



History of St. James' Anglican Church Est. 1848

Sources:

History researched and compiled by Gary G. Mead

“As the Last Leaf Fell” – Barbara (Mason) Peart

In 1844, St. Margaret's Bay District inconveniently extended from Boutilier's Point to Dover (later divided in September 1895, into two parishes – St. Paul's at French Village and St. Peter's at Indian Harbour) In many cases it was impossible for the elderly and very young to walk the long distance to St Paul's in French Village. Consequently, church services were sometimes held in schools or in private homes, one being the old Joe Fader house at the entrance to Station Road. At a public meeting held in the school house on the North Shore in October, 1844, it was agreed Rev. John Stannage, Mr. John Martin Boutilier, and Sam Shatford would form a committee to carry on the building of a Chapel on the land provided by John Martin Boutilier and his wife, Mary Catherine, on June 4, 1845.

The first service was held on the 15th of November, 1846 and St. James was consecrated in January 1848.

Deed for St. James' Chapel

This indenture made the fourth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand either hundred and fourty-five between John Martin Boutilier of St. Margaret's Bay in the county of Halifax, Yeoman, and Mary Catherine, his wife, of the one part and the Right Reverend John, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia, of the other part, witnesseth: that the said John Martin Boutilier and Mary Catherine, his wife, for and in consideration of the sum of five shillings lawful money of Nova Scotia, to them the said John Martin Boutilier and Mary Catherine, his wife, well and truly paid, at or before, the ensembling and delivery of these presents, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, and they do for ever discharge the said Right Reverend John, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia and his successors in office fr ever. The following lot of land situated on the north shore of St. Margaret's Bay, aforesaid and bounded as follows:

Beginning at the stake on the southern side of the new main road leading from Halifax to Chester on the line of lands in the possessory of Henry Doray, thence to run south two degrees thirty minutes east, on the line of said Henry Doray's land five rods where it comes to the end of a stone wall thence in direct angles which is south eighty-seven degrees thirty minutes west, twelve rods, to a small spruce tree, thence north, two degrees thirty minutes west, until it comes to the main road, thence easterly on the southern side of said road to the place of beginning; containing one-half acre, more or less, in trust, for the purpose of erecting a place of worship and a burial ground in connection with the Protestant Episcopal Church of England, together with all buildings, improvements, and appurtenances whatsoever belonging thereto.

To have and to hold, unto him the said Right Reverend John, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia and his successors in office for ever the aforesaid tract of land for the purposes aforesaid and for no other purposes whatsoever and the said John Martin Boutilier and Mary Catherine, his wife, for themselves their heirs and assigns do hereby covenant, promise, grant and agree to and with the said Right Reverend John, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia and his successors in office for ever, in the manner following: viz: that the said John Martin Boutilier and Mary Catherine, his wife, their heirs and assigns, or some or one of them, shall and will well and truly warrant and maintain and for ever defend unto the said Right Reverend John, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia and his successors in office for ever, the quiet and peaceable possession of said described plot or tract of land against the claims of any person or persons whomsoever.

In witness whereof the said John Martin Boutilier and Mary Catherine, his wife, have hereunto their hands and seals subscribed and set the date and year first above written.

Ed Wallace) Witnesses
John Stanage)

John Martin Boutilier
Mary Catherine Boutilier

Here follow the requisite certificates in the original. The above is recorded in lib. or folio 412.

Notes from Vestry minutes

“On the 23rd of July, 1846, the frame of St. James’ Chapel was raised on the North Shore of St. Margaret’s Bay by the inhabitants, joined by many of their friends from French Village. About 50 men worked all day gratuitously, and the next day it was boarded in in the same manner. On the first day the Minister and his friends dined with all the people under a tent erected for the purpose near the Chapel, many of the women and children being present, and all appeared most happy to see a new Church erected in honour of Almighty God, an of His Everlasting Gospel.

