

# Religion



**Deaf people and a sacrificial lamb at the 12th annual Bible conference in Toronto (1913)**

*The Gospel Light/Ontario Mission of the Deaf Archives*

**R**eligion and religious institutions have played integral roles in the development of the Deaf community in Canada for the past two centuries. The clergy was often one of the driving forces behind the movements to educate deaf children and achieve social reform on behalf of deaf people. Clergymen were also some of the staunchest supporters of sign language and helped keep it alive in schools during the days of rampant oral methods (a practical move on their part, as oralism was virtually useless in large gatherings such as religious services). Many of the religious leaders were hearing men (and sometimes women). A number of deaf Canadians also played a part in the vitality of religious organizations within the Canadian Deaf community.

Unfortunately, as is the case so often in collecting data for a book of this sort, many of the early records of these religious groups and their activities have been lost or destroyed. Sometimes all that remains are the memories of individuals, whose recollections — while compelling — may be faulty on certain points. And, although every known existing religious group for deaf Canadians was contacted to submit material for inclusion in this book, not all responded. This chapter, then, contains detailed information on some groups and only sketchy data on others.

One of the first North American martyrs and saints was a deaf man, René Goupil (b. May 13, 1608; d. Sept. 29, 1642), who was serving in Canada when he died.<sup>1</sup> Goupil was born in France and entered the Jesuit novitiate on March 15, 1639 in

Paris. However, he “had to discontinue his novitiate because he was afflicted with deafness.”<sup>2</sup> The Latin note in the Jesuit archives of Chantilly reads: “*Renatus Goupil a tirocinio Parisiensi exclusus erat, quia surdaster.*”<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that Goupil was already a surgeon when he tried to become a priest, so he was probably hard of hearing rather than deaf. Whatever the degree of his hearing loss, it was sufficient to disqualify him for the priesthood. Undeterred by this rejection, Goupil travelled to Canada where he served as a layman with Canadian Jesuits. He worked from 1640 to 1642 at the Sainte-Joseph de Sillery mission near Québec City. In August 1642, he was a passenger in a flotilla of 12 canoes carrying about 40 people between the Sillery mission and Sainte-Marie-Among-the-Hurons, a Huron-French settlement near what is today Midland, Ont. (where the Martyrs’ Shrine still stands). Among the members of the flotilla was the Jesuit priest, Father Isaac Jogues, as well as several Huron chiefs and their families. The canoes were attacked by Iroquois (who at that time were engaged in a bitter war with the Hurons for domination of the fur trade with the French). Goupil and Jogues were captured and taken to a Mohawk settlement in present-day New York state.<sup>4</sup> It seemed death was imminent, so Jogues accepted Goupil’s vows and made him a Jesuit brother. A few days after taking his vows, Goupil was killed when one of the villagers saw him making the sign of the cross over a Mohawk child (perhaps this action was misinterpreted as “casting an evil spell” on the child). On June 29, 1930, Pope Pius XI canonized Goupil, *quia surdaster*, along with seven other Jesuits. Their annual feast day is October 18. According to some, Goupil is considered to be Canada’s first and only deaf saint.

## Protestant Churches of the Deaf

### Early Efforts

Deaf people in the mid-to-late 1800s received their religious instruction almost exclusively through their residential schools. In fact, some of the schools would not have existed had it not been for the efforts of the clergy and other religious individuals. The following announcement, which was printed periodically in Deaf community publications during the late 1890s, illustrates the role of one school in the religious education of its students:

#### *Religious Exercises:*

*Every Sunday — Primary pupils at 9 a.m.; senior pupils at 11 a.m.; General Lecture at 2:30 p.m., immediately after which the Bible Class will assemble.*

*Each School Day the pupils are to assemble in the Chapel at 8:45 a.m. and the Teacher-in charge for the week will open by prayer and afterwards dismiss them so that they may reach their respective school rooms not later than 9 o’clock. In the afternoon at 3 o’clock the pupils will again assemble and after prayer will be dismissed in a quiet and orderly manner.*

*Regular Visiting Clergymen: Rev. Canon Burke, Right Rev. Monseignor Farrelley, V.G., Rev. J.L. George (Presbyterian); Rev. E.N. Baker (Methodist); Rev. R. Marshall (Baptist); Rev. M.W. Maclean (Presbyterian); Rev. Father O’Brien.*

*Clergymen of all Denominations are cordially invited to visit us at any time.*<sup>5</sup>

Data concerning the work of the Protestant churches for deaf people in the U.S. and Canada was first compiled in 1949 by the Rev. Alexander MacLeod Manson (b. May 13, 1920), a hearing minister. His thesis, *The Work of the Protestant Churches for the Deaf in North America 1815-1949*, was written while he pursued a master of arts degree in the education of deaf students at Gallaudet College (1948-1949) prior to beginning his position at the Evangelical Church of the Deaf in Toronto (1948-1951).

## Protestant Church Efforts in Ontario

The activities and longevity of the protestant Deaf community in Ontario is a good example of the involvement of deaf and hearing Canadians in spiritual matters. These dedicated deaf church leaders, together with their hearing friends and advocates, devoted their time, energy, and prayers to ensure opportunities for spiritual training within their communities.

The Ontario Deaf community owes much to the strong religious beliefs of John Barrett McGann and his hearing daughters. McGann was the hearing man who pioneered deaf education in the province in 1858.<sup>6</sup> His zeal was fueled by a strong conviction that it was only through education that deaf people could learn about God and be saved. He and his eldest daughter, Euphemia, gathered together students to form the first school for deaf people in Ontario. In 1863, he wrote a small volume entitled *First Book of Lessons. Home Education for the Deaf and Dumb* (designed for those deaf students attending local schools or being educated at home by parents). In this book, he expressed his belief that “where there is no language, there is no religion.”<sup>7</sup> Some of the educational exercises listed in the book also teach religious concepts. McGann’s efforts are among the earliest recorded examples of religious work in the Ontario Deaf community.

His third daughter, Harriet, was also active in these endeavours, but there is some disagreement regarding the beginning of her involvement. One article states that her religious work began “as far back as the fifties [1850s] when the late Mrs. Ashcroft [née Harriet Elizabeth McGann], Charlie Howe and others formed a gathering and for a while it showed every indication of blooming into prosperity, but later on Mrs. Ashcroft was obliged to move from the city.”<sup>8</sup> She is also mentioned as being responsible for gathering together “the first Bible class in Toronto” for deaf adults, which “lasted a year till Miss McGann had to leave Toronto to study Bell’s system of visible speech at Boston.”<sup>9</sup> It is known that 12 individuals met on Carlton Street (not far from Yonge Street) in the home of a Mrs. Howe (probably the mother of Charles J. Howe, a student at

McGann's school in Hamilton, Ont.).<sup>10</sup> Some credit this small group as forming the nucleus of what later became the Toronto Mission to the Deaf (a religious project undertaken by members of the Toronto Deaf-Mute Association).

Another influential person in the religious life of deaf Canadian Protestants was Frederick Brigden (b. Apr. 20, 1841; d. Apr. 16, 1917), a deaf man who was active in religious work in England (his native country) before he immigrated to Canada in 1872. He is credited with starting a Sunday Bible study group called the "Deaf-Mute Bible Class of Toronto."

## The Toronto Deaf-Mute Association

In 1877, learned men and philanthropic clergymen of the city were invited to a meeting called by Dr. Wesley ("Willie") J. Palmer (b. June 11, 1834; d. June 3, 1888), the first principal of the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb in Belleville (1870-1879). The purpose of the meeting was to form an "association for the benefit of the deaf-mutes."<sup>11</sup> Those attending also established a fund to rent a room at the Shaftesbury Hall YMCA, located on the northeast corner of Queen and James Streets. From historical data gathered from various sources, it now appears that the association referred to by Palmer became the Toronto Deaf-Mute Association. Brigden's Bible study class was incorporated into the activities of this new social and non-denominational organization.

