

Historic Church Bells Call Descendants of Pioneers to Worship

Across the woodland park, dedicated to the memory of their forefathers, and named for its donor, John E. Pearce, of Dunwich, the chimes of historic St. Peter's Church at Tyrconnell, rang out at 4 p.m. yesterday. They called, as they had done for 125 years, the descendants of John Pearce and Leslie Patterson, Stephen Backus, and Mary Pearce Storey to a service of gratitude and thanksgiving to He who had given them life and the ancestors whose name they so proudly bear.

This marked the closing of a day that commemorated the sesquicentennial of the arrival on July 14, 1809, at this point five miles west of Port Talbot, of the small band of pilgrims who had set out bravely from Erie, Pa., to make a farmland from the forest.

About 200 descendants of the Pearce - Patterson - Storey - Backus families were here on Tuesday, to reminisce, to renew acquaintances and meet younger members of their families for the first time, to hold reunions with sisters and brothers who lived half a continent, or even further, away. They ranged in age from 18 months old Mary Esther, who was introduced as the granddaughter of William Pearce of Exeter and the great granddaughter of Thomas Pearce, to Mrs. Bertha Turville, Hyde Park, 86 years of age and Rev. Anson Moorhouse, Sr., of Riverside, who has entered his 70th year.

HOME FROM AFAR

There were family groups, one of which numbered the greatest in age of any present, the six members' ages totalling 464 years. One brother, Leslie Pearce, with his daughter, had travelled from Lacombe, Alberta, which was thought to be the lengthiest trek. His brother, Walter Pearce, and his family, were here from Sheffield Mills, N.S., and this particular branch of the family held a reunion of its own, for it was the first time they had all been together in a quarter of a century.

The children had a wonderful day, free from rules and regulations. They romped and they ran and they climbed trees. They met dozens of cousins they never knew existed and became undying friends, instantly.

It was a day for remembering, from start to finish.

Eric G. Moorhouse, Justice of the Supreme Court of Ontario, who acted as chairman for the event, which he believes to be the first sesquicentennial of its kind ever held in, as he expressed it, "Upper Canada," showed The Times-Journal's representative

piece of pumpkin pie, which he was finding most appetizing.

"See that sugar on there," he said, "do you know what that is?"

A guess as to its being maple sugar was correct and he went on: "That's right. This pie has got maple syrup on it, and maple sugar, and it was made from the trees right in this park."

TALL CAKE

There was a beautiful cake, three stories tall, which had been made and baked by Miss Eva Pearce, of Wallacetown, and iced and decorated by the wife of her nephew, John S. Pearce. Keen interest was exhibited in the picture of the centennial reunion of 1909. There were parents in it, and grandparents, and in some cases, the viewers themselves.

A millstone, brought by the original members of the families, from Pennsylvania, which ground the flour in those long ago days, was a point of much interest. It is still in perfect working order, having recently been fitted with a new handle by a member of the family.

Perhaps living was lean in those early years of the 19th century, but such was not the case yesterday, when food to feed a good sized town was placed on the tables in the picnic area above the lake, for the noon meal. Following this important event, Douglas Simpson, of Glencoe, acted as master of ceremonies for the short program.

FAMILY HISTORY GIVEN

A brief history of the family was given and told of the travelling, in 1800, of Leslie Patterson and his sisters, from Fermanagh, Ireland, to Erie, Pa., where they met Joseph Backus and his family from Vermont, and John Pearce from Rhode Island. In 1809, Leslie Patterson, who had married Lydia Backus, with his widowed sister, Mary Storey, her son and two daughters and John Pearce, married to Fanny Patterson, left Pennsylvania for Canada, and settled on the land purchased in 1808 from Colonel Talbot. Stephen Backus soon followed, and married Anne Storey, and here today some of the families' descendants still occupy the farms. In the midst stands the church where they had all worshipped, on ground donated by Mary Storey, 125 years or more ago, which is still open for regular services.