On the 15th of November, St. James’ Chapel being sufficiently finished (the exterior only being completed), Divine Service was performed in it for the first time by the Rev. J. Stannage About two hundred persons were present, many of them from distant places. The sermon was from the First Book of Chronicles, Chapter 11, Verse 19. A collections was made for stoves and pipes amounting to £16.”

Newspaper Article from the “Halifax Times” August 4, 1846

Thursday, the 23rd July 1846, was a great day for the inhabitants of the North Shore of St. Margaret’s Bay. At an early hour, nearly all of the people from many miles around assembled at the request of their Minister, to help each other in raising the frame for a Prot. Episcopal Church in that settlement. The building is 30 by 40 ft., in post with a tower and pinnacles 38 feet high, and will contain 250 persons. It is to be finished in the Gothic style, and will not only be a great accommodation for the congregation to worship God more suitable and comfortably than in the small and over-crowded schoolhouse where they have met for several years, many having to stand outside, or to remain away for want of room, – but, being near the post road, it will also be a pleasing object to the dye of every traveller in whose heart the faith of the Gospel is “working by love”, and who likes to be reminded,

wherever he goes, that he is but “a stranger and a pilgrim here below,” and that there is “a house for him, not built with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

By the zeal and activity of the people, aided by many friends from the other side of the Bay, who accompanied their minister to the spot, after a solemn and suitable prayer to God by all on their knees, the whole of the frame was put up before sunset; and the next day it was boarded in, also by the voluntary labour of the people who hope to derive benefit from its sacred services. A large tent had been erected near the place over which the British Flag was floating, and under which a dinner was provided by several friends of the church, for those who were engaged in the work. The rain which poured down in abundance for a while, in no way slackened the zeal of any. All the women and children, able, came to witness the joyful event, and many an expression of delight was heard from more than one of them. An old woman, a mother of 23 children, and of great part of the settlement, walked a mile, at her advanced age, supported by her children and grandchildren, to behold what she said she never thought to have seen in that place. The scene was altogether an interesting one, and his missionary and his friends had only one thing to regret, viz: the unavoidable absence of some of the Clergy of Halifax, who they believe, would have been so pleased with the poor fishermen's exertions as greatly to forward, by their influence in the city the completion of the good work.

The Reverend J. Stannage would take this opportunity of thanking those friends in Halifax, in Jersey, and in England, as well as those on this side of St. Margaret's Bay, who have, by their donations encouraged him much in the building of this, as well as other places of worship now completed on Boutilier's Point (Hackett's Cove). He has always found that help from a distance calls forth the zeal of the poor people on these shores, who feel their limited circumstances too much to undertake anything which seems beyond their reach, greatly and long as they may have wished for it. He is, however, sorry to be obliged to say that, he has lost the assistance of the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, which he had for Boutilier's Point (Hackett's Cove) that there are many other calls upon the resources of his Parishioners; and that the people of the settlement in which his Church is building, being extremely poor, have been able to contribute only £23 in money. About £50 is still required to finish the outside, (so as to have it open for service during summer) in addition to what he has already received, or has been promised by Societies and individuals. He will, therefore, be most thankful for any help from the friends of “Christ and the Church”, in Halifax and elsewhere, either in money, or articles that could be sold for the purpose of or that could be used for the building. Mr. S. really believes that none can have a commensurate idea of the great religious destitution of these shores, and the desire of the people for the services of the Church, unless they should visit them themselves. While he gratefully acknowledges the liberality of the people of Halifax, he is confident that he would have more help from them, and that more sacrifices would be made for religious purposes, did they but see the necessities of their poorer brethren in their own county and township, and within 30 miles of their opulent metropolis. Trusting that “the love of Christ will constrain many” he humbly sends the above appeal in dependence upon the Heavenly blessing.

Church Hall

Land for the church hall was donated by Mrs. Willard Christie in 1928. In 1929 the hall was built with Irving Young, Forman, Ezekiel Boutilier, John Cavicchi, and Rupert Boutilier as helpers. Ezeiel Boutilier hauled the timbers from the sawmill at Stillwater Lake using Oliver Dauphinee's horse and wagon.