For some reason, assistance from local philanthropists began to die out in the months following the formation of the Toronto Deaf-Mute Association. As this occurred, deaf people became increasingly concerned that religious services for them would also wane. Toward the end of 1878, Brigden wrote to the YMCA board of directors at their offices on the corner of College Street and Spadina Road in Toronto. He asked for their supervision and assistance in arranging religious instruction for deaf citizens of the city. In response, the board assigned two hearing men to confer with him — C.G. Walker, the YMCA board's secretary, and John Drysdale Nasmith (b. July 21, 1845; d. Apr. 24, 1912), a local businessman who had inherited his father's bakery shop at the corner of Jarvis and Adelaide



**Energy infused Brigden as he presented his sermon (1897)**

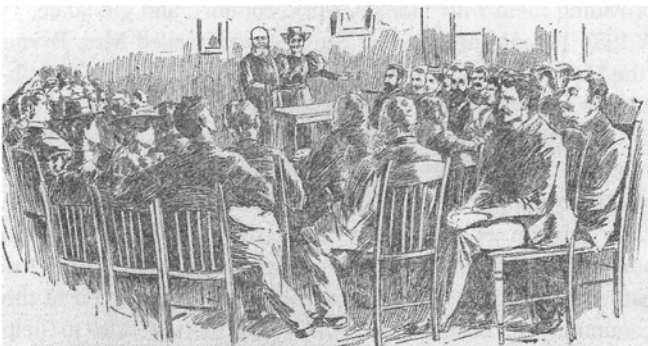
*The Daily Mail and Empire (Toronto, Ont.)/Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library*

Streets. Nasmith became deeply interested and involved in the affairs of the Toronto Deaf-Mute Association. He and Brigden established a regular Sunday afternoon meeting at the YMCA building on College Street for Bible study and worship. The two men alternately taught the class and preached to the congregation, with Nasmith communicating by writing on the blackboard and Brigden by using signs and the British two-handed manual alphabet. Their efforts were successful in keeping the services going.

## Toronto Mission to the Deaf

The Toronto Mission to the Deaf was the first mission program in Canada established, supported, and administered by deaf people. Spawned primarily by members of the small Bible class of Frederick Brigden within the Toronto Deaf-Mute Association, it was created in an attempt to reach deaf people outside the city of Toronto. Two of its most staunch supporters were Ambrose Wilcock Mason (b. Feb. 16, 1851; d. Jan. 8, 1935), a young deaf artist, and his deaf wife, the former Fannie Elizabeth Lewis (b. Aug. 3, 1857; d. Apr. 23, 1928).

In June 1889, Mason was full of ideas of "becoming a great landscape genius and a photographer of renown."<sup>12</sup> However, his wife (a former student at the Ontario Institution [1871-1878] and a woman known for her "upright and unselfish attitude in entertaining the poor and needy") urged him to do something for humanity as well.<sup>13</sup> Complying with her wishes, he held a meeting at the Wesley Church, located at the corner of Dundas Street and Ossington Avenue in Toronto, to discuss outreach efforts. Mrs. Mason suggested that money being sent by the church for missions to China and other foreign lands be used



**An artist's rendering of a religious meeting in Toronto, with Nasmith preaching and Annie (née Fraser) Byrne interpreting (1897)**

*The Daily Mail and Empire (Toronto, Ont.) / Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library*



**1884 wedding picture of Ambrose W. and Fannie E. (née Lewis) Mason**

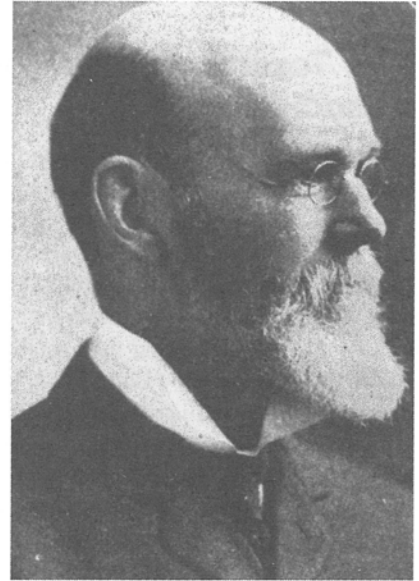
*The Gospel Light/Gallaudet University Archives*

instead to start mission stations for deaf people in various parts of Ontario. With this idea in mind, the Toronto Mission decided to send as a missionary “someone who knows how to talk with those whose ears are closed, and whose tongues are mute.”<sup>14</sup> According to the February 2, 1920 issue of *The Canadian*, it was in August 1886 (not in 1889, as previously believed) that the first “experimental” mission station was established outside the city as a branch of the Toronto Mission.<sup>15</sup> The meeting was held in the home of a deaf couple, James John Ormiston (b. July 30, 1861; d. Dec. 20, 1944) and the former Christian Margaret McLaren (b. July 24, 1859; d. July 3, 1951), on a 100-acre farm in Raglan, near Oshawa, Ont. The Ormistons were former pupils at the Ontario Institution (1870-1878 and 1873-1877 respectively). Some 15 people gathered for a sermon by Mason (by then a church layman), who had travelled for five hours from Toronto (75 kilometres away) for the service. Because the site was located near the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks above Myrtle Station, those attending the mission also had to contend with tramps who appeared daily at the Ormiston’s house begging for food.

At the Third Biennial Convention of the Ontario Deaf-Mute Association in Toronto (June 21-24, 1890), Fannie Mason delivered an address entitled “Missionary Work Among the Deaf.” She asked deaf people to allocate a portion of the foreign mis-

sion contributions for the establishment of a more extensive system of missionary labours within Canada. She also encouraged them to organize religious societies and auxiliary branches of the missions in every town and city, along the lines of those set up by the Toronto Mission to the Deaf. Many deaf people at the convention favoured these ideas, and soon the mission work spread.

Nasmith also contributed to the Mission’s work. In 1894, he recognized the need for a full-time interpreter and social worker for the people of the Toronto Mission. Annie Fraser (b. Sept. 18, 1869; d. May 24, 1958) was chosen for the job. Fraser, a hearing woman, was already fluent in sign language and was familiar with the work of the church. Her eldest brother, Philip (b. Aug. 7, 1863; d. Nov. 14, 1925), was deaf and had settled in Toronto after attending the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb (1870-1878). He and



**John D. Nasmith**

*The Deaf Canadian/Gallaudet University Archives*

his deaf wife, the former Catharine Jane (“Cassie”) Johnston (b. Feb. 23, 1862; d. Nov. 4, 1903), were active members of the Toronto Mission, where he served as “president of the Toronto Deaf-Mute Association as well as chairman of the local and general committees of the Mission Board.”<sup>16</sup> Nasmith paid for Annie Fraser’s studies at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Ill., and at the Toronto Bible College, where she finished in 1896. On May 25, 1891, she married a Toronto deaf man, John Rutherford Byrne (b. Dec. 23, 1865; d. Nov. 21, 1930). For the next 60 years, Mrs. Byrne served as the official interpreter of the Toronto Mission, as well as a “big mother” to deaf people, providing them with “homes, work, comfort, and guidance.”<sup>17</sup> A 1953 Toronto newspaper, *The Telegram*, called Mrs. Byrne “the Mother of the Deaf” in the city.<sup>18</sup> A school for the deaf publication referred to her as a woman, “who, though not herself deaf, has devoted her whole life and talents without reserve or stint to service for the deaf. She has been their comfort in sorrow, their encourager in every good work, their trusted councillor [sic] in every time of need, their kindly but faithful admonisher when any have been tempted to wander from the paths of rectitude.”<sup>19</sup> She encouraged the deaf women of the community to establish groups and work together to help needy deaf people. In 1897, as a result of her efforts, the women members of the church formed an organization called the Dorcas Society.

By the end of the 1880s, the Toronto Mission’s activities





**Annie (née Fraser) Byrne**

*Signs of the Century/Photo reproduction credit: Burlington Camera Ltd. (Burlington, Ont.)*

had grown sufficiently to warrant a new role in the province. With the establishment of other mission stations, the Ontario Mission of the Deaf (OMD) came into being in 1889; the Toronto Mission continued as the largest of OMD's stations. By 1898, the Ontario Mission had 16 new mission stations in various areas within the province.<sup>20</sup> By 1920, mission stations had been established in Ottawa, Oakville, Simcoe, St. Williams, Stratford, New Hamburg, Kitchener, Breton, Cookstown, Palgrave, Barrie, Aurora, Woodstock, Hamilton, London, and Toronto. By 1951, new mission stations had been set up in other towns, such as Brantford, Galt, Hamilton, Ingersoll, Oshawa, Ottawa, Owen Sound, Peterborough, Sarnia, St. Catharines, St. Thomas, Trenton, Windsor, and the Lake Simcoe District, plus Montréal, Québec.

