	1930-1931
Sister Euphemia Hussey	1902-1905		1938-1940
Sister Sacred Heart Collison	? -1917	Sister Helena Larocque	1930-1932
Mother Bertille Evon	1917-1919	Sister Alma Jordan	1931-1932
Sister Cleophas	1917-1919	Sister Oswald McDonald	1931-1932
Sister Bertrand	1917-1922	Mother Mechtilde McCarthy	1932-1934
	1950-1952	Sister Julien Hinchberger	1932-1934
		Sister Dionysia Sullivan	1933-1935
Mother Cecilia Podlewski			1947-1948
Mother Genevieve Hennessy	-1926	Sister Leocrita Faubert	1932-1933
			1956-1962
Sister Ambrosia Durkin		Sister Mary Louis McSherry	1935-1936
Sister Anna Marie Renaud	1926-1932	Sister Marie Cecile Janisse	1934-1936
Mother Louise Joly	1926-1932		1952-1959
Sister Rita Costello	1926-1927	Sister Laurentia Malloy	1934-1935
Sister Wenefreda Morin	1926-1927	Sister Adrienne Stock	1935-1937
	1935-1936	Sister Mary of the Angels Walker	1936-1938
Sister St. James McIntyre	1926-1927	Mother Blanche McGuire	1936-1937
Sister Beatrice Gagnon	1926-1929	Sister Eusebia Barron	1936-1939
	1936-1941	Sister St. Omer Glavin	1936-1937
	1952-1953		1950-1955
	1958-1963		

<i>Sister Madeleine McDonald</i>	1937-1940
<i>Sister Berchmans Connelly</i>	1935-1936
<i>Sister Jean Marie Faubert</i>	1938-1955
<i>Sister Mary Edward Hill</i>	1937-1938 1940- ?
<i>Sister Amadea Kneitel</i>	1939- ?
<i>Sister Emmanuel Dunn</i>	1938-1940
<i>Sister Berta Bannon</i>	1947-1948
<i>Sister Adele Reaume</i>	1940- ?
<i>Sister Antonia Gignac</i>	1940- ? 1947-1952
<i>Sister Eugenia</i>	1940- ?
<i>Sister Ethelreda Mary Walsh</i>	1947-1950
<i>Sister 'Wilma' Josepha Zimmer</i>	1948-1949
<i>Sister Anne Marie Renaud</i>	1947-1950
<i>Sister Clarence Loftus</i>	1948-1950 1969-1972
<i>Sister Marie Rosaire Roy</i>	1952-1953 1955-1956 1969-1971
<i>Sister Gervase Martin</i>	1949-1952
<i>Sister St. Gregory Slattery</i>	1953-1956
<i>Sister Mary Calvary</i>	1950-1952 1955-1969
<i>Sister Regina Toohey</i>	1955-1956
<i>Sister Carmela Reedy</i>	1952-1955
<i>Sister Marie Antoinette Renaud</i>	1956-1969
<i>Sister Leonita Riberdy</i>	1955-1956
<i>Sister Beata Gagnon</i>	1957-1958
<i>Sister Rose Secker</i>	1956-1957
<i>Sister Mary Margaret Gauthier</i>	1957-1958
<i>Sister Alonzo Murray</i>	1958-1959
<i>Sister Francis Xavier Seguin</i>	1959-1965
<i>Sister Isabelle Girard 'Ludmille'</i>	1958-1962
<i>Sister Medard Levesque</i>	1962-1964
<i>Sister Theophane McManus</i>	1959-1962
<i>Sister St. Dominic Carrigan</i>	1962-1969
<i>Sister Annette Gariepy</i>	1962-1964
<i>Sister Maureen Meloche 'Madonna'</i>	1964-1965
<i>Sister Marie Patrice Janisse</i>	1963-1971
<i>Sister Marie Yvette Masse</i>	1965-1971
<i>Sister Denise Sullivan</i>	1965-1968
<i>Sister Scholastica Resta</i>	1971-1974
<i>Sister Margaret Ann Beaudette</i>	1971-1976
<i>Sister Brenda Sedlak</i>	1973-1981
<i>Sister Mary Diane Cahill</i>	1972-1979
<i>Sister Josephine Marie Peltier</i>	1975-1977
<i>Sister Matilda Coyne</i>	1974-1975
<i>Sister Mary Philomene O'Keefe</i>	1976- ?
<i>Sister Bernadette Boyde</i>	1975-1978
<i>Sister Mary Carmel White</i>	1978-1982
<i>Sister Mary Raphael Giedemann</i>	1977-1978
<i>Sister Mary Pius Burtney</i>	1982-

SISTER ANNE BEZAIRE



Daughter of Arsene Bezaire and Lucy Strong, born in Windsor 1924 and moved to Belle River in 1929.

She attended elementary and secondary school in Belle River and graduated from bilingual normal school in Ottawa in 1943. She entered the Ursuline Community at "The Pines" in Chatham and made her final vows in 1953. Sister Anne taught in various schools from 1953 to 1974. Since 1974 she has worked in the pastoral ministry and is presently engaged in adult religious education in the city of Chatham.

SISTER MARY EDITH (Catherine Brossoit)

Born in Belle River in 1870.

In 1890 she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary in Montreal and made her first profession in 1892. Sister Mary Edith taught for many years in Quebec and served as a superior in such varied places as Hochelaga, Quebec; Cohoes, New York; Tampa, Florida; Japan and Rome, New York.

Sister Mary Edith died in Montreal on March 2, 1947.



SISTER THERESA CAMPEAU

Daughter of Leo Campeau and Betty (Gagnier) Campeau, was born in Windsor, April 22, 1956. She is the eldest of a family of eight, having six brothers.

A parishoner of Sts. Simon and Jude Church, Belle River, Theresa entered the Ursuline Community August 18, 1980 and was stationed at Merici House in London until August, 1982 when she pronounced first vows at the Ursuline Motherhouse. She has been stationed at St. Ursula's Convent in Windsor since then. Sister Theresa Campeau is a Mental Retardation Counsellor and is presently serving at Glengarda School in Windsor.



SISTER M. HOLY CROSS CÔTE (Rose Côté)

Daughter of Joseph Côté and Josephine Berthiaume, was born in Belle River, Ontario.

She received the Habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London in Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse and Orphanage Chapel on August 8, 1901, and made her Final Profession on August 24, 1903. Her apostolate in the classroom extended over nearly fifty years in various parts of the Diocese – Windsor, Belle River, Paincourt, Ingersoll, and London. Many Londoners who have been successful in business posts owe their advancement to the training given them by Sister Holy Cross in their first Commercial Department under Catholic auspices in London.

Sister Holy Cross died January 29, 1968, the last member of her immediate family; vieces and nephews survive.

MOTHER M. LAWRENCE (Venderville Côté)

Was the daughter of Joseph Côté and Josephine (Berthiaume) Côté, was born March 22, 1872 at Puce, Ontario.

She entered the Ursuline Community in Chatham on December 8, 1902. She received the Habit August 15, 1903 and pronounced her vows December 28, 1905. She spent most of her life at "The Pines" as a Homemaker. Mother Lawrence died November 21, 1947.

SISTER MARIE LALEMENT DENOMEY



Daughter of Joseph and Libby (Desjarlais) Denomey, born in Belle River, December 29, 1914.

Sister completed her education at the old St. John the Baptist school and St. James High School in Belle River.

On October 15, 1933 Sister entered the Novitiate at the Sacred Heart Convent in London. She received the Habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph, August 15th, 1934.

Alter her final vows Sister Marie Lalemant worked with the Aged. She was a member of the Executive at St. Mary's Hospital and of the old House of Providence. Sister saw that Arts and Crafts was a must for the Elderly in order to keep them busy and happy.

Alter 29 years of service to the Aged Sister was named Superior of Ignatia Hall—"The Infirmary for our senior Sisters at Mount St. Joseph". This is also Sister Marie Lalemant's Golden Jubilee as a Sister of St. Joseph.

SISTER EDMUND DUROCHER (Louise Durocher)

Daughter of Oliver Durocher and Mary Roullier, born in Belle River, Ontario.

She received the Habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Diocese of London, at Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse on August 8, 1901, and made her Final Profession in the same Chapel on August 24, 1903.

Sister Edmund died at the early age of thirty years, a victim of consumption, on June 25, 1909. Her health was never robust, and shortly after her Final Profession, it was evident that she had tuberculosis. She was remarkably patient throughout her long illness and anxious to help as far as she could. Sister Edmund was cheerful, prayerful and most grateful for the attention bestowed on her by the Sisters in the Hospital.



SOEUR THERESE FLEURY

Daughter of Noe Fleury and Marcella Poisson, born in Belle River in 1927.

She attended St. Jean Baptiste School and St. James High School in Belle River. She then obtained her teaching certificate from L'Ecole Normale de l'Université d'Ottawa in 1946.

In 1946, Thérèse entered the order of Les Soeurs Grises de la Croix in Ottawa and made her final profession on July 15, 1951. Sister Thérèse has taught school ever since, mostly at the High School level, in Ottawa, Sarnia-Windsor. At present, she is Vice-Principal at Notre Dame College in Sudbury.



SISTER MARGARET MARY GAUTHIER (Mary Gauthier)

Daughter of Dennis Gauthier and Jane O'Keefe, born in Tecumseh on July 1, 1874.

She received the Habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Mount St. Joseph Motherhouse and Orphanage, on April 6, 1893, and made her Final Profession in the same Chapel on August 15, 1895.

The greater part of her Religious life was spent at the House of Providence, London, where she gave herself whole-heartedly to the residents there whom she loved and who loved her in return. In the early days of our Community when alms were solicited for the support of the aged and orphans in our charge, Sister Margaret Mary, year after year, made the rounds of the many parishes of the Diocese, heedless of the hardships which were very great in those pioneer days. Her visits are still remembered by many an old resident. On the completion of her term as Superior at the House of Providence, Sister went to Chatham Hospital, where she remained for three years until 1953, when she finally retired and came to reside at the Motherhouse, Mount St. Joseph, London. Sister Margaret Mary died January 22, 1965.



MOTHER M. CLOTILDE (Marie Rosalie Gerard)

Was born June 17, 1872, in Vosges, France, daughter of Christopher Gerard and Rosalie (Niere) Gerard.

She entered the Ursuline Community in Chatham, December 28, 1897 and received the Habit May 3, 1898. She pronounced vows May 25, 1900. She served the Community as a music teacher being stationed in Windsor for many years. She died March 27, 1942.

SISTER ISABELLE GIRARD



Born on January 25, 1912, daughter of John Girard and Lena Parent.

Sister Isabelle received her education in Belle River and entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1933. After taking her first vows in 1937, Sister Isabelle was appointed to Mount St. Joseph Orphanage where she had charge of 120 boys and acted as barber, tailor and mender of clothing and even shoes. She then spent 13 years at St. Peter's Seminary as housekeeper. Sister Isabelle also served at Mount Hope, St. Joseph's Hospital, London and in convents at Belle River, Maidstone, Sarnia and Windsor. In recent years, Sister Isabelle has been working in Pastoral Care at St. Mary's Hospital in London. She celebrated her Golden Jubilee as a Sister of St. Joseph in 1983.

SISTER M. CAROLINE MARTINDALE (Eileen Martindale)

Daughter of Grant Martindale and Elizabeth Lefebvre, born in Windsor, January 20, 1922.

She received the Habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Sacred Heart Convent, London on August 25, 1940 and made her Final Profession in the same Chapel on August 25, 1945.

During her seventeen years of Religious Life, Sister Caroline taught in various schools, London, Delhi, Sarnia, Windsor and St. Thomas, until, because of ill health, she had to discontinue teaching.

Sister Caroline died on Monday, March 11, 1957 at St. Joseph's Hospital, London.



SISTER M. CHARLOTTE MARTINDALE (Virginia Rhea Martindale)

Daughter of Grant Martindale and Elizabeth Lefebvre, born in Windsor, June 14, 1924.

While she was still young, her parents moved to Belle River where she received her early education with our Sisters who taught there.



After completing Grade Twelve, she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph in London. She received the Habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Sacred Heart Convent, London on August 25, 1943, and made her Final Profession in the same Chapel on August 25, 1948.

After making her Novitiate, Sister took Grade XIII and then attended London Teachers' College. She taught one year in London, and was then assigned to St. John De Brebeuf School, Kingsville, where she remained for seven years. She was then stationed in St. James School, Seaforth, where she spent the rest of her life as a Teacher.

Sister Charlotte died on June 21, 1961 of cancer.

SOEUR SAINT-GEDON (Marie Ouellette)



Née à Belle Rivière, le 21 Septembre, 1891, d'Alfred Ouellette et de Marie Fontaine. Marie influence ses dix frères et soeurs par son obéissance à l'autorité familiale.

Soeur Saint Gédéon entrait au noviciat des Soeurs Grises De la Croix en 1916. Après sa profession en 1917, elle se dévouait à servir les malades à l'Hopital de Sudbury, de Mattawa et d'Albony et enfin, à la Maison-mère en 1941. Soeur Saint Gédéon est décédée le 17 Décembre 1943.

SOEUR CLAIRE ST. PIERRE

Est la fille d'Ulric St. Pierre et de Rillie Chauvin.

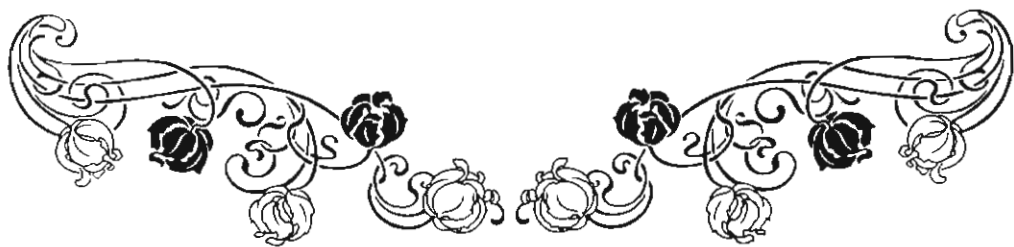
Née à Windsor le 23 Mai, 1937, elle à fait son éducation primaire à l'école St. Jean Baptiste et son école secondaire au North Essex High School. L'année suivante, elle continuait son éducation à l'école normale de l'Université D'Ottawa et ensuite commençait à enseigner à l'école St. Antoine de Tégumseh.

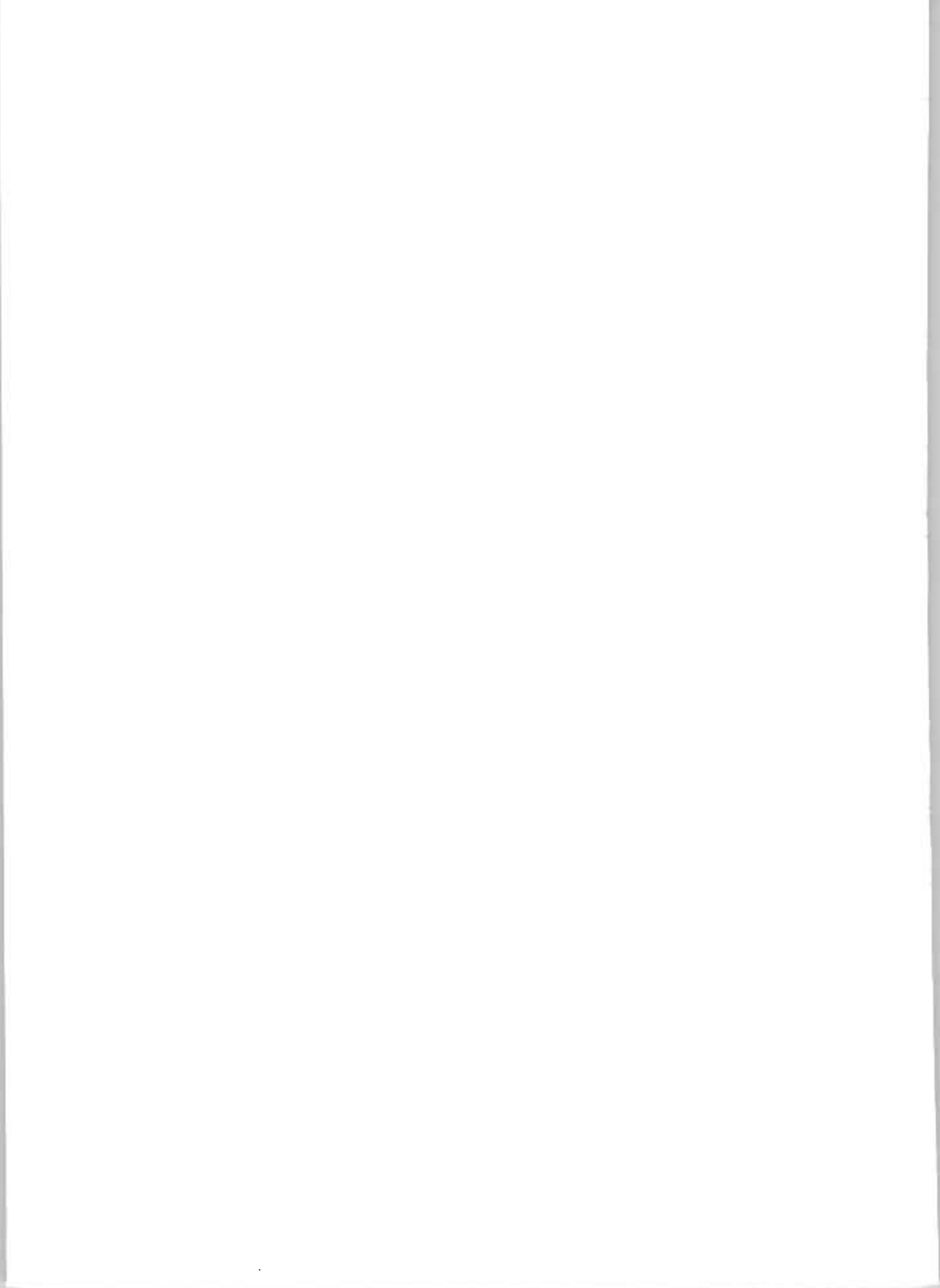
En 1958, elle entra dans l'Ordre des Ursulines à Chatham en portant le nom de Soeur Agnès Claire. Elle a fait ses derniers voeux le 28 Décembre 1967 et le 13 Août, elle à fêté son Jubilé d'Argent. A présent, Soeur Claire enseigne à l'école Our Lady of Help, à Walfaceburg.





Chapter V
Our
Community
At
Work





Our Community At Work

The original territory of what is now known as St. Simon and St. Jude parish was considerably larger than the present boundaries. This extended from as far east and west as the present boundary of Kent County and Pike Creek respectively. While this book is written to commemorate the growth of the church in the last 150 years in this area, we realize that is also most interesting to learn of the occupations and means of livelihood of the people. With this in mind, the writer will endeavour to sketch some of these occupations and enterprises from the beginning to this time.

The first settlers were granted tracts of land along the waterways which was essential for water and transportation. As the heavily wooded area was cleared, people moved further inland. The first inhabitants lived mainly on lumbering, fishing and farming. With the increase in population, the activities were also multiplied adding new ventures as well as services necessary for the inhabitants.

While the subject of this book deals mainly with the last 150 years, you will note in the following comments that there were already some settlers established who became the basic founders. Among these you will find the names of Pierre Ducharme, Baptiste Bonsouliar, Baptiste Chauvin, Baptise Voylette, Francois Le Maitre, Vital Dumouchelle, Charles Campeau, Baptiste Renaud, Andree Boisdoree, Angus Mackintosh, Francois Bertrand, Joseph Roulleau, Pierre Labadie, Antoine Goyeau, Moise Ouellette, Hipotitte Goyeau, Baptist Lesperance, Robert Goise and St. Amour.

The first general store was opened by Antoine Goyeau in 1791. As early as 1806, an Inn was operated on the old stage road by a Mr. Labaline. In addition to serving the occasional traveller, the settlers and Indians mingled. This site also served for wedding receptions and special occasion gatherings.

With the coming of the Great Western (Grand Trunk) railroad (now C.N.R.) in 1852, the first saw mill and grist mill were built by Luc and Denis Ouellette on opposite sides of the river immediately south of the tracks. Several other mills as well as a flax mill were built after this with one owned by Charles S. Chisholm being remembered as having burned one night with the loss of the Abram Van Orden family who lived in adjacent quarters. The mill was one of several owned by Chisholm who for a short period of time, while chairman of the Board of Commissioners for the Police Village of Rochester, was successful in changing the name to the Village of Chisholm. These mills provided facilities for the settlers to grind their grain for livestock as well as the making of flour. The saw mills were kept busy by the large amount of lumber produced by the land clearing.

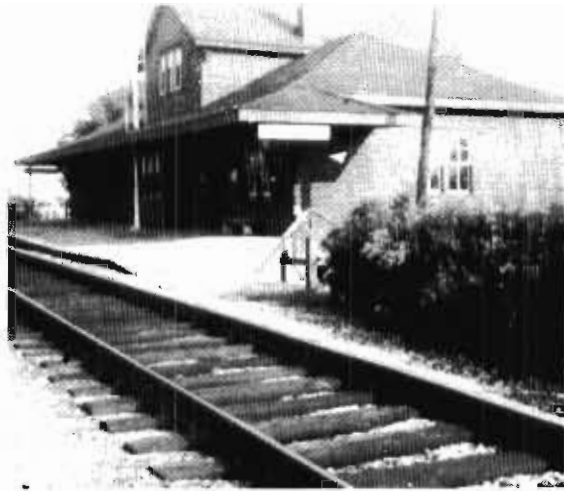
Old Mills



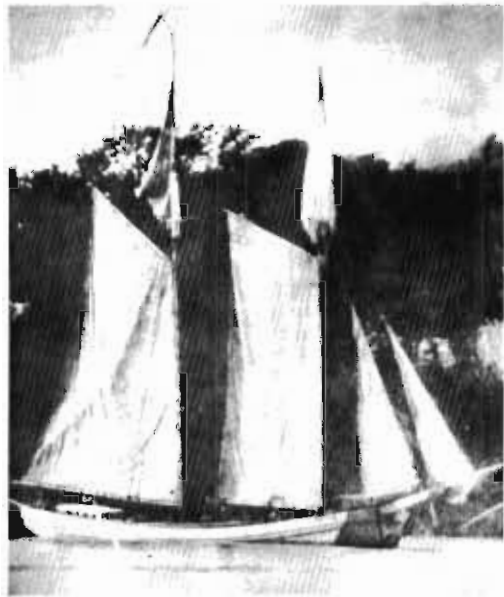


G.T.R. Station (C.N.R.)

The construction of the new railroad now made possible the transportation of grain, meat and lumber products such as broom handles, axe handles, railroad ties as well as barrel staves and cordwood to Windsor and other settlements to the east. In 1888 another railroad known as the Canadian Pacific Railroad was built.



C.P.R. Station



The years 1880 to 1910 saw a great deal of activities along the mouth of the river with the peak being at the turn of the century when the harbour was improved and extended. There was at this time nine large scows and carriers being two and three mast schooners registered to operate from this location. Notable among these names were the Ouellettes, Thibert, Charron and Fleury. During the summer, the sailing operations provided employment for up to 100 sailors on the boats and docks, while in the winter half that number worked on sails and repairs. The sand schooners of the fleet travelled as far as Put-in-Bay in Lake Erie and the Thames River for sand used mainly in Detroit. The remainder of the fleet carried lumber and agricultural products from the neighbouring lands.



The first tavern in the area was called the Great Western Hotel built by Mrs. Rose Delaney, the widow of an early settler. Following her husband's death in 1857, she built a general store which was later remodelled and converted into a hotel. This building was also used as a courthouse when necessary. This property and building located at the corner of Seventh Street and old Tecumseh Road, was later owned by Mr. and Mrs. J. Taylor. The building remained standing until demolished in 1940.

As evidence of the importance of farming in the surrounding area, a fair was held annually for 15 years at a site near the C.P.R.



LE BON
MARCHÉ

Above is a photograph of the Noah Parent Hardware store, Main Street Belle River, taken in 1907

Among those identified are U Ducharme sixth from left, Mr Parent, standing in the doorway of the store, George Lavoie standing behind the sign one of the little lads standing at the right is Joseph Gauthier, and the youngster with the hoop at the extreme right is Carl Ladouceur

The building is now the King George Hotel

Ici est une photo prise en 1907, du magasin de quincaillerie de Noah Parent

Parmi ceux qui ont été identifiés sont: U Ducharme, le sixième à gauche, M Parent debout à l'entrée du magasin, George Lavoie debout derrière l'enseigne, Un des petits garçons avec le cerceau à l'extrême droite est Carl Ladouceur

Cette édifice est maintenant le "King George Hotel" sur la rue Main.

At the turn of the century some of the business in the village included J.B. Adams' store, Parent's Bakery Shop, Jim Strong's Store, Nouvin's Store, Poisson Hardware, Noah Parent's Store, Leon Lavoie's Butcher Shop, Hercules Parent's Belle River Hotel and Denis Marentette's Wellington Hotel.

EASTERN MARKET (COTE'S RED & WHITE)



The picture was taken in 1904. At that time it was a general store operated by a Mr. Adams. Left to right are Mrs Charles McMahon, Mrs. Adams holding Evelyn McMahon Bratt, girl unknown, Mr. Adams owner, and Mrs Eliza McMahon. The horse and buggy belonged to Mrs. C. McMahon.

The Joseph Denomeys bought the store in 1914 and operated it as a general store up until 1926 when Mr. Côté bought them out.

Cette photo a été prise quand le Red & White était un magasin général en 1904. A ce temps, un nommé Adams était le propriétaire du magasin. Les personnes dans la photo sont de gauche à droite: fille-inconnue, M. Adams (patron), et Mme Eliza McMahon. En 1914 le magasin changea de main. Joseph Denomey était le propriétaire jusqu'en 1916 quand M. H. Côté l'acheta. Le magasin se nomme encore Red & White's et est encore sous sa direction.

First Canning Factory



With the growth of agriculture, a tomato canning factory was established on Railway Avenue and continued until 1958 when it was closed and converted to a turkey farm operation. Following the cannery closing, Campbell Soups loaded the tomatoes onto the railroad from this site and transported them to Chatham for processing. After a few years, this was also discontinued and a new canning factory was started by Aurele Ducharme at the east end of town and is still in operation.

Present Canning Factory



The village of Belle River was incorporated in 1874 and for the first twenty years many problems arose in establishing By-Laws and Regulations to govern the affairs of the growing municipality. Towards the end of this period, the services of a surveyor was obtained to plan the area for streets and sidewalks. As a result, greater stability was realized.

FIRST SIDEWALKS



Replacing the wooden sidewalk (about 1913).
left to right, are "Yeastcake" Lalonde, Baptiste Goulet, Adolff Parent, unknown, Theodore Desbours.

Les hommes dans cette photo sont en train de remplacer les anciens trottoirs de bois avec de nouveaux trottoirs de ciment. De gauche à droite sont, "Yeastcake" Lalonde, Baptiste Goulet, Adolff Parent, inconnu et Théodore Desbours. Ils sont en train de construire un nouveau trottoir de ciment. (Vers l'année 1913).



In 1906 Felix Sauve began a brick, block and tile manufacturing operation along the east bank of the river immediately south of the bridge. This has continued to operate at the west end of town after having been taken over by Denis and later Bud Sauve.

In July 1907, the Rochester Municipal Telephone Company extended their operation into Belle River with ten lines, each serving ten people. Mrs. Clara Tellier, at the age of thirteen, was the first operator. In 1910 the Volcanic Gas Company of Chatham installed the first natural gas lines into the village. As evidence of the importance of the area in agriculture, sugar beets were loaded and transported on lake scows to the processing plant in Mount Clements Michigan.

In 1918, a wealthy American by the name of William S. Stuart settled in Belle River leading to his becoming reeve in 1919. This man along with James S. Cooper who emigrated from London, proved to be great philanthropists in the area. While of opposite political beliefs, their rivalry and generosity assisted many families during the early years of the 1920's. Mr. Stuart's main ambition was the building of roads and it was during his tenure of office that the "Blue Water Highway" now No. 2 Highway, was built connecting Windsor and Belle River. It was also during this time that main street was paved. Mr. Stuart later died in an auto accident.

Old Road



New Road



Mr. Cooper built his large mansion which still stands and is now operated as the Cooper Court Hotel. In addition to this he planned the construction of an elevator along the C.P.R. in competition with that built by Stuart along the C.N.R. which was later operated by Pete Lalonde. To his credit also goes the Belle River Brick and Tile Company, Belle River Poultry Farms and Greenhouses, all being along the C.P.R.

Cooper Residence



Belle River Tile Yard

A racetrack to the north of the railroad and a baseball park in the east end are also credited to his generosity as well as many contributions to schools and the church. To encourage agriculture he purchased twelve tractors, a harvester and some prize cattle which he distributed to farmers. Mr. Cooper was later reported missing while on a boat crossing to Europe.



With the coming of the automobile great changes were made in the modes of living which were to later affect everybody. The first auto dealership and service was begun by Charles Gauthier in 1920.

CHARLES GAUTHIER'S GARAGE



This thriving garage business of the roaring twenties was operated by Charles Gauthier and was the first car agency in Belle River. Mr. Gauthier opened his shop here in 1920 and handled Ford and Ford Service for the next ten years selling cars, trucks and parts.

The gas pump shown in front was not the "jet age" type but rather a manually operated machine which had to be pumped up for each gallon of gas used. There were no modern lifts or even grease pits in the early days. As a matter of fact there wasn't much greasing to do on a Ford.

Their set of tools consisted of the ordinary screw driver, monkey wrench coupled with haywire and horse sense. A sixty-volt Delco machine was used as power to run the lighting system as Hydro did not come to Belle River until 1922-23.

This picture was taken in the year 1922. Left to right is a Mr. Dupuis (who delivered gasoline from Leamington), a Mr. Ducharme, Jacob Lesperance, Gilbert Durocher (an employee), Noel George and Joseph Gauthier (father of Charles Gauthier, the operator).

Cette besogne prospère de garage des années vingt à trente était opérée par Charles Gauthier et fut le premier agent d'auto dans Belle Rivière. M. Gauthier ouvrit sa besogne en 1920 et entretenait et réparait les Ford et pendant 10 ans a vendu des autos, des camions et leurs morceaux.

La pompe d'essence montrée en avant n'était pas de notre âge moderne mais elle était managée à la main et elle devait être pompée pour chaque gallon vendu.

Il n'y avait pas de levée moderne et même des trous de graissage dans ce temps-là ce n'était pas tellement utile car il n'y avait pas beaucoup de graissage à faire sur les Ford.

Le coffre d'outils consistait d'un tournevis ordinaire et d'une clé anglaise. On se servait d'une machine de soixante volts pour faire du pouvoir électrique car l'électricité n'existait pas dans Belle Rivière jusqu'en 1922-23.

Cette photo fut prise en 1922. De gauche à droite: M. Dupuis (livreur de gas de Leamington), M. Ducharme, Jacob Lesperance, Gilbert Durocher (un employé), Noel George, Joseph Gauthier (père de Charles Gauthier, propriétaire).

Belle River, 1874 — 1974, Belle Rivière

In 1919 an oil drilling operation was begun by Smith — Hamilton — Estlin Oil Company in the east end of the village. This new venture proved to be short lived due to the pollution it created.

In 1922 the first hydro power lines came to the village and in 1926 the waterworks was built with all homes supplied by 1927.

With the great depression which followed the stock market crash of 1929, Belle River was not spared the hard times that followed. Under the guidance of capable leaders such as William Poisson, Leo Sylvestre, Jeremie Ducharme and others along with the generosity of some of the more affluent citizens and that of neighbouring residents who loaned funds, the village managed to avoid bankruptcy. In 1937 there were 37 families who required regular assistance.

In 1939 the grain elevator which had been built by Cooper at the C.P.R. was destroyed by fire and later rebuilt only to burn again following the purchase by A.H. Tellier in 1967. Following this fire the operation was moved to Chatham for a time then returned to this area at the site of a former elevator at the C.N.R. where a storage warehouse was constructed for seed and fertilizer and has continued to this date as a garden centre.



**1st. Elevator at C.N.R.
Steam Operated**

**Built By Stuart
Later Operated By Mr. Lalonde**



Belle River's Grain and Seed Co. Ltd. which was purchased by Mr. A. H. Tellier in 1967 from the Cooper Estate. This elevator was near the C.P.R. tracks and burned completely the same year.

La compagnie Grain and Seeds Belle Rivière fut achetée de la propriété de James Cooper en 1967 par M. A. H. Tellier. L'élevateur était situé près du C.P.R. et malheureusement passa au feu la même année.

With the beginning of the second world war in 1939, attention was focused on war efforts with the village and citizens contributing greatly. Many young men from the area served at home and abroad.

In 1948 a young journalist moved to this part of the county and established what later became the North Essex News. Also in 1948, the village came under the supervision of the Ontario Provincial Police with a local office. Prior to this, the policing had been done by individuals hired by the village.

In the last forty years many changes have taken place in the growth including the incorporation into the status of a town in 1969. To John George goes the distinction of being the first town mayor. With the good years of the 1970's, many new homes were built on the west side of the river as well as in the east and south ends of the municipality.

Amongst those remembered as having contributed greatly to business were Elliott Wilkinson Furniture and Hardware, J.D. Renaud and Son Funeral Home and Store, Stanley Renaud Shoe Store, Alfred Ladouceur Blacksmith, Mike and Leo Lvoie Grocery, Hector (Con) Rose for the first bowling alley, Charles Gauthier Garage and Auto Dealership, Philip Mousseau General Store, Joe Denomey General Store which later became Herman Cote's Red & White store as well as the name of Gallop and Gillies.

Familiar names presently in business with some having been for several years are Melady, Ladouceur, Lanoue, Harpe, Durocher, Marentette, Lavin, Meloche, Parent, Elliott, Lavoie, Denomey, Dean, Guilbeault, Mousseau, Poisson, St. Pierre, Tellier, Trepanier, Lalonde, Labonte, Fleury, Belisle and many more.

Since the town borders on Lake St. Clair, a number of American and people from Windsor and the county occupy a number of homes as seasonal dwellings resulting in an increase in population in the summer months. The additional population contribute greatly to the economy of the community. Belle River also participates in a community arena which in addition to being an important sports complex, is also the site of the annual Fiddler's Contest that has gained great recognition in Ontario and parts of the United States. The town can also boast of baseball playground and park as well as a new Optomist Park. Work has also begun on the construction of a new marina near the mouth of the river.



As previously stated, the popularity of the automobile brought great changes in the occupation of our citizens as we now find a large number employed in the automobile factories and allied industries in Windsor. Employment is also provided by several restaurants, hotels, banks and stores.

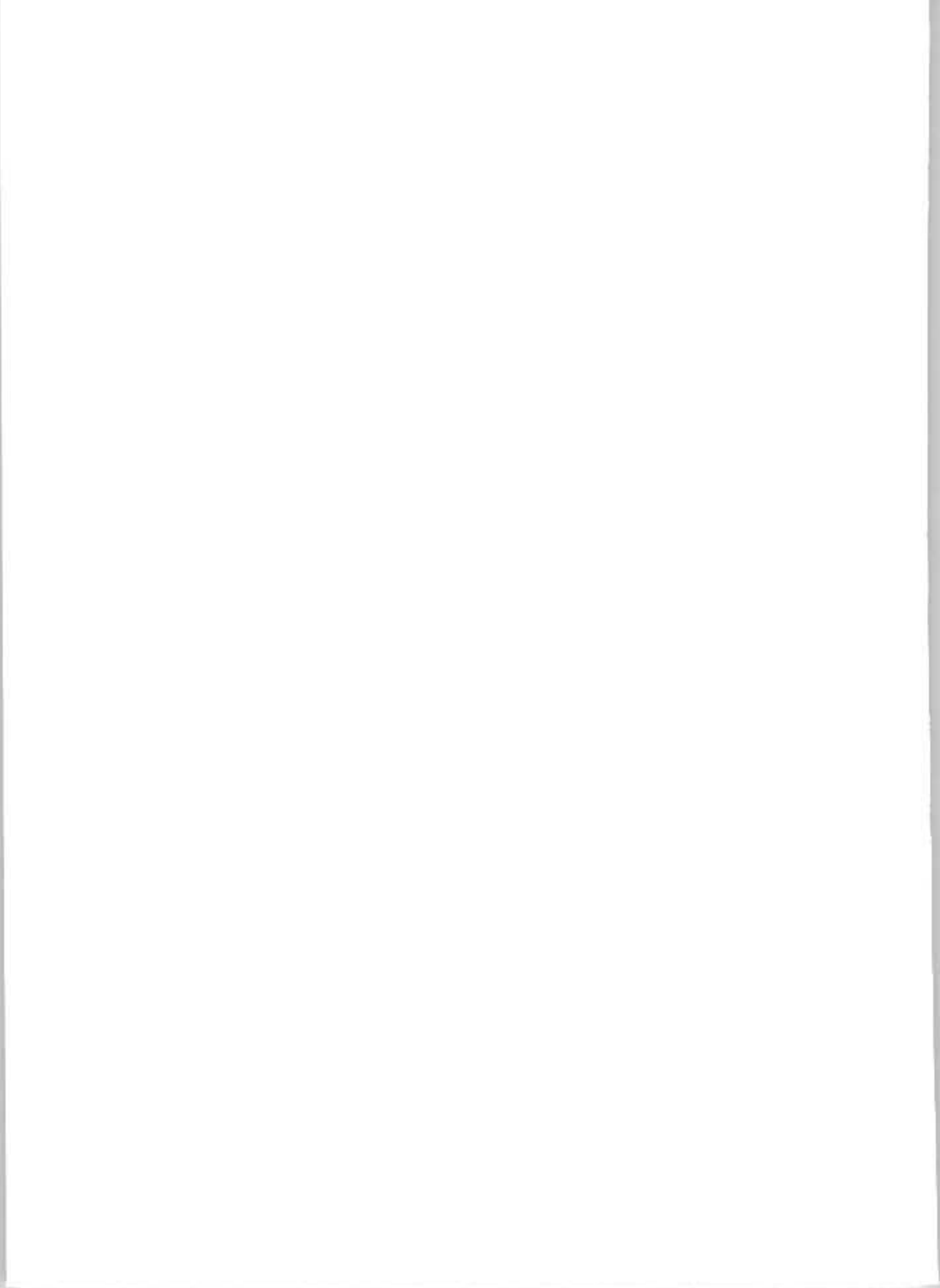
Many changes have also taken place in agriculture which has become more specialized such as the growing of corn, soybeans, wheat, and tomatoes. While their numbers have greatly diminished, there are still a few dairy farmers in the area.

With the foregoing, you will see that the history shows many devoted and hardworking citizens who have jointly helped to make this one of the most prosperous and pleasant communities to live in. Certainly, all those mentioned should be very proud of their heritage.



Chapter VI
Parish
Centenary
1834 — 1934





1834

Parish Centenary

1934

Triple festivals covered by four days of celebration, from July 1 to July 4th inclusive, were the main events of the parish centenary.

First, it was the celebration of the centenary of the founding of the Belle River parish; secondly, it was the hundredth anniversary of the founding of La Société of St-Jean Baptiste; thirdly, it was a memorial day in honor of the dead of the parish, an Old Boy's Reunion for all who, at one time or another, have lived or were born in Belle River.

Preparations for these festivals had been going on for several weeks, under the leadership of Father Laliberté, parish priest, who was assisted by several committees of local workers. The general president of the combined celebrations was Charles Gauthier, and the chairmen of the various committees were:

Entertainment – Armand (Mike) Lavoie

Decoration – Denis Ouellette

*Meals & Refreshments – Mrs. Catherine Ouellette
– Mrs. Emily Wilkinson*

*Reception – Reeve Léo Sylvestre
– Médéric Forget, clerk of the municipality*

Finance – Philip Mousseau

Law & Order – Jérémie Ducharme

The program of the festivals was as follows:

Sunday, July 1, 1934 Parish Day

The hundredth anniversary of the parish was commemorated with appropriate religious pomp, with two bishops in attendance. Their Excellencies Bishop Kidd, of London, and Bishop F.X. Kelly, of Oklahoma, who the previous week preached the annual retreat to the clergy of the Diocese of London, at St. Peter's Seminary.

Bishop Kelly was the invited guest of Bishop Kidd and went to Belle River as such. He was a scholar, an erudite and the author of several books, chief among which was his volume entitled "The Forgotten God." He was a Canadian by birth, having been born in Prince Edward Island. He was educated in the province of Quebec, at Nicolet, after which he went to Detroit and Washington. He was bishop of Oklahoma for several years. At a private banquet held, in the separate school after the church ceremonies, he spoke in both French and English to the assembled guests. At the same banquet, Bishop Kidd also spoke in response to addresses delivered to him, in French by Aurèle Lacharité, and in English by William Martin, both pupils of St. Joseph's School.

The Sunday ceremonies opened with a Pontifical High Mass by Bishop Kidd, who was assisted by the following: Honorary deacons, Rev. Achille Rondot, parish priest of Staples, and Rev. Luc Beuglet, C.S.B., parish priest of St. Anne's Detroit. Others were: First assistant, Fr. Pierre l'Heureux of Stoney Point, deacon, Fr. I. Poisson, of Tilbury, sub-deacon, Fr. Ovila Charbonneau, of Windsor, master of ceremonies, Fr. W. Bourdeau of Hotel Dieu Hospital, and second master of ceremonies, Fr. Philip Muga, of East Windsor. The assistants to Bishop Kelly were Fr. J. C. Kelly, of London, and Fr. Vincent Caron, O.M.I. of Ottawa.

The sermon for the occasion was delivered by Fr. C.H. Laliberté, parish priest of Belle River, who spoke in both French and English. He took as his text the words: "Thou art Peter and upon that rock I shall build my church." He extended a welcome to the visiting clergy and to the dignitaries of the church, and referred feelingly to the founders of the parish, recounting their hardships and recalling their faithfulness to the teachings of the Mother Church and extolling their virtues as Christians. He characterized faith as a special gift.

After the High Mass, from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. there was a parish dinner and on that occasion, two addresses were read to His Excellency, Bishop Kidd, one in French by ex-Reeve Jérémie Ducharme and the other in English by Dr. T. Weise. They gave an historical background of the history of the parish from the beginning to 1934.

His Excellency replied in the two languages, expressing the same sentiments in each. He spoke of the pioneering days and invited his hearers to picture their forefathers hewing their homes in the wilderness, nearly two hundred years ago. Of that civilization, little is left. Science has altered everything. But one thing remains and he hoped it would always remain. He described that as "the Christian character of the homes," "Our fathers had faith," His Excellency stated. "Faith appeared in their every action. Their domestic life was simple, but over the doorway of every home could have been written this inscription: 'Here Honour Reigns.'" He congratulated Belle River on its having attained the hundred mark in its life as a parish and wished well for its future prosperity and development.

