



1893

1984

ST. MARY'S

HISTORY

ST. MARY'S CHURCH 1893 - 1984

IN THE BEGINNING - there was a small parish without a church of their own within easy access for attendance of both parents and children. All residents had to travel a fair distance to attend services and functions at St. Stephen's on Mount Newton XRoad. The parish was known as South Saanich.

A dream of building a church was borne and on April 24th, 1893 a committee meeting was held at the Rural Hotel, attended by:

Mrs. Watson, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Thomas, Mrs Mackenzie,
Mr. E. John, Mr. G. Harrison, Mr. E. Sadler, Mr. G. Thomas,
Mr. Mackenzie, Mr. C. Green, Mr. F. Turgoose, and Mr. C. Arthur.

Plans and specifications were finalized and would be submitted to Archdeacon Scriven for his approval. A lot on Cultra Avenue had been donated by Mr. Croft on the condition that work be commenced within four months. They estimated the cost at \$1,000 but later found a mortgage for \$3,000 was necessary, and this was undertaken by Mr. & Mrs. George Thomas, Mr. & Mrs. George Harrison and Mr. Edwin John, Snr. Thus the start of St. Mary's Church became a reality. At this time the Rector was Rev. F.G. Christmas who served from 1890 to 1901.

The list of subscribers to the church fund was a lengthy one with contributions coming from as far away as Cowichan. By direct appeal the sum of \$658.00 was collected with another \$108.50 promised. In order to commence work, \$200 was advanced by Mr. E. Sadler and \$500 on a note held by J. Lamberton.

A service of dedication and the first service in St. Mary's took place on July 6th, 1893 - the collection amounted to \$18.30.

The following years involved a lot of hard work - the objective, to raise money to pay off the mortgage. Many social events took place - concerts, dances, theatrical productions, bazaars, teas, etc., and suppers served at the Agricultural Fair.

The Martindale family were very active workers in the church life at this time - the oldest son, John, was on the vestry; Mary the oldest girl played the organ and Ada led the choir.

Mr. Gillen supplied wood for the stoves in the church, and lit the fire every Sunday, and the women of the parish kept the church clean, the kerosene lamps polished and filled, and attended to flowers for the altar.

Constant work by dedicated parishioners allowed the church to be free of debt and a service of consecration was held at 2 pm on June 16th, 1904 when the church was named St. Mary's. The Rector was Rev. F. H. Wimberley, who served from 1901 to 1905. Bishop Perrin took the service and the collection that day amounted to \$11.35. Bishop Perrin furnished the church with a very pretty cover for the Lord's Table, two brass flower holders with patent holders attached, two wooden candlesticks and a very handsome wooden cross.

Mr. & Mrs. George Thomas donated the bell for the church — Mr. Thomas was Rector's Warden from 1871 to 1881. The bell was dedicated on December 8th, 1907.

Mr. Colin Henry Merkeley and Emma Turgoose were the first couple to be married in St. Mary's on January 1st, 1896, the Rev. F. G. Christmas, Rector, officiating.

On May 10th, 1908 the marble font, given in memory of E. Sadler was dedicated. William Turgoose was the first child to be christened at this font on May 24th, 1908, the Rev. J.W. Flinton officiating.

During these years the Rector had three parishes for which he was responsible — St. Stephen's, Holy Trinity and St. Mary's. The 8 am service was at St. Stephen's, then the Rector walked over the Mt. Newton Indian Trail to Holy Trinity for the 11 am service and then to St. Mary's for the 3 pm service. Following this busy day, evensong at 7pm took place at St. Stephen's.

The Rev. J.W. Flinton served from 1906 to 1912. He still had three churches to look after, and a Miss Groves walked over from St. Stephen's to play the organ.

During 1913 to 1916 the Rev. H.T. Archbold served. He only had two parishes to take care of as Sidney area had built St. Andrew's church and a Rector was appointed for St. Andrew's and Holy Trinity.

Data covering the years of the First War and the twenties is very scarce, but in 1921 the committee members were Arthur T. Pope, Frank Tanner, Mrs. W.A. Bissett, Mrs. W. Derrinberg and Mrs. Fox. In 1929 Mrs. Bissett, Mrs. Greensted and Miss Lyle served on the committee. In 1931 the Rector's Warden was Mr. Greensted. The committee of 1932 consisted of Mrs. Greensted, Mr. Greensted, Mrs. Bissett, Miss Lyle and Mrs. Styan. These Committee members were part of the Parish Committee which included both St. Stephen's and St. Mary's.

