



History of St. Paul's Anglican Church Est. 1832

Sources:

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“As The Last Leaf Fell” – Barb (Mason) Peart

St. Margaret's was relatively uninhabited until 1783 when Governor John Parr visited Lunenburg and persuaded many of the German/French speaking settlers to come here and begin settlement. From the mid 1780's to the 1820's, many of the settlers traveled to Halifax, Chester, or Lunenburg to be married or have children christened. Travelling Missionaries called occasionally to hold services in the room of a house or barn.

The land deed for St. Paul's Anglican Church, dated the twenty-sixth day of August, 1823, states that Frederick C. Boutilier and his wife Mary Catherine, handed over to the Honorable and Right Reverend Robert Stanser, Doctor of Divinity, Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Nova Scotia, for the sum of five shillings, a certain tract of land in French Village “for the purpose of building a church for the public worship of Almighty God according to the rites and ceremonies of the united Church of England and Ireland as by law established, and for no other intent, use, or purpose whatsoever.”

Rev. John Ingles writes that since his last visit to Margaret's Bay in August, 1824, the frame of a church 43 ft. by 33 ft. had been raised, and the trustees for it are collecting materials in order that the work may proceed in the spring. By November 7, 1825, when Rev. James Cochran visited the church, he reported the building had been completely covered in, partly clapboarded, and all the windows installed. He estimated 900 people were living in the area (According to Census, there were 506 in 1817)

“The people have much merit. They will form a large and interesting congregation, teachable and anxious for right instruction and he sincerely hopes the society will be able to make some provision for them. The school at that place is will taught my Mr. Goremain but the inhabitants are so scattered around the shores of an extensive and indented bay, that it is impossible to collect many children at any single pint. There are now twenty- two in attendance at the school.”

“ In the fall I returned and preached in the church to a very respectable congregation, and baptized three children. The Rev. Mr. Twining had performed service there about a month before The building is completely covered in, and partly clapboarded, and the windows are all in; nothing more can now be done to it until spring, when they expect to proceed rapidly with its completion, the subscriptions already made to the church and the grant from the venerable

society will fall somewhat short of the expense of finishing it; but the deficiency I doubt not will be readily made up by t a new contribution It is highly gratifying to see this edifice raised in a place but lately known to our ministers and where at least nine hundred souls may be said to have been living without God in the world In the evening I officiated in a private house three miles below the church, where more assembled than could find accommodation, On Monday evening also I preached at the schoolhouse to a numerous congregation, and everywhere found a pleasing anxiety for religious instructions. The inhabitants concur in expressions of gratitude to your Lordship, and in earnest hopes that they may be allowed a resident Missionary. Few places, if any, afford a grater field for the active labours of a faithful minister. The people are extremely attentive to the wishes of a clergyman, and contribute to his comfort as far as they can, at least I can so testify from personal experience; and I have no doubt they would at once comply with the conditions under which the society grant resident Missionaries, Great ignorance as your Lordship knows, prevails among them, and, as might be expected from their deserted state, a great degree of iniquity; but the visits of religious teachers have already had a beneficial tendency”

“On Saturday, the first day of the new year, 1825, I went for a third time to Margaret’s Bay, to give them service the next day. A storm arose the night of my arrival, which continued the greater part of the Sunday; but, notwithstanding, I had large congregations in the morning at the schoolhouse, and in the evening at Moore’s. I also baptized two children, one of the belonging to Thomas Croucher who with his wife came eleven miles on foot, for the purpose of attending diving worship.”

The first Church at French Village, St. Paul’s, was consecrated on October 21, 1832. The first resident clergyman of the Parish of French Village was Rev. John Stannage, who had been curate of St. Paul’s in Halifax. He served here full-time from 1834 to 1854. Mr. William R. Cochran of King’s College and John Pearson served as assistants for two years at the end.

On Easter Monday, 1858, it was resolved that St. Paul’s Church be lit with burning fluid. In 1862, Rev. J. Ambrose agreed that the new unfinished church at Cyrus Boutilier’s on the Halifax Road be pulled down and brought to French Village for the purpose of building the new church at French Village. The new church was raised on June 2nd, and by November 3rd, 1863, it was completed and consecrated by Bishop Binney.

Ordination of Rev. John Stannage, June 22, 2834, by Rev. John Inglis, Lord Bishop of N.S.