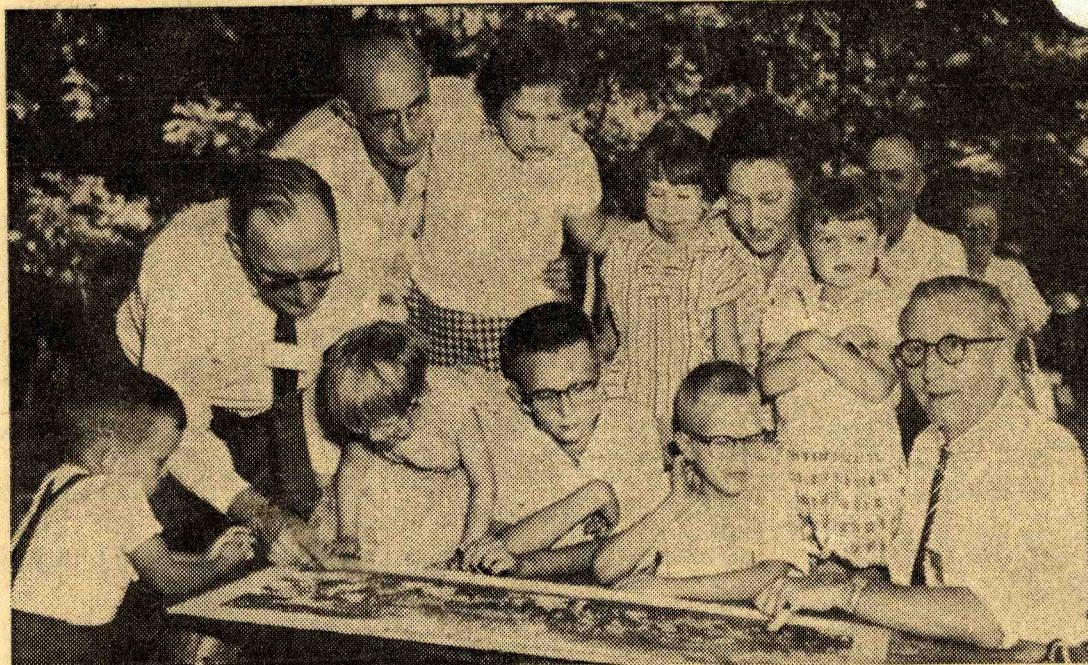
The service yesterday was addressed by Rev. Anson Moorhouse, Sr., and other members read the scripture, played the organ, and joined in the singing of the hymns.

Special guests for the day were Rev. John and Mrs. Graham, rector of St. Peter's Church, and family members attending included Eunice Moorhouse, Goepel and her husband, Herbert Goepel, Pines Lake, N.J.; Rev. Anson Moorhouse, Jr., and Mrs. Moorhouse, Toronto; Miss Cornelia Backus and Miss Gladys Backus, Chatham; David Cowper Smith, Palgrave, Ont.; P. E. James, Ingersoll; Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Waite, R.R. 2, Port Stanley; Miss Minnie Gow, Dutton; Mr. and Mrs. Ray Chittim, R.R. 6, Chatham; Winnifred Anne Gow, Wallacetown, and others from Missouri, New York State, Ohio, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Michigan, Toronto and Belleville and South-western Ontario.