The Toronto Mission, which had been meeting in the YMCA building, found itself without a place to worship when the Y moved in 1897. Fortunately, the Toronto Bible College was closed on Sundays, and Nasmith was able to secure the use of the school's auditorium on College Street. The Toronto Mission met there every Sunday afternoon for the next 27 years (1897-1924). The Mission also held its annual Easter Bible conference there. In addition to their Sunday services at the College, the organization also conducted Sunday School classes for deaf worshippers at four other sites in Toronto —

one in the Danforth Avenue United Church for people living in the eastern part of the city, one at Central YMCA for those in the central city, another in the West End YMCA, and one in Long Branch for those living in the south part of the city. The Mission also maintained a Brigden Scholarship in the Deaf School at Chefoo, China, for deaf boys interested in becoming teachers of deaf students.

In 1901, a Bible conference was sponsored by the Toronto Mission and held in the city. It was the first of its kind in Canada. All but one of the presenters were chosen from among the Deaf community. The Bible conference became an annual event.

In 1908, as a means to communicate with all the members of the Ontario Mission, Brigden began publishing *The Gospel Light*, a small monthly religious paper that continued until 1917, the year of his death.

## The Dorcas Society

The Dorcas Society, formed in the fall of 1897 by Annie (née Fraser) Byrne, was created to "arouse the interest and practical sympathy of deaf women in Christian work outside their own homes, and to give them the blessing of realizing that they also had the power to become fellow-workers with God by labouring for the good of others."<sup>21</sup> Twelve women gathered at the first meeting, held at the home of Mrs. Fannie Mason, where they elected Nasmith's hearing wife, the former Clara Jane Clark (b. Apr. 26, 1847; d. July 3, 1927), to serve as president and Miss Ethel Brigden, hearing daughter of Frederick Brigden, as secretary-treasurer. The meetings were usually scheduled between October and April and held on a weekly basis in the homes of the members (usually from 2:30 to 4:30 in the afternoon on Thursdays).<sup>22</sup> The ladies of this society performed such works as supplying clothing to impoverished deaf students before they left for school in Belleville, assisting "overburdened deaf mothers," and sewing clothes for the Canadian Home Missions. Early members included Mrs. Fannie Mason, Mrs. Mary (née Needham) Slater (b. Unknown; Apr. 22, 1900), Mrs. Clara Nasmith, and, of course, Mrs. Byrne.

## The Evangelical Church of the Deaf

The Toronto Bible College continued to be the meeting place of local deaf protestants when they reorganized their group in 1918 under the name "Evangelical Church of the Deaf." Philip Fraser was named superintendent of the first board of trustees of the newly named church. This board also included his son-in-law, John Tyler Shilton, as assistant superintendent (Shilton's hearing wife, Isabel Edith [b. Apr. 5, 1889; d. Dec. 16, 1965], was the eldest daughter of Philip and Cassie Fraser); and directors George W. Reeves; Frank E. Harris, Charles A. Elliott, John R. Byrne, William R. Watt, Arthur H. Jaffray, Henry S. Whealy (also spelled "Whealey"), Ambrose W. Mason, John H. Mason, Richard C. Slater, Herbert W. Roberts, Fred W. Terrell, and Harry E. Grooms — all prominent deaf leaders in the Toronto area.<sup>23</sup> This church became



### The Dorcas Society, Toronto (1899)

*The Canadian Mute/Gallaudet University Archives*

**Standing (left to right):** Mrs. A.W. Mason, Miss Patterson, Miss J.L. Smith, Mrs. H. Mason, Mrs. Buchanan, Miss Brigden, Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Flynn, Mrs. W.J. Terrell, Mrs. Boughton, Miss B. Brigden.

**Sitting (left to right):** Miss Fraser, Miss Morrison, Mrs. Slater, Mrs. Wedderburn, Mrs. Nasmith.

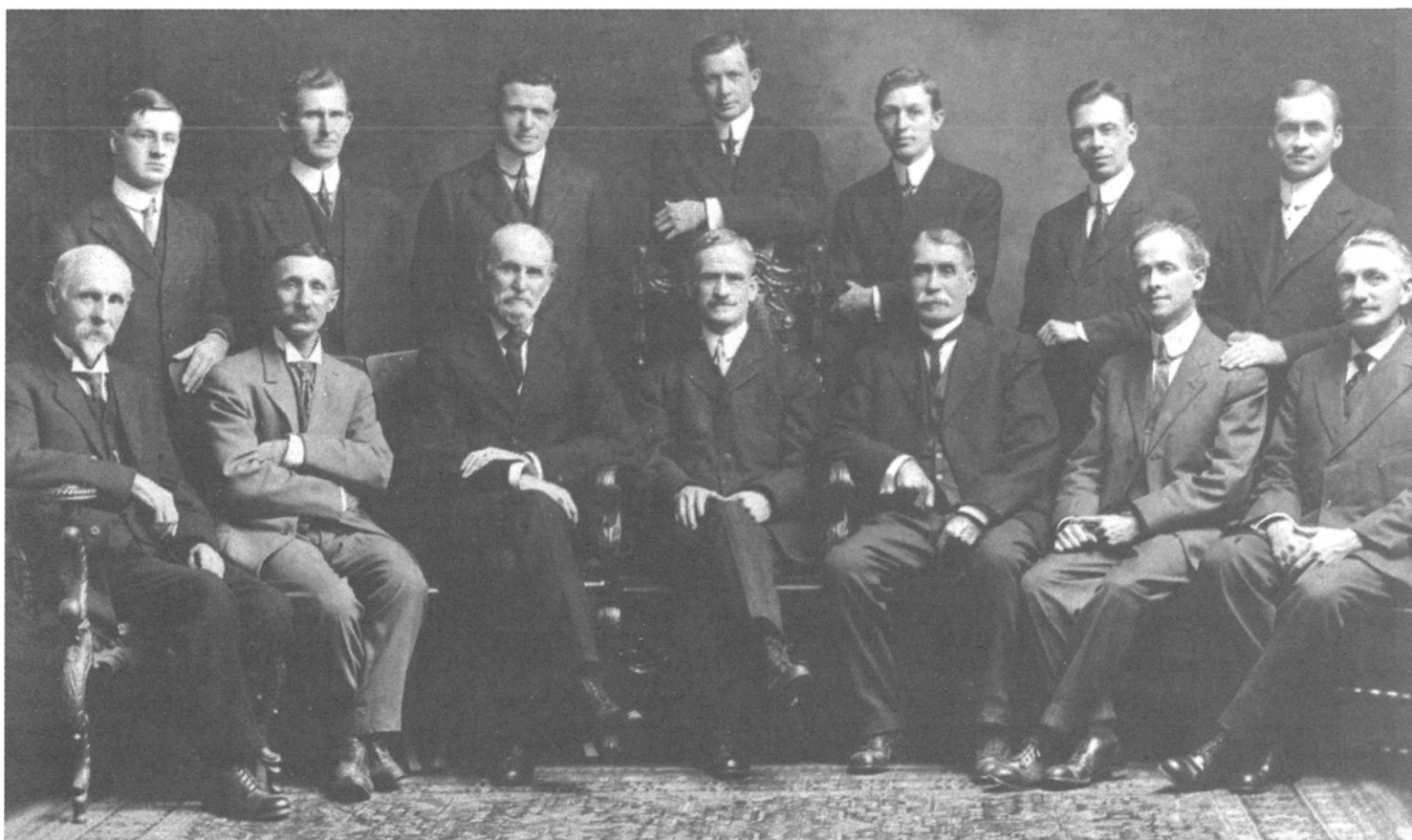
the central mission station in the province of Ontario under the Ontario Mission of the Deaf. Byrne became the first superintendent of the church. He was a prominent deaf leader in the religious community for many years. A week after he died (on November 21, 1930), the following tribute appeared in *The Canadian*:

*Mr. Byrne was especially assiduous in his kindness and practical helpfulness to the poorer and less educated deaf, to everyone of whom he was a devoted friend. Sincere in his beliefs, conscientious in the discharge of duty, indefatigable in service but always unassuming and undemonstrative, courageous in speaking the truth as he saw it, yet charitable in his judgments, a leader in very good work and a tower of strength in the spiritual upbuilding of the deaf of Ontario, he has set an example to and promoted religious activities of the deaf, the influence of which will long be felt, and has left a gracious memory that will long be cherished.<sup>24</sup>*

The activities of the church, which was non-denominational, continued to increase until it became evident that a permanent site was needed for the group. In 1920, members launched a movement to build a church home of their own. Eager to have such a church, three deaf men — George William Reeves (b. Apr. 25, 1876; d. Sept. 12, 1953), Arthur Hall Jaffray (b. Oct. 24,

1882; d. Aug. 27, 1954), and John Tyler Shilton (b. Aug. 28, 1884; d. Nov. 1, 1950), son of a Methodist minister — formed an unofficial committee of their own and began extolling the need for such a building. These men, leaders in the Ontario Mission and in the Ontario Association of the Deaf, set up a building fund and recruited financial assistance from prominent people and interested friends. The fund grew slowly, but after obtaining many personal pledges from among the Protestant Deaf community, it finally reached \$27,500. The Congregationalist Church learned of the efforts being made by the Deaf community and decided to use money from its missionary society to match each dollar raised. After learning of this, pledges from deaf people increased, and the fund had reached a total of \$32,500 by the beginning of 1925, an amount that was then matched by the Congregational Church.