Among the clergy in the vestry were also Fr. John Rooney of Prompt Succor Church, Windsor; Fr. W. E. Dillon, of Sacred Heart Church, Windsor; Fr. John Jordan, of Chatham; Fr. Romeo Lefaive, of St. Pierre, in Kent County; Fr. Alex Denomey, C.S.B. of Assumption College, and Fr. G. Pitre, pastor of Tecumseh.

The services were concluded with the singing of the *Te Deum*, that majestic hymn which is usually sung in Roman Catholic churches on occasions of rejoicing and thanksgiving.


The program of the afternoon consisted in various sports and games, the day ending with a play by the children of St. Joseph's School, at 8:30.

1834 ————— 1934

Centenary Concert

given by

*The Children of
Belle River*



Sunday, July First
at 8 15 p. m

Programme

1. Prologue.
Celestial Court with Angels of Jubilee presiding. Queens—FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY—tell the story of their work in the Parish. MEMORY reviews the leading points of the century
2. St. John the Baptist Scene with Hymn.
"Nous Voulois Dieu"
3. Rainy Duaises.
4. Chorus. "Le Ble qui leve."
5. Drill. "The First Diggers."
6. Rainbow Song
7. O, Canada.

CONCERT

Given by the School Children
to Commemorate

Centenary of Belle River Parish

Sunday, July 1, at 8.15 p.m.

ADMISSION 25c.

Monday, July 2, 1934 St. Jean Baptiste Day

St. Jean Baptiste Day was opened with the customary solemn high mass, at which officiated Fr. Pierre l'Heureux, former pastor of Belle River, who was assisted as deacon and sub-deacon by Fr. Augustin Caron, of Stoney Point, and Fr. Pierre Boudreau of Tecumseh. Monsignor C.A. Parent, of Tilbury, occupied the throne.

The sermon for the occasion was delivered by Fr. Oscar Martin, formerly of Tilbury, and now of Simcoe. He pictured the life of John the Baptist, particularly in his role as Precursor of Our Lord. He then eloquently traced the history of the founding of the Société St. Jean Baptiste and of its development during the past hundred years. Referring to the French Canadian nationality he drew a simile between the mission of John the Baptist on the shores of the Jordan and that of the French people on the shores of the St. Lawrence. Particular reverence by the French people for John the Baptist had been one of their characteristics from the days of the establishment of the colony. The first national celebration was held in 1634. The French people had almost instinctively adopted St. Jean Baptiste as their patron saint. Another great celebration was held in 1647, but it was not until 1834 that a society, national in character and symbolic of the traditions was formed. The credit for the launching of this society is given to Ludger Duvernay, a journalist of the time.

Fr. Martin here described the beginnings of La Société St. Jean Baptiste and followed its development since then to every province, country or state where French Canadians are living. St. Jean Baptiste had been adopted by the French as their patron saint but it was not until 1908 that the choice was confirmed by a special decree issued by His Holiness, Pope Pius X.

Immediately after the church service a parade was held through the streets of the town. It was the largest procession held in many years according to regular attendants at St. Jean Baptiste celebrations.

Much of the credit for the success of the parade was given the Windsor branch, under the presidency of Charles Marier. The largest floats were contributed by Windsor and in addition 21 decorated cars traveled to Belle River from Windsor.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, speeches, always a looked for part of St. Jean Baptiste programs were heard in the large tent set up for the evening concerts. The chairman was ex-reeve Jérémie Ducharme, one of the officials of the Belle River branch of La Société St. Jean Baptiste. The speakers were Charles A. Marier, who spoke in the name of George Janisse, president of the central organisation, but absent: Fr. G. Pitre of Tecumseh, general chaplain of La Société St. Jean Baptiste of Western Ontario: A. T. St. Pierre past general president, Charles Quenneville, past general secretary, Fr. C. H. Laliberte, Reeve Léo Sylvestre, and Fr. Arthur Breault, O.M.I. who was the guest speaker.

Reeve Léo Sylvestre recalled that Belle River had been incorporated as a village in 1878, the first reeve being Fred Bouteiller, and the first clerk, a Mr. Hamel. He welcomed the visitors to Belle River, on the occasion of this celebration.

Fr. Breault, who was vacationing in the Border Cities pending his departure for the missions of South Africa, spoke of action as being the concrete expression of inner thoughts. People nowadays applaud only those who live what they think and believe. He stated that the French Canadian race had a vocation, but must live that vocation in terms of actions and permanent works.

In the evening the young ladies of the parish gave a French play "L'Amour Filial".



"L'Amour filial."

RESUME

Marie, petite servante est fille de Madeleine, une pauvre fermière. Le marquis de Felines, riche propriétaire, jaloux de la beauté et surtout de la bonté de Marie, l'oblige de quitter sa pauvre mère enfin d'aller gagner de l'argent à Paris.

Dans une de ses sorties, Marie rencontre la Marquise et Fanchon, son complice malin.

Poussées par leurs sentiments de haine envers Marie elles l'accusent injustement et Fanchon va jusqu'à lui annoncer une nouvelle si tragique qu'elle perd la raison sur-le-champ.

Faith accompanie de son amie Pierrette, elle retourne dans son pays. La vue et le chant de sa bonne mère, lui rendent la raison.

PERSONNAGES.

Mme de Felines, riche propriétaire Ella Forget
 Mme de Cibray, son amie Alida Ouellette
 Madeleine, fermière Mauch Trotter
 Catherine, sa sœur Marguerite Grenier
 Marie, fille de Madeleine Corine Denoncy
 Pierrette, son amie Dora Ladouceur
 Chouchou, amie de Marie Geraldine Strong
 Fanchon, servante de Mme de Felines, Marie A. Charon
 Soeur St. Suzanne, institutrice du village Blanche Caron
 Charlotte } jeunes sœurs Genevieve Monseau
 Louise } Marie J. Larivière
 Nini } Georgina Laforet
 Une Marchande de Gâteaux Sarah Poisson



Tuesday, July 3, 1934 Memorial Day

The third day of the Belle River four-day celebration was Memorial Day. At nine o'clock in the morning, a Solemn High Requiem Mass was said after which took place the blessing of the New Calvary, at the cemetery.

The day was particularly devoted to a remembrance of the departed of Belle River since the inception of the parish, one hundred years ago.

A visit to the cemetery, 1-1/2 miles south of the town, would bring one in contact with scores kneeling over tombstones or before monuments, and praying fervently for the departed members of their respective families. Others were depositing flowers on the tombs, and still others were beautifying the family burial plots.

In this the faithful were encouraged by a sermon by Fr. C. H. Laliberté, parish priest at Belle River, after the blessing by Fr. Pierre l'Heureux, former pastor, of the New Calvary, erected by public subscription in 1933. Fr. Laliberté spoke on death and the attitude of the Catholic Church toward her departed members. Prayers constitute the form of respect bestowed on the dead by Mother Church. Catholics are taught to believe in the effectiveness of requisitions to the Lord for the forgiveness of sins, thus opening the portals of Heaven to the deceased. He urged his hearers not to forget to pray every day for those who had been called by death, the best preparation for which is the purgation of the soul by Confession and Holy Communion. Death should not be feared. If one has lived the good life, a Christian life, death is merely the passing to reward, the reward promised by the Redeemer, that is, eternal bliss in God's Heaven, he said.

In the morning, Solemn Requiem High Mass was celebrated in the parish church. The mass was said by Fr. Isidore Poisson, native son of Belle River who was pastor at the newly-established parish of Stevenson, south of Tilbury. Fr. Poisson was assisted by Fr. Achille Rondot, pastor at Staples, as deacon, and by Fr. Augustin Caron, of Stoney Point, as sub-deacon. The attendance filled the large St. Simon & St. Jude Church almost to capacity.

From four to eight p.m. an old-fashioned dinner was served in St. Joseph's school by the young people to their parents and friends. From nine until 12, old-time street dancing was the attraction.

Wednesday, July 4, 1934 American Day

Belle River brought its four-day celebration to a close with a bang-up July 4th. This last day had been declared "American Day," and hundreds of Americans flocked to the up-lake town to participate in the festival. When the curtain dropped at midnight, scores were still lilting in the street to the tune of old-time fiddlers who were hoisted on a platform overlooking the street. It was stated by officials of the celebration that the last day was surpassed only by St. Jean Baptiste Day, on Dominion Day, when more than 4,000 people thronged the streets and picnic grounds.

Prior to the street dancing program of the evening, the students of Ottawa University from the counties of Essex and Kent gave a concert in the big tent erected for concert purposes. The capacity of the tent was too small to accommodate the crowd and the sides were raised in order to permit ticketholders to hear the performers on the stage. The program consisted of recitations and songs. The piece de resistance was a play entitled "Le Gendre Enragé" (The Mad Son-in-Law). The performance kept the audience in roaring laughter.

Séance Récréative

par les élèves

de

l'Université d'Ottawa

— — — — —
Juillet - 1934 - July

Entertainment

by the students

of the

University of Ottawa

SÉANCE RÉCRÉATIVE

PAR LES ÉLÈVES DE
L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA

ENTERTAINMENT

BY THE STUDENTS OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

Belle River Celebrating

Triple Festivals Will
Cover Four Days
Next Week

Parish Centenary

Feast of St. Jean Baptiste
And Old Boys'
Reunion

The up-lake town of Belle River is busily engaged just now in putting on its gala apparel, in preparation for the festivals of next week. These festivals will last for four days, from July 1 to July 4 inclusive, and will be of a threefold character.

THE THREE FESTIVALS

First will be the celebration of the centenary of the founding of the Belle River parish; secondly, will come the annual feast of the St. Jean Baptiste Day, an important event in French Canadian history for a century; and thirdly, the Old Boys' Reunion, which is expected to draw to Belle River hundreds of former residents.

Preparations for these festivals have been going on for several weeks, under the generalship of Father Laliberte, parish priest, who is assisted by several committees of local workers. The general president of the combined celebrations is Charles Gauthier, and the chairmen of the various committees are: Entertainment, Armand (Mike) Lavoie; decoration, Denis Ouellette; meals and refreshments, mesdames Catherine Ouellette and Emily Wilkinson; reception, Reeve Leo Sylvestre and Mederic Forget, clerk of the municipality; finance, Phillip Mousseau; and law and order, Jeremie Eucharne.

THE PROGRAM

The program of the festivals is as follows:

Sunday, July 1. Masses at S. S. Simon and Jude Church, at 6:30 a. m., 8, 9.30 and High Mass at 11 o'clock, at which His Excellency, Bishop Kidd, will officiate in pontifical robes. From 1 p. m. to 5:30, parish dinner, and at 8.30, concert by the children of St. Joseph school.

Monday: St. Jean Baptiste Day. Solemn High Mass at 9 a. m. After mass, a monster parade with allegorical chariots, and St. Jean Baptiste picnic. The sermon at High Mass will be delivered by Fr. Oscar Martin, and the principal speaker at the picnic will be Fr. Arthur Breault, O. M. I. Other speeches will be given by Senator Lacasse, Hon. R. D. Morand, M.P., for Essex East, Dr. Paul Polsson, former M.L.A., and Dr. A. H. C. Trotter, newly elected member for North Essex. In the evening, the young ladies of the parish will give a play in French, entitled "L'Amour Filial."

Tuesday, Memorial Day. Solemn High Mass for the dead at 9 a. m. Procession to the cemetery after mass and blessing of the New Calvary, built in 1933. From 4 to 8 p. m., old-fashioned dinner by the young people to their parents and friends.

Wednesday, American Day. During the day, games will be played and speeches will be delivered. And at 8:30 p. m., the students of Ottawa University from the counties of Essex and Kent will give a concert.

SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS

Among the attractions to entertain the visitors will be soft and hard ball games, races, and street dancing. On July 1, at 3 p. m., there will be a ball game between Royal Oak and Belle River, and at 6:30, a soft ball game between St. Joachim and Belle River. On July 2, at 3 p. m., there will be a soft ball game (girls) between Paris Shines, of Windsor, and Brantford. At 6:30, another soft ball game between Stoney Point and Belle River. On that day, street dancing will be carried on from nine to twelve in the evening. The music during the day will be furnished by the Wheatley band (30 pieces), and Maedel's Junior Havmakers. As a special attraction, from 9:30 to 10 p. m., songs with guitar accompaniment will be rendered under the title of "Round-up Ranger." On the same day, races of every description will be run, beginning at 3:30 p. m.

On Sunday, addresses will be read to His Excellency, Bishop Kidd, in both French and English. The French address will be read by Jeremie Ducharme, former reeve, and the English address by Dr. T. Weiss, local dentist.

Special attractions have been devised for every one of the four-day celebrations, and Belle River expects to see within its confines, during these festivals, thousands of visitors and Old Boys.

"We extend a cordial invitation to all," said Fr. Laliberte.

Belle River Fete Ending

Today Last of 4-Day
Celebration in Old
Town

Memorial Is Held

Faithful Pray for Souls
Of Departed and Hear

Sermon

Special to
The Border Cities Star

BELLE RIVER, July 4.—
Interest in the four-day cele-
bration here continued unabated yesterday, which was Memorial Day, and the third day of the festivals.

The day was particularly devoted to a remembrance of the departed of Belle River since the inception of the parish, one hundred years ago.

MANY AT CEMETERY

A VISIT to the cemetery, 1½ miles south of the town, would bring one in contact with scores kneeling over tombstones or before monuments, and praying fervently for the departed members of their respective families. Others were depositing flowers on the tombs, and still others were beautifying the family burial plots.

In this the faithful were encouraged by a sermon by Father C. H. Laliberte, parish priest at Belle River, after the blessing by Father Pierre L'Heureux, former pastor, of the New Calvary, erected by public subscription in 1933. Fr. Laliberte spoke on death and the attitude of the Catholic Church toward her departed members. Prayers constitute the form of respect bestowed on the dead by Mother Church. Catholics are taught to believe in the effectiveness of requisitions to the Lord for the forgiveness of sins, thus opening the portals of Heaven to the deceased. He urged his hearers not to forget to pray every day for those who had been called by death, the best preparation for which is the purgation of the soul by Confession and Holy Communion. Death should not be feared. If one has lived the good life, a Christian life, death is merely the passing to reward, the reward promised by the Redeemer, that is, eternal bliss in God's Heaven, he said.

REQUIEM MASS

In the morning Solemn Requiem High Mass was celebrated in the parish church. The mass was said by Fr. Isidore Poisson, native son of Belle River who is now pastor at the newly-established parish of Stevenson, south of Tilbury. Fr. Poisson was

assisted by Fr. Achille Rondot, pastor at Staples, as deacon, and by Fr. Augustin Caron, of Stoney Point, as sub-deacon. The attendance filled the large St. Simon and St. Jude Church almost to capacity.

From four to eight p. m. an old-fashioned dinner was served in St. Joseph's school by the young people to their parents and friends. And from nine until 12 old-time street dancing was the attraction.

Today, the fourth and last day of the celebration, is American Day. Belle River is expected to be invaded by hundreds of Americans from Detroit and other points. July 4 being a holiday in the United States, the committees in charge of the Belle River festivals hope that the attendance today will be in keeping with that of the past three days.

CONCERT TONIGHT

In the evening of this last day, the students of Ottawa University from the counties of Essex and Kent will give a concert at 8:30. In the afternoon, games of various kinds will provide the amusements, and a program of speeches has also been arranged.

Much favorable comment was made yesterday on the smoothness with which the four-day program of outdoor and indoor events has been carried out. All were united in bestowing upon the chairmen of the several committees and their members showers of congratulations. "Belle River," it was stated by Napoleon Adam, who came from Sudbury to attend the festivals, "can do things when it wants to."

Festival at Belle River Ends

Four Day Celebration
Voted Huge Success
By Sponsors

BELLE RIVER brought its four-day celebration to a close yesterday with a bang-up July 4. This last day had been declared "American Day," and hundreds of Americans flocked to the up-lake town to participate in the festival. When the curtain dropped at midnight scores were still litting in the street to the tune of old-time fiddlers who were holsted on a platform overlooking the street. It was stated by officials of the celebration that the last day was surpassed only by St. Jean Baptiste Day, on Dominion Day, when more than 4,000 people thronged the streets and picnic grounds.

Prior to the street dancing program of the evening, the students of

Ottawa University from the counties of Essex and Kent gave a concert in the big tent erected for concert purposes. The capacity of the tent was too small to accommodate the crowd and the sides were raised in order to permit ticket-holders to hear the performers on the stage. The program consisted of recitations and songs. The piece de resistance was a play entitled "Le Gendre Enrage" (The Mad Son-in-Law). The performance kept the audience in roaring laughter.

The four-day Belle River celebration was organized to commemorate the centenary of the founding of the parish of St. Simon and St. Jude and the centenary of the founding of La Societe St. Jean Baptist. Two days were also set aside as additional to the program. One was Memorial Day, in honor of the dead of the parish, and the other was American Day, which also included the Old Boys' Reunion.

The festivals were concluded on Wednesday night amid expressions of general satisfaction over the success of the undertaking.

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1934
Auto Centenaire
(100)





**Centennial Play
held in old Municipal Hall in 1934, During Centennial Year**

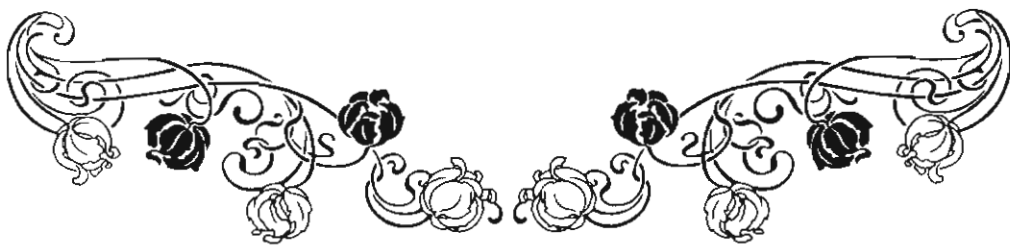
Top Row L: R Joe Taylor, Marguerite Lalonde, Lucy Sylvestre, Mathilde Taylor
Gladys Parent, Maria Ladouceur, May Stewart, Vera Green
Middle Row: Thille Lavole, Anne Renaud, Evelyn Gallop, Edna Dean, Rosemae Caza, Yvonne Butler
Bottom Row: Laura George, Rita Mousseau, Germaine Butler, Isabelle Armstrong, Millie Wilkinson
Standing (left side): Cecile Maitre, Catherine Drouillard

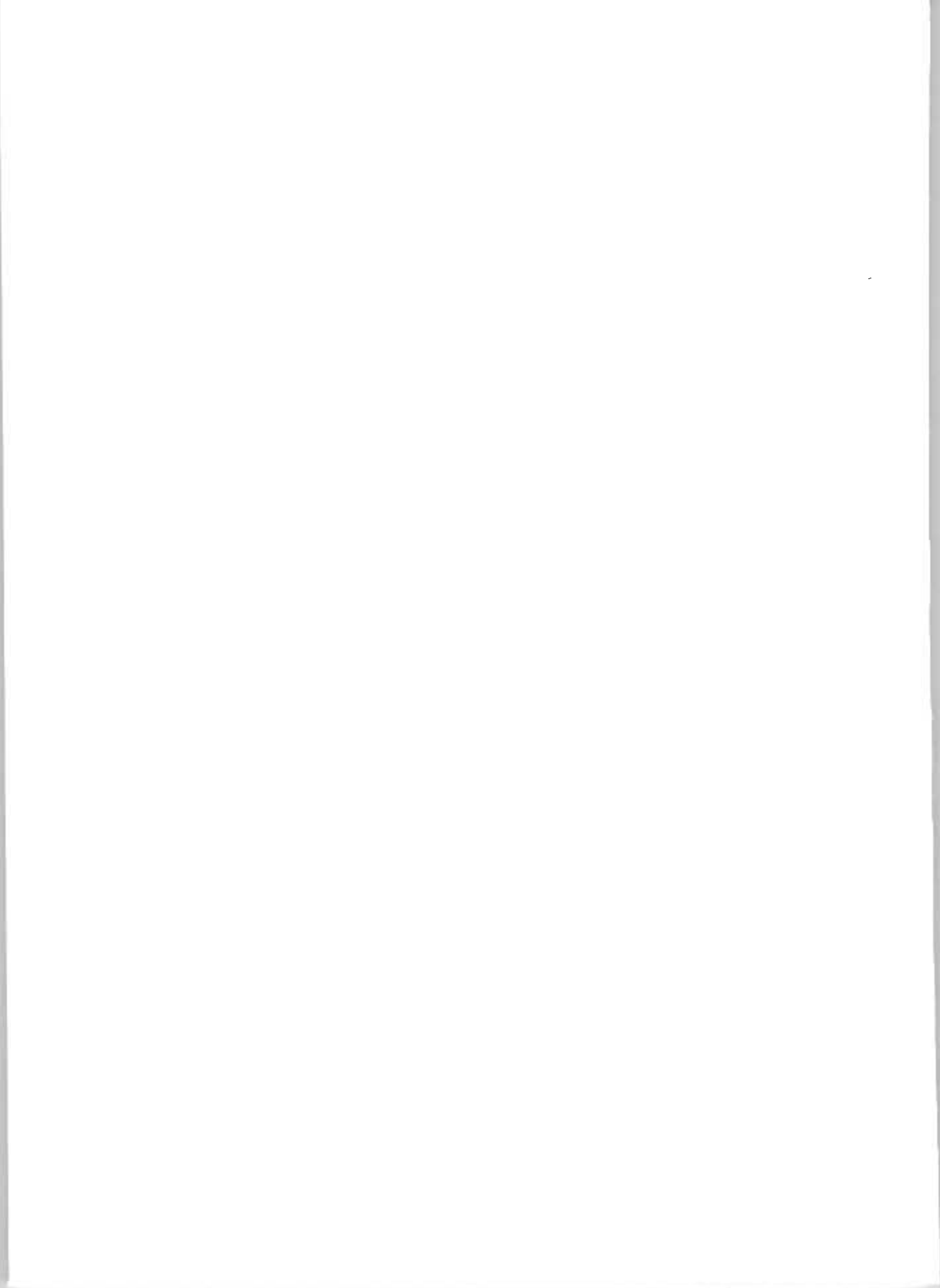


Chapter VII

Parish

Organizations





Parish Council

Probably a forerunner of the Parish Council as we know it to-day was a committee of advisors elected in 1883.

A short excerpt from the organization meeting and the first meeting of this group follows:

Belle River April 30th, 1883

Roman Catholic Church meeting

A general meeting of the Parish was called by Reverend Father Girard for the purpose of electing a committee of advisors under the name of Church Committee.

The meeting was called to order and Reverend Joseph Girard was elected President by an unanimous vote.

The meeting decided that in order to have the Parish fairly represented that four (4) members be elected for each municipality viz: Township of Maidstone, Rochester, and the Village of Belle River.

Subsequently those elected were: Rochester Township – Edward Tracey, John Roach, Israel Durocher and Paul Diesbourg. Maidstone Township – Joseph Cote, Philippe Marentette, Narcisse Mousseau and Denis Rourke. Village of Belle River – John Gray, N.Z. Mousseau, Antoine Papineau and Pierre Brossoit.

The first item of business was to acquire five acres of land for the cemetery.

Pastor's salary was to be \$950.00 per year but he accepted \$800.00

All members of the parish were to be assessed re parish dues (tithe).

The Parish Council and Advisory Board as we have today was started after Vatican II.

The second Synod to the Diocese of London decreed the establishment and operation of parish councils, in order that the laity might be given the opportunity of participating in the work of the church.

In general, the Parish Council is all members of the parish, while the Advisory Board is the executive.

The members of the First Advisory Board of St. Simon and Jude Parish in 1970 were:

- Rev. L. W. Pare, Pastor*
- Max N. Mousseau, Chairman*
- Marcel Levesque, Vice Chairman*
- Sister Marie Yvette, Secretary*
- Raymond Strong*
- Carol DeGuire*
- John Nadalin*
- Harold Chasely*
- Lucien Sequin*
- Hall Committee – Harry Laplante, Donal Gagnier*

At the present time, the Advisory Board members are:

- Father Gerry Duchene*
- Father Dwayne Adam*
- Sister Mary Pius*
- Gerry Alexander*
- Micheline Li Wan Po*
- Harry Strong*
- Don Hamelin*
- Brian Ducharme*
- Lucie Dunn*

La Societe Saint Jean Baptiste



Il serait difficile de fixer définitivement la date de la première célébration de la fête nationale dans les comtés d'Essex et de Kent. Quelques vieillards placent l'observation de cet anniversaire vers 1854.

Les premières sociétés étaient plutôt paroissiales. Les difficultés de transport empêchaient la célébration de la fête par une réunion régionale telle qu'existe aujourd'hui. Cette coutume fut commencée dans le comté d'Essex en 1880.

Le but principal est d'unir les canadiens-français catholiques ainsi que pour défendre les intérêts religieux et civils mais surtout de conserver la langue française.

La société Saint Jean-Baptiste de Belle Rivière existe en réalité depuis 1885 et a été incorporée le 28 décembre 1926. En 1959, elle comptait trois cents quatre-vingt-un membres.



**Albert Leboeuf – Petit St. Jean Baptiste
about 1910**

On se souvient de la façon adoptée pour célébrer la fête nationale des canadiens-français: premièrement par une messe solennelle, une grande parade, le "petit Sainte-Jean Baptiste" vêtu d'une belle peau de mouton et suivi d'un joli agneau blanc, le pique-nique paroissiale, les discours politiques, et la tout clôturé par un souper aux poulets.

On note que les premiers directeurs étaient:

Sévérin Ducharme, notaire public.

Jean-Denis Renaud, fermier.

Léo Sylvestre, pharmacien.

Damase-Gilinas Poisson, fermier à sa retraite.

Picture St. Martyrs Shrine by St. Jean Baptiste

En 1951, le 24 juin, le monument commémoratif des Martyrs-Canadiens situé sur la rive ouest de la rivière fut dévoilé par son Excellence, Monseigneur J. C. Cody, D.D. Ce beau monument fut érigé sur la lieu-même où on célébra la première messe à Belle Rivière.



Les décorés de Belle Rivière par L'Association St. Jean Baptiste de l'Ouest d'Ontario

- 1959 — John Girard, John G. Renaud
- 1960 — Alfred Poisson, Henri Charron
- 1961 — Ephraim Trottier, Walter Durocher,
Willie Campeau, Armand Barrette
et Maxime Robillard
- 1962 — M et Mme Wilfrid St. Pierre
M et Mme Adrien Parent
M et Mme Léo Sylvestre
- 1963 — Mme Libby Denomey
M et Mme Aurèle Denomey
- 1964 — M et Mme Armand Lalonde
M Samuel Girard
- 1965 — M et Mme Charles Gauthier
M et Mme Denis St. Pierre
- 1966 — M et Mme Felix Diesbourg
- 1967 — Mme Eva Durocher
Mme Bernadette Levesque
Mme Laurentia Gaudette
M et Mme Henri Poisson
- 1968 — M et Mme Norman Meunier
- 1969 — M et Mme Henri Dupuis
- 1970 — Mme Armand Lavoie
- 1971 — Mme Catherine Drouillard
- 1973 — M et Mme Laurent St. Pierre
- 1974 — Mme Jennie Thibert
M et Mme Joseph Labbé
M et Mme Raymond St. Pierre
- 1976 — M et Mme Joseph Lalonde
- 1977 — M et Mme Vital Béchard
- 1980 — M et Mme Cléophas Girard

Youth Groups

Since the very early days of our parish, the priests and parishioners have always shown a deep concern about the youth of the parish. Over and above the needs to provide a suitable education it was recognized that it was also necessary to provide activities that would allow young people the opportunity to meet socially, to learn about the world around them, to live out their faith in the turmoil of daily life and to become responsible citizens.



SODALITY MEMBERS

Marie (Cote) Parent

Georgine
(LaForest)
Patterson

Edna
(Cote)
Bechard

Stella
(Parent)
LaForest

Genevieve
(Mousseau)
Whopman

Marguerite
(Durocher)
Janisse

PLAY was named JEANNE d'ARC

We have no record of the earlier youth groups but probably one of the oldest groups in the parish was the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin (Les enfants de Marie). The Sodality was made up of girls 16 years of age and over and most of their activities centered around the spiritual formation of its members.

SODALITY 1957

Standing: Annette Trepanier, Mary Margaret Dupuis
Carmen Gauthier, Mary Butler

Seated: Beverly O'Connor, Helen Bracken
Beverly Strong, Geraldine Butler, Patricia Hurley



In the early nineteen hundreds, dancing was forbidden so that most of the activities of the youth centered around sports, drama and group outings.

Catholic Youth Organization (C.Y.O.)

This group was very active from the early 1940's until the late 1950's. It was made up of high school age youth and sponsored a wide range of activities.



Regis Club

In 1949, Father Mel Quenneville started the Regis Club in the parish. It was organized to meet the needs of young adults who had completed high school. For many years it was a very active group and sponsored a great variety of social activities and once again drama was very popular. Clem Wolfer and Al Nanni directed many of the plays. The Regis Club was also involved in Marriage Preparation Courses which were called Pre-Cana.

Young Christian Students (Y.C.S.) and Young Christian Workers (Y.C.W.)

The 1950's saw the growth of Catholic Action in the parish. Catholic Action begun in Europe and was a recognition of the role of the lay person in the mission of the Church. Y.C.S. and Y.C.W. were not large groups but very active and by various means promoted the apostolate of the laity in the world.



A Young Christian Student Convention - Y.C.S.

*From Centre to left to right: Michael Dupuls
Robert Harpe, Rena Beaugrand
Simone St. Pierre, Fr.
Fr. Lariviere, Noel Polsson, Jeanne Poisson
Sally Dean*

Sts. Simon and Jude Youth Group 1983 - 1984

The purpose of the present youth group is to bring the young people together in a common goal. The present goal of the youth is to deepen their faith in the Catholic Church and to develop an awareness of the needs in our community.

This year there are approximately 30 students ranging from grade nine to the university level. They are now running a 3 week schedule: week one deals with faith, week two with communitiy awareness and week three with a group activity.

Parishioners are often called upon to share with our youth their views of family life, community involvement, communication, peer pressure, alcoholism, drug abuse, etc. Interest in today's youth is of vital importance because they are tomorrow's leaders.

La Fédération des Femmes Canadiennes-Françaises Section St. Simon et St. Jude Belle Rivière, Ontario

Cette organisation fondée le 19 juin 1965 dans notre paroisse fut active pour une dizaine d'années. Nous avons eu comme présidente Mme Lucienne Lacasse, vice-présidente Mlle Yvonne Bézaire, secrétaires Mme Jeanne Rancourt, Mme Marie-Anne St. Pierre, trésorières Mme Catherine Drouillard Mme Thérèse Gaudette, Mme Bernadette Drogosz.



Nous avons souvent fêté ensemble telle que les fêtes de la Sainte-Catherine, les parites de Noel, le Mardi-Gras, des danses et les pique-nique à la plage. En plus, il y avait les présentations de prix pour les Concours de Français. Il ne faudrait pas oublier la pièce "La veillée de Noel" qui fut un grand succès en décembre, 1966 à Belle Rivière, à Rivière-aux-Canards, à Windsor, à Paincourt, à Pointe-aux-Roches et à Welland. En décembre 1967, par demande nous avons joué cette même pièce de nouveau, L'argent collectionné fut pour payer le nouveau plancher du jubé de l'église en janvier, 1968.



En 1975 à cause d'un manque de présidente et de temps de la part de plusieurs autres membres, la décision par la majorité des membres dut prise de fermer les livres de la fédération à ce temps et de contribuer l'argent en banque à l'église.



CWL

The Seal of the League, shown at the top of this page embodies the cross as symbol of Faith surmounting the maple leaves for the ten provinces, enclosing in an unbroken circle representing constant service, invoking a strong voice of Catholic Women from sea to sea. The seal bears our motto for God and Canada.

The Catholic Women's League Motto — For God and Canada.

The Catholic Women's League was started in St. Simon and St. Jude Parish in 1920 and received its charter in April of 1922.

Reverend P. L'Heureux was the first Spiritual Director with:

President Mrs. Damase Poisson (Madeleine)

1st Vice-President, Louise Laforet

2nd Vice-President, Florine Ducharme Meunier

Secretary Treasurer, Miss Zoe A. Lalonde (Mrs. Earl Taylor)

Florine Meunier and Zoe Taylor, charter members, are still active members of St. Simon and Jude Parish.

The Catholic Women's League is a National organization beginning at parish level and extending to diocesan, then provincial and finally national dimensions. The League celebrated its diamond jubilee nationally in 1980 and St. Simon and Jude Parish Council celebrated its diamond jubilee in 1982.

The message of our first national president Miss Bellelle Guevin is as relevant to-day as it was in 1920.

"There has been a movement all over the world to concentrate feminine energy, and the intensity of such a force is only now beginning to be understood. Catholic women cannot escape from the mentality of the century they live in, nor can they break with the spirit of the times."

This article is an attempt to capture the highlights of our activities in the past sixty-two years. What is recorded here in capsule form does not begin to cover the many hours and years of generous service carried out by our members, nor can it measure the growth in faith and love that such involvement has fostered.

There is no question that what we are is more important than what we do. But in our hearts we acknowledge that what we do contributes to what we are.

The first meetings of the league were held in the Belle River Town Hall. A weekly card party was held as a social event and to raise money for their various charities.

There are happy memories of a Boston Bean Supper, a successful fund raising event to reconstruct and repair the convent for the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

In 1934 the diocesan convention was held in Belle River. Delegates were billeted in the homes of members and a banquet for 300 was served in Taylor Dance Pavillion. Catherine Ouellette Drouillard chaired this successful event.



Many changes have taken place in the League's activities since that time — still our motto remains the same for God and Canada.

For the last ten years, the league in Belle River has stressed the importance of the voice of Catholic women as a united force not only in our community, but around the country and in many countries throughout the world. Our national, provincial and diocesan executives keep us constantly in tune with what is happening in our world and help us to focus our attention on the needs of others.

From our 1% plan to provide clean water to third world countries, to an effective letter campaign to help find lost children in Argentina, we are all doing our best to promote peace and justice.

Our programs are receiving much attention and praise from Development and Peace organizations.

League members in Belle River are strong supporters of Birthright and Pro-Life groups. Our guest speakers, from Hospice (to help the dying), and Brentwood (for alcoholics) to Mr. Melady (our local funeral director) emphasize the constant need to fight for the rights of the weak and helpless, and missionary sisters have provided us with interesting evenings.



A raffle booth at the annual Christmas bazaar

The past five years have been busy and productive. Our annual bazaar has grown and become a cooperative effort encompassing many organizations from our youth to our senior members. In 1982 we celebrated 60 years of service to our community with a special mass and banquet. Past presidents received pins of recognition. New vestments for our 150th anniversary were purchased by league efforts. The parish directory was another league project. Pot Luck suppers and Mother-Daughter breakfasts have been revived and we now have two Mission Card Club groups supporting adopted families and various mission projects.

A resolution from St. Simon and St. Jude Council deploring the sale of Criminal Memoirs was passed at diocesan, then provincial and finally national conventions in 1983.

It read as follows:

"Be it resolved that we the members of the London Diocesan Council of the C.W.L. of Canada in 63rd Convention assembled do support the Solicitor-General of Canada in his efforts to amend the Criminal Code of Canada to prohibit the sale of Criminal Memoirs. Be it further resolved that we encourage any legislative initiatives by the Attorney-General of Canada to prevent criminals from benefitting from their crime."

The Catholic Women's League is a growing force in our community. Our work and prayers are important fibres in the fabric of parish life. With the help of Our Lady of Good Counsel, we will continue our work for God and Canada.

Membership in our parish has increased or decreased through the years, but there is always someone motivated to carry on our work of service to the parish and community.

At the present time we have three hundred members — a part of the 16,500 diocesan and 130,000 national membership.

*Top Row: Jeanne Lauzon, President
Jackie Bezaire, Education Convenor
Hattie Laporte, Chairman*
*Bottom Row: Mary Parent, Social Activities
Dorothy Lanoue, Spiritual
Géralyn Coté, Social Activities
Mary Nadalin*



C.W.L. Executive

*Top Row, left to right: Pat Preston - Past President
Theresa Barrette - 2nd Vice President
Bernadette Lanoue - 1st Vice President
Vivian Filiatrault - 3rd Vice President*
*Bottom Row: Jeanne Lauzon - President
Lillian Mousseau - Diocesan 2nd Vice President
Margaret Tellier - Corresponding Secretary
Micheline LI - Treasurer*

Girl Guides of Canada – Bellemore District Essex Division 1947 – 1983

Guiding in Belle River was established in 1947 – sponsored by the C.W.L. Father Marentette and C.W.L. members, namely, Mrs. Z. Taylor, Mrs. A. Chaseley, Mrs. H. Tellier, were instrumental in organizing its beginnings for the community. At that time, there were approximately 20 Girl Guides and 20 Brownies. Leaders were M. Bracken, T. Chevalier, G. Mousseau, E. Denomey, Mrs. Lesperance, M. Ladouceur, T. Morgan, D. Chapman, R. Monroe, S. Gallop. The District Commissioner was Mrs. W. Wallace. The meetings were originally at the Old Town Hall and then transferred to the Parish Hall. Guiding was very active in the community until 1952.



Ten years later in 1962, with leaders like Mrs. G. Bessey, Mrs. A. Lachapelle, Mrs. G. McGuire, Mrs. L. Laporte and Mrs. J. Bezaire, it was re-established and continues today.

In the early 1970's, Bellemore District, which encompasses Belle River, Stoney Point, St. Joachim, Emeryville and Puce, was transferred from Kanata Division (Windsor) to Essex Division. Mrs. J. Bezaire was District Commissioner at that time until 1975. Mrs. L. Laporte was District Commissioner from 1975 – 1980, Mrs. M. Ashton was District Commissioner from 1980 – 1983, Mrs. V. Griffin is now Commissioner.



Bellemore District has at this time, 187 Guides, Brownies, Pathfinders, Rangers, Junior Leaders, 26 Guiders. The aims of Guiding – to make learning a fun game, giving girls the opportunity to become happy, resourceful and responsible members of society.





History of the Knights Of Columbus Council 2775

Founded in 1937 – Three men, Mike Lavoie, Adrian Parent and Adrian Tellier started a drive to recruit members. There were 62 members at first. Armand "Mike" Lavoie was the first Grand Knight.

Meetings were held in his store room until a hall was built. Board of directors was formed with Armand Lavoie as president, Wilfred St. Pierre Sec-Treas., Directors were Clarence O'Gorman, Edgar Tremblay and Ulric St. Pierre.

The knights were active during World War II. They helped the Red Cross, sent parcels overseas and donated a canteen for overseas service.

The building of the Hall on Belle River Road, next to the High School started in 1950 and meetings were held in 1951. The hall was expropriated by the High School Board for expansion in 1966. Meetings were then held in the Legion Hall until 1968 when a building and property were bought in Emeryville. It was remodelled, painted etc. by many volunteer members of the Council and meetings and social gatherings were held there until it was sold. A motel & hotel was bought across the road. It was re-modelled by many volunteer members again and on February 15, 1979 the present hall was occupied.



Many social gatherings and meetings are held there throughout the year.

Charter members still living:

Raoul Sylvestre, Edward Tellier, William Blanchette, Theo E. Durocher, Charles Tellier, Leon Lavoie, Henry Derdaele, Raymond Donnelly, Leo P. St. Pierre, Henry Strong, Herman Cote, Laurent Lachance, Ray C. Ouellette, Sylvio Pinsonneault, Edward Bracken, Edward J. St. Pierre, Ed. Durocher.

Past Grand Knights:

1. Armand Lavoie
2. Adrian Tellier
3. Jesse Brooks
4. Ray Markham
5. Sylvio Pinsonneault
6. Wilfrid St. Pierre
7. Edgar Tremblay
8. Tom Butler
9. Max Mousseau
10. Roy Byrne
11. Lou Morneau
12. Clarence Bracken
13. Charles Diemer
14. Richard Hargreaves
15. Laurence St. Pierre
16. Jephthe St. Pierre
17. A.J. Ashton
18. Louis Pinsonneault
19. Bernard Bellemore
20. Ernest Pike
21. Eugene Dale
22. Henry Marentette
23. John Danyluk

MEN WHO WENT BEYOND THE COUNCIL LEVEL

Adrian Tellier: district deputy, Faithful Navigator of Dean Wagner Assembly in 1951. He was on the State Board as secretary 1944 – 1947. Master of 2nd Ontario District Cardinal McGuigan Province 1960 – 1966.

Sylvio Pinsonneault: district deputy, Faithful Navigator Dean Wagner Assembly 1954.

Wilfred St. Pierre: Faithful Navigator Dean Wagner Assembly 1962.

CHAPLAINS OF KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Rev. Father Laliberte, Rev. Father Doe, Rev. Father Baillargeon, Rev. Father Marentette, Rev. Father Pare, Rev. Father Morand, Rev. Father Bonici, Rev. Father Rivard, Rev. Father Cassano, Rev. Father Aqualina, Rev. Father Jos. Barbara (present chaplain).

AIMS OF THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The knights of Columbus is a Catholic non-profit organization to help the needy regardless of color or creed; offer life insurance to its members. Support many organizations with financial donations.

They sponsor the Father Baillargeon Columbian Squires Circle 539 since 1948.

PRESENT EXECUTIVE

*Chaplain - Father J. Barbara
District Deputy - F. Martin
Grand Knight - J. Danyluk
Deputy Grand Knight - Dr. J. Recker
Chancellor - M. Lesperance
Warden - G. Hogue
Recorder - Randy Marentette
Financial Secretary - N. Barrette
Treasurer - R. St. Pierre
Advocate - Wm. Ellwood
Lecturer - J. Barrette
Inside Guard - F. Robitaille
Inside Guard - A. Bellemore
Membership - D. Tardif
General Program - L. Barrette
Outside Guard - H. Rivest
Trustees - H. Marentette, J. George, W. Meloche
Editor Bulletin - Gil Roy*



Baseball team of 1939, sponsored by K of C, Belle River

*Back Row: Edmund Lachapelle, Francis Ladouceur, K of C Grand Knight - Adrian Teller
Manager of Team - Bill Blanchette, Henry Strong, Joe Durocher, Wilfred Bush
Front Row: Clarence Brachen, Leo Parent, Gerry Comartin
Bat Boy - Richard Parent, Bill Campeau, Raymond Strong, Norman Poisson*

St. Vincent De Paul Society

The St. Vincent de Paul Conference of St. Simon & St. Jude Parish was organized in 1948 by Rev. A. P. Marentette and continues to be active in 1984.

The aim of this society is to help the needy of the parish in a spiritual and material way.

Parishioners are asked to contact the society to inform them of any one who is cold or hungry or without shelter. One of the members then visits these people and by personal contact is able to assess their needs.

The St. Vincent de Paul Society is financed by the generous donations of parishioners not only of money but also of used clothing and furniture.