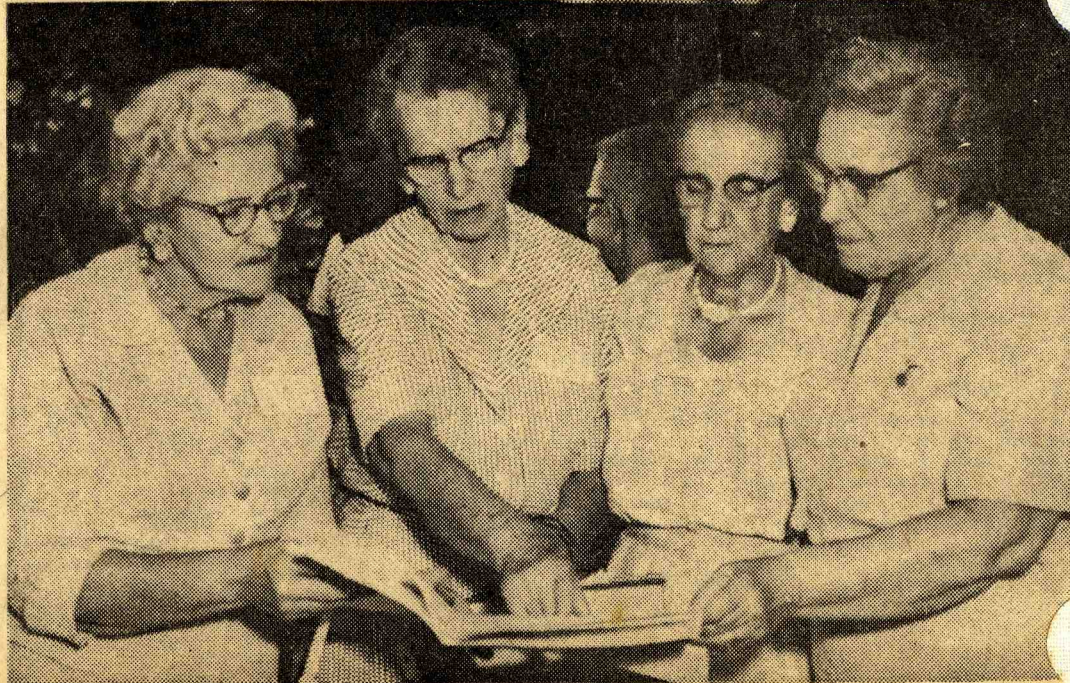
ACROSS THE MILES to a reunion within a re-union was one of the highlights of yesterday's anniversary for this group of brothers and sisters who had not been together as a family for 25 years. They are, left to right: Ernest Pearce,

Byron; Walter Pearce, Sheffield Mills, N.S.; Miss Gertrude Pearce, Dutton; John E. Pearce, Wallacetown, who donated the land for the park-site to the Province, and H. Leslie Pearce, Lacombe, Alta., with Mrs. Bertha Pearce Turville in the foreground.—(T.-J. Photo).



EVERYONE WANTED TO SEE the large picture of the group who had been present at the 100th anniversary of the arrival at Tyrconnell of some of Elgin County's oldest families. Here, taking full advantage of the opportunity to check for themselves are: Ross Smith, Belleville; Rev.

Anson C. Moorhouse, Jr., Toronto; Barbara Oldham, Paynes Mills; Steve Moorhouse, Robert Moorhouse, both of Wichita, Kansas; Bonnie Pearce, Wallacetown; Justice E. G. Moorhouse, Toronto; and in the back row: Willis Dodson, Barbara, Judy and Mrs. Dodson, Raytown, Missouri.—(T.-J. Photo).



STUDYING A CHART of the the family tree and finding out just where their branch is shown, are three sisters and a sister-in-law, Mrs. Pearl Davis, Detroit, Mich.; Mrs. Ada

Banghart, London, Ont.; Mrs. Myrtle Marshall, Byron and Mrs. Cora Hill, Columbus, Ohio. Copies of the family's genealogical history were made available to all the families.—(T.-J. Photo).

CHURGHES

Wallacetown United Church Re-Opening Set For Sunday

WALLACETOWN—A new chapter in the changing history of Wallacetown United Church will begin this Sunday.

The church will be re-opened and re-dedicated following \$20,000 worth of alterations and additions which include a new porchway and a Sunday School annex.

It was as far back as 1875 that the foundation stone of the little church—then called Wallacetown Methodist Church—was laid. Then in 1925, following Church union, the church became a United Church.

In 1956 extensive decorations and re-arrangement of seating added to the capacity of the church to cope with the expanding adult congregation.

ROLL INCREASED

But there has also been an increase in the juvenile congregation and it is partly to cater for this increase that a comfortable Sunday School annex with a common room included has been built onto the church, in this latest modification.

The Sunday School roll is 100 at present and there is now accommodation for a further 40.

The church basement where the Sunday School met has been turned into a modern kitchen and dining hall for church functions.

The modest front entrance of the church has been enlarged, but the original door through which generations of Wallacetown residents have passed to worship, has been retained.

A \$2,800 gas heating system has been installed—previously a coal furnace was used—and washroom facilities installed.

This kitchen is of contemporary design, in douglas fir faced with blonde maple, and well provided with cupboards and shelves.

