

## **St. Luke's Anglican Church, Lyndhurst & Rectory An Historical Perspective**

Our beautiful St. Luke's Anglican Church in Lyndhurst was built as part of a local Anglican response to the flurry of Methodist church building in the 1870s and 1880s. The Reverend John Osborne assumed control of the Parish of Leeds & Lansdowne – encompassing St. Peter's in Seeley's Bay, St. John's Leeds on Sweet's Corners Road, Holy Trinity at Oak Leaf, St. Paul's in Delta and congregations meeting in schoolhouses at Lyndhurst and Farmersville (Athens) – in 1878. The parish was divided in 1881, with the Rev. Osborne taking charge of the new Parish of Leeds Rear – St. Peter's, St. John's and the Lyndhurst congregation.

Choosing a site formerly occupied by an 1843 Methodist Episcopal church, the Lyndhurst congregation set out to raise building funds. Original contributors of \$100 each to the fund included Wellington Johnson, Henry Green, John and Richard Singleton and family, John Kendrick and sons, William Webster, Ed Webster, William Sheffield and Francis Sheffield. But most of the funds were raised by local women at a number of social events. The church building was constructed in 1882, with most of the building material being brought by wagon or sleigh from an area near Lombardy or Toledo. All of the work was done by hand. The Rev. John Osborne, Rector, led the first service at St. Luke's on October 18, 1882.

The design of St. Luke's, both interior and exterior, is an example of a revival of "Ritualism" which the area experienced toward the end of the 19th century. Unlike the basic rectangular box shapes of the churches built by the Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists in the township since the 1840s, St. Luke's features a soaring spire atop its tower, surrounded by elaborate ironwork, and fine stained glass windows that feature the image of St. Luke in the window over the altar

Our church's design and layout is taken from medieval Christian architecture and ritual, on which the revival was based. The intent of this ritualistic revival was to imbue the church building, furnishings and style of worship with meaningful symbols. For example, the baptismal font was originally placed inside the church's entrance, symbolising that one enters the church through baptism. Unlike earlier area Anglican churches where the pulpit and desk were prominent, the altar became the dominant feature – emphasizing the central Christian belief that humanity's salvation was made possible through Christ's sacrifice on the cross, re-told through the Eucharist. The church was also situated so that the congregation is facing the liturgical East while worshipping, following the symbolic emphasis on kneeling toward Jerusalem where Christ's life on earth was spent

and where His triumphant return will take place.

The new symbols of Ritualism were accompanied by new practices that included burning candles on the altar, the wearing of surplices by clergymen and bowing to the east. These changes were unwelcome by many congregations populated by individuals of Irish origin as they appeared to mimic Roman Catholic practices and not promote the Church of Ireland's emphasis on scriptural revelation. However, there is no record of this being a problem at St. Luke's. Here, Ritualism was embraced, perhaps because the clergy were low church in background and practice and were sensitive in their introduction of change. Also, this revival appealed particularly to women as it seemed to give greater value to their efforts.

St. Luke's Church, the rectory, and the hall built behind the church, were the centre of much of the spiritual and social life of the area from the 1880s on. Building on the strength of our past, our strong, faithful and loving community continues worshipping God, reaching out to those in need and making God's amazing love known to the world. May God bless you.

### **The Rectory**

In 1896, local son and architect Benjamin Dillon was commissioned to design a new rectory to replace the frame structure adjacent to St. Luke's Anglican Church. The new rectory, in the style of Beaux Arts Classicism, was constructed in 1906. Unlike the church, which was used solely as a house of worship, the rectory was built to be multifunctional. In addition to housing the resident Anglican priest and his family, the rectory was also designed with ample space for receiving and entertaining church officials and members of the congregation. Its significant size and graceful appearance speak to the importance of the Church in this area at the beginning of the 20th century.

Many of the original features inside the rectory remain intact, including the wood floors and a pair of pocket doors. The verandah originally had semicircular balconies. The piece of ground on which the rectory was built once sloped significantly. It was built up with fill to provide lawns, gardens, trees and, once, a tennis court – all to accommodate various parish social events.

### **Rectors of St. Luke's Anglican Church, Lyndhurst**

1878 – 1883      The Rev. John Osborne

1884 – 1888      The Rev. Francis Codd

1888 – 1890	The Rev. J.W. Forsythe
1890 – 1898	The Rev. William Moore
1898 – 1898	The Rev. Ben F. Byers
1898 – 1901	The Rev. J.W. Forster
1902 – 1903	The Rev. George Metzler
1905 – 1907	The Rev. W.F. Fitzgerald
1907 – 1910	The Rev. Edgar M. Croly
1910 – 1920	The Rev. Hilyard Smith
1921 – 1927	The Rev. S. Morton
1928 – 1934	The Rev. J.A. Poston
1934 – 1937	The Rev. Gerald E. Graham
1937 – 1947	The Rev. P. Gately Reynolds
1947 – 1957	The Rev. Robert Booth
1957 – 1959	The Rev. J.H. Schaffter
1960 – 1962	The Rev. H.G. Phillips
1963 – 1968	The Rev. F.C. Whittington
1968 – 1975	The Rev. J.A. Lock
1975 – 1979	The Rev. David Bugler
1980 – 1984	The Rev. Don Bailey
1984 – 1986	The Rev. J. Dalrymple
1986 – 1992	The Rev. Jeff Boerger
1993 – 2003	The Rev. Harold Miller

2003 – 2011      The Ven. Reginald Gilbert

2011 – 2013      The Rev. Robert Porter

2013 -            The Rev. Nancy MacLeod