One of the most distinctive features about the Evangelical Church was the extent to which deaf people were responsible for its creation and day-to-day operations. They founded the organization from which the church grew, and served on its board of directors. Although hearing men served as ministers and a hearing woman was the primary interpreter for more than 60 years, deaf laypeople were actively involved from the beginning, and full membership was (and still is) restricted to deaf individuals. The name “Evangelical Church of the Deaf” is certainly appropriate in this case.



### The first board of trustees of the Evangelical Church of the Deaf (1918)

*Courtesy of Ontario Mission of the Deaf (Toronto, Ont.)/Photo credit: Farmer Bros. Limited*

**Standing:** Arthur H. Jaffray, William R. Watt, John T. Shilton (assistant superintendent), George W. Reeves, Frank E. Harris, Fred W. Terrell, Harry E. Grooms.

**Seated:** John H. Mason, John R. Byrne, Ambrose W. Mason, Philip Fraser (superintendent), Richard C. Slater, Charles A. Elliott, Henry S. Whealy.

Property at 56 Wellesley Street was chosen for the new church. Centrally located one block east of Yonge and not far from Queen's Park, the site came with a mansion that had once belonged to Paul Kane, a well-known Canadian artist and writer of First Nations life. The Evangelical Church of the Deaf purchased the property for \$20,000 cash and began to hold meetings in the mansion until the new church building could be constructed. Dr. William T. Gunn, a hearing man who was one of the leaders in the Congregational Church, was influential in helping the deaf congregation establish its new home. Gunn convinced members of the Evangelical Church that it would be in their best interests to become affiliated with the Congregational Church so they could then join the new United Church of Canada (which was being formed at that time by the union of the Congregational Church, the Methodist Church, and the Presbyterian Church). Gunn assured the church members that even though they would be affiliated with one particular denomination, the Evangelical Church of the Deaf could continue to maintain its non-denominational status.

Groundbreaking for the permanent home of the Evangelical Church of the Deaf took place on September 22, 1925. Two months later on Monday, November 9, the congregation held a service for the laying of the cornerstone. The

stone was put in place by Col. Henry Cockshutt, then lieutenant-governor of Ontario (1921-1927). Ambrose W. Mason, the oldest deaf member in the congregation and one of the pioneers of the Toronto Mission to the Deaf, presented Cockshutt with a silver trowel in commemoration of the event. John R. Byrne, the first superintendent of the Evangelical Church, signed the dedication prayer, and Dr. Gunn and Shilton gave speeches — one orally and the other in sign language.

Once the building was completed, it still needed to be decorated and furnished, so the congregation borrowed \$10,000 — \$5,000 from a local bank, which was paid off by 1929, and the other \$5,000 from the Methodist Union, paid off in 1936. The formal dedication of the new Evangelical Church of the Deaf building took place on Good Friday, April 2, 1926, during the 26th Annual Bible Conference for the Deaf (April 2-4, 1926). Fred Brigden and J.W. Nasmith, hearing sons of the late "pioneer fathers," gave speeches. The new church — which included an auditorium large enough to seat 500 people, two vestries, a lecture and entertainment room for 300 people, a large gymnasium, a bowling alley, a board room, a ladies' aid room, two or three sitting and reception rooms, a kindergarten classroom, library, kitchen and larder, living rooms for the caretaker and his family, several rooms suitable for bedrooms, and





**The Evangelical Church of the Deaf on Wellesley Street, Toronto (1926-1973)**

*Ontario Mission of the Deaf Archives (Toronto, Ont.)*

storerooms in the cellar — was worth \$75,000 upon completion.<sup>25</sup>

The first wedding held at the Evangelical Church took place on the afternoon of September 26, 1928, when James Richard Tate, Jr. (b. Sept. 26, 1900; d. Dec. 29, 1961) of Toronto married Muriel Joyce Allen (b. June 23, 1903; d. June 9, 1983) of Hamilton. Both were graduates of the Ontario School for the Deaf at Belleville (1910-1921 and 1912-1921 respectively). The ceremony was performed by Rev. A.L. Richards, a hearing moderator of the Evangelical Church who had travelled from Whitby, Ont. for the service. Annie Byrne interpreted the service in sign language.

Some time after 1928, Rev. Richards left Canada for England. After his departure, the congregation decided it was time to have a minister of their own (preferably someone deaf), rather than “borrow” a minister who had to travel from another area to preach and officiate at ceremonies. In 1933, the Rev. Bengt Olof Georg Almo (b. July 13, 1902; d. May 20, 1972), a deaf man from Stockholm, Sweden who came to the U.S. in 1932, was hired as the church’s first full-time minister. However, he resigned the following year and returned to the states.

Until this time, the church had no paid staff. Mrs. Byrne volunteered her services as interpreter, assisted at times by Isabel Shilton. Most of the church work was in the care of deaf laymen. The congregation began seeking another full-time minister, but it was not until the spring of 1935 that they received a monetary gift that helped provide partial payment of a minister’s salary. The \$25,000 donation came from Samuel

Carter (b. Dec. 8, 1859; d. June 16, 1944), a British-born hearing gentleman living in Guelph, Ont. Carter, a knitting goods manufacturer, had a deaf daughter, Elizabeth (b. May 30, 1899; d. June 14, 1968) who had attended the Belleville school (1906-1917).<sup>26</sup> The interest from this generous donation was invested in a trust fund and used to pay the minister. The Rev. Alexander MacGowan (b. Oct. 8, 1887; d. May 11, 1966), a hearing man who had come from Stirling, Scotland to live in Bronte, Ont., offered to work for the church. He was Carter’s son-in-law. MacGowan had several years’ experience in the ministry and quickly learned sign language for his new job. At the time of his appointment on July 3, 1936, he was the first and the only hearing minister to serve Canadian deaf people in a paid capacity. In addition to his Toronto congregation, he also ministered to deaf people living in the surrounding areas by preaching once a month in such towns as Brantford, Hamilton, Kitchener, London, Oshawa, Ottawa, St. Thomas, Galt, Owen Sound, Sarnia, Barrie, Woodstock, Cookstown, and Aurora. He worked at the Evangelical Church from 1936 until 1946, at which time he officially retired on the advice of his doctor. However, he consented to be available for weddings and other ceremonies until the next minister, the Rev. Alexander Manson (b. May 13, 1920), returned from his studies at Gallaudet College in Washington, D.C. (The church gave Rev. MacGowan “two one-hundred dollar bills” as a farewell gift when he retired.)<sup>27</sup>

In 1947, three hearing trustees of the church approached Manson (a hearing man who knew nothing about deafness at that time) as the replacement for MacGowan. A former student at Emmanuel College in Toronto (the local United Church the-



ological college), Manson then attended Gallaudet College (1948-1949) to learn about deaf people and their language; he received his master's degree in 1949. While at Gallaudet, he wrote a thesis on the religious work among Deaf communities in North America. Manson was employed by the Evangelical Church for three years (1948-1951), and then left the deaf ministry. After returning to Emmanuel College for a masters' degree in theology, he served rural hearing churches near London, Ont. for many years.

With Manson's departure, the congregation needed a new minister once again. This time the church members made the selection themselves rather than depending on the hearing trustees. They chose a hearing American, the Rev. Willis Ethridge (b. Jan. 23, 1925), who was then pastor of the United Evangelical Church of the Deaf in Portland, Oregon. Ethridge had been ordained by the Baptist Church. The Canadian United Church recognized this ordination but refused to recognize Ethridge's schooling or accept him as a minister. Thus, he had difficulty being registered in Canada to perform marriages, and the money from the trust fund for ministers' salaries was withheld. Nevertheless, Ethridge and his family moved to Toronto in January, 1953. During the summer of that year, he established the first Christian summer camp program geared to the spiritual, social, and recreational needs of deaf people. This camp was very popular and was continued after Ethridge left Toronto.<sup>28</sup> During his tenure at the Evangelical Church, Ethridge and his family also took in two deaf children (brother and sister) from the Children's Aid Society. Despite the problem of being officially recognized by the United Church, Ethridge remained as pastor of the Evangelical Church of the Deaf until December 1956, at which time he left to establish a mission school for deaf people in Jamaica. The Ontario Mission provided support to their missionary pastor and his family at what later became known as the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf.