Today the Women's Association are holding a "clean-up bee" in the kitchen, removing construction litter.

Previously both men and women church members have been helping with sanding varnishing and painting.

MANY HELPERS

Two families, Mr. and Mrs. Vic Betts and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Campbell, brought their dinner with them and spent the whole day working on the church last Friday.

They are typical of the community endeavor that has gone into the changing face of Wallacetown United Church.

The building committee, under chairman Jack Campbell and secretary Stewart West, were Norman Sutton, Jack Ripley and Victor Betts.

Half of the money for the project has already been raised. The finance committee includes A. C. White, chairman, Norman Welch, secretary, Morley Page, treasurer, William S. McKillop, Earl Shipley and Lloyd Wigle.

The church, whose minister is the Rev. Clarence E. Beacom, will be dedicated at 3 p.m. on Sunday.

Guest preachers, The Rev. D. M. Burns, of Central United Church, St. Thomas, and the Rev. Will Hamilton, a former minister of Wallacetown United Church, will be present.

All are invited to the service, at which music will be given by guest artist Miss Elaine Keillor and the choir directed by Mrs. Norman Welch.

After the dedication there will be a tour of the new Sunday School and kitchen and tea, with the Women's Association as hosts.

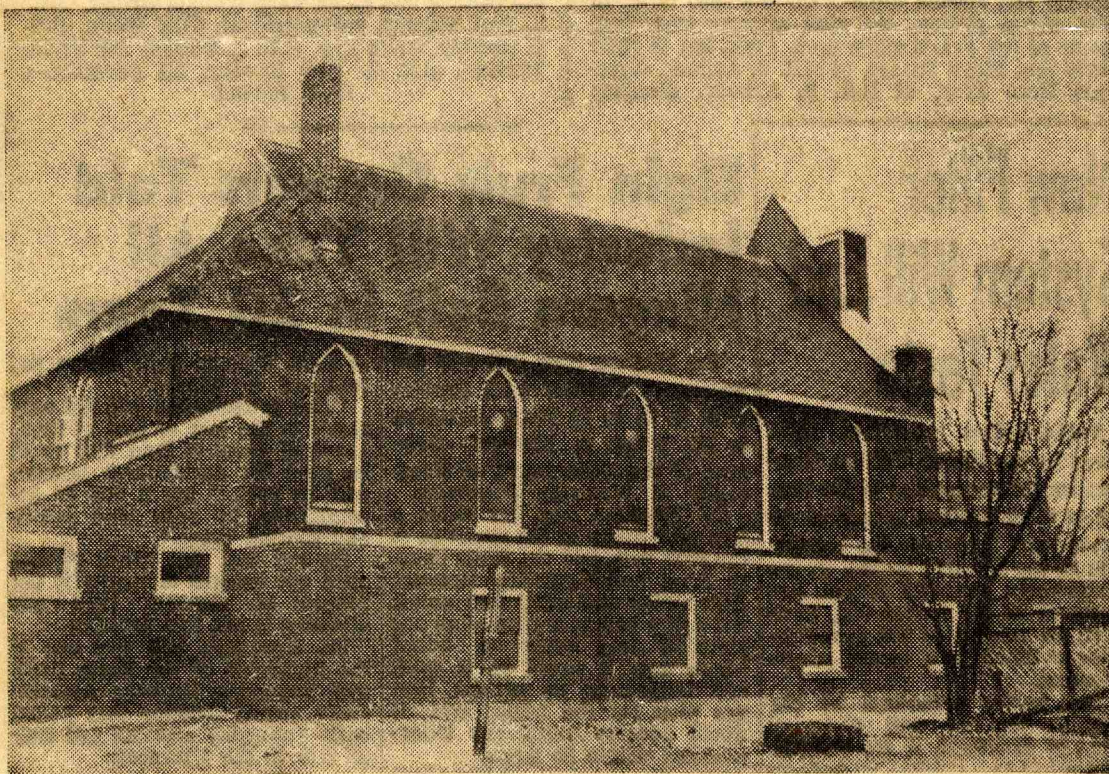
Architect of the work was George E. Morley, of St. Thomas, and construction was by Kondal Construction Co. of St. Thomas.