There is a very busy St. Vincent de Paul Store operating in Belle River; witness to this generosity.

The first president of the St. Vincent de Paul Society was Lawrence De Lafreniere who worked with five other members.

At the present time Roland Robillard is president with eight members under the guidance of Father Gerry Duchene. They hold a weekly meeting every Monday night at the rectory. You are asked to call either the rectory or Mr. Robillard whenever you see anyone in need in the community.

Ushers Club

The Ushers Club of St. Simon & St. Jude Parish was formed in 1926 with Armand Lavoie as the first president. The charter members were Joseph Denomey, Mederic Forget, Charles Gauthier, Ulric Marentette, Edward Sauve, Raymond Sauve, Aurele Ducharme and Tancrede Lablanc.

USHER:

Webster's definition of the word is, doorkeeper, an officer who walks before a person of rank, one who escorts people to their seats. Although these definitions are correct and to the point, they are certainly too vague to truly define the spirit and purpose of the usher of St. Simon and St. Jude Church today. Needless to say, the usher's first duty is to help coordinate and maintain decorum at Holy Mass, by assisting members of the congregation to their pews when the church fills, by taking up the collection and by bringing up the gifts to the altar, passing out the Church news in the form of the bulletin at the end of Mass, and in all the other standard duties relative to the position.

The general consensus of the ushers of today's club, is to see the helpful spirit extend beyond the doors of our church and out into the parish as a whole. An example of the ways the ushers have been able to help out has been in the organizing and conducting of the children's games at parish picnics, and in offering help in other small areas of parish activities. Although there is a feeling of pride in having been able to help out in the past, the general feeling in the club is that we have only just begun.

During mid 1982 the ushers as a group decided to re-organize and re-affirm their position relative to the parish. It was decided to begin by uniting the group as a whole towards the purpose of acquiring new blazers, one for each member usher, so as to relay a feeling of uniformity and organization to our fellow parishioners. Name tags were printed up for each usher to wear along with his blazer and this tended to inspire a feeling of camaradie between the ushers and the congregation. This major project necessitated the beginning of the Ushers' Clubs' first major fund raising program, in the form of a monthly share the wealth draw. Tickets were sold by member ushers at \$1.00 apiece and at each monthly meeting five winning tickets were drawn for prizes ranging from one hundred dollars to five dollars. A second fund raising program initiated was a father and son breakfast, which was held on Sunday, April 17, 1983, and which was so much fun and such a success, thanks to both the tremendous help of the CWL in preparing and serving the food and by parishioners' response, that it has been established as an annual event. It was the fantastic response in both the draw and the breakfast by the entire parish and community that saw the blazer project come to a successful end.

Now, after a quiet summer has quickly passed in the ranks of the Club, work has begun on a second major project by its members. It was decided that part of their participation in the up and coming one hundred and fiftieth anniversary which will be celebrated this coming July 1984, would be in the purchase and erection of a new, lighted sign in front of our Church. We have already come to realize this may be a reasonably expensive task and to begin to finance this project the Ushers have initiated another monthly draw, this time in a 50/50 format. The first draw is to take place at the regular meeting on the first Sunday of November. Again the ushers hope for the parishioners full support in this draw and in any other fund raising projects the club may adopt in order to see this project to a successful conclusion this coming summer.

Also starting this fall, namely for the month of November the Ushers' Club will begin to send cards of convalescence to fellow parishioners in the hospital. We hope this gesture will in some small way show the members' appreciation for the support the parishioners give the club through the projects.

In closing, let me just state one more time, the Ushers' intentions are to help within the parish in any way they can, and this help is not to be confined to within the walls of the Church itself. If any individual or group feels assistance from the Club may be required, feel free to contact the Club through its executive or any of its thirty seven members, and we will try our best to serve in whatever way we can.

President
Dan Vickerd

Vice President
Norm Lathier

Secretary
Sam Beaugrand

50/50 Draw Chairman
Homer Dorey

Special Projects Chairman
Paul Barrette



Insert - Father Marentette

*Back Row: left to right: Francis Ladouceur, Harry Laporte, Andre Levesque, Rene Durocher
Raymond Ouellette, George Rittenhouser, Richard Hargreaves*

*Second Row: Nelson Caza, Max Mousseau, Joseph Lalonde, Herman Labadie, Armand Denomey
Alfred Durocher, James Dean, Dr. T. Weise*

*Bottom Row: Adrian Renaud, Charles Gauthier, Albert Laforet, Ulric St. Pierre
Father Levack, Louis Laforet, Raymond Sauve, Leo Parent*

The Altar Society

Most of the women in the parish belonged to the Altar Society, which was formed in 1928. The first president was Mrs. Paul Sauve, followed by Mrs. William Lavoie in 1930, Mrs. Armand Lavoie 1932 and Mrs. Elliott Wilkinson in 1933.

One of the first fund raising events amounted to \$6,000.00 which money was used to buy new pews for the church.

On the first Sunday of the month a special collection was taken by the ladies, at each mass, and this money was used to pay for altar needs such as vestments, candles, altar linens and altar boys robes.

Mrs. Armand Lavoie (Tillie) made the altar linens and priest's vestments for many years.

Sarah Poisson, one of our active senior citizens, dusted the pews in the church every two weeks for 50 years.

Once a year the women of the parish gathered for a complete house cleaning of the church.

The Altar Society was active in the parish from the early 1920's until the late 1950's, when they joined with the Catholic Women's League under the title of the Catholic Women's League and the Altar Society.

Other presidents who contributed many years of time and talent were Mrs. Eva Durocher and Mrs. Florine Meunier.

In mentioning the past presidents we give honour to the many women of St. Simon & Jude parish who gave of themselves to the work of the Altar Society through the years from 1928 to 1960.

Altar Servers

The society of altar servers has traditionally been a group of young boys dedicated to serving the priest at the altar. The existence of this group can be traced back to the foundation of the parish.

At present, there are 41 boys and 2 girls ranging from ten to seventeen years of age. For the most part, the altar servers have been under the direction of the parish priest.

There is a three month training period for any young boy interested in becoming an altar server. After his initial welcome, he is put on a regular serving schedule. He is also expected to attend a monthly altar servers meeting. Servers are also called upon for weddings, for funerals, for parish and school celebrations.

Dedication and seriousness of purpose are the key qualities of a good server.

Altar Boys (1924 - 25)

Top Row: Henry Lafaive and Father L. Heureux

2nd Row: Leonard Rivait, Herman Durocher

Maurice Trottier, Arsene Fleury, John Martin

Ernest Denomey, Adelard Trottier, Harvey Lefaive

John George, Alphonse Thibert, James Stuart

Bottom: Leon Lavoie, Leonard Gauthier

Rosaire Lesperance, Henry Lambert

Armand Denomey, William Lalonde

Eugene Denomey, Maurice Mousseau



4 boys in the family

**All 4 were altar servers at the same time.
(Sons of Rosanna Girard and the late Edmond Girard)**

Alfred (left) and Gilbert Thibert
as altar boys in 1906



1st Row:
Bob Parent
Maurice Bellmore
Louis Durocher
Gerry Ducharme
Lionel Poisson
Renée Girard
Roy Tellier
Paul Beaugrand

2nd Row:
Father Marentette
John Beaugrand
Gerald St. Pierre
Joel Ouellette
John Taylor
Renée St. Pierre
Edward Lalonde
Omer Girard
Sam Beaugrand

Back Row:
Alfred Beaugrand
Edmond Fleury
Rennee Ouellette
Leo Sylvester
Edward Tellier
Eugene Girard

The Good Neighbour Club

The Good Neighbour Club is appropriately named as it includes members from as far away as Stoney Point, Emeryville, Woodslee and Puce.

Established in the fall of 1969, under the guidance of Reverend Henri Masse and the capable leadership of the first president, Mrs. Catherine Drouillard, the club has grown and flourished.

Father Masse, with his varied talents was a competent teacher. Many of the elderly, hesitant at first, tried their hand at ceramics, leather-crafts and other hobbies, thus re-discovering that handicrafts and art can be challenging and rewarding way to spend their leisure hours. The ceramic classes continued for a number of years with Bernard and Irene Strong as instructors.

THE NORTH ESSEX NEWS, Thursday, June 22, 1972



CRAFT DEMONSTRATION DAY UNDER DIRECTION OF FATHER MASSE AND C. DROUILLARD

Senior Citizens prove the art of quilting is not lost. Mrs. Florine Meunier, Blanche Lefalve, Mrs. Maria Marentette have time for a cheery smile while they quilt.

In 1971, the club which obtained a substantial New Horizon grant, became affiliated to the Senior Citizens Association of Ontario, and with the help and encouragement of the parish priests, a section of the parish hall was renovated and set aside for the use of the members. A constitution was drawn up, and Mrs. Drouillard continued as president until she moved to Windsor in . She was replaced by Mr. Richard Drouillard who with a zealous executive worked unceasingly towards one goal — — their own club house.

This dream came true early in 1983 when a section of the south-east corner of the church property was leased to the club and the present hall was built.



Regular weekly card parties and bingos are held. The craft activities have progressed and still are quite popular. The annual Quilt raffle and bazaar have made a substantial monetary contribution to the club.

QUILTING BEE



Left to Right: Irene Smith, Bern Levesque, D. Hamelin, D. Vaillencourt
The Good Neighbour Club held their third quilting bee at the St. Simon and St. Jude Parish hall on Monday with the members working on quilts for sale any time or during the club's bazaar in June. The quilters already have seven or eight quilts ready for sale. These four ladies are shown as they make the finishing touches to a quilt. There were 16 quilters present on this day in 1981.

In addition to the above, the club has a very enthusiastic bowling league. Shuffle board, a pool table, a dart and bean ball game are also provided for the physical benefit of its members.

The kitchen is well equipped and luncheons and delicious dinners are frequently served.

Over the years, several trips to historical sites, museums, and provincial parks where admission is free or at reduced rates, have been organized.

Although non-denominational, the membership is almost totally made up of parishioners who work and play for the benefit of their fellow man. Anyone over fifty years of age is eligible.

Among the charitable activities, members visit the sick and shut-ins, bring Christmas gifts to the residents of nearby rest homes, donate to the needy and exchange visits with the Villa Maria of Windsor, the Stoney Point, Tecumseh, River Canard and Tilbury Clubs.

The Good Neighbour Club's new building was ready for occupancy on October 1st, 1983. The official grand opening day was held on December 4th. The ceremony included the raising of the flag, the ribbon-cutting, the blessing of the building, a bazaar and a spaghetti dinner.



RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY

*Left to right: Cl  ophas Girard (Director), Richard Tighe (Belle River Mayor)
Hon. Eugene Whelan (Minister of Agriculture), Richard Ruston Ontario (M.P. for Essex North)*



Blessing of the new quarters. Rev. Gerald Duchene (Pastor of St. Simon and St. Jude Parish) Officiating.

A NEW HOME



Catherine Drouillard, and Richard Drouillard are proud of their efforts to bring about the Good Neighbour Club — a place Belle River's senior citizens can call home. Mrs. Drouillard, of Windsor, founded the club in 1969. Mr. Drouillard, of Belle River is the club's current president. Dec. 4, 1983.

Corner Stone — Donation of Lappan (Tecumseh).

Mots de Félicitations de l'âge d'or

Les membres du club "Good Neighbour" qui comptera en 1984 sa quinzième année d'existence se font un devoir d'offrir à la paroisse leurs félicitations et leur assistance à l'occasion de cet heureux évènement.

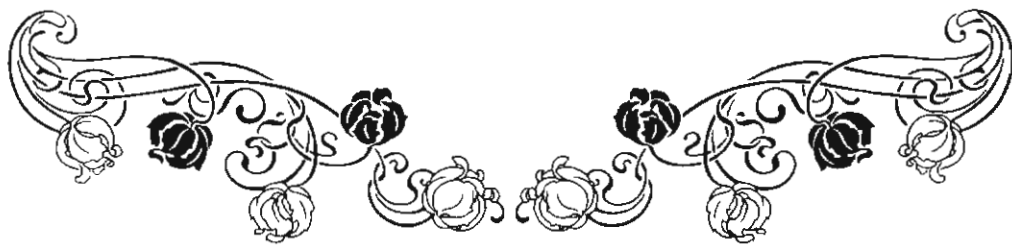
Dire que la paroisse St. Simon et St. Jude célèbre 150 ans. Quels souvenirs nous reviennent en lisant sa belle histoire — surtout nous, les moins jeunes qui en ont connu une grande partie.

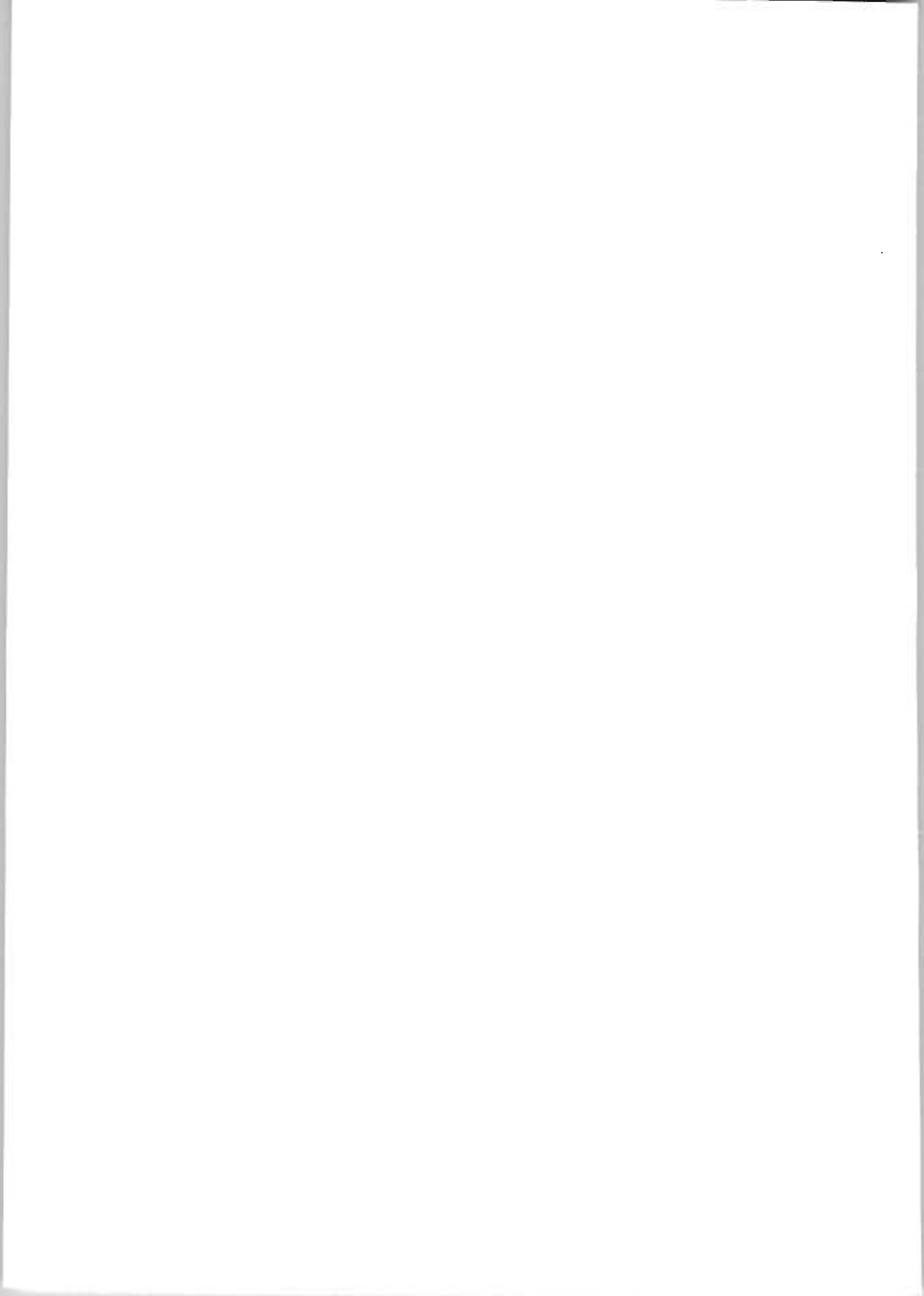
Le but de notre club est de divertir les gens d'âge plus avancé par l'organisation d'activités culturelles et sociales afin de rendre leur retraite plus agréable et plus saine.

Donc, profitons de ces beaux jours de fête dans notre paroisse pour nous réjouir et fraterniser ensemble.



Chapter VIII
St. Simon
&
St. Jude
Community
Centre





St. Simon & St. Jude Community Centre

Until the opening of the hall, now known as St. Simon & St. Jude Community Centre, the only facilities available for the use of church, school and community affairs was the old municipal hall on Notre Dame Street.

The year was 1949 when enterprising parishioners, with Rev. A.P. Marentette as pastor and Mr. Charles Gauthier as chairman undertook the construction of the large parish hall situated conveniently on Meunier Street south of the Church.

The Dean Construction Co. was given the contract to build the 105' X 80' cement block structure. Much of the help was given by volunteers. Among some notes written by Father Marentette we have these comments: "The steel in the hall was arranged for and brought in by Arthur Ducharme. A separate permit was needed for the beams due to size which had to be transported by truck and trailer". A second item cites: "The cement was laid all in one day! no seams, no cracks - donated by Ulric Marentette". We must pause to congratulate these devoted parishioners who worked so diligently to clear the grounds of old sheds and chicken coops, scrub brush and broken down fences to make room for the new hall.

You are cordially invited to
the Grand Opening

of the
SS. SIMON & JUDE PARISH HALL
BELLE RIVER, ONTARIO

on Thursday, November 10th, 1949

sponsored by Ushers' Club

Featuring Tobie David and Variety Show - Radio Celebrities

Dancing to Hub Williams Orchestra

DANCING 9 P.M. TO 1 A.M.
SHOW 10 P.M.
DRESS OPTIONAL

ADMISSION
COUPLE \$3.00 - SINGLE \$2.00

PATRONS & PATRONESSES

Dr. and Mrs. Scruton

Mr. and Mrs. Elie Phaneuf

Mr and Mrs. Adrian Teller

Dr and Mrs. E. Dupuis

Mr and Mrs. Dennis Sauve

The building of our parish hall has proven a very wise investment. It would be difficult to find a more serviceable centre. This spacious, well equipped building has been used over the years by practically every society or club in the community at one time or another.

For several years the kitchen help was undertaken by the ladies' societies. Their first duty was the organizing of the new kitchen. When the bales of dishes arrived from England, a "bee" was held to wash and sort out the four hundred plates, cups, saucers, etc., and place them in the new cupboards. The large cooking pots, the coffee-maker and many kitchen supplies were purchased by Father Marentette at the Army Surplus Store in London. This day will be remembered by many as a great day of fun as well as hand work!





Kitchen staff K of C Hall
 Eva Durocher, Pearl Gignac, Tillie Lavoie
 Florence St. Pierre, Yvonne Butler, Florine Meunier

Retreat Breakfast – February 20, 1949
 in K of C Hall

Mrs. Tillie Lavoie (in white cap)
Mrs. Eva Durocher (white apron)
Mrs. Florine Meunier
 became the first volunteer crew of the
 parish hall that same year.

Mrs. Tillie Lavoie, Mrs. Florine Meunier, Mrs. Eva Durocher and Mrs. Charles Gauthier who had prepared meals for the K of C for several years were the first to take over the kitchen duties. With the help of many other volunteers they were able to serve large banquets and wedding parties. All the food was prepared by hand - peeling the vegetables, cutting up the chickens, making the pies and cakes — This meant nearly two days of work for every reception.

The parish owes a debt of gratitude to the many volunteers who contributed their assistance in these early undertakings.



Regis Club help in Hall Kitchen
 From left to right: **Marcel Levesque, Leo Campeau**
John Taylor, Norbert Marentette
Jules Levesque, Denis Gauthier

When Father Rivard was pastor a New Horizons Grant was obtained for renovations and alterations to the hall. The large stage was removed and an upstairs room was added as well as a smaller meeting room downstairs. These became the rented senior citizens' quarters for several years.

The ceiling was lowered, brick and carpet walls added a new decor and a more modern lighting system was installed.

Other details were added later when Father Pare became pastor. A walk-in refrigerator donated by Mr. Mike Lavoie was installed in the former furnace room. The kitchen was completely renovated — new stoves, extra refrigerators and a freezer were purchased. The silverware, the dishes, more modern kitchen utensils, trays, bowls, and other pots and pans were added.

Because of the increase in activities it became impossible to depend on a handful of volunteers so a kitchen staff was hired.

This spacious, well-equipped hall has been the headquarters for major fund-raising events such as the parish picnics later known as Lawn-Fete, when all the societies participated.



The Holy Name Society held a series of weekly bingos. The Catholic Women's League sponsored cooking classes, fashion shows and their yearly Christmas Bazaar and Mother and Daughter breakfast. The St. John Baptist Society held card parties during lent for a few years. The Squires and Regis Club put on skits and minstrel shows. The Federation des Femmes Canadiennes-Françaises gave an all French performance: "La Veillée de Noël", to raise money for the repairs of the choir loft. Banquets and wedding receptions have continued to be a good source of revenue since the opening of the hall. The school pupils had yearly concerts. There have been in the hall events of all sorts: showers, dances, luaus, masquerade balls, talent contests, dancing classes, archery classes and special occasions especially for the children such as movies, Hallowe'en and Christmas parties. The Brownies, Guides, Cubs and Scouts have held and still hold their meetings in the hall.

Although the St. John the Baptist School has a large gymnasium, it still makes use of the hall facilities for its graduation parties. One year, when some classrooms were not ready for September opening, temporary classes were set up in the hall.

Also in 1968, during the very extensive renovations of the church, masses were said in the hall for a few months.

Evidently, the St. Simon & St. Jude Community Hall has been and still is a busy place!

At the present time the centre is self-supportive. Marcel Levesque is the manager and the kitchen staff is under the direction of Doris and Bernadette Robillard. They serve small groups such as dinner-meetings and family groups after funeral masses. Extra help is hired when needed.



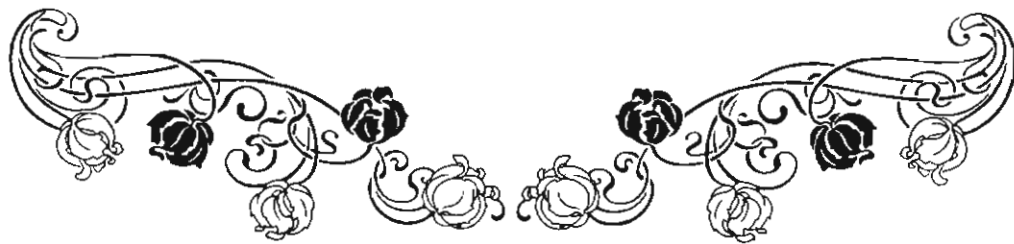
The prospects for the future include the renovated meeting rooms (now vacated by the Good Neighbour Club), a more heat-efficient entrance, steel doors and new siding.

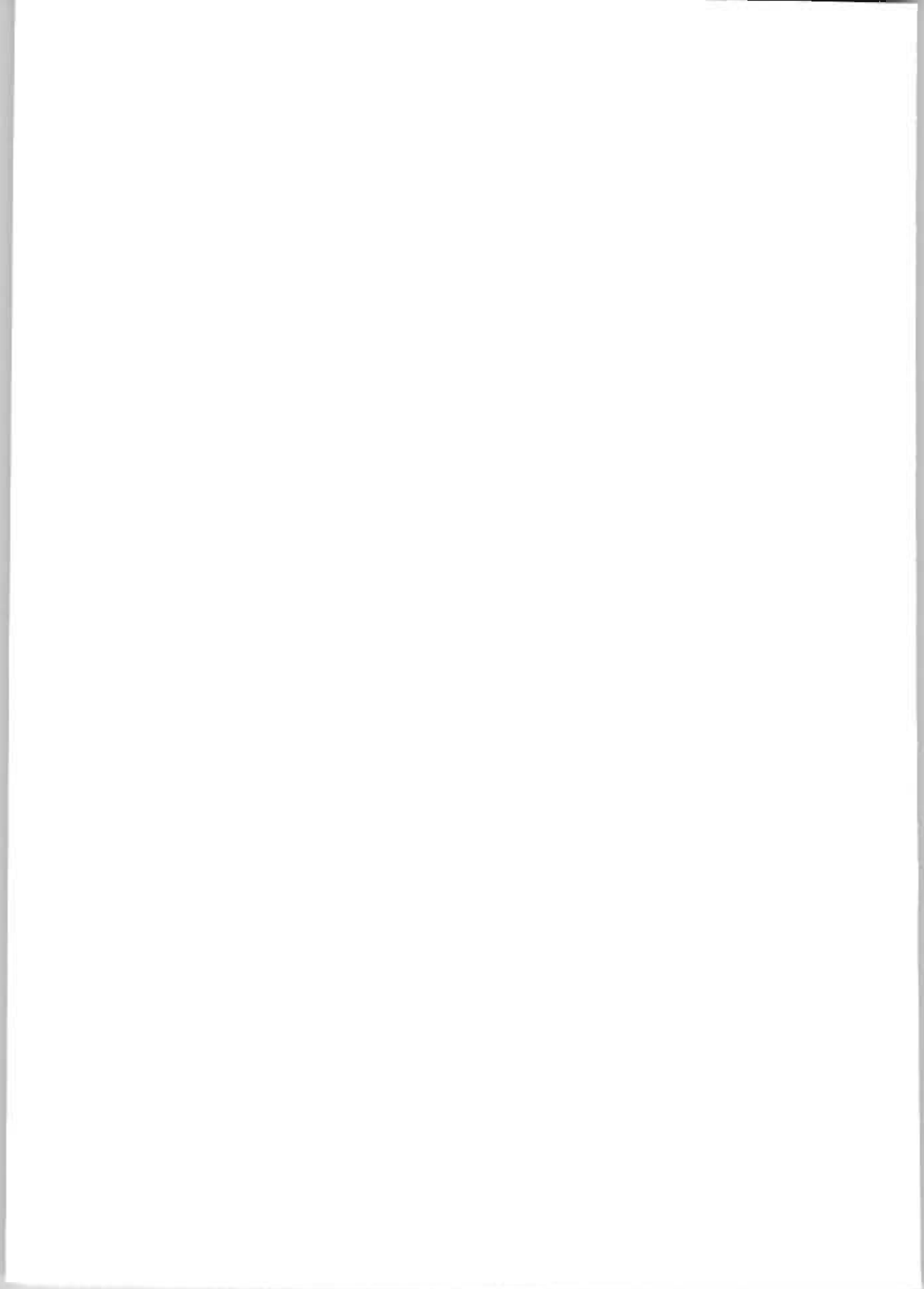
By its proximity to the parish church, its spaciousness, its efficient services, and well-served meals, the parish hall has gained a well merited good reputation.



Chapter IX

Education





The History Of Education In Belle River Parish

The compilation of the history of education in our parish has been both interesting and challenging because the plethora of information and photographs in some cases was more than this brief outline could possibly encompass, and the dearth of information and photographs in other cases created an imbalance in coverage that was totally unfair, since most schools were in service about the same length of time and filled basically the same need in all parts of our community. This then is an attempt to eschew partiality, give equal weight to all aspects of our educational heritage, and to tell the story in such a way as to minimize the disjointedness which often creeps in when historical entities are isolated for descriptive purposes while their histories are inextricably intertwined.

The first historical account of schools in the area known as "St. Jude Mission" was given for the year 1843. St. Jude Mission was comprised of the present parishes of "Stoney Point, St. Joachim, Staples, Leamington, Woodslee, and parts of Maidstone and Tecumseh." In his "History of Belle River" James Taylor tells us that Father Pierre Point was the Jesuit Priest "Placed in charge of the Mission at Sandwich and Detroit — — the oldest and most Catholic mission of Western Ontario. The works most dear to Father Point were the conversion of the Indians, the preservation of the Faith among the early pioneers, and the teaching of Christian doctrine in the schools. He was the founder of Catholic Schools in the counties of Essex and Kent. He believed this to be the best means of keeping the colonists firm in their Faith and true to the traditions of their ancestors. In two years Father Point had established thirteen schools in Essex and Kent counties, six of these in St. Jude Parish, and one of the six in the immediate environs of Belle River. He constantly told his people to love their religion and their family traditions, that they might remain a truly Catholic people."

The first teacher in these schools was Father Nicholas Point, brother of Father Pierre Point, and these schools were, as recorded by local historian Nathalie Wallace, nothing like the schools we have today. . . "They were merely a meeting place for the children, usually at one of the larger homes in the district. A teacher would come into a certain home perhaps once every two months. He would bring with him some twenty books to distribute to the families. They were to study from these in the interval between visits from the teacher. On the next visit, the schoolmaster would exchange these books for twenty different ones."

It is interesting to note that although Father Pierre Point did not arrive in this area until 1843, an entry in an old account book dated 1840 and kept by one Antoine Goyeau (one of the few people in the district who could read and write and who owned a store on the east side of the Belle River about two miles south of town) reads. . . "I paid my taxes, \$2.76 for the year on 112 acres of land. My schools' taxes were 83¢." From this we must surmise, since there were no provincial or federal taxes at the time, that the 83 cents was a local tax to support a local school and that the school was a "home" school of the type already described, probably established shortly after the arrival of the second wave of French and Irish settlers in 1830 – 35, some thirty-five to forty years after the initial wave of 1790 – 1800. When the third wave of French and Irish settlers arrived between 1840 and 1845, Father Point was already about his work of establishing schools in St. Jude Parish. It is easy to bridge the historical gap and surmise that the "one school established by him in the Belle River area" was the same school already established by local residents and supported by local taxes. Nevertheless Father Point imprinted Catholicism on area schools and there is no doubt that this initial Catholic structuring has had a profound effect on education in general and Catholic education in particular down through the years.

Sometime between 1843 and 1876 (when the Village of Belle River was incorporated) a free-standing public school building had been built and was functioning as a public school. This quote from the obituary of Mr. Albert Chevalier, Grandfather of Shirley Lefrancois, attests to this fact: "The only road from Charron Line to the village was by way of the Lake Road, north to the C.N.R. tracks. He attended the village school, a public school, by way of a path through the woods. The school was situated on the corner of St. Charles and Eighth Streets. (It) burned down and it was then (in the 1870's) that Father Gerard was instrumental in building St. John Baptist school (the brick school on Notre Dame Street). The first road opened was St. Charles Street followed by the opening of Notre Dame Street." (May 15, 1954 — North Essex News).

Father Gerard succeeded Father Point as Pastor of St. Jude Parish and wasn't just "instrumental" in the building of the two-storey brick school house on Notre Dame, he actually had the school built at his own expense and retained personal ownership until his death. Since the public school had burned circa 1874, he leased his school to the Public School Board.

It is interesting to note here that the "Catholic Schools Act" had been passed in 1863 and that this legislation, enacted in both Ontario and Quebec entitled predominately Catholic communities to establish separate school boards and open separate schools — but more importantly, where public schools were in existence in predominantly Catholic communities, provided for the establishment of separate school boards and the take-over of public schools from the public board by the Catholic board. Despite this legislation, no one in St. Jude Parish, even though it was predominantly Catholic, had, since its enactment in 1863, attempted to take over the public schools — after all why should they — the schools were government supported, the trustees were all Roman Catholic, all teachers hired were Roman Catholic, catechism was taught by the teachers, and the parish priest from Belle River made regular visits to the school . . . the best of both worlds! Father Gerard seemed to appreciate the potential in this arrangement — he not only rented his school to the public board, he also petitioned Bishop Walsh in 1889 to let a staff of Sisters take charge of the school. He asked for and received the Sisters of St. Joseph. From Taylor's history: "Father Gerard made all arrangements with Mother Ignatia, Mother Superior of the Community of St. Joseph in London. When all was satisfactorily settled, Father Gerard rented a small house in the south end of the village on St. Charles Street (The old Emon house, since torn down) and he had everything prepared for the coming of the sisters . . . He knew (of) their spirit of sacrifice and their deep love for the souls of those little ones, whom our dear Lord was to confide to their care." "Mother Ignatia appointed Mother Angela McKeough as local Superior; Sister Agatha McCarthy, Sister Bernard Howell, Sister Columba Overend and Sister Herman Murphy as the pioneer staff in this new mission in Belle River; it was named the Mission of St. Joseph." Mr. Taylor goes on to give his readers a sense of how the sisters were received . . . "These sisters entered heartily in the difficult task in their new school." "As sidewalks were still unknown in Belle River, they (the children) laid a walk of bark from the convent to the school so that the sisters would not have to pass through the entire village on their way to school. They tried to make the life of the sisters pleasant and agreeable in these little deeds of kindness. The parents imitated their children in this respect and many were the gifts that were sent to St. Joseph's Convent for the sisters by these poor but generous souls."



**St. John Baptist School as Built — —
Note the Bell Tower and Cross**



**St. John Baptist School with St. James High School
Behind — — sometime after 1931**



*Bottom Row L to R: Tom McMahon, Ernest Denomey, Herman Durocher, Lawrence Parent,
Adelard Trottier, Vanny Durocher, Russel Stone, Edmond Durocher
Alphonse (Dicker) Guilbeault, Camille Parent*
*Second Row L to R: Bernadette Guilbeault, Cecile Parent, Evelyne Wilkinson, Hildaguard Henry,
Marie Wilkinson, Elva Dupuis, Yvonne Denomey, Irene Hebert, Jeannette Parent,
May Menard, Della Oueltette*
*Top Row L to R: Raymond Durocher, Rene Ladouceur, Ulric Poisson, Leonard Poisson,
Ernest Lesperance, Fred Cote, Lawrence Lalonde, Oswald Strong, Norman Lalonde, Norma Renaud,
Aurise Barrette, Rose May Caza, Matilda Lalonde, Father L'Heureux, Corrine Parent, Gladys Diesbourg*



1937 SJBS

First Row F to B: Annette Gauthier, Marguerite Barretté, Paul Denomey, Laurent Campeau,
Daniel Barrette, Donald Thibert, Alfred Lalonde
Second Row: Stella Lablanc, Yvonne Girard, Marguerite Marentette, Paul Taylor, Charles Desbiens
Third Row: Therese Denomey, Rachelle Laforest, Emma Ouellette, Rita Cote, Merine Deslauriers
Inconnu, Delia Durocher, Therese Charron, AnnaBelle Campeau
Fourth Row: John Mousseau Jr., Raymond Papineau Robert Ducharme, Renaud, Arthur Durocher
Last Row: Genevieve Renaud, Stella Girard, Muriel Hargreaves, Marguerite Durocher
Angela Chartier, Jeannette Poisson



1948 SJBS

Bottom Row L to R: Jim Dean, Roger St. Pierre, Armand Beaune, Robert Trudell
Louie Durocher, Ed Barrette
Second Row: Gertrude Caza, Gail George, Elva Rivait, Margie Blanchette, Virgine Vezina
Mary Lou Beaugrand, Claire Sylvestre, Madeline Campeau
Third Row: Rose Bechard, Annette St. Pierre, Claire St. Pierre, Mary Anne Laliberte, Pauline Benoit
Mrs. Bernadette Levesque, Jeannette Martin, Marilyn Rabidoux, Pearl Emond, Julia Caza
Back Row: Jules Barrette, Paul Benoit, Remi Girard, Leo Sylvestre, Edward Lalonde, Robert Parent
Agnes Barrette, Nora Gagnier, Ray Tellier, Gerry Ducharme, Bob Pare, Neil Parent, Roger Beaune.

However, despite how well things were going with this arrangement, in 1899 Bishop McEvay of London, recognizing that Catholics had to assert their rights under the "Act" or lose them, mandated that certain schools in his diocese had to become truly "separate" schools — — and Belle River was among them. Father Edmond Meunier, third pastor, initiated legal proceedings to establish a separate school board. This done, the new board purchased Father Gerard's school on Notre Dame Street from Father Gerard's niece, who had inherited it from him, they then refused to renew the lease to the public school board, and finally took over the building for their own use. The public school supporters removed all teaching equipment and supplies, but the separate school board held their ground. The school was named St. John Baptist School by Bishop McEvay who came to Belle River to bless the school. The Bishop brought with him a statue of the school's Patron Saint and that statue of St. John Baptist, now 85 years old, stands in the entranceway of the 'new' St. John Baptist School today.

The 'old' St. John Baptist school continued at its Notre Dame Street location (where the Post Office is today) from about 1876 until 1956. It consisted of 3 classrooms on the first floor and a large general assembly area on the second floor. There were three teaching sisters to staff this school and the population ranged between 40 and 80 students. It is interesting to note that despite the fact that this school continued to serve this immediate area for some eighty years and those eighty years saw over one hundred sisters of St. Joseph assigned here for varying lengths of time to provide a vital service to this community, very little has been written about them or the profound affect their selfless devotion has had on the educational, social, religious, and cultural life of our parish family. A complete list of all of the Sisters who contributed so significantly to the development of our parish from 1889 to the present is included in another place in this history as a tribute to their individual and collective faith, hope, and charity. Local historian James Taylor best describes their contribution in his "History of Belle River" series published by the North Essex News in 1960 . . . "Since their arrival in Belle River the Sisters of St. Joseph have done marvellous work, and they have placed the schools among the best in Ontario. Ever devoted to the cause of religion and education, they have deemed no sacrifice too great for these factors, so necessary today in the formation of the character of our children. They educate not only the minds of our children, but also their hearts, which is true education. The heart guides the intellect and a noble heart will always produce a man capable of devoting his time and talents in bettering the life and conditions of mankind." In every account I have read concerning St. John Baptist school, mention is made of the "Peewee Parade" . . . apparently since St. John Baptist school had been built back in the days of 'outside plumbing' and never had, right up to its eventual demise, inside facilities, and since St. James High School, built next door in 1931, did have inside plumbing, twice every school day for twenty-five years the younger students who had to go to the bathroom would line up and march over to St. James high school — — much to the relief of everyone involved I'm sure.

In 1949 when the post-war baby-boom hit the area, the additional elementary school student population actually spilled over into the St. James High School building which had been closed in 1948 when the North Essex District High School opened. The original St. John Baptist school house now 90 years old was eventually condemned by the fire-marshall and purchased by Denis St. Pierre in 1956 and was demolished by him and his sons Fernand, Richard, and Marcel. Some of the limestone blocks, originally shipped in from Amherstburg for the foundation, can still be seen in at least one local rock garden.

In 1956 a new "St. John Baptist School" was constructed on St. Peter Street at the south end of Meunier Street on the Wilfred Lalonde property at a cost of \$167,000. This new school boasted 12 rooms and was designed to accommodate 400 students. The school was blessed by the Reverend John C. Cody, Bishop of London, while Father A. P.

Marentette, Pastor of St. Simon and St. Jude Church officiated at the opening ceremony. Sister Marie Cecile was the first principal of this fine new facility. In 1959 there was a \$70,000 four classroom addition; in 1966 a four classroom, a nurse's room, and enlarged boiler room addition, costing \$375,000; and in 1968 a seven classroom, special education room, library resource centre, double gymnasium, and health room addition, costing \$500,000. Leo C. Parent and Richard Hargreaves were at the helm of the Separate School Board and Francis Ladouceur and Zoe Taylor acted as secretary-treasurers over those hectic "building" years. Rene Bisnaire was the first lay-principal and was in charge of the school during the expansion years. His vice-principal, John Drogosz took over when Mr. Bisnaire left to take a position with the Ministry of Education. John Drogosz was the last principal to hold the principalship for any length of time because of an automatic and regular transfer policy instituted by the County Separate School Board which took over from local trustees in 1967.



The "New" St. John Baptist School — 1956



The Final Addition — 1968



Blessing of the New School: L to R: Gerald Ladouceur, Joseph Lalonde, Francis Ladouceur, Fr. A. P. Marentette, Richard Hargreavas, Bishop Cody, Inconnv, Leo Parent, Donald Hillman



The transfer of the entire student population from the 'old' to the 'new' St. John Baptist — Miss Antia Drouillard (Levesque) with her grade two class



Pupils Study the Mass

English and bilingual pupils of Grades 6, 7 and 8 at St. John Baptiste School, Belle River, Ont., are acquiring a greater understanding of the meaning of the Mass as a result of a program undertaken by the teachers of these classes and Father J. H. Rivard of Sts. Simon and Jude parish. Each week one class spends its religion period doing research work on the history of the various liturgical vestments, while others learn to prepare vestments for the

Mass, write the prayers of the faithful or prepare the altar. Father Rivard celebrates Mass in the classroom and the pupils are encouraged to active participation. Father Rivard is shown above celebrating Mass while pupils of Grade 6 surround the Altar of Sacrifice. Originator of the idea to have the study program was Grade 6 teacher, Adrien Pinsonneault (top left).



GRADE 2 — 1959 - 60

Foreground Sitting: Roland St. Pierre, Michael Butler

Front Row L to R: Marie Laforest, Gloria Mousseau, Paullne Lemire, Virginia Cote, Yvette Charron
Suzanne St. Pierre, Louise Lariviere, Lois Richer, Norbert St. Pierre

Antoine Diesbourg, Clifford Deslippe, Ronald Robert, Maurice Hamelin, Jaques Hamelin

Middle Row: Michelle Papineau, Rose Marie Comartin, Carmelle Forget, Charlene LaPorte,

Claire Poisson, Antoinette Roy, Annita St. Pierre, Angela Roy, Therese Beaulieu,

Catherine Lemire, Helene Barrette, Carol Emond

Back Row: Teacher, Anita (Drouillard) Levesque, Gerard Beaudin, Allan Bellemore, Charles Lalonde
Dennis Freeman, Patrick Butler, Rosaire Hamelin, Gerald Robert



Seated L to R: Lucille Cazabon, Sec'y, Sr. M. Antoinette, Helen Best, Sr. M. Yvette, Rene Bisnaire
 Principal, Loretta Comartin, Sarah Lablanc, In Connv. M. Jeanne Jobin
Middle Row: Bridgette Butler, Vlviane Choulnard, M. Anne Bracken, Rita St. Pierre,
 Bernadette Levesque, Joanne Sauve, Mary Ellen Byrne, Bernadette Polsson, Dora Sylvestre
 Helen Hastings, Loraine Chevallier, Sr. M. Patrice
Back Row: Bernadette Pilotte, Bob Farrow, Inconnu, Chris Howes, Herb Millitz, Adrian Pinsonneault
 John Drogosz, J. Marc Laroque, Therese Quenneville



Seated L to R: Suzanne Meloche, Diane Doyon, Anita Denomey, Nicole Papineau, Marlette Laporte
 Bonnie Daudlin, Suzanne Doyon, Rose Marie Cote
Middle Row: Mrs. Bernadette Levesque, Lynda Marchand, Patricia Strong, Therese Denomey
 Pamela Masse, Pamela Lachapelle, Corrinne Barrette, Denise Diesbourg, Linda Lesperance,
 Joan Labadie, Constance Byrne
Back Row: Michael Richer, Roger Guilbeault, Marc Marentette, Mario Lavoie, Mike Hamelin,
 Francis Roy, Pail Gullbeault, Marc St. Pierre

Stepping back historically let's pick up on those public school supporters who had been ejected from their school in 1899 . . . many voiced their objection to the take-over, some actually removed all furnishings and teaching supplies leaving the separate school supporters with just empty buildings, and some appealed a local ruling that all school taxes go to the separate schools. Their appeal, through the Court of Revision, was upheld and the following families were allowed to withdraw their separate school support and pay public school taxes: Theophile Ladoucer, Moise Papineau, Martha Chisolm, Esedras Parent, Damien Menard, Georgina Cleary, Rose Pigeon, Mrs. R. Belleville, Richard Hogan, Jacques Ladoucer, William Ball, Gilbert L. Foster, Richard Paiment, Victoria Lamoreux, Paul Diesbourg, Mr. James Mooney, Arthur Parent, Ovilla M. Beaune, Paul Lalonde, Joseph Chevalier, Victor Ouellette, Clovis Parent, Henry Taylor, Charley Parent, and the Bell Telephone Company.