Replacing Ethridge was Robert Leslie Rumball (b. Oct. 2, 1929), a young, ex-professional football player (Ottawa Roughriders and Toronto Argonauts) who had recently entered the ministry. Rumball, a hearing person, knew nothing about deaf people but was willing to learn. He applied to the United Church as a candidate for ordination in December 1957, but agreed to stay only if it seemed that it was the right decision both for him and for the deaf congregation. Rumball learned quickly, and after a few months it was apparent that he was the right man for the job. He was ordained in June 1957 and has remained with the church ever since. His hearing wife, Mary Jean, a registered nurse, served as camp nurse during the summer.

Many milestones were reached during the next three decades. On March 18, 1958, the Ontario Mission of the Deaf was provincially incorporated. In 1960, the church sent James Malcolm Hardy (b. Jan. 4, 1934) as its first deaf Canadian missionary to Jamaica. Six years later, another deaf member of the church, Margaret Ann Horne (b. Aug. 24, 1935), entered the same mission field, where she stayed for 15 years (1966-1981). She was a former student at the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville (1951-1953). In 1967, the church established a Group

Home Program to provide emergency service and residential care to children and young adults from all provinces of Canada. The same year, the "Farm of Hope" for emotionally disturbed deaf children was started near Milton, Ont. Youth hostels for deaf men and women were set up in 1973 and 1981, and foster home programs for deaf children were established in 17 Ontario centres. Members of the Mission continued to raise funds, send workers, and provide leadership to the Caribbean Christian Centre for the Deaf in Jamaica.

In May, 1971, *The Signing Hands* began publication. This newsletter contained news of what was happening at all the stations of the Ontario Mission. The motto of *The Signing Hands* was "He Must Increase," the same motto used by the old *Gospel Light* newsletter of Brigden's time. The first issue of *The Signing Hands* mentioned that Rev. Rumball would be "traveling through the Maritimes and Newfoundland, from April 19 to May 12 this year, sharing with the deaf in the eastern provinces the Good News of the Gospel."<sup>29</sup> Rumball continued this type of travelling for many years. In fact, one of the concerns of the Ontario Mission was helping deaf people start their own churches in other provinces, so they formed the Canadian Mission of the Deaf to meet this challenge. As part of its efforts, Rev. Rumball undertook preaching missions to other provinces.

In 1973, the church building on Wellesley Street was sold and for the next five years the congregation met in a vacant



**The Ontario Community Centre for the Deaf on Bayview Ave., Toronto**

1980 Ontario Community Centre for the Deaf postcard (Toronto, Ont.)

subway property at 19 Elmhurst Avenue, made available courtesy of Mel Lastman, mayor of North York, Ont. The church also began a massive fund-raising campaign spearheaded by Lt. Col. Constantine Falkland Cary Smythe (b. Feb. 2, 1885; d. Nov. 18, 1980), a wealthy hearing man who had built Maple Leaf Gardens.<sup>30</sup> The goal was to raise enough money to build a \$7.5-million community centre for deaf people. The fund grew through grants provided by the Ontario government, as well as from donations from churches, service clubs, corporations, charitable foundations, and concerned deaf and hearing citizens. In 1975, the church purchased property at 2395 Bayview

Avenue in North York. By 1978, services were being held in the unfinished building. On April 5, 1979, the site, called the "Ontario Community Centre for the Deaf," was officially opened, and on December 1, 1981, the Board of Managers of the Centre changed the name to the "Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf" (BRCD).

The building, which included 40 single-occupancy apartments and 24 double-occupancy apartments — plus rooms for students — accommodated a full-day preschool program, a vocational rehabilitation program, a printshop, an adult education development program, an adult residential program and home for aged deaf people, an elderly persons centre, health-care services, and recreational programs and activities. In the Stafford Smythe sanctuary, named in memory of Conn Smythe's son, inter-denominational religious services were offered three times on Sunday, and Bible study classes occurred during the week.<sup>31</sup>

In May 1983, the Crescent Group Home, a halfway house for those individuals preparing to live on their own, was established as an extension of the BRCD Adults' Residential Program. On April 1, 1986, the Bob Rumball Associations for the Deaf (BRAD), a secular social service group, was established. This group grew out of the Ontario Mission and now operates the Mission's properties. Each of the projects within BRAD is self-controlled, with its own board, financial records, and staff. All properties managed by BRAD are owned by the Ontario Mission of the Deaf.

## Protestant Efforts in Québec: The Montreal Mission of the Deaf

In the 1940s, deaf anglophones in Montréal expressed an interest in having a protestant church mission established in their city. In 1947, John Tyler Shilton of the Ontario Mission of the Deaf contacted Mr. James Grimes of Montréal regarding this, but Grimes was unable to perform this type of work due to other commitments. Another member of the Montréal community (whose name is unknown) was found to assume the role of provisional chairman of the new mission. At first a laypreacher came from Toronto once a month to conduct a service at the Mackay Institution for Protestant Deaf-Mutes. An average of 26 people attended during the first three months.<sup>32</sup> Then, in 1948, the Montréal Mission elected a slate of officers that included Mr. A.H. McDonald, chairman; Mr. J.A. Gregory, vice-chairman; Mrs. B. Brown, secretary; and Mr. A.C. Moore, treasurer. The Mission held two services a month, sometimes bringing in a laypreacher from the Ontario Mission and sometimes asking local preachers and laymen to speak. One of these invited speakers was Mr. Frank Vann of Trans-Canada Airlines (renamed Air Canada in 1965), who was asked to give a presentation in 1962. He became so interested in the Deaf community that he began to take sign language lessons and became proficient in the language. Soon Vann became the unofficial pastor of the Montréal Mission, dealing with such areas of concern to the Deaf community as health care and the courts. He was later ordained by the Mennonite Church so he could officially conduct funeral services, marriages, and other special

services. The Ontario Mission of the Deaf and the Evangelical Church of the Deaf, both in Toronto, continued to provide guidance and support to the Montréal Mission, which became incorporated in 1970 as "The Montreal Mission of the Deaf, Inc." One reason for incorporation was so the deaf members could take greater control over their organization.

## Protestant Church Activities in the Maritime Provinces / Ecumenical Ministry of the Deaf / Atlantic Ministry of the Deaf

During the early 1900s, Maritime Deaf communities began to set up religious meetings for themselves. These including Sunday evening services in Halifax, N.S. conducted by Robert Wilkie McDonald (b. Mar. 6, 1861; d. Mar. 31, 1932) ("... started by Mr. Goucher, the Secretary of the M.D.M.A. [Maritime Deaf-Mute Association] ..."),<sup>33</sup> and a Bible reading class that met in the home of deaf people every Sunday evening, started in late 1906 in Moncton, N.B. by Miss Minnie E. Knight.<sup>34</sup> In addition, deaf people in Saint John, N.B. sought a room in 1907 for their own Bible reading classes.<sup>35</sup> These attempts appear to have been conducted by local citizens without the formal guidance of any particular pastor or church, however.

The Rev. James Stanley Light (b. Jan. 11, 1895; d. Dec. 2, 1963) from Massachusetts was among the first to formally minister to the deaf Protestant population of the Maritime provinces. For almost 30 years (beginning in 1934), Light, a deaf Episcopal minister of the New England dioceses, regularly visited the School for the Deaf in Halifax, N.S. He remained there for a week each fall, preaching to the students at the school and also to the adult deaf population at services held in St. Paul's Anglican Church. During the rest of the school year, the teachers at the Halifax School were responsible for the religious instruction of their pupils, as indicated by the school's 1949 annual report:

*The greater part of the religious instruction received by the children here is given by the teachers in a regular daily morning period from 9 to 9:25 a.m. These periods are taken by the Protestant teachers and each teacher has as nearly the members of her regular class, as possible, after the Roman Catholic pupils are taken out. The latter have their own instruction by their own teachers, as our school is interdenominational. Each Sunday afternoon we have a regular Sunday School period from 2 to 2:45 p.m. Classes are taught by the classroom teachers.*<sup>36</sup>

In 1971, attempts began to establish a ministry specifically for deaf people in Nova Scotia. An Interim Planning Committee for a Church for the Deaf was formed at an October meeting held at Dalhousie University in Halifax. By December, this group had formulated goals, which included finding a pastor who could sign, establishing Bible study groups and Sunday School classes in sign language, and locating a permanent home. On October 20, 1972, the Ecumenical Ministry of the Deaf (EMD) was chartered as a religious organization. (The

name changed to the Atlantic Ministry of the Deaf on October 1, 1993.)

