

## How the L.D.S. Church got started in the area

In the fall of 1933, on September 17th Mission President Welling from Minneapolis, Minnesota came and organized a branch. There were already several members in the area. This was the head office for this mission area, as there was no church in Edmonton at the time. At first it was called Beaver Crossing Branch which was organized with John Burgess as President, Sam Webster and Victor Hatch as councilors. Shortly after the Burgess', Lybbert, Loose bunch arrived in October Sunday School was organized with George Burgess as Superintendent with Lester Lybbert and Awold Loose as councilors, and Leah Evans (Burgess) as Secretary. They first met in homes then they got the use of the Beaver Crossing School. More members were moving into the Cherry Grove area so meetings were moved to the Cherry Grove School and the Branch was renamed Cherry Grove Branch.

In the latter part of 1930's Mission President Broadbent from Minneapolis came up to attend Conference and to give the branch further instructions from Salt Lake. He also told the group that he had a dream the night before and that he saw a beautiful temple on that hill.

Early 1940's President Miller, who was the first Mission President of the Western Canadian Mission, came out from Edmonton to pick a site upon which to build a Chapel. A couple of the brethren took President Miller and the Branch President by team and wagon to various places, one of which was Beaver Crossing never once coming to Cherry Grove. The next day they commenced their searching. President Miller told the brethren that he had a dream in which he saw exactly where the church was to be built. He directed the driver where to go. They came to a flat which was partly open, where the church now stands, he got out and walked around and said "this is the place where the chapel is to be built. I can see a large beautiful Chapel and a large congregation."

Between 1940 and 1943 the mission was switched from Northwestern States Mission to Western Canadian Mission with head quarters in Edmonton. In the winter of 1941 or 1942 the members worked together and they got enough logs piled up on the Beaver River flat, ready to be sawed into lumber in the spring. But in the spring misfortune befell the logs when a fire went through and burned them up. They went to work and got more out and by 1944 their chapel was built.

The local people dug an excavation big enough to accommodate a wood burning furnace, under the building. The members cut the wood and the furnace was stoked a few hours before each function so the building would be cozy and warm.

Gasoline pressure lamps supplied the first light but later a 110 Delco light plant was installed. It was the first building in Cherry Grove to have electric lights, thus came the expression, "Lit up like a Mormon church."

The building was always available to anyone for any useful purpose, as long as the participants refrained from tea, coffee, alcohol, tobacco, and boisterous or uncouth behaviors. The three-act plays found its stage and curtains very useful and funerals and weddings in the area made use of the convenient double doors and seating accommodations. The Church services were held every Sunday during the development of the community.

In the winter season everyone enjoyed music, drama, and dancing. Temporary bars were placed over the windows so that young and old could play volley ball once a week, but the high light of the season was the Gold and Green Ball. Local talent or records were often the music for the ordinary dances but for this gala affair a live orchestra was hired and the youth put on a floor show.

In the summer there were always softball games but the climax of the season was the 24th of July celebration. The day's activities started at ten in the morning with program of stories, songs and readings. After the program, people separated into family groups to eat a picnic lunch. Every one participated in the afternoon activities of races and ball games. Homemade ice cream and lemonade was sold at a booth made of green poplar trees. A dance in the log school house concluded the day's festivities.