With the monies available as a result of the Court of Revision decision, an attempt was made to keep the public school movement alive, and for about five years after their dislocation from Father Gerard's building, public school classes were held in a room of the Johnson family home. A quote from Nathalie Wallace's history will give some idea of the scope of the operation and perhaps show why public education disappeared from our parish for about twenty-five years . . . Mrs. Silas Purvis, teacher, reporting: "When I arrived in Belle River on January 2, 1901, I found that there had been two public school teachers before me. Prior to that time the only school in Belle River was called a public school but was taught by the nuns. I heard that there had been a bitter fight and several people staid (sic) as public school supporters. There were very few protestant pupils; the Hope family of three, the Giles family of two and a boy by the name of Cornette. Some of the catholic pupils were the Lavoies, Mike runs a store in Belle River. Another family was the Cloutiers, who soon moved away. One of the girls became a nurse, the other a teacher, the youngest, who could only say in English, "Please may I leave the room?" is a celebrated lawyer in Detroit. The Hopes moved away and others who were ardent public school supporters but catholics, moved away. I taught on the south east side of the Belle River in a or a room house owned by a colored family by the name of Johnson. (The centennial edition of the North Essex News states that around this time one room in the Johnson house had been set up as a classroom). I think there was only one teacher after I left, a lady who staid (sic) one year. From time to time a few protestant families came to Belle River but didn't stay long."

Although the public school system was non-functional for the next 25 years, taxes continued to be collected by the village of Belle River from the public school supporters. In 1931, Belle River Council was notified that Public School No. 5 for the Township of Rochester and located in Belle River was being re-organized under a new Public School Board made up of Norman Ford, Harry Eagleson, Bill Mainprize, Mrs. Chevalier, Albert Stover, and Henry Taylor, and that the new board was asking for all the public school taxes collected from the date of the public school closing up to and including 1931 — some 25 years. There was heated opposition from some elements of the Catholic community but religious tolerance was becoming more wide-spread and despite continuing opposition by a few die-hards a school was established and operated for three years in a section of the main house on the Walter Johnson property (that block of land where the apartment complex for the senior citizens now stands). From 1934 until 1953 classes were housed in the Taylor home (at the present location of the Royal Bank). In 1953 a two-room public grade school was built at a cost of \$35,000, located across the street from the United Church on Belle River Road (South Street), with Mrs. Gladys McRae as principal and senior class instructor, and Mrs. Elsie Brown in charge of the junior class. In 1968 after the introduction of the County-Board System, there was a concerted effort to consolidate a number of one and two room schools into one larger school for greater efficiency of

operation and scope of program. At that time the Essex County Board of Education acquired land at the east side of St. Peter Street, just off Ninth Street, and in 1972 constructed a new building on the site. The new Belle River Public School had an initial enrolment of 300 and a staff of 12 under the principalship of David Lennox. It is interesting to note that the original two-room school which stands next to the Belle River High School was taken over by the High School in 1972 and now serves as that school's "Fine Arts Annex".



Upper Left: Belle River Public after forced departure from St. John Baptist location on Notre Dame (The Johnson House)
Above Right: Belle River Public on South Street next to the High School — 1953 - 1968
Left: Belle River Public on St. Peter St., 1968 to the present

The West-Central section of the parish was serviced by one of the six schools organized by Father Point between 1843 and 1856. It continued to operate as a catholic school until 1870 when it became officially recognized, or more correctly was politically adopted, as a public school (P.S. No. 1 — — By-Law No. 84 — — Maidstone Township). The school was located at the corner of West Belle River Road and the old Baseline Road (south of the cemetery). The school continued as a public school in this location until 1894 despite the fact that the teachers and students were predominately catholic. At this time Father Meunier was in the process of organizing the separate school board and included this school in its purview. Since the Sisters of St. Joseph had already been accepted into the Belle River School (later St. John Baptist) without incident, the next step seemed appropriate — — the appointment of the Sister of St. Joseph, from the Belle River convent, to teach at this public school as well. However, public reaction was immediate and forceful... rather than wait for the Catholic Board to take over their school, public school supporters moved the school and all its contents about four miles south, just off the West Belle River Road, on lot No. 13, first concession, Maidstone Township. From this site it continued to function as a public school and came to be known as the "Robillard School" because of its location on the Robillard Farm. It is interesting to note that despite the fact that it remained public didn't alter the fact that the students were still predominantly Catholic and the teachers Catholic. There was an addition built on to the school several years later by Ernest Seguin. Ironically, when the back part of the school burned down in 1905, the pupils were temporarily housed back in the new separate

school (Sacred Heart) built to take the place of their school on a site just north of the site of their original building. Sacred Heart had space for these students because of a severe drop in enrolment. Shortly thereafter, Ernest Seguin re-built the burned part of the Robillard school and this school continued to operate until the advent of the Township Boards in 1961. At this time the original school building was purchased for a storage shed on a nearby farm and a new brick building was erected on the site. This new building served the area until 1968 when jurisdiction devolved to the Essex County Board of Education. At this time the school was boarded up and the student population transported to Dr. S. F. Millen School in Woodslee. Dr. S. F. Millen School closed into the Belle River Public School when Belle River Public was built in 1972. The Robillard school building was purchased by the Belle River Lions Club and continues as their clubhouse to this day. There were many different teachers at the Robillard school over the years, but the following are those who were remembered as having boarded at Edgar Ladouceur's home, Lorenzo Ladouceur's home or Adelard St. Onge's home: Mrs. Aurore Odette, Mr. Lacharite, Mr. Ducharme, Miss Ernestine Renaud, Miss Gagnier, Miss Loretta Trudelle, Mr. Aloysius Bellaire, Miss Granger, Miss Ernestine Maitre, Miss Rose-Marie Pinsonneault, Miss Minnie Ducharme, Miss Alpha Maurice, Miss Mary Purcell and Miss Lottie Renaud... but the one name which has become most closely associated with the school is that of Miss Laura Renaud who taught at this school for some 20 - 25 years.



ROBILLARD SCHOOL 1908

Seated L to R: Delina Girard, Edgar Ladouceur, Raymond Papineau, Alfred Granger, Mois Girard
 Eddie Dupuis, Onesime Boileau, Callxte Diesbourg, George Girard, Edgar Carriere
 Second Row: Lolita Sauve, Ida Chevalier, Edna Girard, Minnie Granger
 Third Row: Eva Sauve, Della Hart, Carriere, Lea Hart, Raymond Sauve, Jennie Granger, Lea Girard
 Fourth Row: Delina Girard, Maggie Girard, Delia Blanchette, Alfred Diesbourg, Humphrey St. Onge,
 John Dupuis, Amedie Girard, Aurelien Parent, Blaise Diesbourg
 Back Row: Marie Girard, Sarah Girard, Aurore Odette (teacher), Jerome Girard, Minnie Sauve



ROBILLARD SCHOOL AROUND 1934 — Teacher Miss Laura Renaud

First Row (on the right) F To B: Jeanette Robillard, Josephine Poisson, Rita Girard, Earl Poisson, Eugene Ladouceur, Eva Robillard, Bernadette Ladouceur, Clement Ladouceur

Second Row: Ella Girard, Dorothy Chevalier, Joseph Lalonde, Pearl Papineau

Third Row: Jullus Vandendoriessche, Roland Robillard, Veronique Lalonde

Fourth Row: Victoria Poisson, Willie Gerard, Norville Girard



ECOLE ROBILLARD — 1912 or 1913

Back Row L to R: Edgar Ladouceur, Raymond Poisson, Edmond Girard, Delia Blanchette, Leah Girard, Jennie Granger, Maggie Lefave, Minnie St. Onge

Second Row: Archille Girard, George Girard, Raymond Papineau, Alfred Granger, Etienne Poisson, Alfred Papineau, Armand St. Onge

Third Row: Edna Girard, Edna Sauve, Delina Girard, Eva Sauve, Minnie Granger, Ida Chevalier, Eva Poisson, Laurina Girard.

Front Row: Rosalie Papineau, Edna Papineau, Lelita Sauve, Delaide Girard, Merine Granger, Evelyn Granger



ROBILLARD SCHOOL — 1939

Front Row L to R: Elise Vandendriessche, Annabelle Poisson, Yvonne Papineau, Claudette Lalonde, Eleanore Girard, George Diesbourg, Leo Girard, Gerald Chevalier, Laurent Papineau, Maurice Ladouceur

Middle Row: Yvonne Lalonde, Rita Robillard, Dorothy Girard, Marie Anne Poisson

Back Row: Aloysius Bellaire (teacher), Victoria Poisson, Rita Chevalier, Veronique Lalonde, John Diesbourg, Orville Girard, Remi Poisson, Rene Girard, Robert Lalonde, Frank Diesbourg



GRADE 8 CLASS 1950

Isabelle Chevalier, Eugene Granger, Irene Marentette, Alfred Peltier, Lucie Robillard, Cecile Poisson, Victor Papineau



Robillard School House used as a storage shed on a farm near the original school site

Stepping back just briefly to the original site and time of PS No. 1 (The Robillard school) we find that Father Meunier, undaunted by the removal of the public school, decided to build a two room brick school to be known as "Sacred Heart School" just north of the original public school site. The clay to make the bricks was taken from the east side of the cemetery on Thadde Parent's farm and the limestone for the foundation was brought by barge from Amherstburg. The new school was completed in 1896 on land donated by Albert Ouellette (provided that catholic nuns teach there) and was opened by Father Meunier. Two sisters of the order of St. Joseph were added to the complement of the convent in Belle River — — Sister Beatrice (Coughlin) and Sister Rosalie (Joly) — — to teach at the new school. The following excerpt from Taylor's History of Belle River gives us some idea of the times... "The hardships these two sisters endured can be best understood by those familiar with the clay roads of Essex County. The sisters had to drive two miles to reach their school. A means of conveyance had to be found. At first they drove themselves to school, but an accident that endangered their lives, proved that this was not prudent. So the pastor (Fr. Meunier) appointed Mrs. J. D. Renaud with her famous pony "fox" to take the sisters to and from school, and "fox" never failed in his duty. He did not let the sticky mud of the bad roads deter him in his duty of having the sisters reach school on time."

The sisters left the school in 1906 as the number of children had decreased so much that two teachers were no longer necessary. It was at this point in time that lay instructors took over and continued to operate the school until its closure. The building itself remained virtually unchanged from the time it was built in 1896 until a \$14,000 addition was put on in 1958 to handle the post-war baby boom experienced at war's-end, 1945. The staff names most frequently heard in conversations with older residents include Mrs. Leo Sylvestre (Dora Sauve), Mrs. William Blanchette (Isabelle Cloutier), Jeanette Robillard, Mrs. Louis Grenier, Miss Lottie Renaud, Mrs. Fernand St. Pierre, Mrs. Ray Lefrancois (Helen Levesque), Miss Blanche St. Louis, and Miss Ida Renaud. Under the township board the school closed its doors in 1964 and the pupils were accommodated in the recently enlarged 'new' St. John Baptist School in Belle River. The building was purchased by Ted Caza who converted it into living quarters and resides there with his family to this day.



SACRED HEART SCHOOL, CIRCA 1896

Men Standing Behind: Cesar Durocher, Joseph Ladouceur, Alfred Ladouceur, Isdras Parent
 Alex Lamay, Israel Parent, Edward Lachapelle, Libarere Poisson, Moise Papineau, Edward Dufresne
 Alex Plante, Arthur Marentette, Alcide Marentette
 Fred Sucherreau, Louis Ducharme
Boys in Front: Armand Ladouceur, Aurelle Ladouceur, Rene Laforet, Joseph Ouellette
 Daniel Ouellette, Real Ladouceur
 Levi Marentette, Ulysses Durocher



Miss Dora (Sauve) Sylvestre with Laurent and Edmond St. Pierre, June, 1928



1928, *Top Girls L to R:* Dora Sauve Sylvester, teacher, Olive Durocher, Evelyne Dupuis, Aurore Marentette
Second Row: Hattie Dupuis, Dora Rose, Lorraine Renaud, Rosella Marentette
Third Row: Ursella Lefaive, Irene St. Pierre, Geraldine Renaud, Marianne Barrette, Lucy Dupuis, Leona Barrette
Top Row Boys L to R: Norval Renaud, Raymond Dufresne, Armand Dufresne
Second Row: Amede St. Pierre, Armand Marentette Jacques Marentette, Aurele Dufresne, Lloyd Munro
Third Row: Laurent St. Pierre, Edmond St. Pierre, Wilfred Dufresne, Edgar Plante, Ralph Rosen, Clifford Rose



SACRED HEART SCHOOL — 1933

Front Row L to R: Gladys Grondin, Laurent Grondin, Alice Dufresne, Henri Marentette, Rosen
 Arthur Durocher, Gloria Lefaive, Herman St. Pierre, Theresa Marentette
Middle Row: Edgar Plante, Ralph Rosen, Henri Dufresne, Stella Durocher, Ursula Lafaive, Rena Plante
Back Row: Aurele Dufresne, Mike Schmidt, Amedee St. Pierre, Edmond St. Pierre, Leona Barrette
 Marie Anne Barrette, Irene St. Pierre, Lucie Dupuis, Rosella Marentette
 Teacher — Isabelle (Clouthier) Blanchette



SACRED HEART SCHOOL — 1939 — Teacher Blanche St. Louis

First Row by the wall, F to B: Marianne St. Pierre, Leo Tellier, Olivia Girard, Herman St. Pierre
 Bertha Parent, Amelia Girard, Henry Marentette, Arthur Durocher, Blanche St. Louis
Second Row: Rosemary Girard, Theresa Marentette, Leona St. John, Norbert Marentette, Leo Papineau
 Leah Girard, Cecile Girard, Rena Girard, Irene Girard, Rosie Girard, Bernadette St. John
Third Row: Gladys Grondin, Charles Barrette, Doris Primeau, Ernest St. Pierre, Armand Durocher
 Florence Dufresne
Fourth Row: Lorette St. Pierre, Germaine Tellier, Cecile Marentette, Norman Lachapelle, Margaret
 Tellier, Earl Lachapelle, Henry Lachapelle, Denis Tellier, Eugene Tellier



SACRED HEART SCHOOL 1948

Top Row L to R: Bill Fecteau, Dale Banfield, Marcella St. Pierre, Jeannette Robillard, Jacqueline Durocher, Edna Dufresne, Raymond Duquette, Edward St. John
Middle Row: Denis Papineau, Jephte St. Pierre, Brigette Poisson, Dolores Papineau, Pauline Parent, Annette Papineau, Pauline St. Pierre, Annette Barrette, Leon St. John, Clement Marentette
Bottom Row: Paul Durocher, Raymond Deforest, Albert St. Pierre, Arthur Marentette, Charles Durocher, Ronald St. Aubin, Bob Banfield, Paul Papineau, Archie St. John



GRADE 8 GIRLS — 1950

Front Row: Helen Levesque, Betty Jane Parent, Carol Renaud, Pauline Durocher, Shirley Tellier
Back Row: Joanne Antaya, Pauline Barrette, Henriette Poisson, Beverley Ducharme, Juliette Tellier, Madeline Poisson, Theresa Simard



Helen Levesque Lefrancois, teacher



GRADE 8 GRADUATES — 1958
 Richard Lebert, Theodore St. Pierre
 RoseAnn St. Pierre

The north-east shore of the parish was serviced by PS No. 6 Rochester, also known as the "Lakeshore" school. This school was established at the corner of the west Ruscom River Road and Old Tecumseh Road around 1875. In 1901, the school was moved west along Old Tecumseh Road to the 4th Concession of Rochester Township — — the dividing line between St. Joachim and Belle River Parish. The local school board rented the land from Mrs. Susan Strong and continued to do so until 1928. In 1928, the board purchased the site from Mr. William Strong. The first trustees after the move, and for quite some time thereafter, were Mrs. Thomas Renaud, Mr. Cyril Denomev and Mrs. Martin Strong, some of the early teachers were Miss Katie Leahy, Mrs. Rose Antaya, Mr. Julian St. Amand, Mr. Arzene Bezaire, Mrs. Rosella Renaud, Mr. Louis Monforton, Mrs. Loretta Drouillard, Mrs. Louise Etue, Miss L. O'Donnell, and Mrs. Jeannette Plante. The school continued as a public school until its closure in 1961 when the Department (Ministry) of Education formed Township Boards of Education which closed this school and others, transferring the catholic students to St. John Baptist School in Belle River and the protestant students to Belle River Public School also in Belle River. Despite the fact that The Lakeshore School was a Public School all the trustees were Roman Catholic; the teachers, catholic; most of the students, catholic; and the Belle River Parish Priest made regular visits to the school. The Township Board put the school building up for sale in 1962. Both property and building were purchased by tender by Ray Strong who converted the school into living quarters for his daughter Beverley and son-in-law Edouard Barrette and granddaughter Elaine. The Barrette's resided there until 1973 when they moved to their new home almost directly across the highway. Mr. Andre Dulac moved into the converted school and continues to reside there until this day.

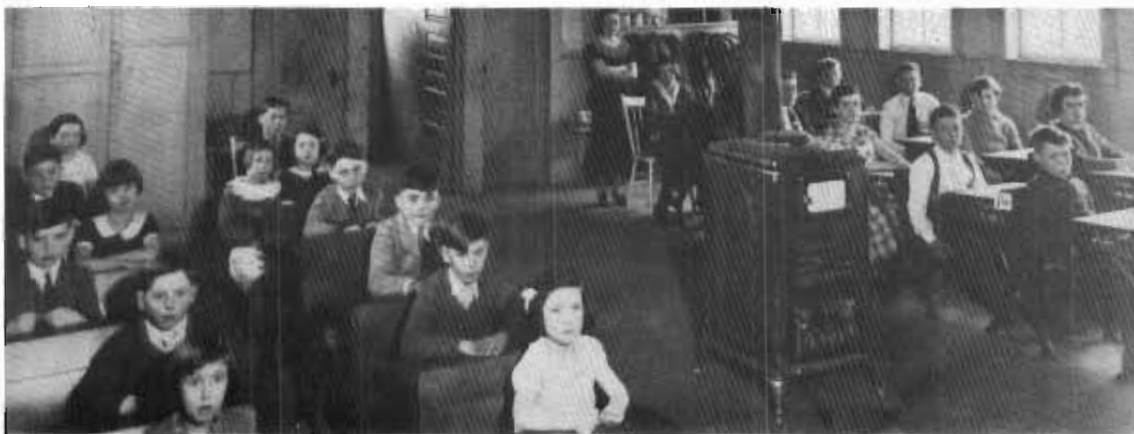


LAKESHORE SCHOOL — 1927

**Top Row L to R: Charlie Delaurier, Bernard Tellier, Miss L. O'Donnell teacher, Alois Baesson
Josey Strong, Lawrence Bourdeau, Charlie Tellier, Alphonse Gagnon**

**Middle Row: Marguerite Delaurier, Celina Laporte, Julia Strong, Yvonne Grise
Lorette Trotechaud, Jos. Ann Trotechaud**

**Bottom Row: Wilfred Delaurier, Alphonse Bourdeau, Joseph Delaurier, Baesson, Leo Gagnon
Harvey Laporte, Laurence Laporte, Omer Delaurier**



LAKESHORE SCHOOL — 1936, Teacher, Miss Bella Cloutier

*First Row (on the left) F to B: Emily Drouillard, James Strong, Jeannette Laliberte, Edward Laporte
Vincent Tratechaud, Sally Mae Tratechaud*

*Second Row: Jullien Pullien, Rachel Pullien, Corrine Laliberte, Vincent Laporte, Leonard Strong
Joseph Tratechaud, Rose Marie Drouillard*

*Third Row: Johanna Tratechaud, Gerald Tellier, Frank Delaurier, May Belle Renaud
Donald Delaurier, Albert Pullien*

Fourth Row: John Brooks, Oliver Delaurier, Marcel Suly, Rita Laporte

LAKESHORE SCHOOL — CIRCA 1951

Teacher, Jeannette Plante

*Back Row L to R: Mrs. Plante, Mary Jane Laliberte,
Roy Trepanier, Carol Renaud,*

Beverley Strong, Lawrence Trepanier

*Second Row: Ellen Strong, Diane Renaud,
Victor Tratechaud, Thomas Tellier,*

*Third Row: Elizabeth Mulhall, Robert Tellier, Jimmy
Mulhall, Junior Renaud*

*Fourth Row: Elaine Tellier,
Agatha Laliberte*

*Front Row: Deschaine, Clare Tellier,
Tellier*



The south-east corner of the parish was served by SS No. 7 Rochester, also known as St. Anthony School and also known as Byrnedale School. The school was located on the Castanier farm on an acre of land which ran east and west between the 2nd and 3rd concession of Rochester Township — — also known as the Byrnedale Sideroad. The school was a one-room log cabin built in 1875 and housed grades 1 to 8. By 1899, the large enrolment necessitated the re-construction of the school. Mrs. Clara Murphy (McHugh) who lived to be 106 and who taught there in 1892 had 100 pupils crammed into that original one-room school house. Her salary at that time was \$300 a year. Teachers who taught in the early days of the school were Mr. Torpey who became a priest; Mrs. Mary McHugh, the mother of Bishop Paul McHugh; Pearl Walsh, who became an Ursuline Sister; and John Blake, who became a doctor. Many others followed, among them Mary E. Stephenson who held the position from 1931 – 1939; Coleen Trepanier (Byrne), a former student, from 1947 – 1959; and Mrs. Florence Comartin (Pillon), from 1959 – 1964. The school closed in 1964 during the consolidation initiated by the Township Boards, and the students were transferred to St. John's School Woodslee. The school buildings and property were purchased by Lawrence Castanier who converted the building to living quarters.



BYRNEDALE SCHOOL — 1933

Front Row, L To R: Lawrence Castanier, Raymond Sheehan, John Dunn, Richard Byrne, Raymond Byrne
 Billy Widders, Dennis Byrne, Thomas Byrne, Coleen Byrne, Helen Byrne, Grace Widders, Sheila Byrne

Second Row: Russel Byrne, Elmer Byrne, Edward Mullins, Patsy Byrne, Ruth Byrne, Phyllis Byrne
 Mary Agnes Dunn, Winnifred Byrne, Agnes Sheehan, Rita Dunn, Evelyn Byrne

Third Row: Bernard Dunn, Ralph Byrne, Stanley Mullins, Norbert Byrne, Billy Mullen, Edith Castanier
 Angeline Robillard, Geraldine Byrne, Eileen Sheehan, Helen Byrne
 Mary VerSpeden, Helen Dunn, Genevive Byrne

Back Row: Teacher, Miss Mary E. Stevenson, Gerald Dunn, Donald Mullins, Carl Byrne, Leo Mullins
 Jack Mullins, Charles Dunn, Eleanor Castanier, Sylvan Melbranke



BYRNEDALE SCHOOL — 1939 (Grades 3 - 8)

First Row on Left, F To B: Marilyn St. Louis, Marjorie Castanier, Eileen Sauve,
 Jimmy Byrne, Betty Castanier

Second Row: Richard Byrne, Ronald Castanier, John Dunn, Carol Mullins

Third Row: Lloyd Byrne, Helen Byrne, Coleen Byrne, Raymond Byrne, Angeline Robillard

Fourth Row: Sheila Byrne, Lawrence Castanier, Luella Sauve, Mary Agnes Dunn, Billy Byrne



BYRNEDALE SCHOOL — 1956

**Front Row, L To R: Mary Ellen Dunn, Nancy Roeback, Pauline Byrne, Diane Bensette
Pat Vandendrlessche, Stephen Mullen, Jerry Byrne, Eddie Dunn, Helen Roeback, Christine Dunn
Delores Strong, Karen Strong, Maureen Mullins**

**Middle Row: Father Mike Dalton, Elizabeth Mullins, Francis Dunn, Tommy Bensette, Johnny Tracey
Lorne Sauve, Teacher Coleen (Nee Byrne) Trepanier**

**Back Row: Margaret Bensette, Helen Tracey, Joanne Roeback, Jim Dunn, Larry Tracey, Pat Roeback
Richard Byrne, Robert Roeback, Johnny Mullen, Margaret Byrne, Beatrice Byrne, Sharron Bensette**

Absent: Bobby Byrne, Joey Byrne

The east-central part of the parish was served by SS No. 17 Rochester, also known as St. Theresa, and also known as the Barrette School. This one-room school building was built by Jean-Baptiste Sauve for the St. Joachim Board of Education and served their needs until 1915 when they outgrew it. The school building was sold to the newly formed school Section No. 17 in Rochester and moved to a site on No. 2 Highway (then the base-line road) mid-way between St. Joachim and Belle River on an acre of land on the North east corner of lot 12 conc. 2 Rochester, purchased from Arthur Barrette. The original trustees were Ernest Bracken, William Dupuis, and William Strong, and the secretary was Michael Tracey. The school was an English language school from 1915 to 1931 and became bilingual in 1932 when Dora Sauve (Mrs. Leo Sylvestre) was hired to satisfy the needs of both the French-speaking and English-speaking students. It is interesting to note that there was considerable controversy over the introduction of French, with threats of dismissal if French were introduced. . . however, the prospect of legal action intimated in a letter sent by the McTague, Clark and Cumming law firm to the board took away all the resolve of the opposing board members. The school was named St. Theresa School in 1935. On this occasion a pageant depicting the Life of St. Theresa of the Child Jesus was put on by Elmira Sylvestre and her pupils; and Rev. Charles Laliberte, pastor of St. Simon and St. Jude Parish in Belle River attended and blessed the school as well as a statue of its parton saint; and a sign with the name of the school, painted by Roland Jobin (artist-decorator, responsible for the interior re-decoration of St. Simon and St. Jude Church), was placed above the entrance. In 1963 during consolidation initiated by the Township Boards of Education, the school was closed, the pupils transferred to St. John Baptist School in Belle River, and the one-room school which had served two municipalities and had stood over 62 years, was finally torn down.



ST. THERESA SCHOOL 1922 - 23

The only children identified in this picture are all Brackens — Edward, Elizabeth, Clarence, Anna Mae and Bernadette. The Teacher is Miss Paquette



Pageant To Honour St. Theresa — 1935

L to R: Ruth Mullins (as St. Theresa)
Francis Mullins, Alice Dupuis (as St. Theresa on
her First Communion Day), Cecile Barette
Gloria Lefaive, Mildred Mullins (Companions Of St.
Theresa), and Dorothy Butler (as St. Theresa as
a Carmelite Nun)



ST. THERESA'S ENTRANCE CLASS — 1931

L to R: Donald Tracey, Garant,
Ernestine Barrette, Mable Byrne, Lillian Butler



ST. THERESA SCHOOL — 1933

Although not many of the children in this picture could be identified, Barette, Bryne, Dupuis, Mullins, and Lefaive are no doubt names that figure prominently in the group. The teacher is Dora Sauve Sylvestre



ST. THERESA SCHOOL — 1937

Along The Wall, F To B: Roy Byrne, Ursula Lefaive, Marion Bracken, Francis Mullins, Dorothy Butler, Ruth Mullins, Rita Mullins, Teacher Elmira Sylvestre
Second Row: Cecile Barette (left), Elva Butler (right), Billy McMahon, Luc Barrette, Gerald Barrette
 Bernard Barrette, Raymond Byrne, Michael McMahon, Gerald Byrne, Ferdinand Barrette
Third Row: Mildred Mullins, Pat McMahon, Gloria Lefaive, Alice Dupuis, Harold Lefaive

The north-western part of the parish was served by St. William School in Emeryville. The pupils from the Emeryville area attended school in Belle River until 1951. It was at this time that the post-war influx of new families and the leading edge of the baby-boom were beginning to be felt. The number of students from the Emeryville/Puce area was sufficient to fill three classrooms in Belle River. At this point the decision was made to build St. William School — following are excerpts from an article found in the May 9, 1951 edition of the Belle River News: “Flanked by 4th degree Knights of Columbus, clergy, Monsignori, school officials, township officials and a large number of residents of the district of Emeryville, his Excellency J.C. Cody, Bishop of London Diocese, last Sunday, May 6, 1951 blessed and officially opened the new three room school which will serve for the education of children in the District of Puce and Emeryville.” “Following the blessing Rev. A.P. Marentette expressed his thanks to all those responsible for the success of the project.” “Mr. Ernest Pike, Chairman of the Board, thanked the ratepayers for their co-operation and confidence placed in the board. The board consisted of Mr. Pike, Chairman, Mr. Louis Morneau, Mr. William Ellwood and Mr. Del Quinlan, Secretary.” “Miss Rita Farrell, principal of the new school received the keys to the institution from separate school inspector Charron.” “The three teachers who will conduct the classes at St. William School are Miss Rita Farrell, Mrs. Bernadette Levesque, and Mrs. Margaret Derdaele.” In April of 1951, a bus-load of Emeryville students, cheered by former staff and fellow-students, left St. John Baptist School to take up residence in their new school. This school, in a parish of its own, and enlarged from three rooms to ten by additions in 1953, 1957 and 1966, was not closed into St. John Baptist School in Belle River during those consolidation years of the sixties... it survives and continues to hold its own despite the current drop in enrolment in elementary schools across the province. St. William School was bilingual from its inception in 1951 and continued that way until 1973 when the french-speaking students were transferred from this school and from St. John Baptist into the french-language elementary school, Pavillon Des Jeunes.



Students boarding the bus at St. John Baptist
For the ride to their new school in Emeryville
April 1951



The Entire Student Body and the Three Original Staff

- 1 Mrs. M. Derdaele,
Grades 1 - 4 Bilingual and 1 - 4 English
- 2 Mrs. B. Levesque,
Grades 5 - 8 Bilingual
- 3 Mrs. R. Farrell
Principal, Grades 5 - 8 English



St. William School In 1951 with Mrs. Derdaele
and Mrs. Levesque standing in front



St. William School Today

ST. WILLIAM SCHOOL — 1958 - 59 — GRADES 5,6,7,8

Top Row L to R: Teacher, Mrs. Grenier, Robert Sylvestre, Alfred Trembley, Gordon Brissette, Virginia Brissette, Jill Andre, Carol Pike
Second Row: Douglas Kehoe, Russell Howell, Ronnie Rabideau, Jeanne Sylvestre, Michelle Grenier, Diane Blron, Yvonne Grenier
Third Row: Denis Caza, Ray Diesbourg, Kenny Byrne, Suzie Desmarais, Anita Rabideau, Beatrice St. John
Front Row: Paul Rocheleau, Maurice Brissette, Leo Rocheleau, Laurent Trembley, Rosy Gagnier, Jeannette Andre, Janet Damphouse



ST. WILLIAM SCHOOL — KINDERGARTEN, 1972

Top Row L to R: John Joesph George, Simone , Tracey Paul, Barbara Lavin, Tommy Pinsonneault, Lisa Sylvestre, Pamela Marentette, Ken Ashton, Paula ,
Bottom Row: Paul Robak, Todd Munro, Mark Emery, Jennifer Poynter, Joey Caza, Colleen Schindler, Margaret Papineau, Danny Bearelle, Bernard Brissette, Teacher: Mrs. McGillis



ST. WILLIAM SCHOOL — GRADE 8, 1980

Top Row, L to R: Tim Smith, Terry Gouin, Danny Normandeau, Tom Teed, Jeff Gyurscik, Kirk Dame
Second Row: Lisa Garant, Darlene Regnier, Mike Savone, Chris Cosgrave, Beth Kennette, Brian White
Third Row: Lori Vankoughnett, Mandy St. Pierre, Kim Dorning, Carol Byrne
 Bonnie Strong, Denis Campeau
Front Row: Debbie Vandendriessche, Cori Rusnak, Patty Zverlna, Denise Emery, Michelle Bearelle
 Kathleen McHugh, Kathy Haig, Brenda McGinty, Teacher:

Secondary education, until 1922, was not readily accessible to the ordinary citizen. Often those with the wherewithal — — financial resources and intellectual acuity — — were shipped out of this community to boarding schools operated by religious communities in the Windsor, Ottawa, and Sudbury areas. It was from this cadre of “boarders” that a number of religious vocations developed. As well there were those who travelled from Belle River to Windsor for their secondary schooling. Some were driven to Windsor by private automobiles and others took the train which left Belle River at 9:00 a.m. and returned home at 7:30 p.m., but for the vast majority, formal schooling ceased after grade 8.

In 1922, through the ever diligent efforts of Mother Genevieve Hennessy who was the principal of St. John Baptist School at the time, and the generosity of James Cooper, a philanthropist who had amassed a personal fortune during the American Prohibition, a secondary school was built next to the ‘old’ St. John Baptist School on Notre Dame. The original building was constructed at a cost of \$9000 and the following quote from Taylor’s Centennial History gives us a sense of the times. . . . “In the month of October the school was blessed by Bishop C’Connor. Courses were basically the same as today, some of the subjects being Arithmetic, Algebra, History, Latin, English and French. In the schools early years of existence there were 10 or 12 students in each class. They had one-hour classes, plenty of homework, and no field trips. The teacher in charge was Sister Ambrosia and among her first pupils were Arthur Ducharme, Ruth & Dorothy Martin, Raymond Strong, Cletus Byrne, and Mary Dunn. During the winter months the school was heated by coal with everyone shoving for a close spot near the pot-bellied stove. An addition, consisting of two training rooms was built

on the school in 1936. One room was for "Domestic and Household Economy" for the girls and the other a "Manual Training" room where the boys were taught handicrafts and drafting."

The school originally operated as a grade 9 - 10 continuation school under the principalship of Sister Ambrosia Durkin. Eventually, however, and until its closing in 1948 under the principalship of Sister Antonia Gignac it offered classes from grades 9 through 12. The last graduation exercises saw Father A. P. Marentette distributed 6 grade 12 diplomas and 8 intermediate certificates (grade 10).

After its closure as a secondary school the vacated rooms were filled with the overflow students from St. John Baptist School next door. The overflow was created by the natural growth of Belle River, the influx from St. Theresa School, and the accommodation of Emeryville students awaiting construction of their own school.

The decision to close St. James High was the result of a number of factors which all came to bear at the same time: the building was a two-storey frame structure and was beginning to show its age; the sisters who had operated the school for so many years were feeling the affects of fewer vocations, and to run a secondary school with a predominately lay staff would be a prohibitively expensive proposition; the post-war population explosion and the "movement-to-the-suburbs" influx was beginning; and the provincial government had made a commitment to spend unprecedented amounts of money to up-grade the public education system — — the first step as we have seen was the consolidation of many one-room elementary schools into larger units of instruction, and the second was an ambitious program of construction of district high schools to serve the needs of rural populations.



St. James High School Built In 1922



St. James High School was purchased by the Royal Canadian Legion in the spring of 1960, and extensively renovated to become one of the finest Legion facilities in Essex County



THE CLASS OF '28 — ST. JAMES HIGH SCHOOL
Top Row L to R: Inconnu, Ernest Cote, Leo Byrne
Alphonse Guilbeault, Reginald Blanchard
Raymond Menard, Vincent Byrne, Maurice Mousseau
Second Row: Adelard Trottier, Felix Cote, Archille
Marentette, Clarence Bracken, Arsene Fleury
Edgar Durocher
Third Row: Mathilda Lalonde, Cleophy Rivest,
Hilda Henry, Hilda Purvis
Front Row: Adeline Trottier, Juliette Schiller
Annie George, Beatrice Wilkinson



James Cooper who assumed the entire cost of construction of St. James High School — — The School was named after his Patron Saint



ST. JAMES HIGH SCHOOL — 1929

Top Row L to R: Donald Bracken, Arsene Fleury,
Stanley Renaud, Alphonse Guilbeault,
Denis St. Pierre, Clarence Bracken
Second Row: Leonard Rivait, Earl Diesbourg,
Lawrence Lacharite, Richard Blanchard,
Stanley Strong, John George
Third Row: Luella Parent, Irene Poisson, Alida
Ouellette, Edna Denomey, Irene Dupuis
Hilda Purvis, Beatrice Lapentigny, Beatrice Wilkinson
Emilie Laforet, Marie Bracken
Front Row: Armand Ladouceur, Rosaire Lesperance
Donald Rivait



ST. JAMES, CIRCA 1942

Front Row: Genevieve Renaud, Emma Ouellette,
Annabelle Campeau, Dorothy Thibert,
Gloria Lefaive, Alice Dupuis, Ann Dorigan
Middle Row: Lorraine Ouellette, Evans,
Catherine Montieth, Betty Diesbourg,
Fontaine, Therese Fleury
Back Row: Veronique Lalonde, Therese Charron,
Niles Martindale, Therese Durocher, Thomas Pike
Father Laliberte, Hugh Graham, Blakely
Mary Sauve, Madeline Ladouceur, Mildred Grondin



Circa 1942 — Teachers J. E. Chauvin (L) and Anthony Nadalin (R) with Father Charles Laliberte



ST. JAMES, CIRCA 1942

Front Row L to R: Niles Martindale, Tom Pike,
Hugh Graham, Herman St. Pierre, Leo Denomey
Middle Row: Earl Dupuis, Herman Thibert, Joseph
Weise, Inconnu, Gordon Martindale
Back Row: Joseph Graham, Charles Montieth,
Father Laliberte, Inconnu



ST. JAMES HIGH SCHOOL — GRADE 9, 1944
Boys: Patrick Graham, Bernard Levasseur,
Michael Ghanam, Kenneth Bagnall, Joseph
Lachance, Norbert Trepanier, Buddy Clayton,
Albert Laforest, Eugene Marentette
Girls: Dorothy Mears, Lorna H. Cliffe, Patricia
Monteith, Virginia Gauthier, Pauline Sauve, Myrane
Plawucki, Beatrice Renaud, Madeline Levasseur,
Lorraine Desmarais, Theresa Monteith, Carmen
Lareau, Marilyn Mears, Dorothy Tweeny,
Marcella Beaugrand

The Final Graduation Class of St. James High School — 1947. It is fitting that St. James is shown in the left background and the 'old' St. John Baptist in the right background.



Complete identification of this graduation class would be an excellent undertaking for an individual or group of individuals from this class

North Essex High School

First Annual Commencement

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5, 1951

at 8 P.M.



École Secondaire d'Essex Nord

Première Collation des Diplômes

VENDREDI LE 5 JANVIER, 1951

à 8 P.M.

PROGRAMME

SCHOOL SONG

O CANADA

INVOCATION—FATHER M. QUENNEVILLE

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN — BIENVENUE

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT — RAPPORT DU PRINCIPAL

GLEE CLUB — *CHOEUR DE CHANT*

Presentation of Intermediate Certificates
Présentation des certificats intermédiaires

Neil Addison	Joël Ouellette
Pauline Benoit	Marlene Pailla
Leona Beron	Donald Peterson
Gérald Bisnaire	Mary Anne Pike
Gérard Bisnaire	Marie Pisonneault
Géraldine Gastanier	Adrian Renaud
Rita Caza	Dorothy Sebastian
Rosemary Girard	Allan Schaler
Patricia Greaves	Mary Anne Sylvestre
Thérèse Goulet	John Taylor
Richard Kennette	Claire Tremblay
Margaret Kerr	Mary Anne Treponter
Isabelle Maître	William Whittle

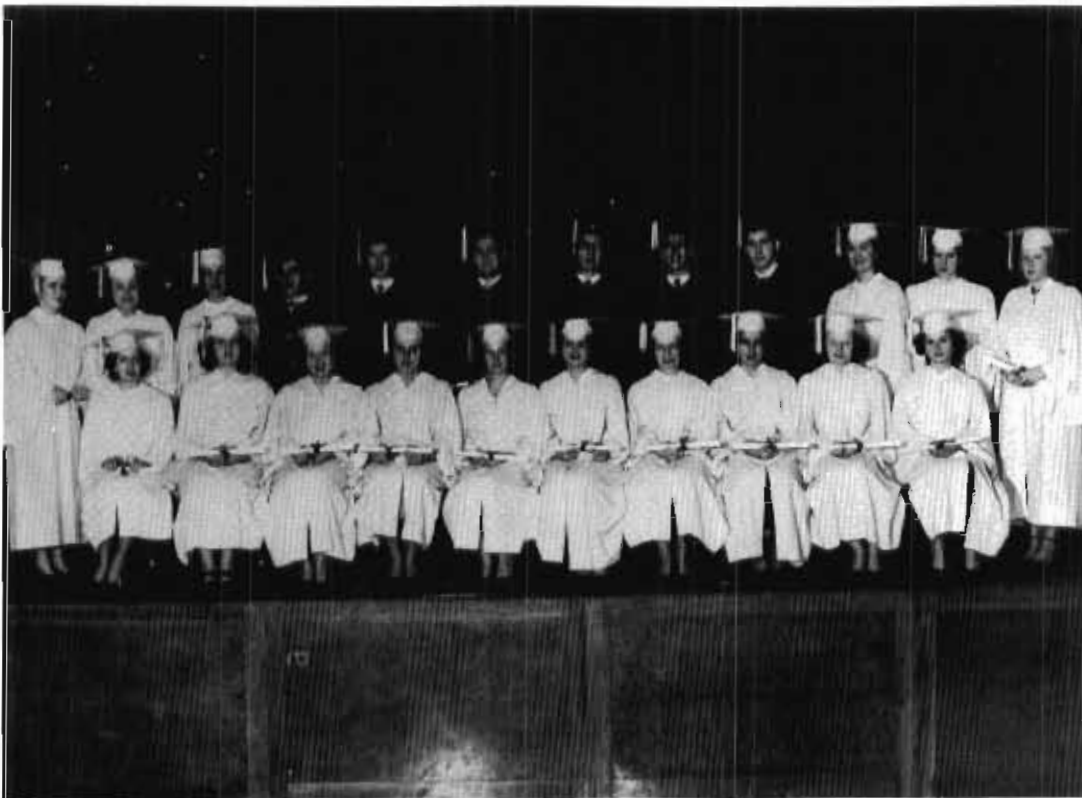
VALEDICTORY—THELMA GODEY

DISCOURS D'ADIEU—ROBERT BISNAIRE

GLEE CLUB — *CHOEUR DE CHANTS*

Presentation of Secondary School Graduation Diplomas
Présentation des certificats de 12e année

Janel Baillargeon	Shirley Gooden
Robert Bisnaire	Jane Holland
Richard Cassidy	Yvonne Lalonde
Donna Chapman	Gérald Lefrançois
Sumane Chouvin	Trilby Jane Margan
Isabelle Denomey	Cécile Pattenaude
Shirley Ducharme	Félix Pisonneault
Marie Adèle Emery	Paul Rabillard
Emerence Goulet	



Presentation of Special Commercial Certificates
Présentation des Certificats du Cours Commercial

Roméo Dupuis Collette Meunier
John Ghonam Shirley Quenneville
Margaret Kennette Ida Mae Rhoads
Madelyn Lefave

Presentation of Honour Graduation Diplomas
Présentation des Certificats de 13e Année

Thelma Godby Marilyn Mears

GLEE CLUB — *CHOEUR DE CHANTS*

Presentation of Public Speaking Awards
Présentation des trophées—concours oratoire

Senior—Gertrude Lanoue Dr. T. Wiese School Trophy
Junior—Carole Renaud Mr. C. O'Gorman Individual Trophies

Presentation of Medals
Présentation des Médailles

Grade 9—Proficiency—Jeannine LeFrançois Mr. Nicholas Ruggaber

Grade 10—Proficiency—Margaret Kerr Mr. Sylvio Pinsonneault

Grade 11—Proficiency—Marie Harpe Mr. Réal Harpe

Special French—Emerence Goulet M. Emile Desmarois

Shop—Gr. 10—Francis Normondeau Mr. Bert Corbett

Agriculture—Gérald Bisnaire Mr. Gabriel McPharlin

Home Economics—Mary Ann Sylvestre Mr. Victor Cado

Upper School Mathematics—Marilyn Mears Mr. Armond Lolonde

Upper School Science—Marilyn Mears Dr. E. J. Dupuis

English and History—Thelma Godby Goulbault & Durocher

French—Robert Bisnaire Mr. Hermon Côté

Grade 12—Proficiency—Donna Chapman Lions Club Scholarship, Presented by Dr. E. J. Dupuis

Special Commercial—Margaret Kennette Armond Lavoie

Grade 13—Proficiency—Thelma Godby Hon. Paul Morin

GUEST SPEAKER—MOST REV. C. L. NELLIGAN, D.D.
Professor of French and History, Assumption College

GOD SAVE THE KING

Honour Roll, 1950 — *Premiers de Classes 1950*

9A—Jeannine LeFrançois
9B—Yvette Chevalier
10A—Claire Tremblay
10B—Margaret Kerr
11—Marie Harpe
12—Donna Chapman, Shirley Gooden

THE PRINCIPAL SALUTES THE GRADUATES

Congratulations, Graduates! You have reached the gateway to a new step in life, and the staff at North Essex High School will watch for, and rejoice in your future successes. Remember that it is what you think and what you do that makes you what you are. Your thoughts and deeds can hold you down, or they can hitch you to a star.