Carpentry contractor in the kitchen was George E. Ford of Dutton helped by Charlie MacDonald.



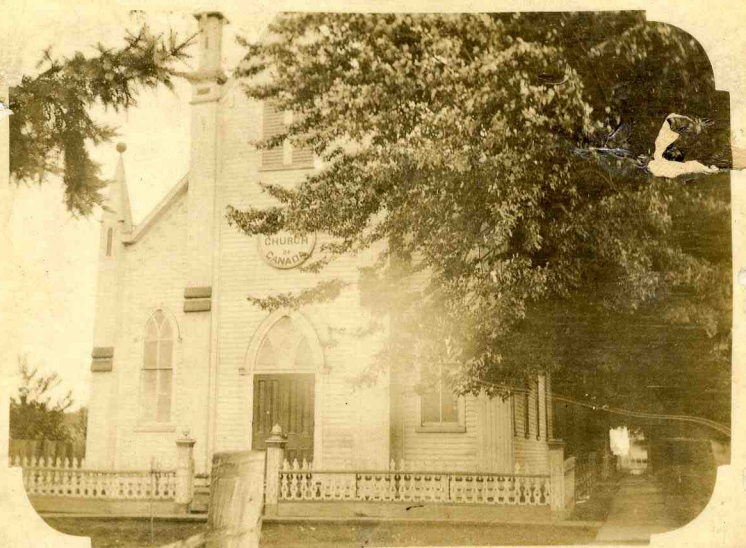
FRONT VIEW—This picture shows how a large new porchway and entrance hall has been added onto the ivy-covered brickwork of the 85-year-old

Wallacetown United Church. The original door, through which generations of worshippers have passed, has been retained, together with the stained glass title above it.—(T.-J. Photo.)



REAR VIEW—Here the single storey, four classroom Sunday school annex is seen at the rear of

the building. The annex includes a common room, and has its own entrance hall, which also gives entrance to the new kitchen.—(T.-J. Photo.)



1925 1925 No. 14
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED

By Wallacetown Methodists—Many Former Worshippers Present

The semi-centennial of the Wallacetown Methodist church was fittingly observed on Sunday, when the pastor, the Rev. F. J. Rutherford, was assisted by Rev. R. D. Hamilton, Aylmer, a pastor 40 years ago. Splendid sermons were given by Mr. Hamilton to large congregations both morning and evening, many former worshippers being present. Excellent music was rendered by the choir, the quartette, also a duet by Messrs. Welch and Forsythe and a solo by Miss Teskev, Leamington. A special feature were the violin solos by Jack Simms, which were much enjoyed. At the evening service Rev. Mr. McKillop, a former pastor, was also present.

Among former residents present were: Arch. Black and party, Toledo; Mrs. Walter Chalk, Dorothy and Harold Chalk, Detroit; Mrs. Nancarrow and sons, Cleveland; Mr. and Mrs. Dunsheath and Mrs. Marshall and children, Detroit; Mr. and Mrs. McDiarmid and Mr. and Mrs. Hitchcox, Sarnia; Mr. and Mrs. Walter Stidwill, Mr. and Mrs. Neil McLachlin, Miss McKellar and R. Balkwill, St. Thomas; Mrs. Graff, Minneapolis; Mr. and Mrs. Will Graham and son, Grant, Mayfair; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Ousack and grandson, Buffalo; Miss Cumming, Kingsville; Miss Teskev, Leamington; Misses Nora Whittingham and Grace Gowan, St. Thomas; G. Leitchfield, Bridgen. Special mention might be made of Miss Bella K. Gunn, Dutton, who was present fifty years ago, and who on Sunday presented the church with two lovely oak collection plates to replace the old ones that were used so many years.

On Monday evening an old-time concert was given, with Rev. H. Godfrey as chairman. Musical selections were given by the Patterson family and Miss Walker, of Blenheim; solos by Messrs. Welch and Keillor. A poem composed by Mrs. Edna Browning-Marshall, of Detroit, was read by Mrs. Ira Robinson and a history of the church given by the pastor. Addresses were also given by Revs. Inns and Douglas.