It was not until September 1973 that the Maritime provinces had its first full-time chaplain for the deaf. The EMD recruited Pastor Francis Gordon Gyle (b. June 11, 1917), a hearing minister from the Immanuel Lutheran Church of the Deaf (1968-1973) in Pittsburgh, Pa. Prior to his move to Canada, he had been a counsellor at the California School for the Deaf in Berkeley (1940-1941; and a few months in 1942); a teacher at the Maryland School for the Deaf in Frederick (1941-1942); a minister at the Holy Cross Lutheran Church of the Deaf in St. Louis, Mo. (1945-Jan. 1952) and at the Deaf Zion Lutheran Church in Miami, Fla. (Feb. 1952-Aug. 1965); and dean of students at the Florida School for the Deaf in St. Augustine (Sept. 1965-Jan. 1968). His degrees are from the University of California, Berkeley (B.A., 1938); Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. (Theological Diploma, 1946); University of Pittsburg (M.Ed., 1968); and the Atlantic School of Theology in Halifax (M.Div., 1978; M.Th., 1987). Gyle knew nothing about deaf people when he took a civil service position in California, but he learned “on the job,” thanks to having a deaf boss and several deaf co-workers (all alumni of Gallaudet College).

A year before moving to Canada, Gyle visited the Maritimes once a month to hold church services for deaf people in Halifax. “On the second Sunday of each month, Rev. Gyle would interpret the morning service in sign language in whatever church he was asked to be their guest and in the afternoon would hold the ecumenical service for the deaf at the J. Wesley Smith United Church, the ‘home’ Church of the deaf in Halifax.”<sup>37</sup> Whenever possible, he also held services for deaf worshippers in Amherst, N.S., and the New Brunswick cities of Fredericton, Moncton, and Saint John. (Bertha Mae [née Hayward] Curtis [b. Sept. 21, 1910] was one of the most active deaf pastoral workers for the EMD at this time. She had been instrumental in developing a Christian ministry to the New Brunswick Deaf community. After her retirement from the Neilson’s Company in 1975, she began her “second career” as a full-time parish worker with the Ecumenical Ministry.)

In March 1981, Gyle left Halifax for Belleville, Ont., to work with the deaf under the auspices of the United Church of Canada for six years. He retired in 1987 and moved to Penney Farms, Fla. in 1988. “Retired” is an inappropriate word to use with Gyle, however. He volunteers at the Lutheran Deaf Church in St. Augustine on a monthly basis, and regularly visits deaf patients in two state hospitals and deaf inmates in the state prison.

The current pastor of the Atlantic Ministry of the Deaf (formerly EMD) is Ralph Waldo Grandy (b. May 17, 1942), a native of Garnish, Fortune Bay, Nfld. His father was a United Church minister in different Maritime towns. Grandy’s degrees are from Memorial University in St. John’s, Nfld. (B.A., 1969); Atlantic School of Theology (M.Div., 1973); and Union Theological Seminary in Richmond, Va. (Doctor of Divinity [D.D.], 1980). Grandy had some prior experience with deaf people, having worked as a houseparent at the Interprovincial School for the Education of the Deaf in Amherst, N.S. (1961-1963). He volunteered for two years at the EMD before being hired full time in June 1985.

## The Winnipeg Church of the Deaf

The seeds that produced the current Winnipeg Church of the Deaf were planted as early as 1912. In that year, Miss Candice Brown (later MacPhail) (b. May [day unknown], 1882; d. July 19, 1958), a hearing teacher at the Manitoba School for the Deaf on Sherbrooke and Portage, invited some of the deaf people of Winnipeg to attend the Broadway Baptist Church, where she interpreted the services. Six years later, in 1918, Rupert J.D. Williams (b. Sept. 28, 1893; d. Mar. 23, 1973) organized and served as chairman of the “Winnipeg Deaf Bible Class,” which met in a succession of locations, including the YMCA, the Manitoba College, and later the First Baptist Church (now the Calvary Temple). Visiting hearing ministers conducted the services, assisted occasionally by deaf members of the congregations. (When Williams moved to Saskatoon, in 1927, Arthur Bailey became chairman of the Bible class, followed by George W. Sutherland.)<sup>38</sup> The group became known as the Winnipeg Evangelical Church of the Deaf (later called the Winnipeg Church for the Deaf).

On July 8, 1923, a Ladies’ Aid Society (LAS) to help sick and needy deaf people was organized by some of the female members of the Winnipeg Church — Sarah Anne (née Phillips) Pettypiece, Kathleen Victoria Fleming Stinson (later Mrs. Augustus H. J. Staubitz, and then Mrs. George P. Riley), Alice Eileen (née Smith) Yeaman, Louise Emmenline (née Turner) Tomlinson, Anna Rice, Caroline (“Carrie”) Fedora, Annie Lavina (née MacPhail) Cook, and Annie Ethelwynne (“Winnie”) Nicholson (later Mrs. George W. Sutherland). Pettypiece was its first president (1923-1924); dues were 10 cents per month. On December 8, 1939, the women agreed to change the group’s name from the LAS to the Women’s Auxiliary (WA), effective January 1940. The WA was very active during the Second World War, knitting and sewing for the soldiers and contributing money to the Canadian Red Cross.<sup>39</sup> They also took classes in first aid work in case their services were needed during the war years.

By 1935, the congregation of the Winnipeg Evangelical Church of the Deaf was still meeting in borrowed facilities, so the members decided to establish a meeting place of their own. Three other organizations — the Winnipeg Association of the Deaf, the McDermid Memorial Fund,<sup>40</sup> and the church’s Ladies’ Aid Society — also joined in the efforts to achieve this goal.<sup>41</sup> After several months of searching for a suitable building, the committee chose a small, centrally located hall at 285 Balmoral Street as the new site for what was now being called the “Winnipeg Community Centre of the Deaf” (WCCD). The Balmoral Street property was “only a basement hall, inside it there was an old wood stove, with pipes from one end of the Hall to the other, a coal bin in one corner, a small room being used for an office, and a baptismal font.”<sup>42</sup> It was purchased in the fall of 1936 for \$2,500 from the church funds. Another \$2,000 (\$1,000 of which came from the McDermid Fund) was spent on improvements and furnishings. The small office, wood stove, coal bin, and baptismal font were removed and replaced with a kitchen, a gas furnace, and a small stage.<sup>43</sup> The hall was to be used as a clubhouse on weekdays and for church services on Sundays.

The WCCD, where the Winnipeg Church was to meet, officially opened (free of debt) on Tuesday, November 21, 1939. Later, thanks to the efforts of a hearing man named John Affleck (b. 1879; d. Feb. 28, 1946), additions were made to the building. Affleck “saw that there were many needs of the deaf, and when he realized that he personally was not going to be able to live to help fill these needs, he arranged through his Will to provide funds to be administered through the Kiwanis Club, for the upkeep of the WCCD.”<sup>44</sup> His will established a \$25,000 trust fund, with the interest available for the WCCD’s use. A half-size second floor was added to the building thanks to \$5,000 from the Affleck fund. Later, the upstairs was completed to full size (at a cost of another \$12,000), again through the Affleck trust account plus a mortgage taken out by WCCD.<sup>45</sup> (By 1958, the mortgage had been paid off, and the members of the WCCD held a “burning of the mortgage” celebration.)