May God Bless You.

C. O'GORMAN,
Principal.

NORTH ESSEX HIGH SCHOOL BOARD
COMMISSION SCOLAIRE

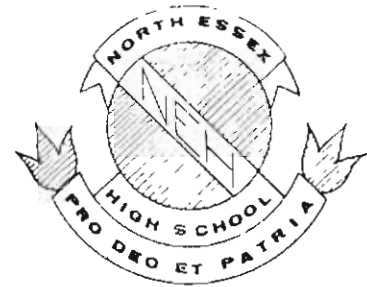
Nicholas Ruggaber	County
Victor Cado	St. Clair Beach
Bertram Corbett	Public Schools
Emile Desmarois	Tilbury North
Dr. E. J. Dupuis	Separate Schools
Gabriel McPharlin	Maldstone
Sylvio Pinsonneault	Rochester
Dr. T. W. Wiese	Belle River
Raymond Sylvestre	Secretary-Treasurer

THE STAFF — *PERSONNEL ENSEIGNANT*

Principal Clarence O'Gorman, M.A.

ASSISTANTS

Orville Arel, B.A.	Gerard J. Longon, B.A.
Donald Black, B.A.	Evangeline Lanoue, B.A.
John R. Gilbank	Clifford H. McKay, B.A.
Eunice Kimmerly, B.A.	Cecelia McNamora, B.A.
John W. Kippen, B.A.	Fernand L. Parent, B.A.



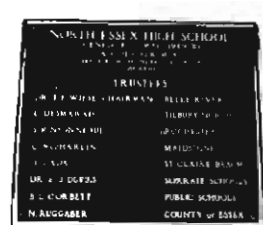
Mr. O'Gorman

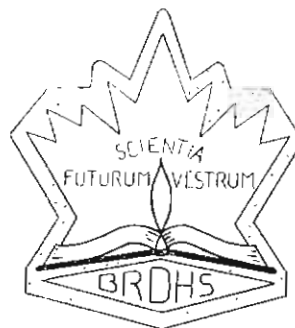


W. E. Franke



G. W. Bezaire





North Essex District High School
"PLAY NIGHT"
 High School Auditorium
 SUNDAY, MAY 29th, 1960 — 8 P.M.
 FIVE ONE ACT PLAYS
 ADDITIONAL ENTERTAINMENT
 ADMISSION: STUDENTS 35¢

SEANCE
 Les élèves de l'Ecole Secondaire d'Essex Nord
 presentent
"LA PETITE SECRETAIRE"
 pièce en deux actes
"LES DEUX SOURDS"
 comédie en un acte
 Le 30 mai, 1951
 à 8:30 p.m.
 Entrée, 50 sous

NORTH ESSEX HIGH
 Presents
THE Stardust Prom
 Music By BILLY JONES
 FRIDAY, MAY 27, 1949
 9-12
 Dress: Optional Admission: \$1.75 (Corsage Inc)



Back Row, L to R: Bob White,
 Dave Cassidy, Rene Bisnaire
 Front Row: Helen Levesque,
 Pat Grieves,
 Rosemarie Girard,
 Shirley Lesperance, Inconnu,
 Shirley Wellman, Carol Taylor



BRDHS STUDENT COUNCIL — 1966

BACK ROW L-R: John Flannery, Bruce Haviland, John Watson, Roger Lebert, Dave Dupuis, Tom Good, Roy Sample, Ron Lalonde, Wayne Dean, Danny Neil, CENTRE ROW: John Campeau, Marie Adele Cormier, Penny Leigh, Lynda Bondy, Mary Ann Forget, Anne Larche, Dolores Strong, JoAnne Burgon, Janice Mulhall, Vickie Boucher, Michelle George, Bill Ladouceur, FRONT ROW: Darlene Parent, Paulette Bisnaire, Rod McDowell, Allison Rhymé, Dave Fields, Elaine Benoit, Mary Durocher.

STUDENT COUNCIL EXEC. ¹⁹⁷⁴ *BR&NS*



Mr. Ryan (Advisor), Cheryl Bellemore (External Affairs), Frank Dayus (Treasurer) Phil Dorner (Vice-President), Chuck Henri (President), Guele Poisson (Internal Affairs)

CLASS REPS. 9 & 10



Top Left: Carl Quenneville, Peter Cads, Bill Robinson, Dave Kincaid, Ken Byrne, Brad Lawler, Larry Marten, Carl George, Pierre Ouellette, Gord Banks, Lance Legault, Phil Montague, Middle Left: Shelley Sabutsch, Betty Trepanier, Cindy Garani, Louise Wottle, Debbie Kostanjevic, Diane Jansse, Marie Melady, Kathy Scully, Elaine Ghanam, Sandy Bauer, Bottom Left: May Jan Sylvestre, Brenda Nantais, Cheryl Manchuruk, Cheryl Blas, Sandra Ranaud, Lou Mahovobch, Sue Little Louise Quenneville, Tish Dengel, Pauline Papineau, Yvette Tremblay.

11, 12, & 13



Top Left: Don Trepanier, Ian Ferguson, Joanne Paters, Tim Byrne, Leo Meyer, Chuck Girard, Wayne Lessard, Brian Hastings, Hubert Paquette, Mike Lanour, Rod Herring. Middle Left: Pam Beausoleil, Michelle Baillargeon, Dori Durocher, Lynn Graydon, Karen Kaly, Theresa Campeau, Debbie Banks, Cindy Bridgen, Rosemary Hamelln. Bottom Left: Tom Allens, Helene Trembacher, Betty Lou Byrne, Lisa Tobin, Diane Pinsonneault, Lsette Leboeuf, Harry Hind, Jay Thilbert, Debbie Campeau, Al Drouillard.

Religious instruction at Belle River District High School (the name was changed from North Essex in 1968) was provided by the local clergy in the "study" period of the school day (2:50 – 3:30 p.m.). This continued until 1957 or 1958 when the school population became so great that the coverage by clergy became an impossible task. At this point the clergy continued to come to the school but were assisted by the catholic teaching staff who were guided in their task by a syllabus devised by the local priests. After several years this system broke down and religious instruction drifted out of sight from 1961 through 1967. In 1968, under Father A.P. Marentette's direction, Father Rivard hired a lay-catechist, Mr. Chris Howes, to conduct religion classes after school hours. The following year, Father Larry Pare, who was appointed to replace Father Marentette, had a portable classroom built. The portable classroom was financed by the contributing parishes, and religion classes were held during the students' spare periods throughout the school day. This continued for seven years but the financial burden on the contributing parishes appeared to be too great for the student-interest shown, despite the fact that the catechist's remuneration was minimal. In 1974 – 75, Mr. Howes completed his teacher training while working part-time teaching for the parish and in September 1975, took a full-time teaching position at St. Anne High School in Tecumseh. No effort was made to hire a replacement. Religious instruction which had been guaranteed in the decision to go 'public' was lost. The portable classroom was moved the following year to the St. Anne site and emphasis placed on the St. Anne program. The number of students commuting from the Belle River area to Tecumseh's St. Anne has grown from a handful in 1968 to several busloads today — the St. Anne total population has grown from 200 to 900 over those intervening years. All this growth despite inadequate facilities and tuition fees assessed in grades 11, 12 and 13; all this growth under the direction of its first lay-principal John Staley. Some area residents still travel into Windsor's Assumption High School for their catholic education . . . where this is done the parents assume responsibility for all transportation and tuition costs. Students, generally speaking, no longer attend other more distant "boarding" schools unless parents wish to perpetuate a family tradition, or students wish to avail themselves of a particular academic or athletic program not available locally.

French Language education in this province, and particularly in this area which was predominately French, received a serious setback in 1914 with the passage of the infamous Bill 17. This bill in effect outlawed instruction in French in the schools of the province... and in so doing drove a wedge between French-catholics and the Irish-catholics who had allied themselves with non-catholics to ensure passage of the bill. Many French-catholic priests, particularly in this area, opposed the government directive and refused to comply with it — — parent groups were actually encouraged by their priests to guard their schools against Department of Education inspectors who might discover that the law was not being complied with. Bishop Fallon, who supported the Irish catholic/government policy, went so far as to remove from parochial assignments, several priests who had openly defied the law. This ban continued for about 10 years and did immeasurable, but fortunately not irreparable harm to both the development of French Language instruction and the relationship between the two Catholic groups which had settled this area. French Language instruction was re-introduced to this immediate area at St. John Baptist School in 1930 when "the junior and senior fourth classes were divided for French improvement"; in 1932 St. Theresa School became bilingual, over the objection of several Irish-catholic board members; and in 1951 St. William School was opened as a bilingual school with the blessing of all concerned. People with vision saw the French language and culture being stifled and eroded by constant pressures and influences created either consciously or inadvertently, but nevertheless relentlessly, by a much larger, surrounding anglophone population. These visionaries saw that the only salvation for French language and culture was through the church and the schools. These new educational beginnings in French Language instruction were very modest, but local students acquitted themselves extremely well in local, regional, and provincial French contests, bringing honour and distinction to their schools and this communitiy. The Sisters of St. Joseph and the Pastors of St. Simon and St. Jude Parish deserve the undying gratitude of this community for their part in preserving this community's French heritage. Three local lay-teachers also deserve recognition for their contribution to this important task over the years — — Mrs. Leo Sylvestre (St. Anthony), and Mrs. Margaret Derdaele and Mrs. Bernadette Levesque (St. John Baptist and St. William).

In 1963, St. Theresa closed into St. John Baptist leaving St. John Baptist and St. William as the only area bilingual elementary schools. In 1972 with the construction of Pavillon Des Jeunes — — the french language elementary school built on the Renaud Line between Highways No. 2 and No. 42, by the Roman Catholic Separate School Board — — the French Language program in both St. John Baptist and St. William ceased to exist.



1973 Ecole Pavillon Des Jeunes 1974



PAVILLON DES JEUNES — GRADE 5, 1972

Front Row, L to R: Donna Sears, France Couture, Lucille Girard, Lufta Domi, Lorna Howell, Francine St. Pierre, Sylvie Morin, Jaclyn Poisson, Monique Vickerd, Julia St. Pierre, Denise Levesque, Laura Trottier

Middle Row: Julie Major, Nicolette Taylor, Joanne Benoit, Monette Boileau, Cecile Girard, Bernard Gullbeault, Daniel Taylor, Denis Dionne, Denis Laforest, Edouard Guilbeault, Richard Bellehumeur, Daniel Dufresne, Shelly Strong, Anne Marie Hammer, Eileen Ghanam

Back Row: Richard Allaire, Denis Beaudin, Kevin Ghanam, Jacques Antil, Keith Laforest, David St. John, Denis Poisson, Réal Morin, Gérard Bellemore, Ronald St. Pierre, Donald Barrette, Yves Fleury, Inconnu, Mme. Suzanne Caron, Teacher



THE STAFF OF PAVILLON DES JEUNES WHEN THE SCHOOL OPENED IN 1972

Première Rangée, G à D: Micheline Maltais, Suzanne Caron, Rachelle Boulais, Bernadette Drogosz, Jean Brûlé, Directeur, Diane Gauthier, Suzanne Lauzon, Denise Dubois

Deuxième Rangée: Gilles Gascon, Nicole Galipeau St. Pierre, Jean-Yves Losier, Madeline Denis, Paulette Campeau, Marie Little, Annette Martin, Jean-Marc Larocque, Pauline Lalonde, Marie-Jeanne Larocque



THE STAFF OF PAVILLON DES JEUNES TEN YEARS LATER — 1982

Première Rangée, G à D: Florence Barrette, Marie-Jeanne Larocque, Bernadette Drogosz, Loraine Couture, Huguette Provost, Sarah Whitehead

Deuxième Rangée: Elaine LeBlanc, Doris Morneau, Bernard Lafrance, Yvonne Chauvin, Richard Peltier, Yvette Levesque

Troisième Rangée: Herman St. Pierre, Marie Little, Gaetan Levesque, Léo C. Sylvestre, Directeur Jean-Yves Losier, Madeline Little (Absents — Loraine Chevalier, Claude Deschênes)

L'école Pavillon Des Jeunes ouvre ses portes en septembre 1972 sous la direction de M. Jean Brûlé. Elle est sous l'égide du conseil scolaire des écoles séparées d'Essex. Cette ouverture fit suite à maintes réunions avec les parents où il fut décidé de prendre la section française de l'école St. William d'Emeryville et la section française de l'école St. Jean Baptiste Belle Rivière et de construire une école de langue française. L'inscription était de 384 élèves. En plus, les classes de sciences familiales et travaux manuels desservent non seulement les élèves du Pavillon mais aussi plusieurs autres dans les parages y inclus les écoles de Pointe-aux-Roches, Emeryville, St. Joachim, Woodslee, Essex et de Belle Rivière. Avec les transferts des directeurs, Mme Pauline Bornais remplacé M. Brûlé en 1978. M. Léo Sylvestre est présentement le directeur.

French education at the secondary level was part of the program at St. James High School and when the decision to build a public high school to replace St. James was made, continuation of the French Language program at the public high school was a condition set in place by the planners. Français continued as a subject (one bilingual class at each grade level) at North Essex District High School from 1948 until 1969, with M. Orville Arel the principal teacher. In 1970, Brother David Pelletier and Brother André Laperriere were added to the staff of B.R.D.H.S. to satisfy the growing demand for French instruction. The credit system had just recently been introduced and this individual scheduling system lent itself particularly well to meeting individual language needs to whatever extent the French population demanded — and at this point French Language activists created sufficient political pressure to result in the creation of a new

"French Language Department" under Brother David. Brother André stayed for one year, Brother David for two. French language course-offerings went from only français to français, histoire, géographie, mathématiques, and orientation. At the end of Brother David's stay the departmental headship became the responsibility of John Mongenais who had come to Belle River earlier from a separate high school in Windsor with the express purpose of promoting French Language education. He worked with diligence and determination to build the department and the program over the next six years. This more comprehensive program was closed out in 1979 when L'École Secondaire L'Essor was built by the Essex County Board of Education in St. Clair Beach to handle the needs of French Language students from both Essex County and Windsor. A large number of Belle River French Language staff and students transferred to the new school, but Belle River continued to offer a class of français at each grade level, with M. Louis Moison the principal teacher. L'Essor has been under the direction of Mr. Paul Chauvin, son of Philippe Chauvin, a french language activist for many years. Paul is as dedicated to the cause of French Language education as his father and has built the school population to over 500 in just four years. French education has come a long way in the past 70 years — from a total ban on French Language instruction in 1914, to a fully composite French Language secondary school administered by a public school board by 1984 — no small achievement when one considers how slowly provincially controlled education institutions change, and how slowly racial, religious and linguistic prejudices die. It is interesting to note that St. Anne's in Tecumseh, which introduced a français program in the early 1970's to vie with Belle River for francophone students, expanded their program to keep pace with Belle River and competes with L'Essor for French Language students. What is even more interesting to note is that L'Essor is attempting to introduce Roman Catholic religious instruction to compete with St. Anne's. In my opinion whenever this type of healthy competition exist between schools, the students ultimately benefit.



THE BELLE RIVER D.H.S. FRANÇAIS STAFF, 1977

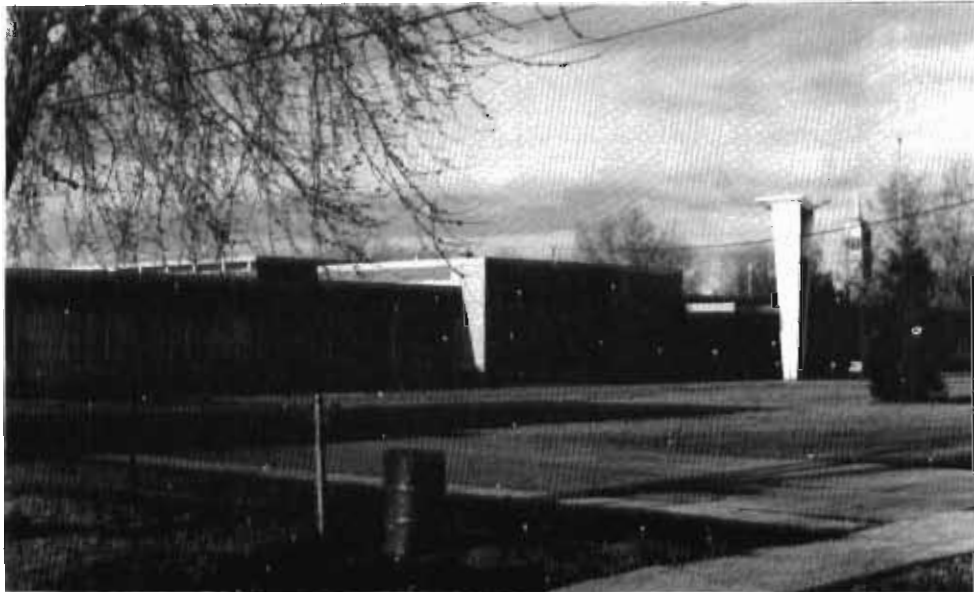
Back Row, L to R: Rene Godin, Louis Moison, Eugene Grondin

Front Row: Susan Shriver, Jean Mongenais, Flora Jones

**Mr. Moison stayed in Belle River to continue the Francais Program there.
The others transferred to L'Essor.**



L'Essor High School, St. Clair Beach



St. Anne's High School Tecumseh

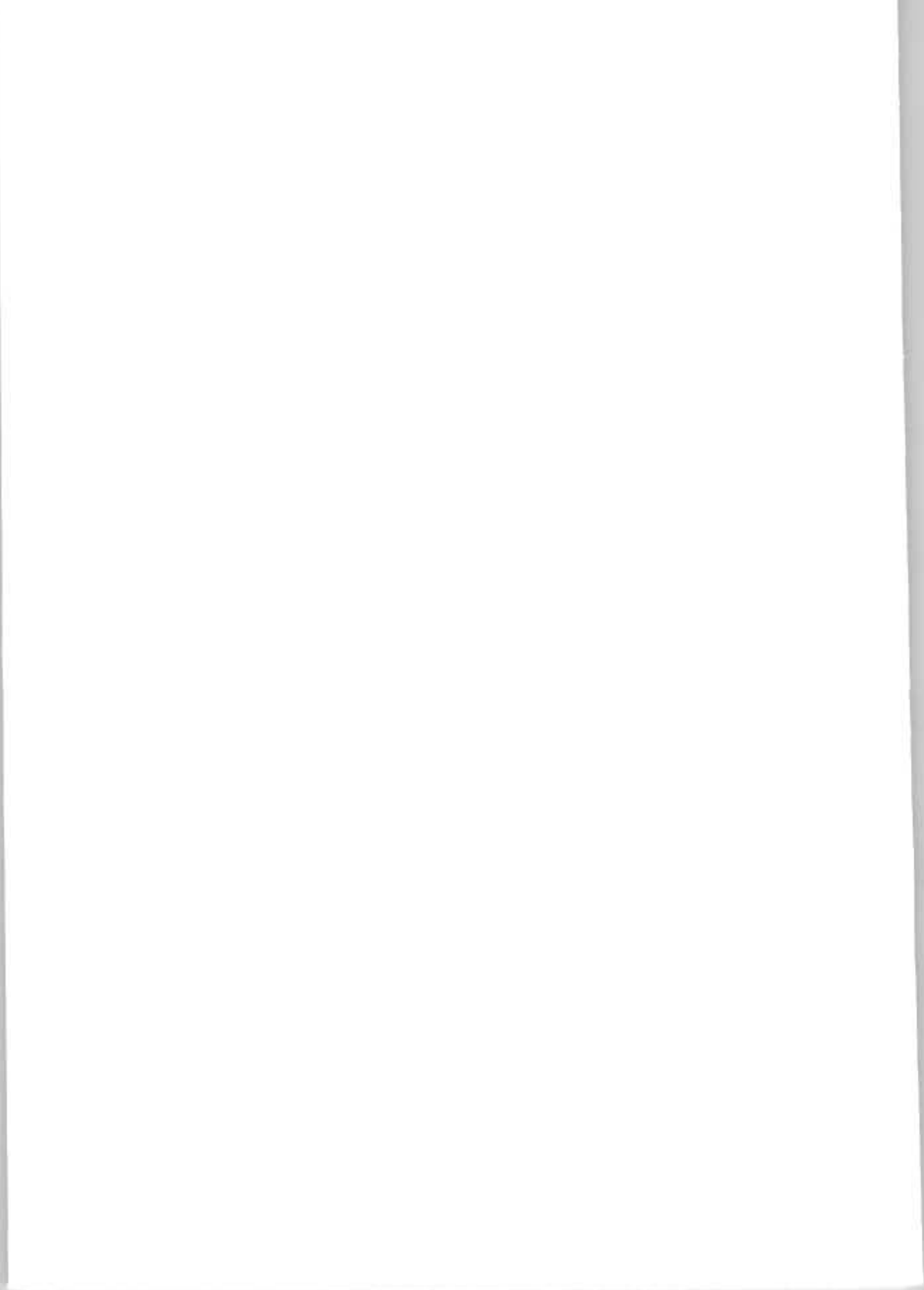
Music education was vital part of the Sisters of St. Joseph's educational and cultural commitment to our parish family. An excellent account of this part of our educational history is to be found in that section of this book dealing with their work in our community.

There may be some errors in this historical compilation, but this has to be expected when information is being drawn from several sources which are often at variance. If errors or serious omissions have occurred we ask that corrections or additional information be sent to Father Gerald Duchene, so that this historical outline can be amended and expanded by someone else at a later date. Many thanks to all those who contributed articles and pictures — — your help has made this task a pleasant one.



Chapter X
Original
Families
Familles
Pionnières





Families — Familles

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Barrette Arthur - Valerie Emery | 30. Lalonde Armand - Edna Ouellette |
| 2. Bezaire Arsene - Lucy Strong | 31. Lalonde William - Leonore Charron |
| 3. Bracken James - Mary Byrne | 32. Lavoie Armand - Emelie (Tillie) Ducharme |
| 4. Butler John - Mary Ellen Roach | 33. Marentette Thomas - Emilia Breault |
| 5. Byrne John - Ellen McMahon | 34. Meunier Norman - Ducharme Florine |
| 6. Charron Henri - Maria Anna Labbe | 35. Mousseau Philippe - Rose Lacharite |
| 7. Chevalier Guillaume - Girard Louise
- Beaugrand Therese | 36. Ouellette Denis - Nelinda Plante |
| 8. Cote Henry - Josephine Rose | 37. Papineau Joseph - Jeanne Marie
Blanchard |
| 9. Denomme Cyrille - Marcelline Mousseau | 38. Papineau John - Olive Girard |
| 10. Denomey Joseph - Libby Desjarlais | 39. Papineau Henry - Mary Plante |
| 11. Diesbourg Paul - Mary Jane Reaume | 40. Parent Leo - Susan Blanchette |
| 12. Diesbourg Felix - Rebecca Soulliere | 41. Plante Joseph - Emelie Fleury |
| 13. Dube Louis - Armenie Durocher | 42. Poisson Damase - Helene Diesbourg |
| 14. Ducharme Jeremie - Emelie Mousseau | 43. Poisson Alfred - Helene Laliberte |
| 15. Dupuis Alfred - Emily Durocher | 44. Renaud John D. - Isabelle Parent |
| 16. Durocher Denis - Adele Renaud | 45. Renaud Thomas - Nancy Forton |
| 17. Durocher Walter - Pearl Ouellette | 46. Robillard Oscar - Marie Louise Breault |
| 18. Gauthier Charles - Vitaline Denomme
- Alma Bouffard | 47. Robillard Maxime - Lea St. Pierre |
| 19. George Joseph - Annie Johns | 48. Rose Alfred - Mary Charron |
| 20. Girard Moise - Caroline Lalonde | 49. Sauve Isaac - Adele Dicaire |
| 21. Girard John - Lena Parent | 50. Sauve Elcide - Margaret Lefebvre |
| 22. Girard Samuel - Georgine Diesbourg | 51. Sauve Alvin - Clara Dupuis |
| 23. Granger Joseph - Josephine Girard | 52. St. Pierre Jephthe - Rose Plante |
| 24. Guilbault Arthur - Valerie Laliberte | 53. St. Pierre Wilfrid - Florence Mousseau |
| 25. Ladouceur Guillaume - Cesairie
Lacharite | 54. Strong William - Ellen Blanchette |
| 26. Ladouceur Lorenzo - Alma Lalonde | 55. Strong William J. - Jenny Marentette |
| 27. Ladouceur Henry - Josephine Rivest | 56. Sylvestre Leo - Dora Sauve |
| 28. Lacharite Eugene - Cora Ouellette | 57. Taylor Earl - Zoe Lalonde |
| 29. Laforest Rene - Regina Papineau | 58. Thibert Francois - Caroline Fleury |
| | 59. Trottier Ephraim - Anaise Charron |



Arthur Barrette
1877-1962

Valerie Emery
1887-1961

Among the early inhabitants of the Belle River area are the members of the Barrette family. A great great grandfather Antoine, son of Amable Barrette and Charlette Boyer from La Prairie, a town southwest of Montreal, bought 200 acres of land situated in Lot 12 in the Second Concession of Rochester. Their home was a few hundred feet from present Myer's corner and the east half is still owned and operated by a descendant Francis Barrette. Antoine and his wife Sophie Tetrault raised a family of nine children: Euclide, Xavier, Albert, Josephat, Remi, Arthur, Louise, Ernestine, Philomene.

Un de leurs garçons Arthur épousa Valérie Emery, fille de Charles Emery et Catherine Primeau, le 12 mai 1903 dans l'église St. Simon et St. Jude. De ce mariage, le couple fut béni par dix-sept enfants: Marie (Eugène Laporte), Joseph (Marie Clara Beaudoin), Alfred (Edwidge Lebert), Eléonore (Christophe Gagnier), Laurent, Berthe (René Bussièrès, Omidas Beaudin), Henri (Bernadette Diesbourg), Laurentia (Moïse Tatro), Raymond, Aldéa (Adelard Couture), Dorothy (Césaire Renaud), Maurice, Bernadette (Morte à 4½ ans), Daniel (Isabelle Dupuis), Marguerite (Oliva Lebert), Léonard, Jeannette (George Carney).

Their children attended St. Theresa's School. In 1953 Mr. and Mrs. Barrette celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Arthur, a retired farmer died May 10, 1962 and Valerie had pre-deceased him on June 13, 1961. Both are interred in the St. Simon and St. Jude Cemetery as well as his parents Antoine and Sophie.

Our parish is proud to pay tribute to the Barrette family. Many descendants are still very active in our parish activities.

Arsene Bezaire
1889-1969

Lucy Strong
1889-1979

Arsene Bezaire, né le 29 Avril 1889 à Rivière aux Canards était le fils de Felix Bézaire & Philomène Beneteau. Il naquit d'une famille de sept frères, Dolphis, Emile, Elie, René, Clément, Raymond, Théophile et de sept soeurs, Marie, Helene, Julie, Alida, Elizabeth, Rose et Alice.

Lucy Hosanna Strong was born October 27, 1889 in Belle River, daughter of Martin Strong and Melvina Tetrault. Her family was composed of two brothers, Francis and Elmer, and a sister Alfreda.

De ce mariage le 24 juin, 1916 à Belle Rivière, fut né 3 enfants, Félix Martin, Lloyd George et Anna Marie.

The family returned to Belle River from Windsor at the beginning of the depression and lived on the present No. 2 Highway next to Grant Martindale. Arsene worked at the Provincial Bank till 1928. After several difficult years, Mr. Henri Charron hired him to work for him in Ville Marie, P.Q. In 1937, he found a job at Chryslers to continue till his retirement.

During these years, he was very active on the School Board, and is remembered by the Knights of Columbus for his role as Lecturer. Also he was a devoted worker for the church, where he served in the choir and in the Ushers Club. He never missed a wake, often leading the prayers himself. Lucy remained in the background most of the time but her cheerfulness and kindness made her remembered by all who met her.

Their eldest child, Felix, was ordained to the priesthood on May 26, 1945. Lloyd George and his wife Violet Straw presented them with eight grandchildren. Their only daughter Anna Marie became a member of the Ursuline Order in Chatham.

Arsene died in 1969 and Lucy passed to her reward in 1979. Both are buried in St. Alphonsus Cemetery, Windsor. Both are gratefully remembered by the parish for their faithful service and fine example.

**James Bracken
1884-1971**

James Bracken, son of an Irish immigrant, Patrick Bracken, was a life-long resident of Concession 2, Rochester Township. He was born, lived 87 years and died on the same farm, one which his father had purchased in 1869 from Olivier Laforet.

On April 24, 1912, he married Mary Byrne, daughter of John Byrne and Ellen McMahon, of Woodslee Parish. They had a family of three: Clarence J. deceased in 1972; Bernadette H. married to (Joseph F. Mooney); and Marie.

**Mary Byrne
1886-1964**



During his lifetime Mr. Bracken served as trustee on S.S. No. 17 School Board. He was interested in education and saw to it that his family had the opportunity to get as much education as was then available in Belle River.

He was also a member of the Holy Name Society and the Knights of Columbus Council 2775.

In their middle age Mr. and Mrs. Bracken liked to travel, believing that an annual rest was necessary for everyone. A winter pastime was playing euchre.

Mary Bracken died on January 21, 1964 at the age of 78. James Bracken died on July 11, 1971 at the age of 87.

**John Butler
1862-1946**

**Mary Ellen Roach
1866-1944**



JOHN AND MARY ELLEN BUTLER FAMILY
Left to right: Lawrence, Harold, Christine (Della), Thomas, Alfred, Eleonore, Blanche, Mabel, and Reuben.

John Butler, born in 1862 was the oldest son of Mathew and Ellen (Mullins) Butler. He came from a family of nine children: John, (Mary Ellen Roach); Bridget, (Thomas Kenney); Margaret, (Philip Lefaive); Thomas (died at 29 years of age); Edward; William, (Florence Hickey); James (died at the age of 20); Maurice; Mathilda (one month old); Mrs. Mary Avory.

His father, Mathew, bought a 100 acre farm from the Crown Land Sale on February 10, 1854 and farmed all his life on the old homestead on the 2nd Concession of Rochester Township, Lot 11. His children attended Byrnedale School.

On October 23, 1893, John married Mary Ellen Roach at Our Lady of Help Church in Detroit but they immediately became residents of Belle River on the "Butler Farms". In 1943 they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They have four daughters: Mabel, (Frank Byrne); Blanche, (Jack Lefaive); Eleonore, (William Lefaive); Christine, (Conrad Murphy); and five sons: Reuben, (Agnes Mullins); Alfred, (Gladys Strong); Harold, (Germaine Meunier), (Evelyn Bellemore); Lawrence, (Bridget Dywer); Thomas, (Yvonne Denommé). The John Butler family attended Sacred Heart School.

The Butler family was among the early settlers in this parish and their descendants are still residents of this area and continue to show leadership in the community.



**Standing from left to right: Simon, Ellen (Mrs. Hector Lebert), Micheal John, Ida (Mrs. Eugene Lebert), Lorena (Mrs. P.J. Dunn), James Bracken
Seated: James Byrne, Mary (Mrs. James Bracken)**

**John Byrne
1860-1956**

**Ellen McMahon
1862-1899**

John Byrne, son of an Irish immigrant, Michael Byrne, was a life long resident of Concession 3, Rochester Township. He was born, lived and died on the same farm which his father received as a Crown Grant from Queen Victoria on January 20, 1848. This document is still in the possession of the family.

John Byrne married Ellen McMahon in 1881 and there were seven children born of this union. Mrs. Byrne died in 1899 at the early age of 37. Mr. Byrne never remarried but kept his family together with the help of his eldest daughter, Mary, who was only thirteen when her mother died. The six children who survived were: Simon; Mary (Mrs. James Bracken); Lorena (Mrs. P.J. Dunn); Ida (Mrs. Eugene Lebert); Michael John; and Ellen (Mrs. Hector Lebert).

Mr. Byrne had a lively interest in politics and served one term on the township council.

He also enjoyed deer hunting. He was one of the first members of the Ruscomb Hunt Club (now defunct), and each year went north for the big hunt. He made his last hunting trip at the age of 90.

John Byrne was baptized and made his First Holy Communion in St. Simon and St. Jude Parish. Later when the Woodslee Parish was formed, his property being within the Woodslee Parish boundaries, his family was transferred to Woodslee.

**Henri Charron
1886-**

**Maria Anna Labbé
1895-1975**

La famille Charron est originaire de St. Martin de Meaux, Champagne, France. Pierre, le premier ancêtre est venu au Canada en 1663 et s'établit à Longueuil.

Un descendant, Henri Charron est né le 16 avril 1886 à Belle Rivière, fils d'Abraham et Adèle (Hamel) Charron. Il assista à l'école au cimetière où 40 élèves composaient les 1ere à 6e années. Lorsqu'il était encore très jeune ses parents sont morts alors il s'aventura vers le nord.

C'est à Fabre, co. Témiscamingue, Quebec, le 25 septembre 1912 qu'Henri épousait Marie Anna Labbé, fille de Octave Labbé et Eugénie Provencher. Après quelques années, ils retournent avec leur famille ici où ils s'établirent sur une ferme sur la rive ouest de la Belle Rivière. Là, ils ont été reconnu pour leurs fraises.



La famille comprend cinq enfants: Leo (curé à sa retraite à Belle Rivière), Marie Anne (Amédée St. Pierre) (décédée le 2 octobre 1982), Albert (Marie Jeanne Frenette), Alphonse (Yollande Brisson) d'Ottawa, et Thérèse (Norbert Quenneville).

Pendant leur vie, M & Mme Charron ont été très actifs aux activités paroissiales. Dans notre église, un des vitraux, don de la famille Henri Charron, rappelle la mémoire de leur dévouement à la paroisse. Nous les remercions de tous leurs bienfaits surtout pour l'encouragement à la vie sacerdotale de leur fils, Leo.

Le 11 mars 1975 Maria Anna quitta cette terre et Henri célébra son 98e anniversaire pendant notre Année anniversaire.

**Guillaume Chevalier
1879-1965**

**Louise Girard
1880-1916**

**Therese Beaugrand
1897-1964**

Guillaume Chevalier's ancestry dates back to Guillaume Chevalier and Rolline Aiber of Normandie France.

Guillaume was born April 28th, 1879 in Belle River, son of André and Felice (Tineault) Chevalier. He married Louise Girard on October 2nd, 1899. She was the daughter of Moise Girard and Caroline Lalonde. They had six children: Two boys died in infancy, Ida, Rose, Leo and Ernest. Louise died young on February 17, 1916. Guillaume remarried Therese Beaugrand, daughter of Joseph Beaugrand and Mary Toulouse. Seven offspring were born, one died an infant, Florida (Ferrari), Eddie, Dorothy (Price), Rita (Sheffer), Gerald, and Isabelle (Teremchuck).



Guillaume bought his father's farm in 1903 and farmed all his life. He had a great love for animals and was always ready when called to attend a sick animal day or night. He especially liked a good fast horse although he was among the first to buy a 1915 Model T Ford. Like his mother, he never missed going to the Windsor Market to sell his produce on Saturdays.

Guillaume went to his eternal rest on February 23, 1965 and Therese had passed away two months prior on December 5, 1964.

Several of Guillaume's children were and are residents of this parish and many of their descendants live in and around the Belle River area.

**Henry Côté
1883-1952**

**Josephine Rose
1886-1978**



Henry Cote, son of Joseph Cote and Mary Papineau was born in Bay City, Michigan on October 25, 1883. On September 10, 1906, he married Josephine Rose, born November 21, 1886 in Big Point, Ontario, daughter of Alfred Rose and Mary Charron. They lived in River Rouge, Michigan the first 12 years of their marriage and had five boys, Alfred, Felix, Ernest, Eugene and Victor.

They settled in Belle River in 1918, bought a home at 606 St. Charles Street, and had five more children: Herman, Marie, Edna, Rita and Margaret.

In his earlier years, Henry was a lumberman cutting logs until he entered the Detroit Edison Co. as a blacksmith in 1923. He retired in 1948 after twenty-five years of service there. He enjoyed his retirement as he was an avid fisherman and carpenter. He made his own tools and sinkers for fishing.

Mr. Cote died June 9, 1952 at the age of 69.

In 1942, they were blessed with the ordination to the priesthood of their son, Victor. After Father Cote's death, Mrs. Cote donated in his honor, the beautiful crucifix which hangs over the main altar of our church.

She was also instrumental in the success of her son Herman's grocery store, the former Eastern Market, which served the parish for thirty-three years. The store closed in 1979.

Mrs. Cote died August 5, 1978 at the age of ninety-two. She had been a member of the C.W.L. and Sacred Heart Societies.

Cyrille Denommé
1863-1939

Marcelline Mousseau
1865-1949



This pioneer couple are the grandparents, great-grandparents, and great-great-grandparents of all the Denomey's in town. They came to this area in the 1890's from St. Joseph on Lake Huron.

Cyrille was the son of Louis Denommé and Sarah Ducharme. Marcelline was the daughter of Pierre Mousseau and Rose Girard. She had a sister Vitaline (Joseph St. Pierre), and three brothers Joseph (Mary Lesperance), Louis (May Tellier), and Peter.

They were married April 9, 1883. Their children are: Joseph (Libby Desjarlais); Vitaline (Charles Gauthier); Virginie (Philibert Meunier); Louis (Lena Parent); Albert (Dahlia Laliberté); Rose Anne; Bertha (Raymond Gouin); Aurèle (Margeurite Gouin).

Mr. and Mrs. Denommé farmed most of their lives. He passed to his reward March 10, 1939 at 72 years and Marcelline died August 5, 1949 at 84 years. The parish wishes to recognize this family in this our 150th anniversary. Many of their descendants are still very active in our parish.

Joseph Denomey
1886-1958

Libby Desjarlais
1889-1965

Joseph Denomey became a business man when he bought a general store in 1914 and operated it until 1946 when Herman Côté bought him out. He also kept a barber shop until he became too ill. He held the position of a school trustee for many years.

Joseph, son of Cyrille and Marcelline (Mousseau) Denomey, was born September 16, 1886 at St. Joseph, Ontario in Huron County.

In September 1908, he married Libby Desjarlais in Stoney Point. She was born there on September 25, 1889, daughter of Antoine and Elizabeth (Ladouceur) Desjarlais.

They were blessed with thirteen children: Yvonne (Thomas Butler), Ernest (an Oblate Missionary), Eugene (Florence Monforton), Edna (Sister Marle Lalement Sister of St. Joseph), Armand (Evelyn Wilson), Corrine (Maurice Forget), Lucia (died 1 year old), Rosalre (Evelyn French), Leo (Evelyn Wilson), Gerard (Catherine Monteith), Therese (Herman Labadie), Arthur (died 3 months old), and Geraldine (died 18 months old).



This couple taught their children that honesty is the best policy as well as reverence for people consecrated to God. Armand, Rosaire, Leo and Gerard were all altar boys. Joseph was an usher and he helped in any way possible with church, school or convent enterprises. His death came February 18, 1958 and Libby a faithful C.W.L. member, passed away March 8, 1965.

We are honoured to recognize the Denomey family in this special edition of the parish's history book.

Paul Diesbourg 1855-1903

Pierre and Margaret Diesbourg immigrated to the new world from Alsace Lorraine about 1852. They had six children, one dying on the crossing over. There doesn't seem to be much knowledge of their oldest daughter Olive who died at the age of 25 years. Two of the children, Theodore and Helene were born in Detroit.

Mr. Chislohm let it be known that he desired a miller for Belle River and Pierre answered the call and started work in the town as its miller. He managed to buy 100 acres of land on Belle River Road and thus started the Diesbourg farm. He divided his land between Theodore and Paul.

Theodore married twice, first marriage to Sarah Papineau and second to Eugenie Poisson.

Paul also married twice. First marriage to a Miss Lapin from Puce. From this marriage were two sons, Theodore and Pierre. Pierre died at 2 years of age.