During the 30's the church fell on hard times with very few people attending — maybe 5 or 6. Sometimes only George King and the Rector showed up. The King family were associated with St. Mary's starting in 1921. George served as both Rector's and People's warden at times, and latterly as an honorary member. He kept the church clean, and in cold weather arrived early to light the wood stove fire. He also rang the bell faithfully for Sunday services. All of George King's grandchildren were baptized in St. Mary's and two grand-daughters were married there. George King served St. Mary's from 1921 to his death at age 84 in 1960.

Even though there were lean years, a courageous few carried on and during the years, several church fittings were added.

In 1934 the Credence Table and Reredos were given by the Jr. Branch of the W.A. and were made by Mr. T. Haddon. The blue frontal hangings and markers were made by Miss Lyle.

In 1938 an Offertory Plate was given as a memorial to Rev. J.S.A. Bastin by the congregation. He was Rector from 1919 to 1937. Also in 1938 the W.A. provided wall vases.

On October 13th, 1949 a meeting was held at the home of Mrs. P. Facey. At this meeting the Saanichton Circle of St. Mary's came into being.

In 1950 a new pulpit was built and carved by Mr. E. Oakes – a handsome addition to the church.

Also in 1950 Mr. R.S. (Bob) Boutcillier became organist and choirmaster. He continued in this capacity for 30 years, and frequently helped out at St. Stephen's and other churches when necessary. Bob also served on the church committee for many years and was a Warden in 1959.

In 1951 the furnace and carpet were installed, and the wafer box for the Eucharist was given as a memorial to Rev. and Mrs. Mortimer, and two brass vases donated by the Saanichton Circle.

A Sanctuary chair, made from an oak beam from Great Yarmouth Church was donated in 1952. Bishop Hills was Rector at Yarmouth before coming to British Columbia.

Also in 1952 a new Altar was donated to the church, and the Processional Cross, two candlesticks and two brass collection plates.

As St. Stephen's and St. Mary's were a joint parish being served by the same Rector, it became necessary for a financial arrangement to be set up. The situation was discussed at the meeting on January 30th, 1956. At that time it was decided to have two separate committees and wardens for each church. The finances would be split on a 60 - 40 per cent basis – St. Stephen's receiving 60 per cent and St. Mary's 40 per cent. There would also be a Parish Council elected consisting of the Wardens of both churches, a Secretary and a Treasurer. This Council would meet to discuss matters of mutual interest. Wardens from St. Mary's were: Rector's – P.S. Laws; People's – J.F. Cooper. The committee consisted of J.E. Tanner, R.S. Bouteillier, E.A. Chatwell, Mrs. P. Crawford and Mrs. J.F. Cooper, Secretary was Hilda Butterfield and Treasurer, P.F. Warren. At the first meeting of the Parish Council it was agreed that receipts from both churches be paid into one account with the Treasurer apportioning the proper share from each parish when paying accounts. Any money left after paying their share of the expenses could be expended at the discretion of the Church Committee. Rev. Dr. E.H. Lee was the Rector at this time and served from 1952 to 1958.

It was becoming evident that space must be provided for the Sunday School, and it was hoped to solve this problem by obtaining a disused Air Force training building from Patricia Bay. In September the building had been moved and work was progressing in getting it ready for use. This building is now the present church hall. Also in 1956, re-roofing of the church was needed and this work was completed; most of the labour was carried out by volunteer parishioners.

Also in 1956 the dedication took place of the processional cross, the Lectern and the cover for the Font.

In 1957 the Sunday School report showed an average attendance of 31 pupils with six teachers - usually four each Sunday. J.E. Tanner was Sunday School Supt. as well as the auditor at this time. The church committee members were **J.E. Tanner, R.S. Bouteillier, Mrs. P. Crawford, Mrs. J.F. Cooper, Mrs. J. Clarke** and G. King. At the close of 1957 St. Mary's Circle became a W.A.

In 1958 the Vestry was re-decorated. A new collection plate and collection **bag for the choir were given as a memorial. Excellent progress was being made on the** kitchen extension and in June, 1959, final plans for the extension were accepted. An Anglican Church sign was installed at the corner of Cultra and East Saanich Road. The Rev. O.L. Foster was Rector at this time.

In 1959 the Committee had the responsibility of making a decision re the purchase of suitable additional property for future church expansion. In October it was decided to purchase 1.68 acres of land from Mrs. L. Angus at the corner of Cultra and East Saanich Road, the cost to be \$2,300. Parishioners would be asked to loan money, interest free, to buy the property along with a request to borrow \$1,200 from the Church Sites and Parsonage Fund for a future church site. In November a total of \$1,140 had been received by way of loans and donations, and \$1,200 received from the Diocese. A deposit of \$1,000 was made on the land. How fortunate we are today to own this property. It was made possible through the necessary foresight of these people looking ahead to the future.