Total attendance during the 1940 calendar year was 795. By the end of 1942, the yearly total attendance had increased to 2,314.<sup>46</sup> The Ladies’ Auxiliary continued to support the work of the church by holding teas (which raised funds for the church’s work) and through charitable acts such as visiting the sick. At first, the church services were conducted by visiting hearing clergymen and interpreted into sign language. However, church members soon began a search for their own minister, supported by both the United and Anglican churches. It took several years to find the right man. In August of 1962, Rev. Donald Ian Wilson (b. Feb. 5, 1933), a graduate of the University of Western Ontario in London (B.A., 1959) and Emmanuel College of Theology (M.Div., 1962) (which is affiliated with the University of Toronto), moved to Winnipeg to serve at the church. His work with deaf people developed partly from his association with Rev. Robert L. Rumball of the Evangelical Church of the Deaf in Toronto, who taught Wilson sign language so he could communicate for the first time with his deaf cousin. With Wilson’s arrival, the Winnipeg Church became the second church in Canada to have its own minister, with all services conducted in sign language.<sup>47</sup> From 1963 to 1965, Rev. Wilson conducted weekly services for the interdenominational group of deaf persons of the Protestant faith. When he had to be out of town, Forrest C. Nickerson, a deaf man who was warden of the church, would lead the congregation in worship.<sup>48</sup> By 1964, Rev. Wilson and his family had been provided with a house, thanks to the efforts of the Home Mission Board. Appliances were donated by the Anglican Church. The Women’s Circle (the new name for the Women’s Auxiliary) provided furnishings for both the home and the minister’s office.<sup>49</sup> The next minister of the church (1967-1976) was Allen Reginald Simms (b. Feb. 24, 1937), another hearing man. He had previously served as assistant curate at St. Matthew’s Anglican Church in Winnipeg (1963-1965), and parish rector (1965-1967) in the tiny Manitoba communities of Poplar Point, Marquette, Baie St. Paul and St. Mark’s. Born in Halifax, N.S., he received his training at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg (B.A., 1961) and St. John’s College of Theology (L.Th. [Licentiate in Theology], 1963), located on the same campus. He left the Winnipeg Church for the Deaf to

become administrator (1975-1986) of the newly opened Kiwanis Centre of the Deaf (now known as the Deaf Centre Manitoba).

In addition to the worship services, the church established a church camp. Together with a committee of church members, Rev. Wilson located property for a summer camp for the deaf population of Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. In the early spring of 1966, “Camp Kakepitay” (a word that means “deaf” in the language of the local Ojibwa Indians) became a reality when Mrs. Dora Eastlack of Omaha, Neb., donated her 8.10-acre Canyon Lake summer estate to the church. The property came with several buildings that Mrs. Eastlack and her husband Ned (who had died in 1962) had built themselves over a 30-year period.<sup>50</sup> The church youth quickly took advantage of these new facilities. By the summer of 1970, according to the church’s annual report, the church-sponsored cubs and scouts were busy with outings and camping trips to the property donated by Mrs. Eastlack.

Over the years, the church has continued to grow and remain active in the Winnipeg community. The first official quarterly newsletter of the church, *Thy Church, You & Me*, began publication in February 1984. The editor from 1984 to 1988 was Forrest C. Nickerson. Also in 1984 (on February 5th) the name of the church was officially changed to the Winnipeg Church of the Deaf.<sup>51</sup> In addition to providing worship services, the church has sponsored workshops — conducted in ASL — on various topics including Deaf culture, life skills, and self-defense.

## Calvary Temple of the Deaf, Winnipeg

Sometimes deaf church-goers worship within churches originally established for hearing people — either in joint services with the hearing worshippers (usually with the assistance of a sign language interpreter), or in separate services (in the sanctuary when it is not being used by the hearing congregation or in some other part of the building during the hearing services). Such is the case of the Calvary Temple of the Deaf in Winnipeg, Man. The core group that formed this congregation came from a Bible study class that met in the home of James and Alvina MacGregor of Steinbach, Man. The first meetings attracted only five deaf people, but within a month that number had increased to 21, and within a year the study group numbered 65 and was too large to continue meeting in a private home.<sup>52</sup> In 1976, encouraged by a hearing woman named Rose Plett (who later became assistant pastor of the church), the pastor of Calvary Temple in Winnipeg opened his church to the deaf worshippers.

The first minister to serve the deaf congregation was Leslie Lawrence Lawer (b. Sept. 13, 1941), an American who became deaf at 13 months of age from spinal meningitis. He received his education at the Oregon State School for the Deaf in Salem (1947-1959) and Central Bible College in Springfield, Mo. (B.A., 1972-1976). He came to the Calvary Temple of the Deaf in Winnipeg in September 1976, and left in June 1982 to do pastoral work in Flint, Mich. (1982-1984), St. Paul, Minn.



(Highland Park Deaf Church, 1984-1988), and Apple Valley, Minn. (Deaf Dakota Hills Church, 1991 to present). When Lawer was ordained in November 1978, he became the first deaf minister in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. He is married to a deaf schoolmate, the former Charlotte Lucille Towell; they have three children, two of whom are deaf. A year following Lawer's departure, the Calvary Temple brought in Rev. J. David Flack (b. Aug. 20, 1947), a hearing man who was born in Alton, Ill. He pursued his degrees at North Central Bible College in Minneapolis, Minn. (B.A., 1972) and at the College of St. Thomas (M.A., 1979) in St. Paul, Minn. Flack's interest in the deaf ministry came to light in 1972 when he took a beginner's course in sign language. Prior to coming to Canada, he served deaf congregations in Minneapolis, Minn. and Seattle, Wash. The Calvary Temple now has an all-deaf board, and Sunday School classes are taught by deaf teachers. When services are combined with the hearing congregation, they are interpreted in American Sign Language. \*

## **Edmonton Deaf Church Fellowship (EDCF)**

Another group that meets in a church for hearing worshippers is the Edmonton Deaf Church Fellowship, which was founded in 1978 by three deaf Edmontonians — Kenneth Monahan (a printer), Jim Kvarnberg (a residence counsellor), and Wes Hawkins (a cabinet maker). At that time, the organization was called the "Deaf Christian Fellowship." On March 16, 1988 the group was incorporated as the Edmonton Deaf Church Fellowship. The EDCF is "an inter-denominational evangelical ministry" that serves deaf people in the city of Edmonton, Alta.<sup>53</sup> Deaf people have leadership roles in the church, which offers separate services for deaf and hearing worshippers. The EDCF also provides Bible classes, personal and spiritual counselling, seminars and workshops, social, and recreational activities. The EDCF meets weekly at the Southgate Alliance Church in Edmonton.

## **Pacific Deaf Fellowship / Vancouver Church for the Deaf**

In British Columbia, the Vancouver Church for the Deaf (VCD) began in 1962 as the Pacific Deaf Fellowship. The congregation met for services in the Community Christian Church on 13th Avenue and Cambie Street (where the Sheraton Plaza Hotel now stands). The director of activities (which included worship services, social activities, and other services) was Robert Joseph Boese (b. Feb. 8, 1939; d. Mar. 10, 1985), the hearing son of deaf parents (David and Elsie [née Nolin] Boese). In 1966, the Rev. Gary William Magarrell (b. May 4, 1943), a hearing United Church minister from Winnipeg, Man., assumed responsibility for the fellowship's activities, and it was then that the group organized into a formal church under the name "Vancouver Church for the Deaf." Magarrell left in 1969 to serve the hearing congregation at the Gilmore Park United Church in Richmond, B.C. (1969-1974). His replacement was Rev. Donald James Hume (b. Sept. 24, 1943), who stayed for

three years (1969-1972). This hearing pastor grew up in Winnipeg, Man., and attended the University of Winnipeg (B.A., 1966). In 1969, he received his master of divinity degree (M.Div.) from Union College (now called Vancouver School of Theology at the University of British Columbia), and was ordained by the United Church of Canada in Manitoba. He learned the basics of American Sign Language from a deaf couple, George and Kathleen Riley. Hume left the VCD to do pastoral work in Kitimat, B.C. (1972-1977), but returned to Vancouver to become a social worker at the Western Institute for the Deaf (1977-1979), rehabilitation consultant for the provincial government (1979-1989), and co-ordinator in the assessment department at Vancouver Community College (1989-1994). He has since returned to the ministry, and is now located at the James Bay United Church in Victoria, B.C. In 1972, Rev. James Simmons, a hearing Southern Baptist Church pastor from Kansas, became the VCD's next spiritual leader. He remained in this position until the mid-1980s, when the church closed. Simmons then left for Chicago, Ill., where he became a pastor of a Baptist church for the deaf. The VCD was a non-denominational effort, financed primarily by the Anglican, Baptist Union, Presbyterian, and United churches.