Paul's second marriage was to Mary Jane Reaume from Paincourt, Ontario on February 24, 1879 and from this marriage there were twelve children. He died in February of 1903 at 48 years of age. Mary Jane died in January of 1929. Theodore, son of Paul from first marriage also married twice. First to a Miss Brown from Chatham, and the second to a Miss Louella Clark from Detroit. They had two sons, Paul and Leo. No issue from Paul, and 5 girls and an adopted son named Theodore from Leo.

Paul and Mary Jane had twelve children: Emile, Edward, Francis, Mary Jane, Charles, Julia, Henry, Arthur, Cora, Fred, Blaise and Calixe.

Emile ran the farm until he was forced to retire. He never married and died in 1965.

Edward married Violet Johnson and had two children, Gladys and Earl. They had the first theatre in town and he was Denison Court Clerk. They also ran a ladies and men's wear store. Gladys married John Parent in 1936 and had four children, Joan, Neil, Charlene and Nicolas. Gladys was well known around as an artist and did some repainting of statues for St. Simon and St. Jude Church. Earl married May Levacque from Tecumseh. They had two children, Juanita and Jan. They lived in Belle River a few years, then moved to Florida and are now back in Canada. Edward died in 1953.

Francis was a train engineer and married Isabelle Greenway. They had two children, Thelma and Douglas. Thelma married Gerald Poisson, son of Dr. Paul Poisson and they had 5 children. Douglas died quite young and left 2 daughters. Francis died in 1962.

Mary Jane married Pierre Renaud in 1903. They had no children and she died in 1904 at 20 years of age.

Charles married Ruth Fraser from Detroit. Charles was active in the Hotel business and ran the Wellington Hotel in Belle River a number of years (1924-1939). They had two children, Betty (Gordon Martindale) and Shirley (Don Caza).

Julia married Robert Tolmie in November 1913. Of this union were born two children, Dorothy and Robert. Dorothy married Castle Crook and Robert took as his bride Marie Schnarr. Julia was active in the Good Neighbour Club and the Senior bowling team. She donated a hand made quilt for the Good Neighbour Club to raffle.

Henry spent most of his life in the West and entered the army for W.W.I. He was section foreman for a train company out there. He married and had two daughters, Joan and Aldean, died in 1981.

Arthur was president of Heuther Brewing Co. in Kitchener and involved in other enterprises. He married Grace Joyce in 1936. They have two adopted children, Jimmy and Carolyn. He died in 1953.

Cora, deceased March 1975, married Josephat Renaud and moved to Comber. They had ten children: Paul, Wilfred, Janette, Isabelle, Leo, Arthur, Alfred, Albert, Leo and Omer.

Blaise also joined the army for W.W.I. He married Lucy Blanchette and they had one daughter Lela.

Alfred was a bartender in Detroit. He married twice but had no children. He died in 1944.

Calixe lived to be 30 years of age and never married.

Three of these children are now living in Belle River. Charles - 95, Julia - 94 and Blaise - 85. Julia's daughter Dorothy is also now a resident of Belle River for 7 years.

Mary Jane Reaume 1860-1929



THE PAUL & MARY JANE DIESBOURG FAMILY
Back Row Standing: Blaise, Edward, Arthur, Charles, Henry, Emile, Francis and Alfred.
Front: Cora (Josephat Renaud), Mary Jane Diesbourg, Calixe, Julia (Robert Tolmie, Joseph McMahon)

**Felix Diesbourg
1887-1976**

**Rebecca Soulliere
1895-**



THE FELIX DIESBOURG FAMILY

**Front row: May, Felix Diesbourg and Rebecca
Back row: Francis, John, George, William,
Elle and Pete.**

Felix Diesbourg son of Theodore Diesbourg and Eugenie Poisson was born July 3, 1887 in Belle River. He came from a family of six children. He had three brothers, and two sisters: George, Georgine (twins), H el ene Marguerite, Jerome Hector and Aim e.

His grandparents were Pierre Diesbourg and Margaret Thiery whose children numbered five, two daughters and three sons: H el ene, Pierre, Paul, Emilie and Theodore.

Felix Diesbourg married Rebecca Soulliere on November 9, 1915. She was the daughter of William Soulliere and Emily Plante. Of this marriage were born eight children, six boys and two girls: William (Marie Jeanne Ouellette), Peter (Emma Ouellette), Elie (Emilie Renaud), John (Bernadette Mousseau), Francis (Marguerite Dennis) and George (Madeline Diemer) and daughters - Mae (Donat Tremblay), Minnie (deceased at the age of eight).

This family grew to thirty-eight grandchildren and as of May 31, 1983, these children have blessed their grandparents and parents with forty-three great grandchildren.

The family is also very honored to have some of the grandchildren of Felix and Rebecca serving God. Father Raymond Diesbourg who is a Sacred Heart Missionary Priest and is now teaching at Sacred Heart Seminary in Chicago, Illinois; Sister H el ene is a nun in the St. Joseph Order and was recently teaching school in Windsor, and Brother Edward who is a Capuchin Brother and is now serving in Manitoba. All three are the children of John and Bernadette Diesbourg of London, Ontario.

Every year, the family gathers at the home of Mrs. Elie Diesbourg of Woodslee for a picnic and reunion and games are enjoyed by all. There are always the euchre card games for the older members of the family, that used to make Felix and Rebecca so well known around the Belle River and Woodslee area.

**Louis Dub e
1876-1963**

**Arm eni e Durocher
1872-1947**

Daughter of Charles and Olive (Dupuis) Durocher, Arm eni e was born the fourth of December, 1872. She married Joseph Langis who died March 7, 1912 (42 years). She remarried three years later to Louis Dub e on February 15th, 1915.

Louis, born July 26, 1876, was the son of Joseph and Elizabeth (Renaud) Dub e. Louis died October 26th, 1963 (87 years). Arm eni e died September 15th 1947 (73 years).

Both rest peacefully in our parish cemetery.



Jérémie Ducharme
1868-1942

Emélie Mousseau
1874-1941

Jérémie was the son of Pierre Ducharme and Olive Ferland from the parish of St. Felix de Valois, County of Joliette, Quebec. He came to Belle River in 1874 when he was six years old. His family first settled in the old vacated rectory at the cemetery and he attended Sacred Heart School.

Jérémie was one of fourteen children. Some died in infancy, but those who survived were Jean Baptiste, Marie (Mrs. Louis Laforest), Ovila, Louis, Josephine (Mrs. Francis Laforest), and Severin.

On June 20th, 1893 he married Emélie Mousseau, daughter of Narcisse and Julia (Ducharme) Mousseau. She had four sisters and five brothers.

For 28 of the 68 years that he lived in Belle River, Mr. Ducharme was a councillor or reeve. When the \$60,000. Belle River waterworks was built in 1925, he and his wife helped board and lodge the contractor and his twelve men for months. Luckily they lived in a very large 6 bedroom home at the west end of St. Charles on a farm of 16 acres in the village and 85 acres in Rochester.

During their 49 year marriage they were blessed with eight children: Emelie (Tillie) (Mrs. Armand Lavoie); Minnie (Mrs. Ovide Forget); Florine (Mrs. Norman Meunier); Catherine (Mrs. Otto Drouillard); Lucille (Mrs. Norbert Sylvestre); Aurele, Arthur and Eugene.



Emélie while raising her family, was also active in the Altar Society. She helped the church groups to clean the old pews, wash the white and gold trimmed altar, and scrub the wooden floor. This was called a spring cleaning bee. She sewed white surplices and black cassocks for the altar boys for many years.

Jérémie was widely known throughout the district and was active in the Catholic Church work. He was president of the St. Jean Baptiste Society for four years and also belonged to the League of the Sacred Heart and the Holy Name Society.

In addition to his other civic offices, Mr. Ducharme had been justice of the peace for Belle River, and also on the Belle River School Board for five years.

He helped establish the first canning factory in the village. While he was councillor, the Rochester Municipal Telephone started to lay the first telephone lines through the village. The first office or central was operated in the Philip Mousseau store, and Clara (Mousseau) Teller was the first telephone operator. She was relieved by Rose Mousseau.

On his farm were seven active oil wells, four located on Notre Dame Street and three others in the orchard. Because the company failed, the wells were abandoned, but Belle River may still be sitting on oil.

Reeve Jérémie died October 28, 1942 at 72 years, and his wife Emélie had predeceased him the previous year on May 5th, 1941 at 67 years. Both are buried in our St. Simon and St. Jude Cemetery as are their deceased children. (35 grandchildren survived.)

**Alfred Dupuis
1888-1966**



**Emily Durocher
1894-**

The Dupuis family was among the early settlers in our area. Church records indicate that Aimable Dupuis and Victoire Knappe had children born and baptised in Belle River as early as 1846. Their son Joseph, born in 1859, married Rose Delima Souchereau on April 30, 1878. From this marriage most Belle River Dupuis' are descendants.

Alfred was one such son, born March 5, 1888 and he had five brothers: Arthur (Elizabeth Denes), Ernest (Armeline Ducharme), Guillaume (died 1930), John (Fimetta Lefebvre) and Edmond (Eva Soulliere); and two sisters: Jennie (Ulric Marentette) and Marie Louise (died 1891, 14 months).

Emily, born June 12, 1894 in Maine, was the daughter of Cezaire and Louise (Dube) Durocher. Her sisters were Elizabeth, Lucy (William Thibert), Odile (Sephare Caza), Amy (Frank Campeau), Ella (Adelard Caza) and her brothers: Eddie (Ida Beaune), Ulric (Nelida Paré) and René (Bella Beaune).

After their marriage on February 23, 1914, Alfred and Emily farmed for 40 years on the Belle River Road (now the home of Kraft's Landscaping). In the 1930's he bought and sold horses. They raised four children: Herman (Audrey Gostlin), Evelyn (William Allen), Hattie (Harry Laporte) and Lucy (Philip Lauria). They attended Sacred Heart School. In 1956 they retired to their modest home at 525 Broadway Street. In 1964 they celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary. With sorrow and regret Alfred passed away October 25th 1966.

After Alfred's death, Emily chose to educate a foster son Luis Flores. Thanks to her generosity he became a priest and was ordained in Quito Ecuador, South America.

In 1983 Emily is still an active member of our parish community. We have been extremely fortunate to have such parishioners as these who through the years have set a fine example of Christian living and that it has been carried on devoutly by their descendants.

**Denis Durocher
1877-1955**

Denis was born in Belle River on the 24th of October 1877. He was the son of Charles and Olive (Née Dupuis) Durocher. His four brothers were Charles, Elie, Emile and Ulysse. His four sisters were Arminie, Annie, Elmire and Amanda.

On the 18th of April, 1899, Denis married Adèle Renaud, also born in Belle River the 15th of November 1879, daughter of Jean Baptiste Renaud and Marcelline Moreau. She had two sisters Marguerite and Victoria and five brothers Pierre Denis, John Louis, Joseph, Frederic and Edgar.

Denis and his wife Adele settled on their sixty-five acre property at the corner of old Highway Number 2 and the west Belle River Road. The Ontario Department of Highways purchased some of his land to construct the well-used highway.

**Adele Renaud
1879-1965**



Front row (left to right): Edna, Olive, Mr. Denis Durocher and Mrs. Adèle (Renaud) Durocher and Merine

Back row: Henry, Ernest, Aurele, Wilfrid and Rheal.

This fine couple raised eight children during their marriage: Aurele (Marie Lebert), Wilfred (Lucia Ducharme), Edna (Eugene Charette), Ernest (Eva Arpin), Rheal (Eleonore Cada), Merline (Rosaire Levasseur) later (Aurele Marentette), Henry (Bernadette Ladouceur) and Olive (Arsene Fleury).

Being a very successful farmer of some 300 acres, he later handed his farms to his sons Henry, Ernest, Rheal and Aurele so that they could continue the farming operations.

The Durocher contribution to the betterment of our community is appreciated by all who know them.

**Walter Durocher
1900-1968**

**Pearl Ouellette
1902-1982**

Walter Durocher, the son of William Guillaume and Therese (Mailloux) Durocher was born March 6, 1900 on the farm south of the C.P.R. on Belle River Road. He attended St. John Baptiste School then furthered his studies in "Business" in Chatham. Upon his return he worked in the General Store owned and operated by his father. The store was located just north of the C.P.R. on Belle River Road. He married Pearl Ouellette January 23, 1923 and moved back to the farm which he worked until his death on January 9, 1968. He was a member, and one time President of the St. Jean Baptiste Society. He also served as a trustee on the Separate School Board.

Pearl (Ouellette) Durocher, the youngest of fifteen children was the daughter of Alfred and Mathilda (Fontaine). She was born on November 20, 1902 at the corner home which still exists on St. Charles and St. Paul Streets. The pastor, Fr. L'Heureux hired her as church organist at the age of eleven. During the early part of her marriage she was absent for eleven years, then returned as active organist and choir director for the Centennial Celebration of the Parish in 1934. She retired in 1971 and was honoured as "Parishioner of the Year" at a parish party. The pastors during her forty years of service to the church were: Fr. L'Heureux, Fr. Laliberte, Fr. Baillargeon, Fr. Marentette, and Fr. Pare.



**Alfred — Walter — Gerard
Marguerite — Pearl
Durocher**

Walter and Pearl were the parents of three children, Alfred born November 25, 1923, Marguerite - June 2, 1925 and Gerard - October 15, 1932. They attended St. John Baptiste School. Alfred went on to Sacred Heart College in Sudbury. He was a church usher for many years and also served on the Worship Committee. He married May (Feldman) of Windsor on September 4, 1948. They had three children, David who was born September 4, 1949, Mary - July 20, 1951, and Mark - March 31, 1953. All three attended St. John Baptiste School as did their father and grandfather before them; then went on to North Essex High School.

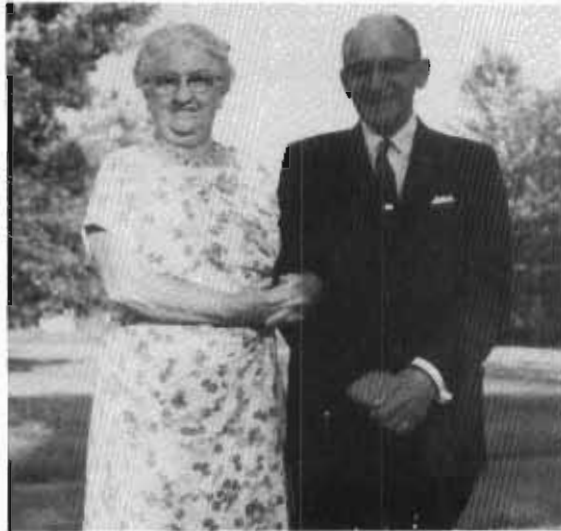
Marguerite completed her studies at St. James High School, the present Canadian Legion building. She was a member of the Sodality and became assistant church organist. She became a Windsor resident after her marriage to Francis Janisse on January 25, 1947.

Gerard was active in the Squires and church choir. He moved to Windsor where he became employed and later married Shirley Ann Chapman on September 23, 1953. They moved back to the family farm in 1968. Their four children received their primary education at St. John the Baptiste School and graduated from North Essex High School.

Charles Gauthier
1892-1967

Vitaline Denomey
1889-1920

Alma Bouffard
1896-



Mr. Charles Gauthier deserves to be acknowledged by our St. Simon and St. Jude Parish for his years of service to Belle River.

Charles was born March 11, 1892 in Tecumseh, son of Joseph and Louise (Parent) Gauthier. He had one sister, Delia Ellwood, one brother Theodore and an adopted brother Norman.

Mr. Gauthier along with five others was instrumental in bringing about the hydro-electric power into our village on December 8, 1922.

He served the village for 36 continuous years. He started with the waterworks department in August 1926, became the village treasurer in 1928 and the assessor in January of 1945. He also became the building inspector. He was the sixth man in Ontario to be honoured with a certificate denoting 25 years of service to the Canadian section of the American Waterworks Association. Mr. Gauthier retired December 31, 1963.

Mr. Gauthier married Vitaline Denomey, daughter of Cyrille and Marcelline (Mousseau) Denomey who died February 1st, 1920, only seven years after their marriage. In 1922, he married the former Alma Bouffard and they raised four sons, Leonard, Paul, Denis and Maurice, also two girls, Mrs. Arthur St. Onge (Dora) and Mrs. Adrien St. Pierre (Annette).

Mr. Gauthier was also the chief designer of our St. Simon and St. Jude Parish Hall. He spent many hours working on the project and then both he and Mrs. Gauthier helped in the kitchen.

To Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gauthier, the parishioners of the St. Simon and St. Jude Parish are very thankful.

Joseph George
1872-1949

Annie Johns
1873-1957

Joseph George immigrated from Lebanon in 1900, leaving his wife Annie and two children, Louis and Nazira behind for three years. They then settled in Detroit where Laura was born, moving to Belle River in 1905.

Because of the language barrier, Mr. George resorted to selling small merchandise such as jewellery, household products, and notions, carrying his supplies on his back and walking long distances.

Later, Mr. Zakoor, a fruit merchant, from Windsor delivered his produce once a week by wagon to this area and Mr. George became our first local fruit merchant.

Through hard work, courage and thrift, this successful enterprise led him to purchase Noe Parent's general store which he later sold to buy the King George Hotel, a business he managed till his death in 1949.

Their children are well known and respected citizens of this community: Louis (Helen Gabour); Nazira (George Ghanam); Laura (Charles Barber); Mary (Hector Rose); Alfred; Annie (Edmond Fournier); John (Evangeline Berthiaume); Kathleen (Vern Jobin); and Clifford (Jean Logan).

Their son John, who was elected to Council in 1945, was the first mayor of the town of Belle River. He served 33 consecutive years and was honoured as an outstanding citizen by the present council.

Another son, Clifford also served 15 years on council and 30 as a volunteer fireman.

Mrs. Annie George died on September 14, 1957 and Mr. George had predeceased her on October 9, 1949.

The history of this courageous family is a fine example of the struggles and hardships endured by our early citizens.



Front row (left to right): Alfred, Laura, Mrs. Annie George, Joseph George, Mrs. Nazira Ghanam, Louis, Mary
Back row: Clifford, Kathleen, Annie, and John.

**Moise Girard
1856-1944**

**Caroline Lalonde
1859-1944**

Belle Rivière était une très petite mission lorsque Moise Girard, né dans la province de Québec, arriva au comté d'Essex avec sa famille, à l'âge de quatorze ans. Il était le fils de Julien et Catherine (Paquette) Girard.

A peu près en même temps, Joseph et Adelaïde (Dicaire) Lalonde déménagèrent de Québec avec leur jeune fille Caroline.

Le 22 juillet 1879, Moise épousa Caroline dans l'église St. Simon et St. Jude. Ils élevèrent huit enfants: Louise (Guillaume Chevalier), Alexandre, Marie Anne (Adolphe Lachapelle), Jean Baptiste (Lena Parent), Adelaïde (Leon Renaud), Marie 'Minnie' (William Henry Girard), Sarah (Hermas Robillard), Delima Josephine décédée le 15 janvier, 1919 à l'âge de 21 ans.



Ce couple travaille la terre sur la première concession du canton de Maidstone pendant la partie majeure de leur vie. Ensuite ils prirent leur retraite à Belle Rivière.

Ils célébrèrent leur 60e anniversaire de mariage en 1939. Moise meurt le 31 mars 1944 et un mois plus tard Caroline aussi passe à la vie éternelle le 17 avril.

Moise fut un des pionniers de la région aida à couper le bois pour construire la charpente de notre église. La paroisse doit beaucoup à ces hommes qui ont mis leur expérience, leurs talents au service de notre communauté.

**John Girard
1889-1982**

**Lena Parent
1894-1983**



La paroisse St. Simon et St. Jude a servi John et Lena Girard pendant toute leur vie. Ils reçurent leur baptême, leur première communion, leur mariage par le Père L'Heureux le 21 novembre, 1910, le baptême de leurs enfants, leur 50e anniversaire, leur 60e anniversaire, et en 1980 leur 70e anniversaire. Après la mort de John le 6 août, 1982, sa messe d'enterrement fut dite ainsi que celle de Lena lors de sa mort le 10 mars 1983 par leur fils, le Père C. Girard.

John était le fils de Moise et Caroline (Lalonde) Girard et Lena, était la fille d'Israel et Marie Anne (Lacharite) Parent.

M. Girard se retira de sa ferme vers l'année 1945 et ensuite fut employé comme concierge à l'école St. Jean Baptiste pendant environ treize ans.

Ce couple fut béni par huit enfants: Isabelle (religieuse St. Joseph), Leonard, Rev. Clifford (ordonné le 12 juin 1943), Rita (décédée en 1963) et René, et trois bébés, Napoleon, Gérald et Joseph décédés très jeunes.

En cette année de notre 150e anniversaire la paroisse est reconnaissante envers la famille de John et Lena Girard et leurs descendants qui ont contribué à son avancement.

**Samuel Girard
1880-1974**



**Georgine and Samuel Girard
holding eldest child
Arzase**

**Georgine Diesbourg
1889-1963**

Samuel's grandfather, Laurent, came to Canada and settled in St. Polycarpe, Quebec with his wife Pelagie Quesnel.

Samuel's father, Louis, born in 1844, married Philomène Goulet. In 1873, they left St. Polycarpe, travelling by wagon, and oxen, with two small children to arrive in Belle River. Their first stop was the church, that was at that time situated on the present cemetery property.

They bought a 75 acre parcel of land for \$100.50 on the 1st Concession of Maidstone Township, lot 18, (the farm is presently owned by Bob and Annette Anderson). They cut down trees to build a log house. Around 1876, they sold this farm and bought another 100 acre parcel of land on the second concession which to this day is still farmed by Marvin and Eugene Girard.

They had seven children: Olive (Jean Baptiste Papineau); William (Louise Annie Laliberté); Samuel (Georgine Diesbourg); Louise died at 15 months; Rose (Telesphore Dore, Aimé Diesbourg, Daniel Denis); Josephine (Joseph Granger); Celina (Adelard St. Onge).

A third generation, Samuel Girard and Georgine, daughter of Theodore Diesbourg and Eugenie Poisson were married October 25, 1909 in Belle River. Their descendants Arzase (Bernida Girard); Cleophas (Imelda Rivest); Irene (Denys Bisson, Wilber Smith); Norman (Ida Girard); Oscar (Marie Mousseau); and their children are all active parishioners of the St. Simon and St. Jude Parish.

The Girard name is one of the most common family names in this community.

**Joseph Granger
1867-1939**

The original Granger family of seven brothers came from Ireland to Canada. They settled in Quebec but around 1867 Joseph's father Zépherin moved to this area and settled near La Salle.

Joseph Zépherin was born in Grand Marais, the son of Zépherin and Aimée Lombard. He had a brother, Frank and a sister, Laura (Théophile Papineau).

Le 17 février, 1895, Joseph épousa Josephine Girard, fille de Louis Girard et Philomène Goulet. Elle avait deux frères, William et Samuel, et trois soeurs, Rose, Delima et Olive. They settled on Concession 1, Maidstone Township, near 401, where they farmed all their lives.



**Josephine Girard
1871-1949**

M. Granger was a member of the St. Jean Baptiste Society, Holy Name Society and the C.M.B.A. and was also chairman of the school board of No. 13 School for 42 years, and was a member of the Maidstone Council for 7 years.

Its élevèrent huit enfants, deux garçons, Alfred et William (Marie Bisson), et six filles Jenny (Alfred Thibert); Minnie (Emile Trepanier); Merone (Aurèle Marentette); Eveline (Henry St. Pierre); Louise (Raymond St. Pierre); Bernida (William Lebert).

Mr. Granger 72, passed away September 26, 1939 and Mrs. Granger departed from this earth ten years later on November 1, 1949 at 78 years.

From this pioneer family the St. Simon and St. Jude parish is happy to still have many of its descendants active in our parish.

Arthur Guilbault 1872-1958

When a tornado hit the church steeple in late November 1922, this brave and skilled carpenter was one who helped repair it.

Arthur Guilbault was born June 21, 1872 in Ste Emélie, Quebec. Since his mother had died at 38 years he was on his own at a very early age. He began working in the forest for 50 cents a week. He soon learned all about lumber and became interested in building. He built the Log Cabin Inn in Belle River (across the street from Melady Funeral Home on the west side) and many other buildings in the area. We must remember there were no electric tools to work with and he walked to and from work from Belle River to Puce.

Valerie Laliberté 1874-1956



Valerie Laliberté's family had moved from St. Joachim, where she was born October 14, 1874, to Jewett City, Connecticut to work in the cotton mills. That is where she met Arthur and married him. Their first son Arthur (Edna Morin); was born there. They returned to Belle River and settled in the existing home site at 432 Notre Dame Street. Their other children were Valerie (Louis St. Pierre), Wilfred 'Fritz' (Elizabeth Ladouceur), Alphonse 'Dicker', Bernadette (Allen Drew), Edmond 'Clutz', Aurore, and Analda (Herman Allard).

This courageous couple worked their one acre of land where he planted corn, grape vines, and fruit trees. He also had a cow and a few pigs. Step by step, he built a chicken coop and she would set hens and raised chicks.

Mrs. Guilbault passed away January 3, 1956 and two years later he died November 1958.

The Guilbault family was a well respected family of our parish. However, over the years the number has decreased and only a few members of the family remain in this parish.

Guillaume Ladouceur 1858-1948



**Front: Mrs. Césairie (Lacharité) Ladouceur and Mr. Guillaume Ladouceur and Josephine.
Back: Adrian, Réal, Lorenzo, Gabriel and Aldéric.**

Césairie Lacharité 1852-1918

Many descendants of the Guillaume Ladouceur and Césairie Lacharité marriage still reside in our parish.

Guillaume, born in Côteau Landing, Quebec, son of Théophile and Archange Marentette, first married Marie Beauchesne on October 28, 1879 but Marie died on the 15th day of January, 1882 at 19 years of age.

Later, on the 24th of July, 1883 he takes as his wife Césairie Lacharité, daughter of Antoine Lacharité and Henriette Dubé.

From this union, 6 children were raised: Aldéric, married on January 28, 1913 to (Emma Girard) daughter of Joseph and Léocadie (Poisson); Gérard Gabriel took Albina Goulet, daughter of Jean Baptiste Goulet and Helene Lalonde, as his bride on June 20th, 1911; Lorenzo took as his wife, Alma Lalonde, daughter of Napoléon and Etudiante (Ducharme) Lalonde on October 12, 1914; Réal married Marie Lavoie on May 8, 1916, daughter of Leon and Emma (Bonnet) Lavoie; Adrian, born in 1891, took as his wife Adèle Bouley, and Josephine, on July 17, 1917, became the wife of Hubert Parent, son of Donus and Natalie (Robidoux) Parent.

One 2 year old boy Joseph Armand died on the 13th of July, 1891.

Mr. Guillaume Ladouceur died on October 26th, 1948 at the age of 90 years. His wife Césairie had predeceased him by 30 years on May 31, 1918 at 66 years of age.

**Lorenzo Ladouceur
1888-1945**

**Alma Lalonde
1889-1981**



**Front row: Bernadette, Mr. Lorenzo Ladouceur,
Mrs. Alma (Lalonde) Ladouceur and Rachel.
Back row: Gerald, Arthur and Leo.**

Lorenzo was the son of Guillaume and Césairie (Lacharité) Ladouceur. He was born February 28, 1888 in Belle River. He had four brothers: Adrian, Real, Gabriel and Alderic and one sister Josephine (Mrs. Hubert Parent).

Alma was born the 22nd of November, 1889, daughter of Napoleon and Etudiante (Ducharme) Lalonde.

Lorenzo and Alma were married on October 12th, 1914 in Belle River. After their marriage they settled on the West Belle River Road and raised a family of five children: Arthur, married Germaine Lavoie; Gerald, married Elizabeth 'Betty' Pilon; Rachel, married Louis Pinsonneault (Rachel died July 16th, 1979); Leo, married Catherine Bellemore; and Bernadette became the wife of Henri Durocher of this parish.

Lorenzo went to his eternal rest on June 2nd, 1945 but Alma lived to 91 years leaving her beloved ones on May 18, 1981. Besides her children, she left 16 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren as descendants, some of whom belong to our parish.

They have proved to be worthy residents of our community.

**Henry Ladouceur
1873-1944**

**Josephine Rivest
1877-1940**

Henry Ladouceur, a Belle River native, was born December 22, 1873, the son of Théophile Ladouceur and Archange Marentette. Théophile came to Ontario from Côteau Landing, Quebec in 1834 after he had worked in lumber camps. One day he met a government agent who sold him 120 acres of Crown Land for \$123.00 to be paid in three payments. This property was located on West Belle River Road.

There he settled and on May 20, 1854, he married Archange Marentette, daughter of Jacques Marentette and Elizabeth Labadie. They had ten children: Adeline, Adele, Guillaume, Joseph, Josephine, Francois, Henry, and three infants died at birth.

After Théophile died on April 18, 1901 at 76 years of age, Henry, being the youngest took over the farm. Henry married Josephine Rivest, daughter of Joseph Rivest and Julienne Beauséjour.



They had only one son, Edgar, born in 1900 on his grandfather's farm. He attended Robillard School. Mr. Ladouceur tells us that his family boarded many teachers who taught at that school. He also recalls how he would drive his grandmother and her neighbour Mrs. Baptiste Sauvé to Tecumseh to attend the feast on Ste Anne's on July 26 with his horse and buggy. The journey began very early in the morning to be on time for 10 o'clock mass.

In 1921, Edgar married Edith Thibert, daughter of Francois and Caroline (Fleury) Thibert, in St. Simon and St. Jude Church. They had two sons, Eugene who married Theresa Tellier and had three children; and Maurice took Yvonne Papineau as his wife and they had three children also. After twenty-five years of farming Edgar and Edith moved to Belle River leaving the farm to their sons. Here Edgar assisted Mr. Melady at the funeral home for a further 26 years.

They have been blessed with many years of togetherness celebrating their 62nd wedding anniversary.

The St. Simon and St. Jude Parish are proud to have had the Ladouceur family as their pioneer parishioners.

Eugene Lacharité
1885-1962

During this 150th anniversary, the parish would like to recognize this special couple who became the parents of one of our native priests Rev. Father Lawrence Lacharité.

Eugene Lacharité was born May 20, 1885 in Sandwich, the son of George and Helene (Renaud) Lacharité. His family consisted of eight children: Alfred, Ulysse, Edule, Denis, Rose, Alma and Adeèle.

Cora Ouellette
1866-1953



Cora Ouellette, daughter of Alfred and Mathilda (Fontaine) Ouellette, was born August 30, 1886 in Belle River. Thirteen children composed her family: Denis, Gilbert, Dora, Alma, Cora, Arthur, Alderic, Edward, Marie, Adrine, Jean B., Edna and Pearl.

On November 22, 1909, Eugene and Cora were married by Father L'Heureux. They raised five sons: Edmond (Beatrice St. Pierre), Lawrence, Arthur, Ernest (Ann Chauvin) and two daughters: Marie (Eddie Marentette), and Stella (John Arvan).

Four of the sons served in the Armed Forces while Lawrence became a priest. At one time, Mr. and Mrs. Lacharité operated an ice cream parlour at the corner of Notre Dame and Chisholm where the St. Pierre block is today. Later, they moved to Windsor where Eugene died December 12, 1962. Cora had predeceased him on December 31, 1953. Both are buried in Windsor.

There are several descendants of the original Eugene Lacharité family living in this parish and they continue to contribute to the support of their church and community.

Réné Laforest
1885-1963

Régina Papineau
1881-1966



Réné Laforest, son of Louis Laforest and Marie-Louise Ducharme, was born in Belle River on December 7, 1885. He had two brothers: Joël (Marie-Emma Reaume) and Sévérin.

On January 11th, 1911, he married Régina Papineau, daughter of Moïse Papineau and Georgina Sauvé, born on December 31, 1886.

Mr. and Mrs. Laforest's first home was on West Belle River Road where he farmed for a number of years. (Laurent St. Pierre lives there now.)

He gave up farming and moved to the village where for ten years he operated an ice cream parlour at the corner of Notre Dame and Chisholm Street, (now the St. Pierre block). He then purchased a grocery store which he operated for about fifteen years before selling the business to Armand Lalonde. He then was employed by the beer store until his retirement in 1953.

Mr. and Mrs. Laforest raised a family of nine children: Aurore (William Carlson), Emily (Paul Peerenboom), Laurentia (James Dean), Jeanne (Francis Ladouceur), Emmanuel (Rita Renaud), Georgine (Douglas Peterson), Abel (Bernice Girard), Rachel (Fred Warnke), and Genevieve (Louis Larivière). Thirty-nine grandchildren survive.

Our parish is truly fortunate and thankful to this family whose contribution to the community will be gratefully remembered.

**Armand Lalonde
1892-1978**



**Seated in front: Armand and Edna Lalonde and Edouard.
Back row: Yvonne, Claudette, Veronique, Robert and Joseph.**

On se souvient de M. Lalonde surtout pour son intérêt ardent au parti Libéral dont il était président régional pendant plusieurs années. Il fut aussi conseiller du village, et membre actif de la société Saint Jean-Baptiste. M. et Mme furent décorés par cette société. Comme passe-temps après sa retraite, il fut agent d'immuables pour la compagnie Lepage.

De cette union sont nés six enfants: Joseph, époux de Pauline Sylvestre; Véronique, épouse de Marcel Pignal et décédée en 1954 à l'âge de 27 ans; Robert décédé en 1976 à l'âge de 47 ans; Yvonne, épouse de Jérôme Chauvin; Claudette, épouse de Marcel Pignal; et Edouard, époux de Rhéa Couture.

Mme Lalonde décédée le 30 décembre, 1972 et M. Lalonde le 6 décembre, 1978, laissent 21 petits enfants.

**William Lalonde
1871-1955**

William Henry 'Bill Sr.' Lalonde, was born in Balla River on February 3, 1871, the son of Gaspard Lalonde and his wife Zoe Dube.

Gaspard was born in Coteau Landing, Quebec in 1843. He and his parents Jean B. Lalonde and Elizabeth Arsenault, five brothers and four sisters moved to Belle River in the 1850's. Gaspard married Zoe Dube in 1868. She was the daughter of Joseph Dube and Marie Dupuis. She was born in 1847 and died in 1879 at the age of 32 leaving seven small children. Gaspard died in 1917 at the age of 76.

In 1901, William married Leonore Charron, daughter of Abraham Charron and Adelaide Hamel and grand-daughter of Francois X. Hamel and Monique Durocher, as well as of Paul Charron and Eleonore Morin. They had four children: Zoe, wife of Earl H. Taylor; Jeannette, single, died in 1982; Mathilde, wife of Ernest Taylor; and Wilfred 'Bill', single.

William was a farmer. He purchased 30 acres of land on the West Belle River Road, which is now the Charron subdivision, in 1898. He also owned the land on the East Belle River, south of St. Peter from Lalonde Street to St. Jude inclusive, on which the Belle River tennis court, St. John de Baptiste School, Belle River United Church and the Belle River Public School are now located.

Wilfred 'Bill', his son still resides in the old family home, which was moved there in 1904, from its former location, namely the 30 acres on the West Belle River Road.

William died in 1955 at the age of 84, and Leonore, his wife, in 1968 at the age of 93.

**Edna Ouellette
1898-1972**

Un de nos paroissiens renommés fut M. Armand Lalonde né le 20 septembre, 1892, fils de Napoléon et de Etudienne Ducharme. M. Lalonde avait quatre soeurs: Aurore (Wilfred Bécharde), Alma (Lorenzo Ladouceur), Agnes (Wilfred Fleury), Amanda (Edmond Ouellette, Avellin Ranger) et deux frères: Aurèle (Minnie Deschaines), et Arthur (Alma Morin).

Le 3 septembre, 1923, M. Lalonde épousa Edna Ouellette, fille de Alfred et de Mathilde (Fontaine) Ouellette. Mme Lalonde aussi était membre d'une grande famille bien connue dans cette région: ses frères Denis, Gilbert, Arthur, Alderic, Edouard, Adrien, Jean Baptiste; et ses soeurs Dora, Alma, Cora, Marie et Pearl.

Les jeunes époux demeurèrent à Windsor mais achèterent bientôt une terre sur la route est de la rivière (maintenant chez Roland Schiller) où ils demeurent jusqu'en 1941. Alors ils achetèrent l'épicerie et boucherie "Red and White" qu'ils maintinrent avec leur famille jusqu'en 1960.

**Leonore Charron
1875-1968**



**Armand 'Mike' Lavoie
1889-1965**

Always interested in community activities, Armand 'Mike' Lavoie organized the St. Simon and St. Jude Ushers Club in 1926. In 1937, a charter was granted to the Belle River Knights of Columbus Council 2775 and he was one of the organizers. He assisted in building the first K. of C. hall. He also contributed to the building of the grotto in our church yard, providing the stone cross in the centre. He was active in the construction and upkeep of the War Memorial placed in memory of Belle River's departed soldiers. For many years, Mike owned and operated a grocery store at the west end of town.

Armand, né le 29 avril 1889 à Belle Rivière, était le fils de Leon et Emma Bonnet. Le 23 juin 1913, il épousa Emélie Ducharme, fille de Jérémie et Emélie (Mousseau) Ducharme.

**Emélie 'Tillie' Ducharme
1894-1975**



Leurs enfants sont: Leo (Rita Chevalier) et Lorraine (Harold Catton) et Béatrice (décédée en 1921 à l'âge de 7 ans).

Mrs. Lavoie was very active in church affairs and for many years made and repaired the church vestments. She was a lifelong member of the Altar Society as well as the Catholic Women's League.

In 1963, they celebrated their 50th Wedding anniversary. Two years later, on February 18th, 1965, Armand passed away. Ten years to the day February 18th, 1975, Tillie went to her eternal rest.

To people such as Mike and Tillie, the parish will remain forever indebted.

**Thomas Marentette
1874-1950**



**Emilia Breault
1881-1962**

Thomas Marentette, born November 7, 1874 in Belle River was the son of Henry and Elizabeth (Papineau) Marentette. He passed away in Belle River on June 15, 1950.

Emilia Breault was born September 18, 1881 in Lowell, Massachusetts. She came to Canada at the age of three and settled in this area. She died November 28, 1962 in Belle River.

Thomas and Emilia were married on November 22, 1903 in Belle River by Father L'Heureux.

Mr. Marentette was previously married to Rosalie Lachapelle on February 10, 1896, but she died December 5, 1898. They had a child Lena, (July 28, 1898) now Mrs. Paradis. They raised two other children their son, Edward (Marie Lacharite) who resides in Belle River and Florence (St. Onge Thibert).

Emilia came from a family of seven children. She had three brothers: Camille, Eugene and Joseph; and three sisters: Clara, Louise and Delia. Thomas' father had four children from a previous marriage: Gilbert, Sadie, Lottie and Rose. Thomas' mother had four children also from a previous marriage. They were Steve, Gus, Adolph and Henry Lesperance. When they married they produced Thomas plus one brother Gregoire and one sister Louise. Altogether there were eleven children.

After Thomas died in 1950, Emilia married Joseph Killaire of St. Joachim and lived with him in Belle River until her death in 1962.

**Norman Meunier
1903-1972**



**Florine Ducharme
1898-**

Norman Meunier, born May 23, 1903 in St. Joachim, was the only son of Arsene and Malvina (Sylvestre) Meunier. He had five sisters: Estelle (Ellery Lepain); Yvonne (Raymond Sylvestre); Germaine (Harold Butler); Jeannette (Denis Plante); and Marie (Tim Ford). Norman worked the farm along with his father in St. Joachim for many years while also keeping a job at Ford's, retiring after 29 years.

On October 28, 1930, he married Florine Ducharme in Belle River. They were blessed with seven children, two sets of twins in two years. Colette (Dan Ashton), Paul (Sheila Finn) and twins Joseph (Doloes Paré), John (Barbara Pettypiece); twins, Carmenne (Gary Murdock) and Camille (Margaret Slade), and Leona (Ingo Andresen). Also surviving are 27 grandchildren.

After her children were in school and old enough to help at home, Mrs. Meunier started working voluntarily at the Parish Hall. Along with Altar Society President, Mrs. Eva Durocher, she worked for eight years seeing to the preparation of food for activities in the largest hall around. Then she became president and continued in the same way for another ten years. Mr. Meunier would come to lend a helping hand many a night.

In 1970, Mrs. Meunier was named Parishioner of the Year along with two of her sisters, Mrs. Catherine Drouillard and Mrs. Minnie Forget. Mrs. Tillie Lavoie, Mrs. Lucille Sylvestre two other sisters and three brothers, Aurèle, Arthur and Eugene were the children of a well known couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jérémie Ducharme.

To Mr. and Mrs. Meunier the parish of Belle River is most grateful for their unrelenting help and is pleased to recognize them in this our 150th anniversary.

**Philippe Mousseau
1876-1902**

Philippe Louis Mousseau was born on May 1, 1876 in Drysdale, Ontario. He was the son of Narcisse Mousseau and Julia Ducharme. The family moved to Belle River in 1881. Mr. Mousseau married Rose Lacharité on September 21, 1897 in Belle River.

They had one son Raymond, born June 10, 1898 and one daughter Eleanore, born November 23, 1905.

Their son married Lena Durocher, July 26, 1921. They left Belle River shortly after their marriage and lived all of their lives in the Windsor area.

**Rose Lacharité
1834-1906**



Their daughter Eleanore, married Earl Gillies on June 21, 1932. They lived in Pontiac, Michigan for approximately two years and then returned to Belle River. Mrs. Gillies is still a resident of our parish community.

Mr. and Mrs. Mousseau operated a general store in Belle River for over 40 years. The original store was moved to 469 St. Charles Street and the white cement block building at the corner of Notre Dame Street and Church Street, now occupied as an apartment building was their place of business. Mr. Mousseau was reeve of Belle River for one year in 1907. He operated the first hydro commission from his home. The hydro bills were prepared by him and at the time, postage for delivering the bills was two cents. He had given his two granddaughters the opportunity of delivering these bills, on their bicycles, for one cent each.

Mr. Mousseau also had the first Belle River telephone office in his store. The late Clara Tellier was the first telephone operator. She began working at the age of 13, in 1906. Many will remember the store where they went to buy penny candy. Others will remember the first day of school (located across the road) and lining up at Mr. Mousseau's for their books and school supplies.

Mr. Mousseau died on November 14, 1955 at the age of 79. Mrs. Mousseau sold the store, shortly after this, to Wilfred St. Pierre and went to live with her daughter, Eleanore. She passed away on March 21, 1964 at the age of 91.

**Denis Ouellette
1874-1940**

A prominent Belle River citizen, Denis Ouellette was President of the St. Jean Baptiste Society as well as chairman of the decoration committee during the St. Simon and St. Jude Centennial Celebrations in 1934. He served as choir master for 40 years, attending daily mass, Holy Week ceremonies, and singing for all weddings and funerals. Later he was accompanied by his youngest sister Pearl.