In 1960 arrangements re the sharing of expenses for both churches was revised and would now be on a 50 - 50 basis. Work on the hall and kitchen continued. Alterations to the Chancel and Sanctuary were made as well as re-roofing of the kitchen. A septic tank was installed.

In 1961 plans were made to install washroom facilities as a project for that year. Completion of the kitchen took place. A total of 40 new Prayer Books were purchased, and the Vestry floor was repaired and a water meter installed.

In 1962 the possibility of purchasing land to the west of the church arose and this would involve selling the corner lot on Cultra and East Saanich Road. However, in June the final decision was made to keep the corner property and hold it for future expansion.

The need for a new organ was very apparent and the Rector's Warden and Bob Bouteillier, the organist were authorized to place a church model Hammond organ in the church for approval. The Rector and Wardens were given authority to purchase same if satisfactory - this was the case and consequently the old organ was sold for \$50.

The water was connected to the church building this fall. The trees had been topped and roof repairs were made to the hall.

In 1963 there was a fully equipped choir and Servers in the Chancel. In February the W.A. reported a membership of 26. Their projects for the year consisted of helping with the expense of completing the kitchen, installing plumbing facilities and contributing to the Organ Fund and Land Purchase Fund. It was planned to hold an every member visitation on March 31st, but this was delayed until June. In June, 1964 re-decorating of the church interior took place.

In March of 1966 a Lectern Bible was donated as a memorial, and the old clock in the Sunday School room was donated - this clock originally came from the Prairie Inn. In 1967 the A.C.W. supplied purificators, psalters for the choir and an altar cloth. The Sunday School showed an attendance of 30 pupils, coming from both areas of St. Stephen's and St. Mary's. The A.C.W. installed a hot water tank in the kitchen; until then all water for washing up after functions had to be heated on the stoves.

The 70's reflect a great deal of activity. New paneling for the base of the Church and Chancel was provided through a parishioner's legacy, and the new nave carpet was provided through a memorial gift. New carpet for the Chancel and new insulation were also provided through a legacy. The hall was repainted and new pews installed in the church. The outside of the church was also painted, and the A.C.W. painted the small middle hall.

In 1970 the Rev. Ivan Futter was appointed as Rector, succeeding the Rev. O.L. Foster. During the '70's the belfry was repaired and the sound equipment installed. A new cupboard for the Vestry was built and two small prayer desks provided; an additional fifty prayer books were purchased. In May of 1976 the new Church Building Fund was opened.

The early 80's again reflect many activities. The hall floor was re-painted and the windows of the church covered with plastic to conserve heat. The kitchen needed a re-roofing job and money was set aside for this project. One partition was made for the Sunday School and a phone placed in the hall. The New Rite Eucharist Service books were purchased. Through a donation, carpet was installed under all the pews resulting in the entire church being covered. The offertory plate and two kneelers were given as memorials.

During this time re-roofing of the church was done and repainting the exterior greatly enhanced the appearance of St. Mary's. Also at this time the tower was repaired which was quite an undertaking. The kitchen was refurbished and a new church sign placed on the exterior of the church.

Approval was granted for the insertion of two stained glass windows as memorials and Bishop Hywel Jones subsequently held a dedication service.

In 1982 the Parish Council members and Wardens, after much deliberation, decided the time was at hand when St. Mary's could become a self-supporting parish. Consequently, permission was sought and granted by the Bishop and Executive Committee that at the end of 1982 St. Mary's would become a separate parish.

In 1983 the Rev. Robert Sansom was appointed as Rector.

Several names show up continuously on church records starting in the 1940's and continuing for many years. To name only a few - Cooper, Tanner, Beaumont, Clarke, Styan, Chapman, Butler, Bouteillier, Chatwell, Laws, Warren, Bissett, Greensted, Spencer. All of these people and many more have contributed greatly in the work of the church.

At the present time the Parish Council includes: Lay Readers - Mr. T. Gunter and Mr. P. Cutts. Mr Cutts is also Choir Director. Rector's Warden: Mr. K.Sutcliffe. People's Warden: Mr. V.Stevens, Treasurer: Mr. R. Jackson, Secretary: Mr. T. Gunter, Envelope Secretary: Mrs. V. Stevens, Sunday School Supt.: Mrs. K. Sutcliffe, Council members - Mrs. G.Delbrouck, Mr. J. Cooper, Mr. C.D. Clive, Mr. W. Blair, Mr. C. Byambell, Mr. M. Newman, Mr. J. Hall.

Presently in 1984 our Rector and the Parish Council are organizing plans for building a larger church at the corner of Cultra Avenue and the East Saanich Road which will accommodate our growing congregation in worship, endeavours and activities. Hopefully this new challenge will be met with the dedication and enthusiasm as previously witnessed by so few in the early years of the parish.

September, 1984