“Having engaged to ordain Mr. Stannage, at Margaret’s Bay, I named Sunday June 22, 1834, for that purpose; but being too weak to proceed by land, the Archdeacon went thither on Saturday, the 21st, on which day Sir Rupert George very kindly received me in his little vessel. We were impeded by calms and head-wind, so that no exertion could take the vessel to the church at Margaret’s Bay, until four o’clock of the afternoon of Sunday. The church had been crowded by nearly six hundred persons, but the congregation had been dismissed, and the Archdeacon had left the place. Happily, the Rev. John Stevenson, who had traveled from

Windsor. (more than fifty miles) solely to be present at the ordination of a missionary for this interesting settlement, where his frequent visits had done much to prepare for this happy event, had not gone away. The boats, filled with members of the congregation were called back; and many others, who were returning to their homes by land, the church was again filled, and Mr. John Stannage was ordained. I was so unwell that I was afraid to begin a sermon, and, therefore, preferred making a familiar address, which might be terminated at any moment when I felt exhausted. My strength, however, was continued to me, and rose with the occasion, so that I was able to say all I wished to say to this most attentive and engaging people. They appeared much affected; and, I trust, the blessing of God upon the employment of the day will give cause for rejoicing to many, through years which are to come. The people, as the Society have been already informed; have bound themselves by engagement, to raise 90 pounds a year for the support of the church. Of this, 30 pounds must be allotted, in the first year, to the payment of a debt contracted in finishing the church; after the payment of which I hope Mr., Stannage will receive from his congregation nearly 90 pounds a year., And I will be deemed worthy of the Society's approbation and encouragement. Fifty pounds a year from their funds would make Mr. Stannage comfortable, contented, and thankful. He is devoted to his duty, and giving great satisfaction to his flock. In the evening I returned to my vessel, and many families who were in church now returned to home, without any refreshment through the whole of a long summer's day; but all seemed happy."

"Monday, June 23, was spent in crossing Margaret's Bay to Hubbard's Cove, where twelve families reside, all of whom profess to be members of the church. These have often been visited by the Rev. James Shreve, of Chester. Here I baptized a sick infant, and improved the opportunity for pressing upon the people the duties which they owed to their minister, In the afternoon we ran to the head of this beautiful bay, and anchored for the night in one of it's numerous little inlets or harbours"

"In this way have my occasional visits to Margaret's Bay been brought to a happy termination, The church, from small beginnings, had grown and flourished till it seemed ripe for the services of a resident clergyman, and the people having subscribed nearly 90 pounds per annum for his support, the Lord Bishop, with well-timed promptitude, immediately selected in a proper person for the station; and I had the satisfaction, in the month of June, to present him for admission to Holy Orders, in presence of the congregation which was thenceforth committed to his charge."

"The solemn rite, which secured to this place the undivided care of a pastor, so pious and devoted as, I trust, Mr. Stannage will prove instead of the periodical or incidental services which had hitherto been allotted to it, was hailed, on all sides, with unfeigned thankfulness and joy; at the same time, I need hardly add, a shade of melancholy and regret must have been blended with an act of final separation between a deserving and affectionate congregation and their former minister who had lived together in unity of spirit and the bond of peace, and were endeared to each other, as well by the services at the altar as by an interchange of numberless kind offices through a constant and intimate private intercourse."

Sentence of Consecration of St. Paul's Churchyard, French Village. February 9th, 1889

Whereas a piece of land situate at French Village in the Parish of St. Margaret's, within our Diocese and jurisdiction, described as follows – beginning at the NW corner of a certain lot of land conveyed by deed bearing date 11th Sept. 1806 from Fred'k Boutilier to the late Jacob Burgoyne, and Fred'k Boutilier, and situate on the main road running along the Eastern side of said bay, running thence N 36 degrees W 11 ½ rods, or until it comes to the place of beginning, containing 64 ½ rods of land, more or less – in a deed bearing date Aug. 2, 1823, between Fred'k C. Boutilier and Mary Catherine, his wife of the one part, and the Hon'ble. And Right Reverend Robert Stanser, D.D., Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Nova Scotia, of the other part, duly registered in Lib. 47, Folio 469 in the Registrar's Office at Halifax, N.S. – has been appropriated for the burial of the dead and whereas the said piece of land is sufficiently enclosed, and is now ready for consecration and whereas a petition has been presented by the Rector, Church Wardens, and others of the Parish of St Margaret's praying that we would be pleased to consecrate the same.

Now, therefore, we Frederick, by Divine permission, Bishop of Nova Scotia, D.D., by virtue of the Authority Ordinary and Episcopal to us committed, consecrate the said land, and do set it apart from all profane and common uses, and do dedicate the same to Almighty God, for the burial of the dead, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England (in Canada) that the bodies of the faithful may therein rest, in peace, and hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

And we do pronounce, decree and declare that the said land shall remain so consecrated, set apart and dedicated for ever, by this our definitive sentence and final decree, which we read and promulge by these presents.

Witness our hand and seal, this ninth day of February in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-Nine, and our consecration the first.

F Nova Scotia

Church Hall

Land for the Church Hall was obtained from Calvin Burchell in 1940 and shortly thereafter members of the community erected the hall, with Allen Garrison as Superintendent. People were amazed that a two story wood frame building could be built without using center partitions.

On July 11, 1955, the hall was moved to Glen Haven on land donated by James Smith, Sr. Caroll Mason, of Tantallon, who worked for Maritime Tel & Tel, rode on the roof hoisting the wires above the peak. The cost for moving the hall was \$1,500.00

The hall was sold in 2008, and is presently used for hosting musical events.