Mr. Ouellette, born November 10, 1874, was the son of Alfred and Mathilde (Fontaine) Ouellette. He came from a family of thirteen living brothers and sisters: Gilbert (Helena Wilkinson); Dora; Arthur (Mathilda Sauv ); Alma (Jean Baptiste Adam); Cora (Eugene Lacharit ); Alderic (Ella Desrosiers); Edward (Amanda Lalonde); Jean Baptiste (Delia Adam); Edna (Armand Lalonde); Pearl (Walter Durocher).

Denis was a sailor and captain of the schooner "Jenny". On July 29, 1901, he married Melinda Plante, daughter of Thomas Plante and Melanie Dufresne. They raised five children, Edmond (Bella Durocher); Wilfred (Lillian Chauvin); Della (Raymond Durocher); Alida (Don Chauvin); Raymond (Rose Beausoleil).

During Belle River's centennial year in 1974 Mayor John George chose Mrs. Melinda Ouellette, our eldest citizen, to unveil the plaque commemorating the founding of Belle River. She lived to the ripe old age of 98 years, leaving this earth on November 17, 1982. Mr. Ouellette had predeceased her on November 10, 1940.

To this wonderful couple and their many descendants the St. Simon and St. Jude Parish are very grateful for their years of devotion to their parish.

**Melinda Plante
1884-1982**



**Joseph Papineau
1815-1904**

**Jeanne Marie Blanchard
1812-1894**

Joseph Papineau Sr. and his Jeanne Marie Blanchard came to the Belle River area around the year 1840. They settled on a farm on the West Belle River Road. It is recorded that in the summer of 1845, Bishop Michael Powers of Toronto, made an episcopal visit to the Mission of St. Jude and stayed for three days at the Papineau home. Mr. Papineau was also the foreman in charge of building the Mission church of St. Jude which was completed in 1848.

This pioneer couple raised six children: Sophie Rosalie (Octave Gauthier); Elizabeth; Antoine (Annie Bisson); Moise (Georgina Sauv ); Joseph Jr. (Marguerite Langlois) and Ang le (Jean Baptiste Ouellette).

Joseph Sr. died in 1904 and his wife Jeanne Marie died on February 7, 1894.

**John Papineau
1875-1959**

**Olive Girard
1877-1963**



JOHN and OLIVE PAPINEAU FAMILY

Front row: Lena, John Papineau, Olive (Girard) Papineau, Edouard

Back row: Edgar, Irene, Raymond, Edna, Alvin.

John Papineau was the son of Joseph Papineau Jr. and Marguerite Langlois. In 1899 he married Olive Girard, the daughter of Louis and Philomene Girard. They farmed a 135 acres on the West Belle River Road, which farm is now owned by Victor Papineau.

John and Olive were blessed with eleven children: Raymond (Cecilia Marentette); Alvin (Celina Daudlin); Edna (Daniel Poisson); Edouard (Celina Daulin); Edgar (Ella Giard); Irene (Gilbert Poisson); Lena (Dophis St. Denis) and four children who died in infancy.

In 1951, the elderly couple left their farm to move into the town of Belle River. In 1959 they celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary surrounded by their children and 28 grandchildren.

John Papineau died on March 29, 1959 and his wife Olive died June 22, 1963. The parish is grateful to the Papineau family and their descendants for their many contributions to the parish.

**Henry Papineau
1881-1960**

**Mary Plante
1882-1967**



**From left to right:
Rosalle, Marie Elmire (Plante) Papineau
Isabelle, Alfred, Louis and Henry Papineau.**

Henry (Honore) Papineau, the son of Joseph Papineau Jr. and Marguerite Langlois was born in 1881. On April 15, 1902, he married Mary Plante, the daughter of Joseph Plante and Emilie Fleury. Their children were Alfred (Alice Maitre), Rosalie (Albert Dugal, Gilbert Thibert), Louis (Avila Soulliere), Isabelle (Louis Calvert), Mathilda (Leonard Denomey) and Pearl (Anthony Michaels).

Henry died on January 14, 1960 and his wife Mary died on January 29, 1967. They are both buried in St. Simon and St. Jude Cemetery.

**Leo Parent
1905-1977**

**Susan Blanchette
1904-1974**

Leo Parent was always an outgoing and friendly man who loved his family, loved his church and loved his town. He was born December 21st, 1905 right here in Belle River. The house he was born in still exists directly behind the present Cooper's Court. He was the son of Adolphe Parent and Odille Goulet. They had a large family of seven brothers: Edward, George, Bernard, Leo, John, Maurice and Gerald.

He met and married Susan C. Blanchette born September 1, 1904 daughter of Michael Blanchette and Ellen Strong. The family farmed on the Lakeshore Road. In fact it was there that they got to know each other since Leo would work on their farm during the summers.



They were married May 11, 1935 in Sts Simon and Jude Church. Betty Jane, who now lives in Indiana, was the oldest of the children and she married Luke Pinsonneault of St. Joachim. Then there was Robert who married Donna Hutnik. And they now live in Windsor. Lastly, there was Michael who was ordained to the priesthood in 1967.

Leo's gifts to his parish were many and they were generously shared. His years of involvement among other things included work on the School Board that spanned about 25 years, service with the Ushers Club, the St. Vincent De Paul Society, the Senior Citizen's Club, Goodfellows etc. He had become a landmark in Belle River doing his share on the Parks Board, and providing us with some sporting thrills both as a player and as Manager of the Belle River Senior hardball team.

The support of good friends like Bill and Isabelle Blanchette who lived neighbour to them in Belle River made life very worthwhile in that little neighbourhood.

Susie had fallen victim to Diabetes just after the birth of Michael. Consequently Leo retired early from General Motors to care for her. Her witness to suffering always revealed the great Faith she had in God her Father.

Their children were privileged to see a couple so beautifully living out their promise of marriage. Fidelity was a keyword of theirs, even though it may not have been in their ordinary vocabulary. It was for better or for worse until death. Of all the gifts they received from God in their lifetime they would surely have to be the most treasured.

There were so many others also who sacrificed as they did. And there will be many more to come.

Susan died February 18, 1974 and Leo died of a sudden heart attack February 16, 1977. They are both buried in the Sts Simon and Jude Cemetery and now live with the Father. Thanks be to God.

**Joseph Plante
1845-1929**

Around 1875, a brave gentleman and his wife, Joseph Plante and Emélie Fleury came to our vast wilderness to settle on the corner of Concession 2 in maidstone on the north side of County Road 42 where Edgar Plante lives today. Joseph cleared his land, built his home and farmed.

Some time later, he would leave his family on Monday morning, walk to Assumption Church in Windsor, where he worked as a mason's helper on the construction of Assumption, carrying mortar to the brick layers. Saturday night, he would walk back to be with his family on Sunday.

**Emélie Fleury
1857-1924**



They raised nine children: Rose (Jephté St. Pierre), Louise (William Dupuis), Frederick (died 18 yrs.), Adelard (Lucille Poisson, Maggie Diesbourg), Marie (Henry Papineau), Melinda (Henry Girard), Amanda (Alfred Girard), Clara (Paul Amédée Girard), Celina (Daniel Brunelle), Marie Delina (died 1 day old).

Joseph died the 27th of September, 1929 and his wife Emélie had predeceased him on the 3rd of May, 1924. She was the daughter of Aimable Fleury and Delima Duquette of St. Barthélemy, Quebec.

The parish has benefited by the decision made by Joseph and Emélie to come and settle in our parish. Many descendants still belong to our parish.

**Damase Poisson
1857-1944**



**Hélène Diesbourg
1861-1959**

La famille Poisson vient de Victoriaville, Quebec pour s'établir à Belle Rivière vers l'année 1866. Damase vient par ici, âgé de neuf ans, avec ses parents, Damase et Marie Papineau, quatre soeurs Eugénie (Théodore Diesbourg), Léocadie (Noé Girard), Marie (Felix Sauvé), Marguerite (Joseph Granger) et deux frères Joseph Liboire (Adeline Léger, Victoire Champagne Lauzon). Jérôme, né en 1867 (Elizabeth Lachapelle) et Antoine, né en 1869 sont baptisés à Belle Rivière.

Damase fut fermier quelques années puis acheta un moulin à scie d'où il travailla comme menuisier pendant que sa dame s'occupait de la ferme. Lorsqu'il prit sa retraite à 63 ans il déménagea sa famille à Belle Rivière. Il fut un des premiers directeurs de la société St. Jean Baptiste de Belle Rivière.

Hélène Diesbourg, fille de Pierre et Marguerite (Thiery) Diesbourg, née en 1861 en Allemagne avait deux frères Paul et Théodore et une soeur Emélie (William Girard). Comme enfant, elle se rendait à l'école Sacré Coeur et elle assistait à la messe à l'église située au cimetière. Elle participa à la première classe de première communion dans l'église St. Simon et St. Jude au village en 1871.

Un double mariage eut lieu le jour de leurs noces lorsque Léocadie, soeur de Damase maria Noé Girard et que Damase épousa Hélène Diesbourg, le 26 novembre, 1878. De cette union, neuf garçons sont nés, deux mourant comme bébés et une fille. Alfred (Hélène Laliberté), Edmond (Amanda Nantais), William (Elizabeth Girard), Paul (Gertrude Conner), Adelard (Agnes McNabb), René (Minnie Marentette), Rev. Isidore et Sarah.

En 1943, ils célèbrent leur 65e anniversaire de mariage. Six mois plus tard Damase meurt le 10 mai 1944. Son épouse le surviva jusqu'au 4 février 1959 où elle meurt au bel âge de 98 ans. Elle laisse une longue descendance de 33 petits-enfants, 107 arrière-petits-enfants et 25 arrière-arrière-petits-enfants dont les talents et le savoir-faire ont beaucoup contribué à l'avancement de notre paroisse.

**Alfred Poisson
1879-1968**



**Hélène Laliberté
1881-1951**

Alfred Poisson vient d'une grande famille pionnière du comté d'Essex. Il est né le 8 septembre, 1879 et a passé toute sa vie à Belle Rivière. Il était le fils aîné de Damase et Hélène (Diesbourg) Poisson.

Il fut fermier ainsi que maître du bureau de poste pendant 22 ans. Il fut avec son père l'un des premiers directeurs de la société St. Jean Baptiste.

Le 8 septembre, 1902, Alfred épousa Hélène Laliberté, fille de Aimé et Adeline (Dufresne) Laliberté. De ce mariage sont nés Armand, Léonard (Eveline Pillon), Denis (Marguerite Lachange), Beatrice (Pierre Trepanier), Brigitte (Louis Barrette), Alphonse (Edna Quenneville), Cleophas, Véronique (Romeo Schiller), Yvonne (Francis Comartin), Rev. Laurent, Jeannette (Laurent Castanier).

Le Rev. Laurent Poisson célébra la messe d'enterrement lors de la mort de sa mère le 14 février, 1951, et celle de son père le 17 avril, 1968.

Notre paroisse honore la famille Poisson pour son bel exemple chrétien et surtout pour la vie consacrée au service de Dieu et de la communauté.

**John D. Renaud
1868-1951**

John D. Renaud, 93, passed away at Riverview Hospital on Monday, October 16, 1951. His wife Isabelle Paré, it predeceased him in 1946.

Born in Maidstone Township, July 16, 1868, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Denis Renaud. The Renaud Line derived its name from Mr. Renaud's great grandfather Mr. Jacques Renaud, an early settler in Belle River. Mr. Renaud had two brothers, Marcisse and Joseph and two sisters, Mrs. Jennie Hanley and Mrs. Rose George Shipman.

He was married to Isabelle Parent at St. Simon and St. Jude Church, Belle River in 1890, by Rev. Father Girard. They had two sons, Leo and Herman and one daughter Irene (Mrs. Nelson Jacques).



**Isabelle Parent
1870-1946**

Mr. Renaud was raised and received his education in Belle River. As a young man he apprenticed for an undertaker and after two years branched out on his own. He continued in this profession for the next 26 years. He also operated a general store and filled his spare time selling farm equipment for 37 years.

In 1958, he was awarded a life membership in the Liberal Association. He was a member of the St. Jean Baptist Society and the Catholic Men's Benevolent Society.

A public spirited man, Mr. Renaud was appointed as the Public Works Inspector covering the area from Ruscom to Pike Creek and retained this position for some 34 years before retiring. He served on the village of Belle River council for 3 terms.

The St. Simon and St. Jude Parish is happy to recognize this patriarch of Belle River who lived to see five generations.

**Thomas Renaud
1870-1938**

A pioneer farmer of our parish was Thomas Renaud. Born on September 9, 1870, the son of Antoine and Emilie Chevalier, he farmed all his life on Lake Shore Road.

He built his own house from wood standing on his one mile long property of 100 acres. He operated his own blacksmith shop where he made horse-shoes, axes, hoes, shovels, picks, odd farm implements and even constructed most of his furniture.

At Our Lady of the Lake Church in 1892, Thomas married Nancy Susan Forton. She was born in 1871 in St. Clair Shores, Michigan, but had moved to Windsor with her family as a young girl. Mrs. Renaud was once employed at the home of Mr. Hiram Walker on Peche Island. She and her girlfriend rowed a boat back and forth daily to get to work.

Mr. and Mrs. Renaud were blessed with seven children: Claire (Walter Laforet), William (Cécile Pinsonneault), Joseph A. (Edna Strong), Emily (Harold Strong), Marie (Frank Sheehan), Gertrude (Percy Laliberté) and Edmond (Louise Beausoleil).

The original farm was later divided into 50 acres for Joseph who sold it to Leo Marchand when he retired in 1952 and 50 acres to Edmond who sold his farm prior to Mr. E.W. Ebbinghaus.

Mr. Renaud had two brothers Joseph and Donus. Nancy came from a family of eleven. Joseph, Henry, Jesse, Lester and Mathew, Philomene (Mrs. Forton), Agnes (Cézaire Drouillard), Cora (Austen Kennedy), Emma (Michael O'Brien) and Jennie.

Thomas died July 18, 1938 and Nancy on March 5, 1953. This generation is indebted to these patriarchs who gave of themselves so that future generations could enjoy the fruits of their labour.

**Nancy Forton
1871-1953**



**Oscar Robillard
1863-1926**



Oscar reading his Trend Paper La Press of Montreal with wife, Marie looking on. 1915

Oscar and Marie Louise were married in Lowell in August, 1884.

Oscar worked at odd jobs until he was employed by Daniel Gage distributor of natural ice from house to house. His wife, Marie Louise did hand weaving in a cotton mill.

In 1893, the young couple moved to Essex County, settling on a still uncleared farm on the southwest corner of what is now the township of Maidstone on Concession 8 and the former Base Line (Highway 42), a farm now occupied by Mrs. Patricia Maître.

**Marie Louise Breault
1866-1945**

The history of the Robillard family gives us an excellent example of the hardships endured by the early pioneers.

Oscar Robillard was born February 5, 1863 in a small hamlet called St. Jean Matha in the County of Joliette, northeast of Montreal.

Marie Louise Breault, his wife who was born on May 20, 1866 also came from the same village.

The Robillards and Breaults immigrated to Lowell, Massachusetts on the Merimack River and settled in the French district nicknamed 'Le petit Canada' because of the many former Canadian families who had settled there seeking employment in the cotton mills.

Their four children were born on this farm: Laura, February 5, 1894 (died May 28, 1975); Maxime, April 29, 1896; Hermas, February 21, 1900 (died October 16, 1953); Regina born December 28, 1902 is now living in Taylor, Michigan.

Due to the poor educational facilities, Oscar decided to move closer to Belle River, so, in 1903 he purchased the E.P. Bouteiller farm (now Denis St. Pierre and Sons' Subdivision).

Oscar served on the village council from 1905 to 1907.

The children all attended the old red brick four room St. John Baptist School which was situated where the local post office now stands. The teachers were the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Laura married Mose Papineau, April 27, 1914. Maxime married Lea St. Pierre, June 9, 1919. Hermas married Sarah Girard, June 13, 1921. Regina married Harvey Leblanc October, 1931.

This hardworking settler died on March 28, 1926 and his devoted wife, on August 28, 1945.

Maxime Robillard 1896-

Lea St. Pierre 1898-



FAMILY OF MAXIME ROBILLARD

Left to right -

Seated: Lea, Lucy (Mrs DiMenna), Maxime

Standing:

Alice (Mrs. Janisse), Eva (Mrs. Comartin),
Jeannette (Mrs. Masse), Rita (Mrs. Gouin),
Denis, Paul and Roland.

Their first home was in Ford City, (now Windsor-East), where he worked at Ford's making Model T's for the next seven years, then returned to the farm on West Belle River Road where his son Roland now lives.

Mr. and Mrs. Robillard vividly recall the 'Hungry Thirties' - the great depression of the 1930's.

They raised eight children: Alice (André Janisse), Eva (Ray Comartin), Roland (Doris Renaud), Jeannette (Louis Masse), Rita (Norman Gouin), Paul (Theresa Renaud), Lucy (Danto DiMenna) and Denis (Bernadette Girard).

Maxime was active in municipal affairs being elected as councillor in 1933. Ten years later he was appointed treasurer of Maidstone Municipal Telephone System which had about 650 subscribers. Upon the death of Archille Mousseau, Max assumed the position of secretary with the help of Lea. This system was eventually converted to the dial system and so he retired in 1965.

Maxime was also active in parish activities - a Knight of Columbus since 1943 and now an honorary life member, secretary, then president of the 'Société Saint Jean-Baptiste' at the time it made an application to the Provincial Government for the Caisse Populaire charter. He was one of the directors for a number of years. He holds account number 16, being one of the first shareholders.

After resigning from the township council, Mr. Robillard continued farming until he and Mrs. Robillard retired to 264 Meunier Street to be close to the church.

This happy couple have celebrated their 50th, 60th and 64th anniversaries and are looking forward to their 70th!

**Alfred Rose
1857-1934**

Originally from Beauharnois, Quebec, Mr. Alfred Rose met his wife Mary Charron and settled in Grande Pointe. In 1907, they moved to Belle River with their family of thirteen children to establish residency in the former Wellington Hotel. Mr. Rose owned and operated the hotel until 1921 while also working three separate farms now owned by Udule Papineau, West Belle River Road, Paul Papineau's on East Belle River Road and the third on West Belle River Road north of the C.P.R. tracks.

**Mary Charron
1861-1949**



Men back row: Alphie, Ovila, Freddie, Joe, Wilfrid and Felix.

2nd row: Alma (Lalonde), Rosa, Emma (Primeau), Josephine (Coté), Euphrasie (Parent)

3rd row: Hector 'Con', Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Rose, Aurise (Byrne).

Taken on the occasion of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Mr. & Mrs. Rose, 1927.

Their family consisted of Joseph (Marie Bourdeau), Emma (William Primeau), Ovila (Olive Renaud), Wilfrid (Mathilda Chadonat), Josephine (Henri Coté), Alphie, Rosa, Felix (Lillian St. Pierre), Alma (Ernest Lalonde), Alfred (Lillian St. Pierre), Euphrasie (William Parent), Hector 'Con' (Mary George), and Aurise (Frank Byrne).

Mr. Rose died on October 25, 1934 at the age of 77 years and Mrs. Rose passed away January 10, 1949 at 88 years. Several members of this large family were life long, loyal and respected parishioners. Hector, the only survivor is still very active in the African Missions.

**Isaac (Isaïe) Sauvé
1839-1922**



**Adèle Dicaire
1847-1927**

Isaac or Isaïe Sauvé was the son of Joachim and Angélique Lorion. On November 21st, 1865, he married Adèle Dicaire, daughter of Jean-Baptiste Dicaire and Josephite 'Josephine' Sireau.

Isaïe came to this county as a very early settler when the land was still heavily forested. He homesteaded on the second concession of what is now Lot 10 Rochester. A grandson, Roy Sauvé now cultivates this land. The homestead has always been a favorite vacation spot for relatives from the city where they were sure of a warm welcome.

Mr. and Mrs. Sauvé raised sixteen children: Joseph Napoleon, Paul (Mary Lemay), Marie Rose deLima (Pierre Bisson), Grégoire (Margaret McMahan), Josephine (William Laramée), Lena, Pierre (died at four years of age), Jérôme (Carrie Thompson), Ocar (Eva Strong), Sarah (Charles Strong), Edith (John Miller), Alma (Jack Blanchette), Caroline (James Corbett), Mathilda 'Tillie', Henry (Eva Mailloux), Elcide (Margaret Lefebvre), and Alvin (Clara Dupuis).

Isaïe died on June 26th, 1922 at 83 years of age. His beloved wife, Adèle, died on August 25th, 1927 at 80 years of age.

They set a fine example of christian living, a habit which has been followed devoutly by their numerous descendants.

Our parish is honoured to recognize these pioneers in our 150th anniversary book.

Elcide Sauv 
1890-1969

Margaret Lefebvre
1898-



A Belle River born couple, Elcide and Margaret Sauv , known to all as Uncle Joe and Aunt Maggie, contributed many, many hours to helping others over the past 60 to 65 years.

Elcide, born May 7, 1890, was the son of Isaie and Josephine (Dicaire) Sauv . He came from a large family of 17 children. Mr. Sauv  was kind and generous with his time in helping his neighbours, friends and relatives. When there was butchering to be done, he was there, when thrashing time came he rendered his services. He farmed all his life on the 2nd Concession of Rochester, next door to his brother Alvin. (Lorne Sauv  lives on part of that farm today.)

Margaret, born March 29, 1898, was the daughter of Thomas Lefebvre and Annie Bisson. Aunt Maggie helped deliver fifteen healthy babies during her career as a midwife. She often went to wallpaper at neighbouring homes, baking many, many pies at thrashing time on wooden stoves.

It was on January 12, 1916, that Elcide and Margaret were married. They lost two sons, Douglas (died April 4, 1921, 1 year old) and Lorne (June 30, 1925, 2 months old).

Elcide and Maggie were certainly hard working and faithful residents of our parish and we are proud of their endeavours. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1966.

It was on December 18, 1969, that Elcide passed away to his eternal reward, but Maggie is at 85 years still very active and living on the farm she shared with her beloved husband.

Alvin Sauv 
1894-

Clara Dupuis
1896-1983

On September 10, 1894, a boy named Alvin was born to Isaie and Ad le (Dicaire) Sauv , the 16th child of their large family.

Alvin went to Byrnedale School with his brothers and sisters. Their teacher was Clara McKeough.

As the years went by, he started courting Clara Dupuis, daughter of Leo and Mary (Tellier) Dupuis. They fell in love and on February 4, 1919, they were united in holy matrimony. He farmed his father's land for 43 years.



On this property on the 2nd concession of Rochester (where Roy Sauv  lives now) they brought six children into the world. May, the eldest married Norman Dupuis, Roy took Lorraine Ouellette as his bride, Luella married Andr  Leboeuf, Eileen became the wife of Richard Lefave. A baby born March 16, 1933, died at birth and Marie married Paul Papineau.

Twenty years ago, Alvin and Clara retired in Belle River. They celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary in 1983. They have 24 grand children and 23 great-grandchildren, a beautiful long line of descendants whose talents in all stations of life have directly or indirectly contributed to the betterment of our parish.

**Jephte St. Pierre
1873-1946**

The St. Pierre family name was originally known as Monpelit. When they came to Essex County around 1875, from Sutton Flats, Quebec, Eusebe St. Pierre and his wife Zénaide Galipeau settled in Windsor with their family of 4 boys: Joseph, Jephthé, Josué and Zéraphim (died 3 years old), for a short time before moving to Belle River.

Baptismal records show that the next child George was born January 1, 1880 and was baptised here. Eusebe Jr. (died 7 months), Jean Baptiste (died 10 months), then came Arthémise, Zénaide, Marie, Anna (died 22 days), Cyrille (5 days), Eva Anna (died 5 days), Louis (died 3 months), and Remy.

As money was scarce in the 1890's and to economize we are told, four couples shared a \$5.00 mass and all got married at the same mass February 17, 1896. (\$1.25 per couple)

Jephte and Rose (Plante) St. Pierre was one of those couples. Later they purchased a farm on the north side of the CPR tracks, then another move, to a farm on the south side of the track on the West Belle River Road where Albert St. Pierre and his family live today.

In 1914 the hydro company bought 9 acres of land for \$900.00 to put hydro lines through to feed Windsor. With that money he built his barn. Fire in the 1970's destroyed it. He previously also had bought 2 sections of the old horse sheds being used to shelter horses while parishioners attended mass. These sheds we are told were along the old St. Jean Baptiste School property where the Legion is now - facing east coming back onto the now Herman Côté and new convent property.

De ce mariage sont nés neuf enfants: Leo (Maxime Robillard), Wilfred (Florence Mousseau), William (Lottie Renaud), Delina (Joseph Labbé), Henri (Evelyn Granger), Raymond (Louise Granger), Ulric (Rillie Chauvin), Denis (Stella Comartin) et Amedée (Marie Anne Charron). Au temps de sa mort le 30 janvier, 1955, Rose avait 112 descendants. Jephthé est mort le 18 janvier, 1946, un mois avant leur 50e anniversaire.

Une belle tradition qu'ils ont est le pique-nique de famille pendant l'été et en 1983 c'était leur 40e réunion.

The members of the St. Pierre family have always been loyal and faithful parishioners. Their descendants continue to demonstrate the same attitude towards the parish and our community.

**Rose Plante
1875-1955**



JEPHTE & ROSE (PLANTE) ST. PIERRE

Back row: Ulric, Amédé, Lea (Mrs. Maxime Robillard), Raymond, Wilfred, Henri
Front row: Delina (Mrs. Joseph Labbé), Jephthé St. Pierre, William, Mrs. Rose (Plante) St. Pierre, Henri

**Wilfrid St. Pierre
1899-1981**

**Florence Mousseau
1899-**



**WILFRID & FLORENCE (MOUSSEAU)
ST. PIERRE FAMILY**

Back row:

Laurent, Herman, Jephte, Edmond, Ernest

Front row: Irene (Mrs. Gerald Diemer), Florence (Mousseau) St. Pierre, Wilfrid St. Pierre, Marie Anne (Mrs. Adelard Masse)

Being grandparents to two sets of triplets is a rare and special blessing. Wilfrid and Florence have sixty-five grandchildren including Belle River's only triplets, Diane, Dorothy and Dolores, and Woodslee's only triplets, Richard, Roger and Robert Diemer.

Wilfrid was born April 23, 1899, the second child of Jephthé St. Pierre and Rose Plante. After his marriage on February 17, 1919, in St. Simon and St. Jude Church to Florence Mousseau, born April 17, 1899, daughter of Joseph Mousseau and Catherine Rau, he farmed on the Rourke Line in Maidstone. He was a Maidstone Road superintendent for 15 years and a Maidstone Councillor for six years.

In 1951, they retired from farm work to buy the P.L. Mousseau Dry Goods Store which they operated until 1964. They then converted the cement block building on the southeast corner of Church and Notre Dame into four apartments.

While Mrs. St. Pierre was a charter member of the CWL and the Alter Society, Wilfrid was very active in the Belle River Knights of Columbus 2775 being a Grand Knight and later a Faithful Navigator for the 4th Degree of Windsor. He was an Alambra member, and member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and president of the St. Jean Baptiste Society for a few years at different times. He was very well known among students as he drove a school bus for seventeen years.

They became the parents of nine children: Laurent (Bernadine Diemer), parents of the triplet girls; Edmond (Rosella Rivait), tragically killed by a falling tree in 1957; Irene (Gerald Diemer), parents of triplet boys; Marie (died at birth); Herman (Lucile Levesque); Ernest (Therese Barrette); Marie Anne (Adelard Masse); and Jephthe (Edna Forget).

Wilfrid passed away suddenly August 8, 1981 and his wife now makes her home with her daughter Irene in Woodslee, but she manages to attend mass every Sunday in our parish church.

The St. Pierre family has been a real asset to our parish not only in their loyalty to their faith and church, but in their contributions to all aspects of community life.

William Strong 1871-1946

Ellen Blanchette 1877-1960



The first member to immigrate to Canada was Nicolaus William Strong who came from Ireland in 1840.

Four years later he married Susan Carrick, daughter of Robert Carrick and Mary Mason. They settled on a farm on the old Tecumseh Road (Rochester Township), about two miles east of Belle River.

They were blessed with five sons and three daughters who were all baptised at St. Simon and St. Jude Church and attended the school at Deerbrook.

James (Mary Ellen Strong), William (Ellen Blanchette), Joseph (Louise Lacharité), Charles (Sarah Sauvé), Mary Gertrude who died in infancy, Bernadette (Edward Tellier), Elizabeth (Michael Blanchette).

The original farm is still occupied by the descendants of these early settlers, William and Ellen.

William and Ellen Strong raised a family of four sons and four daughters who were also baptised at St. Simon and St. Jude Church and attended the same country one-room school.

Harold (Emily Renaud), Melvin (Rosella Renaud), Bernard (Irene St. Louis), Lorraine (Joseph Klenner), Gertrude (Wilfred Berthiaume), Raymond (Stephanie 'Tina' Renaud), Josephine (Roy Murphy), and Julia (Adrian Renaud).

Mr. and Mrs. William Strong were hard workers. Though lacking the facilities of modern farm implements, having to do everything manually, this family was a happy one.

In 1927, two years after the death of Grandma Susan, the old homestead was moved over to the west side of the farm and demolished in 1966 being at the time over 100 years old.

William died on September 23, 1945, and Ellen passed away on December 13, 1960.

William and Ellen had 35 grandchildren, 60 great-grandchildren and 28 great-great-grandchildren.

Many of these descendants are active members of this community and faithful and devoted parishioners.

William Strong 1880-1956

William Joseph Strong was born on September 7, 1880. He was the seventh child of his parents Joseph Strong and Margaret Mullins. He was born on the Strong homestead on the farm now owned by Bud Lefave. He grew up there with five sisters: Bridget (Charles Renaud), Mary Ellen (James Strong), Cecelia (Louis Dicaire), Theresa (Augustus Chevalier), Eva (Oscar Sauve), and one older brother, Joseph who never married and died on the same farm at age 74.

Bill or 'Burk' as his friends called him was a small, handsome man with dark curly hair. He was fun loving and well liked. He was a farmer and a carpenter by trade and built houses in the neighbourhood. Quite young, at 22, he married Jenny Marentette a neighbour girl who was 20 years old. She came from a large family whose parents were Phillippe Marentette and Odile Durocher.

They were the parents of three children: Adrian (Kathleen Hagarty), Gladys (Alfred Butler), and Eveline (Walter Caza).

While they were still young, William bought Lot 13, Concession 2 of Rochester Township, a 100 acre farm with still some uncleared land and an old house that was so run down that sheep were sleeping in it. He cut lumber and rebuilt the house and about 1911 he moved into it. The house was well built and he lived in it until 1934 when his son Adrian married and moved into the house. Mr. Strong moved into a cottage across the lane, and so lived out his life on the farm.

During his life he became interested in politics. He was elected to the Rochester Council and served there for seven years. He then became Reeve and was Reeve for seven years. He enjoyed public life as he liked company and was a good speaker. He was well known in agricultural circles.

William went to his reward October 2, 1956 (76 years) and many mourned the passing of Jenny on January 30, 1950 (67 years).

This Strong family came to this country from Ireland in the early 1800's.

Jenny Marentette 1883-1950



Léo Sylvestre 1891-1966



Dora Sauvé 1907-

Un homme, très capable, Léo Sylvestre fut préfet de Belle Rivière, pendant 21 ans de 1931 à 1952. Il fut président de la société St. Jean Baptiste régionale du sud-ouest d'Ontario, ainsi que celle de Belle Rivière pendant plusieurs années.

Léo, né le 17 août 1891, à St. Joachim était le fils de François Xavier Sylvestre et Caroline Dupuis. Après ses études à Montréal pendant la Grande Guerre 1914-1918, il s'enrola dans l'armée et fut promu à Lieutenant.

A son retour d'outre mer en 1924, il ouvrit une pharmacie dans la bâtisse de Mme Diesbourg et celle-ci fut détruite par un incendie. Il acheta la propriété de M. Ovila Beaune pour en ouvrir une autre là où était Mike's parc de stationnement. C'est à cette époque qu'il entra à Osgoode Hall Law School à Toronto et compléta son cours d'avocat en 1930. Il pratiqua à Windsor ainsi qu'à Belle Rivière.

En 1933, Léo épousa Dora Sauvé, née à Pointe aux Roches, le 16 juillet, 1907. Quatre enfants naquirent de ce mariage. Léo (Janet Craig), Carmelle (Jean Paul Gingras), Francine (Daniel Skroki), Jean Paul (Nancy Balkwell).

One of the highlights of his career as reeve is the building of the Belle River bridge which was christened with a bottle of champagne in January, 1950. He was also instrumental in the construction of the waterworks.

Dora était institutrice dans notre région. Elle encourageait son mari dans toutes ses entreprises.

Léo et Dora étaient des catholiques exemplaires. Léo fut un grand patriote. Il est décédé le 14 mars 1966. Dora demeure à Windsor maintenant et jouit de ses quatre petits enfants.

**Earl Taylor
1898-1960**



TAYLOR FAMILY

**Front: Earl, Tom, Jim, Cathy, Zoe
Back: John, Paul, Peter**

**Zoe Lalonde
1902-**

The original Taylor family was one of the first settlers of Belle River area, dating back to the early days of Crown Land. They owned and operated The Great Western Hotel situated on the old Tecumseh Road near Seventh Street. A descendant Earl, born in Detroit in 1898, was the son of Henry and Sarah (Delvin) Taylor. He had five brothers Harold, Ernest, Russell and Albert and one sister Rose Marie (Ernest Graham).

On September 14, 1927, Earl married Zoe Lalonde, born May 10, 1902, daughter of William Lalonde and Leonore Charron. Zoe had one brother Wilfrid and two sisters Mathilda (Ernest Taylor) and Jeannette. They were blessed with six children: Paul (Barbara Rasky), Peter, John (Katie Donegan), James (Nora Gagnier), Thomas (Lynn Hedrick) and Catherine (Robert Fitzmaurice).

In his distinguished career Earl served as local postmaster for 16 years. He was an active member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Thanks to Earl the history of our church was researched and written as well as the Civic History of Belle River. Due to his death on September 11, 1960, his work was not totally published.

Zoe was the Catholic Women's League's first Secretary-Treasurer and was given the responsibility for the organizing of the Girl Guide and Brownie movement in our parish. In 1957 she was the first woman ever elected as trustee to the St. Jean Baptist School Board. In 1960 she became its Secretary-Treasurer and held that position until all Roman Catholic Boards in the County of Essex amalgamated under one Board.

She has many fond memories of church work of the past, such as the annual church cleaning, the yearly door to door soliciting throughout the parish for funds for the Propagation of Faith and many more.

Our parish is proud to pay tribute to the Taylor family. They were, without a doubt, model citizens and contributed greatly to the needs of their community.

**François Thibert
1866-1961**

This 'Grand Old Man' was born in Belle River on March 14, 1866, the son of Michel and Angele Campeau, one of a family of 12 children, 11 boys and one girl.

Mr. Thibert married the former Caroline Fleury, daughter of Amable Fleury and Delima Paquette also of Belle River. Her family was originally from St. Cuthbert, Quebec.

**Caroline Fleury
1869-1937**



Their three sons, Remi (Delia Longtain), Gilbert (Regina Trepanier), and Alfred (Jannie Granger), and one daughter Edith (Edgar Ladouceur) were born and raised in our parish.

Mr. Thibert was navigator on Lake St. Clair for 20 years. He was also a foreman for Canadian Cannery in Belle River for 16 years. He was, as well, a capable carpenter.

After the death of his wife in 1937, he moved with his son Gilbert on St. Charles Street across the road from the former convent where he lived until, after a lengthy illness, he died on December 17, 1961.

The Thibert family have been faithful parishioners for the past 125 years.

**Ephraim Trottier
1883-1962**

**Anaïse Charron
1889-1976**

The Trottier family originally came from St. Bernard de LaColle, Quebec. Ephraim's parents Louis and Rosalie Tremblay were married at St. Francis Church in Tilbury on January 30, 1877. They had three children: Ephraim, Joseph and Louise (Dolphis Thibert). During Louis's second marriage to Philomene Trudelle, they also had four children Rosalie, Malvina, Wilfrid and Natalia.

Le 30 juillet, 1911, Ephraim épousa Anaïse Charron, fille de Adhenar Charron et Anna Brosseau. Ils eurent huit enfants: Adeline (Ernest Chevalier), Maurice (Marie Leboeuf), Joseph (mort à 1 an), Laurette (Leo Moison), Lucienne (Charles Levesque), Blanche (Leonard Marentette), Louis (Helen Smith) et Leonard (Catherine Deehan, Ida Ripley).



Back row: Adhemar Charron, Ephraim Trottier and Ernest Chevalier

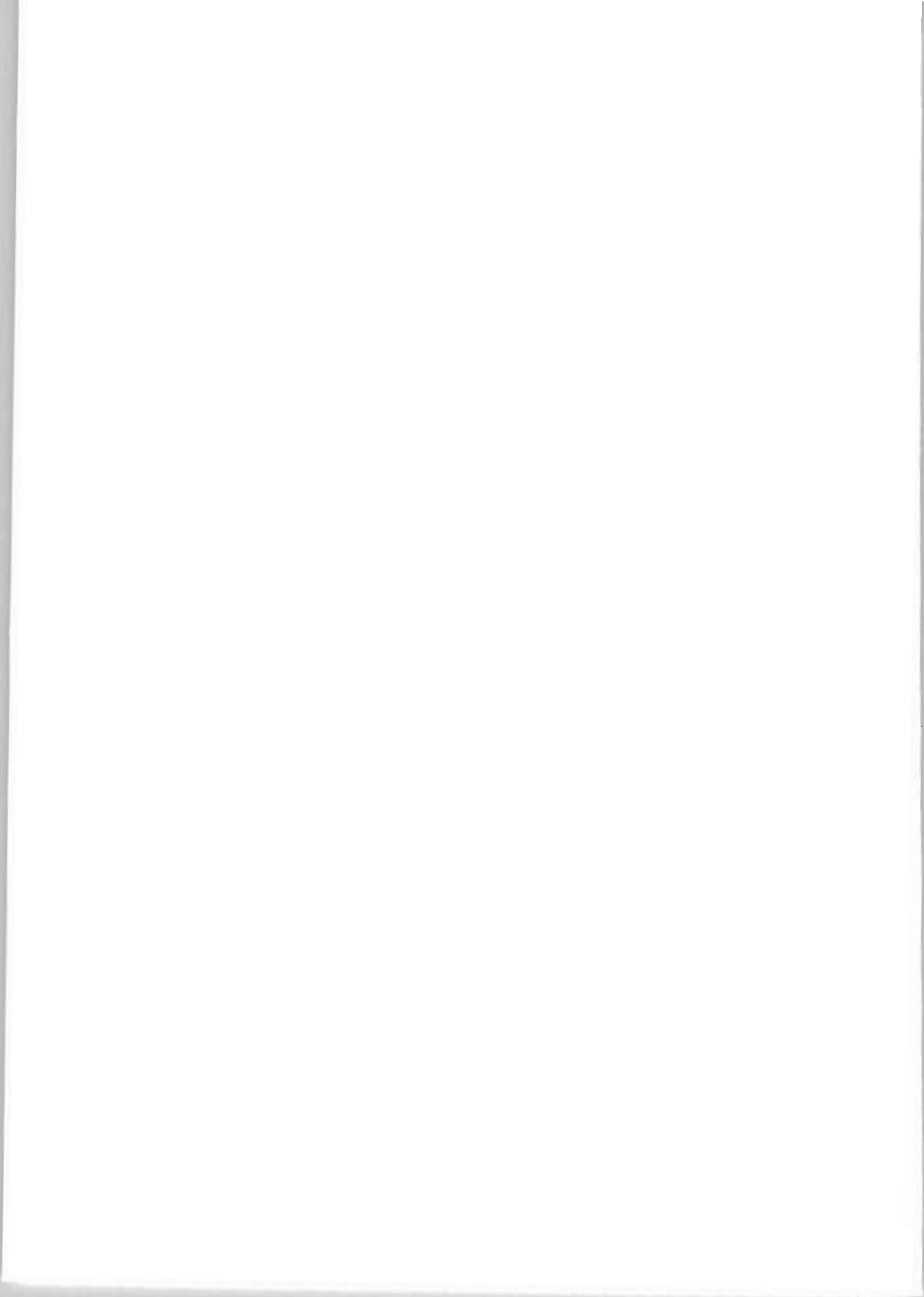
Seated: Anna Charron, Anaïse Trottier and Adeline Chevalier (kneeling)

In 1918, Mr. Trottier delivered mail on Route 2 east of Belle River. He was also the first to deliver milk in glass bottles in the village. Il était membre actif de la société St. Jean Baptiste et de la ligue du Sacré Coeur.

Mrs. Trottier, an accomplished milliner before her marriage was also very adept in needle work and art. Her children and grandchildren will always treasure her oil paintings.

Ephraim est mort le 17 août, 1962 et Anaïse est décédée le 26 octobre, 1976.

The Trottier family has certainly contributed greatly to this community and we are pleased to honour them in our 150 anniversary.





Chapter XI

Liturgical

Life







"I AM WITH YOU ALL DAYS"

LITURGICAL LIFE:

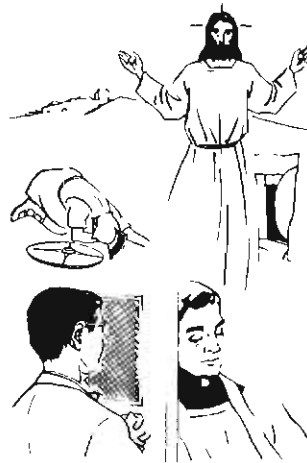
The very heart of a parish is the Eucharist and the Sacraments by which Jesus is present to us and touches all of our lives. The Liturgy is described as the public worship which we offer to God. Pope Paul VI said, "The liturgy is the outstanding means by which the faithful can express in their lives, and manifest to others, the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church." A little further on he adds, "Christ is always present in His Church, especially in her liturgical celebration. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, not only in the person of His Minister, "the same one now offering through the Ministry of priests, who formerly offered himself on the cross, "but especially under the Eucharistic species. By His power He is present in the sacraments so that when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present in His word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read in the Church. He is present finally, when the Church prays and sings, for He promised: Where two or three are gathered together for my sake, there am I in the midst of them." (Const. on the Sacred Liturgy).

All of us have memories of the Liturgy in our parish. In the following pages we've gathered together pictures of First Communion, Sunday Mass, Wedding processions etc. that make up the liturgical life of our parish.



BAPTISM

“Full authority has been given to me both in heaven and on earth; go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:18)



CONFESSION

“Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.” After saying this he breathed on them and said: “Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.”



FR. MICHEAL PARENTS'
FIRST MASS, MAY 28, 1967

EUCCHARIST

The Holy Eucharist is the sacrament and the sacrifice in which Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine is contained, offered and received.

