Harbourville United Church

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HARBOURVILLE UNITED CHURCH HISTORY

In 1857, during a time of religious revival in the Annapolis Valley, a Methodist pastor in the Cornwallis district named John Lathern, set afoot a move to build a Methodist church in the Harbourville area which would be a branch of the Berwick Methodist Church and Camp Meeting Association. Rev. George Butcher designed the church which was erected by John Clark overlooking the village of Harbourville . Construction costs were approximately $1000; the little Methodist church opened in 1860.

Over the years, the people of Harbourville and surrounding communities held many fundraising events on behalf of the little church on the Bay of Fundy cliff. Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterian Covenanters worked together to fundraise as well as to provide generous private donations in order to furnish the new church with pews, hymn books, altar cloths and so on. The church was shared for services by the three religious denominations from the beginning until the early 1900's.

Ongoing maintenance and improvements to the HUC have been made throughout its seven-generation history by community members, especially by the women of the Harbourville Ladies Sewing Circle. For many years, church service was held on the first, third, and fifth Sunday of the month at 2 PM and at 7 PM during July and August.

The ecumenical nature of HUC is emphasized today, most notable in recent years with the beloved annual Christmas Eve service when the general public is invited to join in a celebration of community, peace, joy and love. This community-led, family-based event has evolved into a much anticipated and magical gathering.

HARBOURVILLE UNITED CHURCH

1860 REV. GEORGE BUTCHER
1862 REV. RICHARD SMITH
1864 REV. T.H. DAVIES
1866 REV. JOHN READ
1869 REV. FLETCHER PICKLES
1871 REV. JOHN PRINCE
1872 REV. J.S. ADDY
1874 REV. GEORGE PAYSON
1876 REV. CHRISTOPHER LOCKHART
1879 REV. JOHN CASSIDY
1882 REV. JOHN JOHNSON
1885 REV. T.D. HART
1888 REV. ALEXANDER LITTLE
1889 REV. E.E. ENGLAND
1892 REV. JOHN CRAIG
1895 REV. G.W. GLENDENNING
1899 REV. JOHN PRESTWOOD
1903 REV. JOHN PHALEN
1907 REV. JOHN GEE
1910 REV. GORGE BRYANT
1913 REV. J.A. SMITH
1917 REV. ARTHUR HOCKIN
1918 REV. C.H. JOHNSON
1921 REV. A.R. REYNOLDS
1925 REV. JOHN G. HOCKIN
1931 REV. J.S. NICKERSON
1934 REV. J.W. DEAN
1940 REV. A.D. MACKINNON
1946 REV. C.D. MATHESON
1949 REV. C.G. PRINGLE
1955 REV. RON MCCULLOUGH
1957 REV. FRED BURRELL
1965 REV. ERIC PACE
1967 REV. ARTHUR WHISTON
1976 REV. IVAN NORTON
1984 REV. PAUL SHAW
1988 REV. DON MACPHERSON
2007 REV. RAY FRANCIS
2008 REV. LINDA WINTON
2012 REV. TOM WOODS

The Sewing Circle

THE HARBOURVILLE SEWING CIRCLE
circa 1963
Members at Jennie Morton's home

HARBOURVILLE SEWING CIRCLE EARLY YEARS

Sometime in the late 1940's,Harbourville resident **Ella Spicer** said to **Blanche (Spicer) Brown**, *They did it once before and I don't see why we can't do it again!* This was in reference to monies that had been raised in the community in the 1920's towards upkeep of the Harbourville United Church. The building had gradually fallen into disrepair since then and was in need of both structural and cosmetic attention. Before long, a group of community women, many who were church members, committed to raising funds for repair of the church through their handcrafting talents.

The first formal meeting of the group was held at the home of Blanche Brown on Feb 8, 1950. The eleven women present took the name **Harbourville Ladies Aid** and proceeded to elect **Ella Spicer president, Blanche Brown vice president, Leah Finley secretary** and **Lottie Anderson treasurer**. Handwritten minutes of this meeting reported: *Work plans were discussed and decided on. It was agreed that we help put a fence around the Cemetery. Also, that our funds be used for any work in the community which is agreeable to all ...A social meeting once a month...A ten cent collection to be taken each night...we gather at 7:30 and leave around 10 o'clock.*

Members sitting at the table (at Emma Morris's home)
Rowena Spicer, Annie Moody, Leona Mapplebeck,Jennie Morton, Ella Spicer, Mrs. Graves, Leah Findlay.

