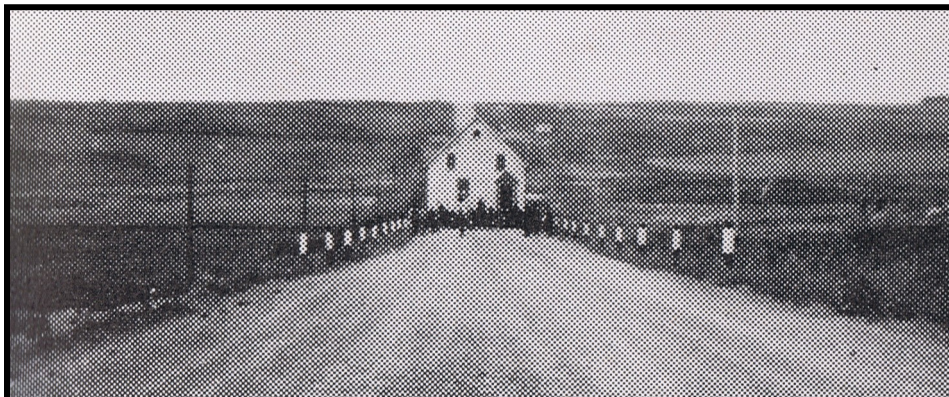


# Chain Lakes Quaker Church

1899 – 2005

Over 100 years of bringing neighbours together



▲ The church moved two miles south in 1949. It is pictured here travelling through the Chain Lakes Valley.

The area around Chain Lakes was settled by Quakers—also commonly known as “Friends.” At first the community held Sunday services in the Chain Lakes school which was built in 1895. In January of 1899 a meeting of Friends was held in Hartney. After this they held monthly meetings, with members attending from both Hartney and Chain Lakes. These meetings later moved to the Chain Lakes Quaker Church, located about a kilometre northwest of the most westerly body of the Chain Lakes.

Property for the church was donated by Mr. John M Hodgson. The building, along with a stable, was built in the fall of 1899. The grounds also included a cemetery. The site was ready for opening services on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1899. For the dedication, services were held in the church at 11:00, 2:30 and again at 7:30. The day’s free-will offering came to a total of \$195.00, which went toward covering the costs of building the church. A good share of the expenses were covered by

money sent from Friends in Ontario and Britain.

Mrs Alma G Dale was a memorable personality of the day: she helped organise and build the church. For the first five years of the church’s operation, she served as minister. She lived in Hartney and drove out every Sunday with her cream coloured ponies and buggy. The work she did in the district had to be given up eventually due to poor health.



▲ Mrs Alma G Dale: first minister of the Chain Lakes Quaker Church

The church was witness to prosperous times. In 1921 a large Sunday School was organised, with six or seven classes. Classes were held in the church during the summer and at the nearby school in the winter. Between 1927 and 1931 pews were installed and two Sunday School classrooms were built on to serve the growing congregation. During the hard times of the depression the minister at the time, Reverend H.C. Harris, voluntarily reduced his salary to almost nothing to help his neighbours through.

Three male ministers followed Mrs Dale. At the end of Reverend Henry Sutton’s 12 year term (1911-1923) the Chain Lakes Quaker Church asked to become affiliated with the Lauder Field and changed its name to Dand Union Church. Two years later it became the Dand United Church. If that wasn’t change enough, in 1949 the church was moved two miles south to the community of Dand.

In 1958 the church saw its second lady minister, Reverend Carole Palmer. She served for less than a year before a local bachelor won her as his wife and she changed her name to Roberts. However, this didn’t keep her from serving another full year as minister. During this time a lighted cross was placed at the front of the church as a part of its post-60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary improvements.

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A dedication service was held in the summer of 1968 at the original Chain Lakes Quaker Church grounds where a cairn was erected beside the small cemetery that still exists on the site.

The Dand United Church served as an important centre for the Dand community, especially after the Dand School closed in 1970. It brought people of all denominations together for community events, meetings, weddings and more. In 2005 the church closed due to a loss in membership and the hardships of a farming recession. Recently a group of interested citizens have purchased the building with the intention of preserving it and possibly moving it back to its original location beside the cemetery.

#### Sources:

“Dand Church Report 1899-2005.” Hart-Cam Museum Display. Visited 7 Aug 2011.

Hartney and District Historical Committee. *A Century of Living*. Steinbach; Derksen Printers, 1982. Pg 32.

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Photos: Dand Women’s Institute. *Golden Memories*. Brandon: Leech Printing Ltd, 1967. Pgs 9, 3.