"Take this, all of you, and eat it: this is my body which will be given up for you."

FIRST COMMUNION

One of our most treasured memories is the day of our First Holy Communion.



FIRST COMMUNION CLASS — 1946
FATHER BAILLARGEON

Back Row: Barbara Dunn, Unidentified, Unidentified, Annette Papineau, Father Baillargeon
Unidentified, Pat Brooks, Georgette Leblanc, Bern Papineau
2nd Row: Margaret Clark, Cecile Emond, Unidentified, Lorraine Poisson, Alva Rivait, Mary A. O'Neill
Unidentified, Beverly Strong, Marie Sauve, Lucille Barrette, Unidentified
3rd Row: Raymond Tellier, Rene Girard, Robert Parent, Louis Durocher, Ralph Rivard, Jack Renaud
Paul Durocher, Jim Dean, Lester Ruston, Edward Lalonde
Denis Robillard, Jerome Gagnier, Tom Ghanam, Lawrence Robideau
4th Row: Paul Beaugand, Charles Parent, Tom Taylor, Robert L'Abbe
Jerry Ducharme, Leonard Bisson, Dan McDonough, Neil Parent, Chuck Trotechaud, Unidentified
Maurice Bellemore, Roger Poisson, Don Bracken, Lionel Poisson, Isadore Trepanier

CONFIRMATION

"When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down to these people and prayed that they might receive the Holy Spirit. It had not as yet come down upon any of them since they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. The pair upon arriving imposed hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:5, 14:17).



Huy Luong Confirmed by Bishop Marcel Geruais.

In the early part of 1979, at the urging of our Bishop, J.M. Sherlock, Father Dan Morand challenged the parishioners to sponsor a family from among the Boat People of Vietnam, to become immigrants to our Country, to our Town, to our Parish.

The challenge was accepted gratefully by the St. Vincent de Paul Society of our parish, under the chairmanship of Roland Robillard, with Richard and Cecilia Drouillard acting as co-ordinators. With Father Dan assisting, the application was made and preparations began.

In January 1979, when the parish was notified that the Luong family was arriving, the Committee had found a residence for them, had the residence furnished, so that the Luong family would be settled as completely as possible so they could enjoy the joys of being free.

Father Dan headed the welcoming committee which met for the first time Huy Luong and three of the children. Two of the Luong children, Tom and Keit, who had arrived in Windsor in March of 1979, were also on hand to welcome and be reunited with their family, having been separated from them since the middle of 1978.

It was to be another two years before Mach Luong, their mother and the two youngest Luong children would be allowed to leave Vietnam, to join her husband and the rest of her family here in Belle River.

In May 1980, a fund raising dinner was held to officially welcome the Luong family to our parish and to cover the expenses involved in bringing her to Canada.

The Luong family, after attending Mass with us from the time of their arrival, requested Instructions in the Catholic faith, and were received into the Church in a special service, officiated by Father G. Duchene on March 9th, 1982.

The Luong family, in appreciation to their adopted community and Country became Citizens of Canada on January 6th, 1983.

The efforts of all those in the parish, in the sponsoring, welcoming, and acceptance of the Luong family was truly that of, and a continuing reminder of, a Christian Community in Action.



Guy and Mach Luong and their 7 children



Baptism & Reception into the Church of the Luong family



CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

"I, N., take you, N., to be my husband/wife. I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life. (from the marriage ritual).

HOLY ORDERS

"Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with erring sinners, for he himself is beset by weakness and so must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. (Heb. 5:1 - 3).

Ordination — Fr. Dwayne Adam



The Morand Family
6 brothers ordained priests
Fr. Dan Morand (former pastor), Ed Morand
Lionel Morand, Pope John Paul II
Bishop Bliese Morand
Leonard Morand, Pat Morand



First Mass of Fr. Victor Cote 1942
Fr. C. Girard, Fr. V. Cote, Fr. L. Lachoute, Fr. W. Simpson

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

"If anyone of you is ill, he should send for the elders of the Church, and they must anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord and pray for him." (James 5: 14 - 15).



Our faith and devotion is also expressed in many other kinds of celebrations: Corpus Christi procession, Eucharistic Congress, Marian devotions, Wedding Anniversaries, etc. The following pictures are a few memories of those kinds of celebrations.



**Claudette St. Pierre devant autel St. Joseph
1961 – (confirmation)**



**Leo & Rosaire Denomey with altar
made by their father Joseph Denomey**



**Corpus Christi Procession
Fr. Laliberte — 1934**



**Wilfred and Florence St. Pierre
60th Wedding Anniversary, Feb. 17, 1979**



Alfred and Jenny Thibert
 Wedding, September 27, 1921

Back Row L to R: Delina Girard, Alfred Granger, Alfred Thibert, Edgar Ladouceur, Edith Thibert
 Front: Bernelda Granger, Jenny Granger, Regina Thibert

150 YEARS SACRAMENTAL RECORDS

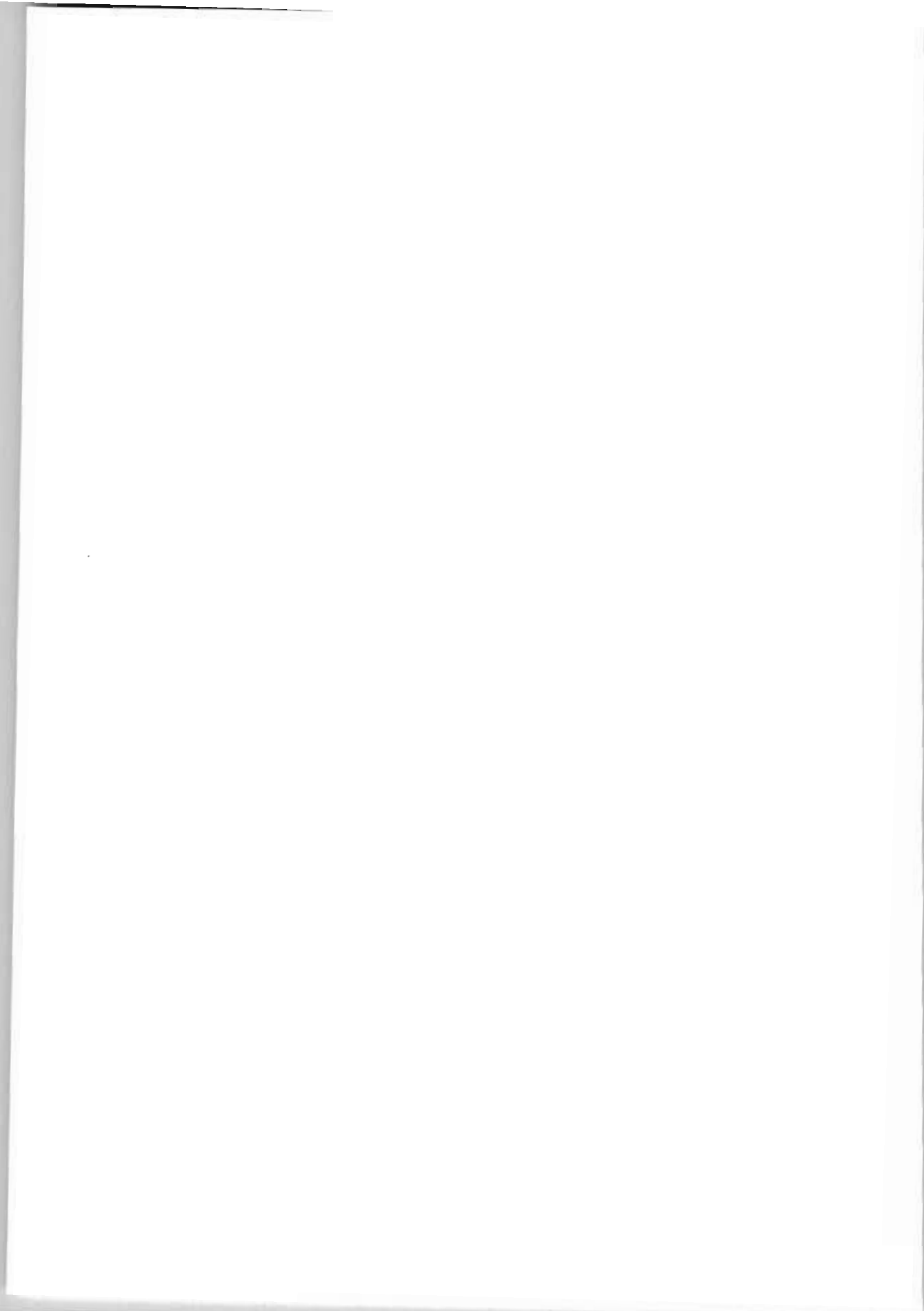
Pastors (Missionaries)		Years served	Marriage	Baptism	Funeral
1834-1858 J.V. Jaffre	Missionary			46	
	P. Point			62	
	Billon			24	
	Jos. Grimet			288	
	J. Ferery			22	
	A.A. Vervais			2	
	J.M. Monmigny			14	
	Total Missionary Years	24 years	67	458	65
1858-1875 Fr. Jahan		18 years	223	1420	374
1876-1890 Fr. Gerard		14 years	197	1152	438
1891-1901 Fr. Meunier		10 years	124	666	314
1901-1903 Fr. Andrieux		4 years	44	135	89
1904 - 1928 Fr. L'Heureux		24 years	232	865	264
1928-1945 Fr. Laliberte		17 years	191	689	252
1945-1946 Fr. Baillargeon		2 years	25	95	23
1947-1969 Fr. Marentette		23 years	431	1803	521
1969-1974 Fr. Pare		5 years	183	498	83
1974-1977 Fr. Rivard		3 years	110	304	162
1977-1981 Fr. Morand		4 years	103	249	162
1981-1984 Fr. Duchêne		3 years	102	218	66
		151 years	2032	8552	2813

Table includes the total marriages, baptisms and funerals of all the priests combined in St. Simon and St. Jude Parish from 1834-1983. Assistant Pastors' administrations are included in the Pastors' regimes.



Chapter XII
Saint Jude
Cemetery
&
Cimetiere
Saint Simon





Cimetiere Saint Simon & Saint Jude Cemetery

Le premier cimetière établi dans cette région fut un don de M. Joseph Réaume qui remit à la paroisse un petit coin de sa terre. M. et Mme Reaume, qui vécurent tous deux au delà de quatre-vingt ans, y sont enterrés.

Une petite chapelle fut érigée en 1834 le long de la rive sud-ouest, et les missionnaires Jésuites de Sandwich venaient y dire la messe et administrer les sacrements.

According to available records we find, that in 1839, Rt. Rev. Alexander McDonald, Bishop of Kingston purchased another acre of land from Thomas Levis. It was to be used for the sole benefit of the Roman Catholic Church Burying ground and presbytery.



Oldest existing monument

Le 11 août 1885, le diocèse de London reçut six arpents additionnels, un don de Albert et Louise Ouellette.

In 1931, the Department of Highways conveyed to the Diocese of London in exchange for that portion used to build Highway 2 (now 42), 4.79 acres on the North of the highway formerly owned by Denis Durocher.

The north-west side of the cemetery is the oldest part for which no map or records are available; the burial plots are very irregular, therefore this historical area is no longer in use.



Resting place of Caroline (Dicaire) Bracken

An unusual death record shows that six daughters of Joseph Killaire and Sophie Beneteau died between October 8, 1863 and December 22, 1863; Emelie (6 months), Marie (14 years), Rosalie (8 years), Elizabeth (11 years), Therese (7 years) and Elisé (3 years). The cause of such a tragedy is not known.

Les hommes responsables pour le creusage des fausses durant les années passées sont; Thomas Renaud, Ernest Dupuis, qui tint la position de surintendant pendant 34 ans et Ernest Dufresne qui creusa pendant plus de 30 ans.



Ernest Dupuis



Ernest Dufresne

In 1970, under the guidance of Rev. Lawrence Pare, pastor of the parish, a cemetery committee was formed and a constitution was established. Mr. Donald Gagnier has been the chairman since its inception.

In 1971, a new fence was erected surrounding the grounds. Although some families still prefer the grave-site rites, a little chapel, built in 1978 lends dignity and offers shelter especially during inclement weather.



The shed built in 1983 is the latest addition.

Over the years, there have been a great many changes. The cost of opening and closing a grave has ranged from \$2.50 to \$75.00 (\$100.00 in winter).

Evidently the prices of the plots have also increased from \$7.00 then, to \$90.00 now. Included in this amount is the money paid to the Perpetual Care Fund. This fee is mandatory and is under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of London where it is invested. Only the interest is returned to the parish for the exclusive use to defray expenses incurred in the upkeep of the grounds.

Autrefois les curés eux-mêmes vendaient les fausses et l'entretien du cimetière était plus ou moins volontaire.

De 1939 à 1962, M. Ulric Marentette fut le secrétaire-trésorier du cimetière, suivit de M. Wilfrid (Bill) Lalonde pendant cinq ans et de sa soeur Zoé Taylor jusqu'en 1977.

Le comité actuel comprend Marcel St. Pierre, Marcel Levesque, Maurice Tellier, Fergus Melady comme directeurs et de Anita Levesque, secrétaire-trésorière. M. Donat Gagnier en est le président.

We are justified in being proud of the appearance of our parish cemetery.

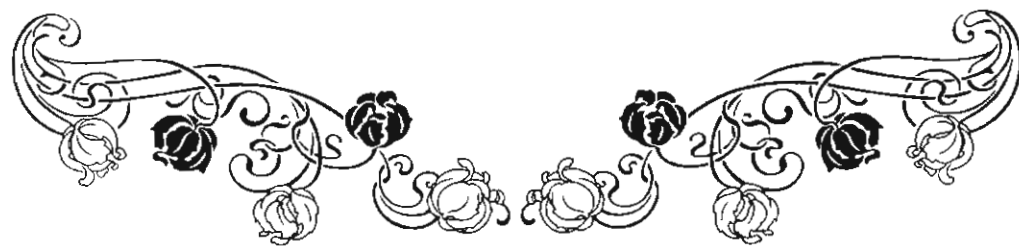


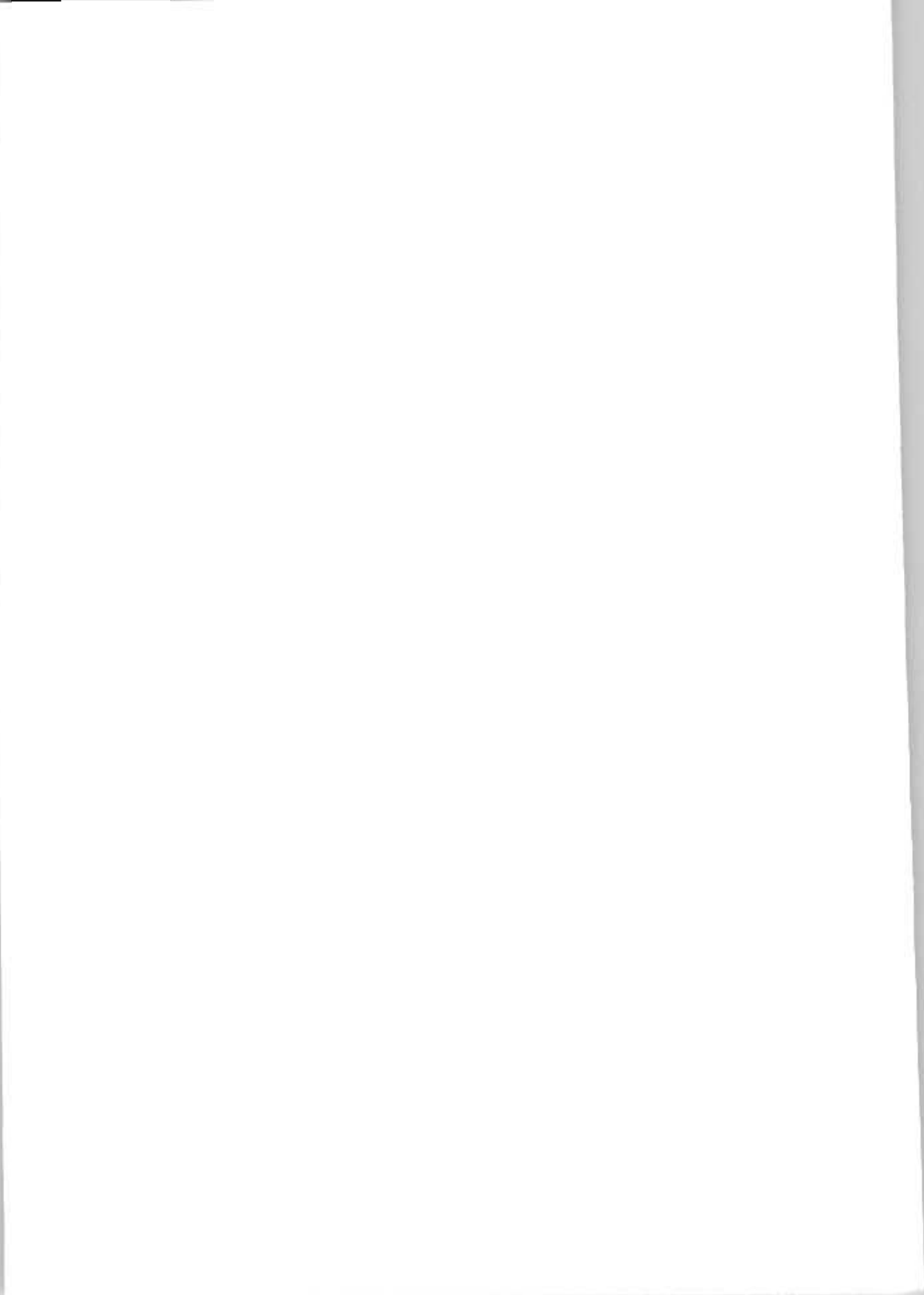
Chapter XIII

World

War

Veterans





The Cenotaph



The cenotaph was unveiled on Sunday, November 23, 1952 at what is now known as Ladouceur Park by Arthur Reaume M.P.P. on behalf of Honourable Paul Martin. Rev. A.P. Marentette of St. Simon and St. Jude Church opened the service with prayer.

The figures which stand on the monument picture the Navy, Army and Air Force and were imported from Italy. Mr. Armand (Mike) Lavoie, whose idea it was, should be given the credit for this memorial as he was determined to see it through to its completion. The board members included Armand (Mike) Lavoie, Chairman, Dr. E.J. Dupuis, first Vice-chairman, Bert Corbett, second Vice-chairman, William Mainprize, third Vice-chairman, Ulric St. Pierre, Secretary-Treasurer, and directors: Mederic Forget, William Blanchette, Jesse Brooks, Dennis Sauve and Armand Barrette.

The citizens of Belle River should be proud of the way they have shown their gratitude to those who fell while fighting for their country and their beliefs.

Those Who Fell



Private Francis Arpentigny

Born: 20 September 1921, in Belle River, Ontario.
Medals & Decorations: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp and War Medal 1939-45.
Died: Killed in action on 25 December 1943, while serving with the Royal Canadian Regiment.
Buried: In Morro River Cemetery, Ortona, Italy.
Parents: Anatole (Pete) Arpentigny & Marie Girard.



Trooper Albert Alexandre Charron

Born: 20 November 1919, in Hamilton, Ontario.
Medals: 1939-45 Star, France & Germany Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp and War Medal 1939-45.
Died: Killed in action on 11 June 1944, while serving with the 1st Hussars.
Buried: Ryes British Cemetery, Ryes, France.
Parents: Frank Charron & Marge Piston.



Private Lawrence Lachapelle

Born: 24 January 1914, in Belle River, Ontario.
Medals: 1939-45 Star, France & Germany Star, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp and War Medal 1939-45.
Died: Killed in action 8 March 1945, while serving with the Lincoln & Welland Regiment.
Buried: Nijmegen Canadian War Cemetery, Nijmegen, Holland.
Parents: Adolphe Lachapelle & Anna Girard.



Private Edgar William Parent

Born: 14 October 1920, in Windsor, Ontario.
Medals: Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp & War Medal 1939-45.
Died: Killed in action 20 March 1942, as a result of mine explosion while serving with the Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment.
Buried: Brookwood Military Cemetery, Woking, Surrey, England.
Parents: Remi Parent & Cecile Scott.



Trooper Lawrence Edmond Parent

Born: 17 May 1908, in Belle River, Ontario.

Medals: 1939-45 Star, Italy Star, Defence Medal, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal with Clasp and War Medal 1939-45.

Died: Died of disease on 17 December 1944, while serving with the Royal Canadian Dragoons.

Buried: Ancona Military Cemetery, Ancona, Italy.

Parents: Charles J. Parent & Theresa Goulet.

Wife: Irene Fournier.



Memorial Day 1942

**Fr. Laliberte performing
Memorial Day Services
in 1942 in front
of Damase Poisson Home**





Rev. A.P. Marentette opened with prayer The Unveiling Ceremony of Belle River War Memorial held Sunday, November 23, 1952.



World War I & II Veterans



Theodore Gauthier
and
Bert Denomey



Henry Diesbourg



Adrien Parent



Blaise Diesbourg



Louis St. Pierre



Onesime St. Pierre



Leonard Gauthier



Francis Parent



BELLE RIVER VETERANS

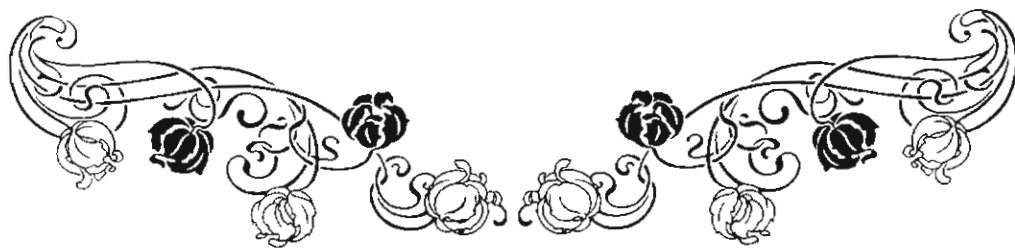
Arthur Lacharite, Ernest Lacharite, Fr. Laurent Lacharite and Maurice Lacharite sons of Eugene Lacharite and Cora Ouellette. They served during World War Two.

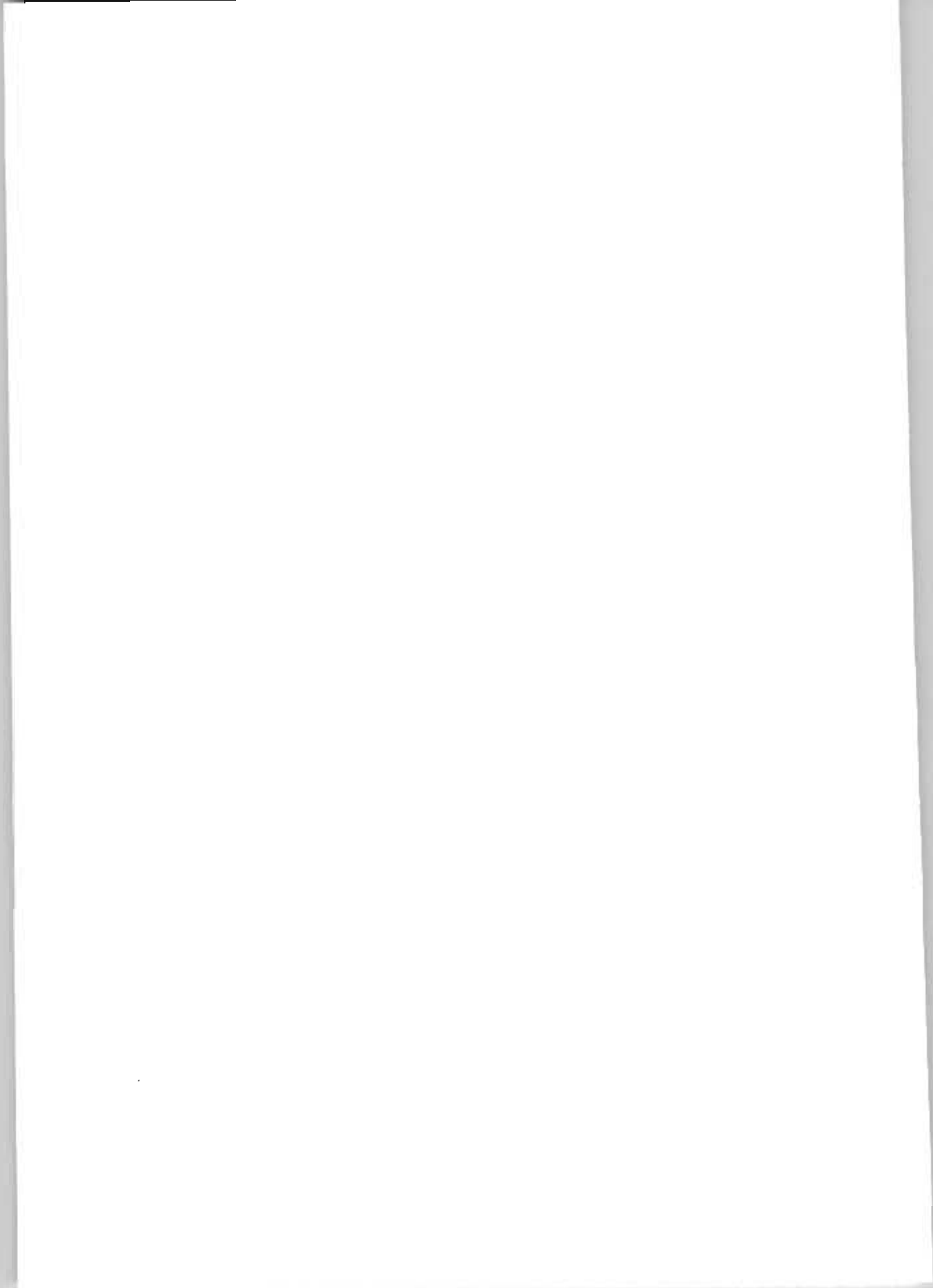


Chapter XIV

Mosaic

La Mosaique





MAIN STREET



OLD



NEW



Yvonne Denomey with parents Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Denomey in front of Denomey's grocery (now Cole's Foodmarket), taken somewhere around 1927.

OLD



NEW



Alfred Dupuis, Armand Lalonde



Taken in front of Eugene Lacharite's Ice Cream Parlour. Presently the St. Pierre building, where Prestige Hair Styles is located. Corner of Notre Dame and Chisolm.



Mr. Charles Gauthier's Garage



Eugene Lacharite and his son Maurice with 1922 Ford Touring. Notice old post-office where Royal Bank now stands.



Ernest St. Pierre holding horses while Jephthe & Herman on load



Charles Gauthier in his home Notice desk, gramophone, telephone



Pictured above is Amédée St. Pierre with his niece Alice (Robillard) Janisse. He is showing one of his first born lambs that year.



Florine Meunier in Baby Grand Chevrolet in 1929.



Load of Tomatoes Eddie & Leo Papineau



Eddie Papineau - Leo & Denis



Mr. Jephthé St. Pierre stands in front of his car on his farm on west Belle River Road



Fred Renaud, 99 yrs.
Will be 100 yrs old during our July 1984 celebrations.



**Blaise
86 yrs.**

**Diesbourg
Charles
96 yrs.**

**Julia
94 yrs.**



Mrs. Marie Louise Gauthier, 92 yrs.



Mrs. Helene Poisson



90TH BIRTHDAY — Miss Sarah Poisson of Belle River celebrated her 90th birthday Oct. 9. A life-long Belle River resident, known by many as "Me Tante Sarah," she still still does housework, yardwork and rides her bike as far as Stoney Point and Tecumseh. The second-youngest of ten children, she is the only girl the family.



Blaise Diesbourg



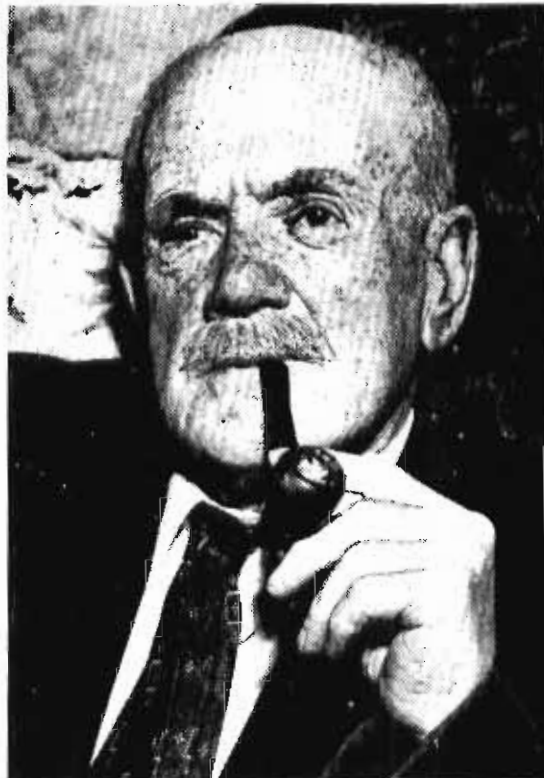
Mrs. Melinda Ouellette



Henri Charron, 98th birthday



The first Mrs. Diesbourg to come to Belle River around 1857, wife of Pierre Diesbourg, the first Miller. Born 1818, Died 97 yrs old in 1915



**Mr. Dennis Dumouchelle
Postmaster, Tax Collector, Town Clerk and
Manager of the Bell Telephone Company**

50th Anniversary



Mr. & Mrs. Emile Durocher



Mr. & Mrs. Wilfrid St. Pierre



Mr. & Mrs. Raymond Mousseau



Mr. & Mrs. Maxime Robillard

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY — Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Mousseau of Huron Church Rd celebrated their 50th anniversary on July 17 with a family dinner. They were married July 26, 1921 in Belle River and have lived in the area since then. Mr. and Mrs. Mousseau have three children, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Ouellette



Mr. & Mrs. John Ouellette



Mr. & Mrs. Raymond St. Pierre



50TH ANNIVERSARY—Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Parent of Belle River will have been married 50 years on Oct. 5. They plan to celebrate their anniversary on Oct. 12. Following a 10 a.m. mass at SS Simon and Jude Church, the couple will attend a family dinner at the Cooper Court Hotel. From 5 to 9 p.m. they will hold a reception in the K. of C. Hall, Emeryville. Mr. and Mrs. Parent were married in Windsor and have lived in Belle River for the past 43 years. They have three children, 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Mr. and Mrs. Parent request no gifts.



Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Gauthier



Mr. & Mrs. Jean Baptiste Renaud



Mr. & Mrs. Wilfrid St. Pierre



Top: **Aurise & Sophie (Girard)**
Albert & Helene Barrette
50th Anniversary



Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Girard

Weddings



Mr. & Mrs. Armand Lavoie



Mr. & Mrs. Wilfrid Dupuis



Mr. & Mrs. Felix Diesbourg



Mr. & Mrs. Laurent St. Pierre



Mr. & Mrs. Mederic Forget



William St. Pierre and Lottie Renaud Wedding



Arsene Laforet and Ida Trottier on their wedding day



**William Parent and Euphrasie Rose
Married Oct. 18, 1921 in St. Simon - St. Jude Church
by Fr. L'heureux
Witnesses: Theodore Parent, Aurise Rose**



**Henry and Bertha Derdaele
25th Wedding Anniversary August 28, 1979**



Wilfrid Neveux and Leona Harts, Sept. 3, 1928
Blake Clarke - Leona - Wilfrid
Back: Eva Neveux, Leon Harts,
Euclid Hebert, Florida Neveux



Wilfrid St. Pierre



Alfred Thibert



Alfred Grondin



Charles Gauthier



**Hermas Robillard
Eddie Plante, Philippe Marentette**



Henry Cote



Euphrasie Parent



Mr. & Mrs. Cesaire Durocher



Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert Thibert



Raymond Mousseau



Mr. & Mrs. Edgar Ladouceur



Mr. & Mrs. Henri St. Pierre



Mr. & Mrs. Jeremie Ducharme



Maxime Robillard



Mr. & Mrs. Jephthe St. Pierre are pictured with their three eldest children: Wilfrid, William and Lea



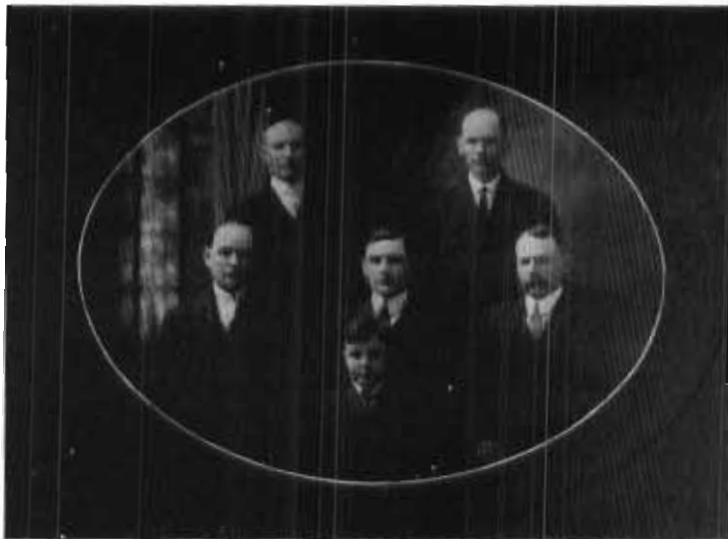
Mr. & Mrs. Cleveland Mousseau



Mederic Forget and Cora Ducharme



Left to right:
Ulric Soulliere, James Strong and Joseph Renaud



Strong Family
James, Joseph
Charles, Daniel, William
Grandson Dennis



All Mousseau Cousins
Back Row: Minnie Ducharme, Lea Mousseau, Veronique Mousseau, Virginie Mousseau, Tillie Ducharme
Centre: Alice Mousseau, Catherine Mousseau
Front Row: Lena Mousseau, Nora Mousseau, Lena Mousseau, Cora Ducharme



Joseph Strong Family
Back Row: Eva (Oscar Sauv ), Theresa (Gus Chevalier), Mary Ellen (James Strong)
Bridget (Charles Renaud), Cecelia (Louis Dicaire)
Seated: Joseph Jr., Joseph Sr., William



**Moise et Caroline Girard, Soeur Isabelle Girard
 Lena and John Girard**



The James N. Strong Family
Bottom Row: Adele (Chevalier) Strong
Catherine Strong, James Strong, Edna Renaud
Lavina Renaud, John Strong, Rose Soulliere
Top Row: Margaret (Maggie) Cook, Steve Strong
son-in-law Ben Renaud, Nellie Antaya, Mildred Lebert



Napoleon and Etudienne Lalonde Family
Back L to R: Agnes, Aur le, Alma, Aurore, Arthur
Front Row: Amanda and Armand



Mrs. Elizabeth Blanchette
Mrs. Bernadette (Etta) Tellier



Sarah Poisson and her mother Helene Poisson
with their cats



Elie Fleury
Thomas Renaud
Noah Fleury
Edgar Renaud



Neveux Family
Philip, Henry, Narcise Jr., Narcisse Sr., Florida,
Marie Louise, Florestine, Lorena
Zelia Neveux (Doucette)



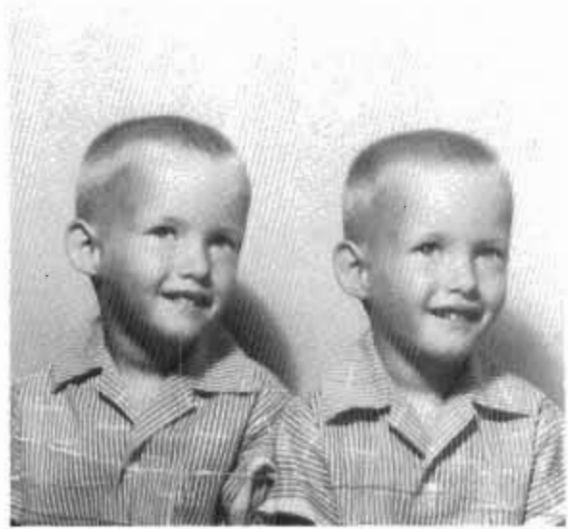
**Alma Gauthier, Charles Gauthier, Eva Durocher,
Gilbert Durocher, Elizabeth Durocher
Eddie Durocher**



**St. Pierre Girl triplets Diane, Dorothy and Dolores daughters of
Lawrence and Bernadine (Diemer) St. Pierre, admire their newly christened boy triplet cousins,
Richard, Roger and Robert, sons of Gerald and Irene (St. Pierre) Diemer**



Twins Joseph & John Meunier



Twins: James and Peter Renaud



Albert with Adrien, Amédé St. Pierre and Henri Charron



Four Generations – The entire responsibility of representing a fourth generation of his family tree rests on one year-old Michael Girard, son of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Girard, 15 James St., Leamington. Michael is being held by his father. Standing from left are his grandfather, Cleophas Girard and his great grandfather, Samuel, of Belle River



4th Generation
Wilfrid holding Kevin, Norbert, Herman St. Pierre



Left to right: Rosaire, Leo and Gérald Denomey



Remi St. Pierre



Strong Family



Aurèle and Robert Ducharme



Standing: Francis, Rita, Richard
Seated: Adrien & Victoria Parent



Granger Family



Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Thibert
Dorothy & Herman



Theresa Denomey, Rita Parent, Mary Sauvé



Lucile, Jules, Marcel, André Levesque



Amedee Thibert



Remi and Marcella St. Pierre



Aurele and Arthur Ducharme



**Leo Parent with Fr. Lawrence Paré in 1973
Parishioner of the year.**



Mrs. Pearl Durocher

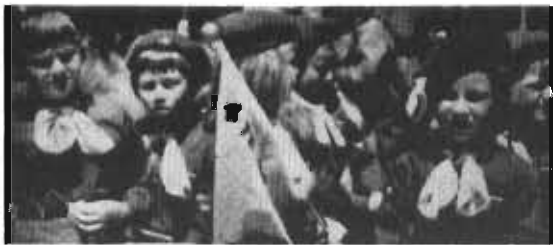


**Mrs. Tillie Lavoie, with her children
Beatrice, Leon and Lorraine**



**One-year-old Catherine Bracken likes being the
centre of attention. She is shown here in a four
generation picture from left to right,
Edward Bracken, Catherine, Charles Bracken and
Mrs. Levina Bracken who is 85. Catherine's
birthday is August 14.**





First Aid Certificates Presented to Guides



Brigadier James Farrow, St. John Ambulance, Windsor, presents First Aid Certificates to Terry Lynn Desormeay, Company 69; Susan Bessie, Ranger and Yvonne Lavote, Company 68.



Belle River Team wins pennant

Back Row: Ralph Ladouceur, Ulric Poisson, Malcolm Parent, Raymond Laforest, Hermas Lachapelle
Edmund Lachapelle, Hugh Graham, Hector (Con) Rose
Front Row: Tonto Lachapelle, Adelard Fleury, Clifford Rose, Mr. Murphy
Emmanuel Laforest, Herman Dupuis



Baseball Team 1910



Belle River Team, Sponsored By K of C 2775



School Play — "Take Me Out To The Ball Game"



Edgar Ladouceur — 1908 Baseball player.
Notice buggy in background

Get Ideas for P.-T.A. Dance



Getting ideas for a Coronation dance are, left to right, Mrs. E. J. Dupuis, decorations convener; Mrs. Francis Ladouceur, general chairman, and Mrs. Raymond Ouellette, the tickets convener. They are members of the Parent-Teacher Association of St. John the Baptist School, Belle River, which is holding a Coronation Dance tonight, at 9 o'clock, in the parish hall.



Belle River Mayor John George shakes hands with Father Masse at a testimonial dinner held last Saturday for Father Masse. Over 370 persons attended and Bishop Emmet Carter and Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Eugene Whelan, both sent Father Masse letters. Standing beside Father Masse is Bill Walker, president of branch 299 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Belle River. Looking on are Father Masse's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Laurent Masse. (Photo by Dan Charron)



C.W.L. Executive, 1983



Shown above are newly appointed president, Mrs. Rosaire Racourt A. P. I. of St. Jean Baptiste school, Belle River and secretary, Miss. B. Poisson. Election of officers took place at the Parish Hall on May 24th. Other officers are: vice-president, Mrs. Real Papineau; treasurer, Mrs. H. Bellaire; councillors, Mrs. T. Poisson, Mrs. G. St. Pierre, Sister Marie Antoinette and Mrs. E. Dufresne. Mrs. B. Levesque, retiring president was in charge of the meeting. (Staff Photo)



On May 24th at the Belle Riviere Salle Paroissiale (Parish Hall) un Concours de Francais (French Concert) was held, put on by the pupils of Ecole Saint-Jean Baptiste and sponsored by the A.P.I. of that school.

The programme took in grades from primary to eight and included songs, recitations and dialogue, all in the French language.

School principal, M. Rene Bisnaire was director while Miss. Bernadette Poisson and Adien Pimstoneault were accompanists.

(Staff Photo)



Here are some of the primary group taking part in the Concours de Francais. (Staff Photo)



..Procession of Blessed Sacrament under priest Father Laliberte in front of Severin Ducharme home on Notre Dame Street, somewhere near 1934



Past President,
C.W.L.

MRS. ANNA RENAUD



Front Row: Maurice Bellmore, Paul Beaugrand, Bob Parent, Rene Girard, Sam Beaugrand, Omer Girard, Edward Lalonde
Second Row: Lionel Poisson, Jerry Ducharme, Raymond Teller, Louis Durocher, John Beaugrand, Leo Sylvester, Joel Ouellette, Edward Tellier
Back Row: Alfred Beaugrand, John Taylor, Eugene Girard, Gerald St. Pierre, Fr. Marentette, Renée St. Pierre, Edmond Fleury, René Ouellette



Ushers Club





4th Degree K of C Colour Guard Holy Thursday





*Left to Right: Mrs. Libby Denomey
Sister Marie Lalement (Edna)
Father Ernest Denomey, Joseph Denomey*



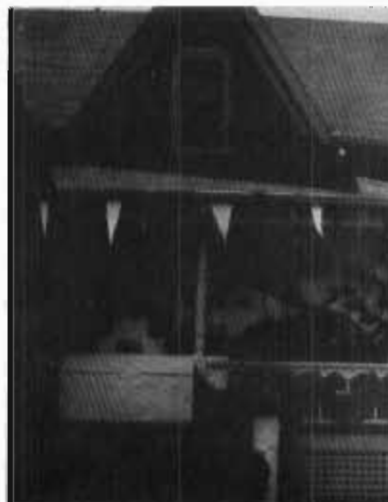
*Fr. Parent giving his mother communion
at his first mass*



Our Lady of Fatima - The Pilgrim Virgin



Youth Group Concert, Late 40's



**Corpus Christi Altar and Procession
at Denis Ouellette**



Leonard and Dora Gauthier, First Communion



Antoinette St. Onge



Mary Ann Renaud



Carol Renaud