Members Standing
(at Jennie Morton's)
Front row: Jennie Morton, Ethel Ogilvie, Ella Spicer
Middle row: Betty Hazelwood, Emma Morris, Freda Aker, Leona Mapplebeck

Each Wednesday, the women could be seen walking to a member's home, one of them carrying a large suitcase which contained their supplies. "Some would knit mittens and socks while others embroidered pillowcases... when each project was completed, someone in the group would buy it and put the money in the Church Fund! "**(Jennie Morton)**

Harbourville's Seaside Park Hotel

The Seaside Park Hotel opened in Harbourville in 1910 on a hill overlooking the Bay of Fundy. It had its beginnings as a 1 1/2 storey house built in the 1840's by Joshua Beardsley. Around the turn of the century Mrs. Idella Aker, widow of sea captain John Aker, operated a little summer hotel there known as the Hillside House.

While living in Halifax where Idella operated the Berwick House Hotel, she met Edward Kappele who dreamed of someday having a luxurious seaside resort. He managed to head up a shareholders group in 1909, the Harbourville Reality Company, comprised of several accomplished business men who provided financial backing. Shares were also sold, many to Americans.

A contractor, Mr. Holland, was hired. Lumber & plastering supplies arrived by the schooner *Ruby L.* The Hillside House was jacked up eleven feet and a sixty foot dining room was built under what had been the first floor. The largest west of Halifax, the dining room boasted beautifully polished hardwood floors and was also used as a ballroom. At the west end of the building was a lounge with beautifully upholstered chairs and a *Victrola* phonograph.

A veranda ran along the entire length of the building and the house had a top deck. Across the road was the pavilion-shaped Seaside Park Lodge, also built in 1910, which provided 50 rooms sleeping accommodations and a screened porch which ran the length of the building. There were also three small cottages built in 1909 and stables, goose pens and a car shed for the Pierce-Arrow .

The resort initially catered chiefly to New Englanders who arrived in Berwick by train. For a few years, Bernard Morris would take his car to meet the train. Bernard later recalled the Japanese lanterns strung along the front of the veranda which was 'a very pretty sight at night'.

In 1909, an ice cream 'freezer' was purchased and homemade ice cream was served on the spacious veranda. Food was obtained locally - butter & lamb were routinely fetched from the Faulkenham farm in Burlington and chickens from the Hird farm.

A first class hotel, the prices were considered very moderate in 1910 - from Saturday to Monday, including Sat. night dinner and Mon. breakfast, the price was $3.00.

For a few years, the Seaside Park was *the* place to go. The roads were reportedly kept in good repair suggesting that one of the shareholders had some political connections. The hotel's dishes, linens and silverware displayed the *Seaside Park Hotel 1910* logo. A hotel-owned sailboat, the *We Too,* treated guests to cruises on the Bay of Fundy; locally owned vessels were also kept busy with deep sea fishing & pleasure excursions.

A cable & pulley system ran from the hotel down the hill to the Harbourville Post Office delivering the daily mail to the hotel in a basket. Hilda Aker's journals, a treasure trove of details from that era, describe evening 'illuminations' and fireworks.

The Park employed many local residents over the years, contributing significantly to the local economy

Seaside Park had a thriving seasonal business until WW I enveloped the world with military concerns. Throughout the war years, the Park was a popular destination for soldiers on leave from training at Camp Aldershot but by the end of the war, business had slacked off and most investors sold their shares for what they could get.

By 1920, the enterprise was surviving, but not getting rich by any means. The Park continued to be a popular choice for annual conventions and conferences, with groups ranging from as few as ten to parties of nearly one hundred. In 1921, the Nova Scotia Methodist Conference held a supper in the dining hall which 77 ministers attended, and on July 1, a private party was held at the Park for more than 100 guests, the McDonald Orchestra furnishing the dance music.

Seaside Park hotel was destroyed by fire 28 October 1929.

There was no insurance coverage.