## **Willingdon Deaf Church / Deaf Community Christian Church**

The Willingdon Deaf Church began in 1982 as a ministry of the Willingdon Mennonite Brethren Church in Burnaby, B.C., serving the Greater Vancouver area. Their first activities were Bible study groups in the homes of members and interpreted worship services with the hearing congregation. The activities for the deaf group were led primarily by Rudolf ("Rudy") John Unger (b. Sept. 2, 1956) (the hearing son of deaf parents who had immigrated to Canada from the Ukraine).<sup>54</sup> In 1986, the deaf congregation began meeting separately for worship services and became known as the Willingdon Deaf Church. In 1993, no longer able to receive financial support from the Willingdon Mennonite Brethren Church, the deaf congregation established their own church (called the Deaf Community Christian Church), received status as a charitable organization, and began to rent space for services from their former host church. The first worship service of the Deaf Community Christian Church took place on February 6, 1994. Easter services on April 3rd marked the church's official start. Unger was hired that year on May 1st as the full-time pastor, awaiting his ordination. He works with a leadership team composed almost entirely of deaf individuals.

## **The Lutheran Church in Canada**

In 1984, the Lutheran Church celebrated its 90th year of its ministry to deaf people. At that time the Church served 52 mission fields in 236 cities in the United States, Canada, and abroad.<sup>55</sup> Two examples of the Lutheran Church in Canada are the Cross of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf,

Edmonton, Alta., and the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Vancouver, B.C.

## Cross of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf, Edmonton

Since the early 1930s, the board of missions of the Lutheran Church has ministered to deaf people who live in the province of Alberta. The earliest preachers to serve there were from the United States. One of the first pastors to minister to deaf Lutherans in Canada was the Rev. Robert Cordes, a hearing man from South Dakota, who returned to the U.S. in 1942. From 1942 to 1947, Pastor E.B. Fox (b. May 29, 1914; d. Mar. 19, 1977) served deaf Lutherans in Alberta while he was working as full-time pastor to hearing Lutherans in Calgary and Didsbury. Fox, who was born in Poland and grew up in Edmonton, has been credited as being the first Canadian to bring God's word to deaf people in Western Canada. He preached, taught Bible studies, and served the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper in Wetaskiwin and Calgary (Alta.) and in Regina and Saskatoon (Sask.). Fox continued his ministry to deaf Canadians for the rest of his life, serving at the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Edmonton from 1961 to 1972 and at Hope Lutheran Church in Port Coquitlam, B.C. from 1972 until he died in 1977. During the 25th anniversary celebration of the Cross of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf, held June 21, 1987, the church honoured his memory by establishing the "Pastor E.B. Fox Memorial Library on Deafness," a collection of books, pamphlets, articles, films, and videotapes.<sup>56</sup>

It was not until 1956 that the first full-time resident missionary was called by the Lutheran Church board of missions to serve in the western provinces of Canada. Rev. Robert Albert Bauer (b. Jan. 27, 1930) became an ordained pastor on October 14, 1956 and began to conduct worship services for deaf people in Edmonton's Grace Lutheran Church (a hearing church). Sunday school was held in the Redeemer Lutheran Church. (For several years, Bauer was also responsible for deaf ministries in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.) In the fall of 1959, the Edmonton deaf congregation purchased land from the municipality of Strathcona as a site for their own church building. Plans were drawn up the next winter, and additional land was purchased in the spring of 1960. On October 15, 1961, the church members held a ground-breaking ceremony and on June 17, 1962 laid the cornerstone of the new church. The Cross of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf was dedicated less than four months later (on Oct. 7, 1962). In 1972, this mission of the Lutheran church filed documents with the federal government to become a formal congregation. Finally, in 1978, they joined the Alberta-British Columbia (A.-B.C.) District of the Lutheran Church (within the Missouri Synod, under whose jurisdiction they remained until 1989, when the Lutheran Church-Canada became a reality).

In 1973, the church began a pilot project to provide a summer ranch program for deaf youth. The ranch was first established in Redwater, Alta. Two years later, the project was incorporated (provincially and federally) as a sister corporation to

the church and was named Pax Natura ("at peace with nature"). It moved to Crown land in the Clyde area of Alberta. The objectives of the Pax Natura Society for Rehabilitation of the Deaf (its formal name) are "to establish a rural community for rehabilitation, retraining, social orientation, and communication; to instill a sense of dignity and worth through rehabilitation and self-help; and to aid the deaf in becoming assets to society through a rural sheltered workshop situation."<sup>57</sup> The Pax Natura Society also offers sign language immersion opportunities and workshops in Deaf culture for members of the hearing community. In addition, since 1975 the Society has run the Pax Natura House, a halfway house in Edmonton.

In October 1991, the Society named its scholarship fund the George W. Sutherland Memorial Scholarship to honour one of the province's leading deaf citizens and active church member. Sutherland (b. Dec. 6, 1901; d. May 13, 1991) was born in the North-West Territories town of Fort Chipewyan (now part of Alberta), and attended the Manitoba School for the Deaf (1914-1921). He was a leader in the Cross of Christ Lutheran Church and the Pax Natura Society for Rehabilitation of the Deaf, and served as a consultant for the Alberta Department of Education. He was also an active member of the Canadian Association of the Deaf, the Western Canada Association of the Deaf, the Edmonton Association of the Deaf, and some of the deaf organizations in Winnipeg, Man.

Years of wear and tear eventually began to take its toll on the church building, so the congregation began holding fund drives in the summer of 1982 to raise money for the needed repairs. They established a renovation fund and received a loan of \$40,000 from the A.-B.C. District Church Extension Fund. The original builders of the 1962 church were again employed to complete the renovations, which included insulating walls, repainting and redecorating the interior, and repairing the roof.<sup>58</sup> In 1992, the Cross of Christ Lutheran Church of the Deaf celebrated its 30th anniversary.

There are also small congregations of deaf Lutherans who meet in Regina and Saskatoon (Sask.), but neither group has its own pastor. The Regina church is served by hearing ministers in the local area. Rev. Bauer videotapes his services at Cross of Christ Lutheran Church and sends the tapes to the Saskatoon-Bethlehem Lutheran Church of the Deaf for use in their ministry. In addition, the Lutheran Church has loaned or rented its facilities to other congregations (such as the Christian Church of the Deaf in Calgary, Alta., which began using a Lutheran-church-owned building on 46th Avenue S.W. in 1962).

## Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf, Vancouver

Fortunately for Vancouver's Deaf community, two deaf Scots, Alexander Mutter Brodie (b. Dec. 31, 1903; d. Sept. 12, 1976) and William Stevenson Reid (b. Mar. 26, 1892; d. July 9, 1977), left their native land to immigrate to Canada. The two later became friends and were instrumental in the 1929 founding what is now the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf. Reid became deaf at the age of 16 from spinal meningitis. He quit school after his illness and was trained as a gardener, but in



**Alexander M. Brodie in late 1920s**

*Courtesy of Elizabeth May (née Brodie) Stoner (Vancouver, B.C.)*

November 1918 he immigrated to Canada to work with his hearing uncle in a butcher shop in Vancouver. It was at this shop (where he worked for the next 50 years as a ham curer) that Reid met Brodie and introduced him to the British two-handed manual alphabet and signs, and to the needs of the Deaf community. In 1922, Reid married a hearing woman, Sarah Smith, who had travelled from Scotland to British Columbia to become his bride. (The two had become engaged before Reid left Scotland.) The Reids are considered one of the two founding families of the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf in Vancouver (Mr. and Mrs. Brodie are the other founders). A detailed description of Alexander Brodie's life can be found in Chapter 7: ORGANIZATIONS.

Precipitating the formation of the Trinity Lutheran Church was a chance meeting between Reid and the Rev. Victor L. Meyer, pastor of Vancouver's Bethlehem Lutheran Church. After discussing the need for such a church with the hearing pastor, Reid brought the idea back to Brodie and a few other deaf people. Brodie and his deaf wife, the former Laura Gertrude Johnston (b. Aug. 6, 1908; d. Nov. 13, 1978), travelled to Seattle, Wash. to ask a hearing pastor (the Rev. George W. Gaertner of Seattle's Our Redeemer Lutheran Church) to visit Vancouver and conduct a worship service for the Deaf community. Rev. Gaertner accepted the invitation and held the first service for deaf Lutheran worshippers on November 3, 1929 at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Twenty-six deaf people attended the service, the first of many held at that site over the next 33 years.<sup>59</sup>



**William S. Reid as a young adult**

*Courtesy of Pearl (née Reid) Rothwell (Richmond, B.C.)*

Hearing pastors at the Seattle church continued to come to Vancouver on a monthly basis to conduct services for deaf Vancouverites. Following Rev. Gaertner (1929-1931) was Rev. Walter A. Westermann (1931-1941), who in turn was followed by Rev. Arnold T. Jonas (1942-1948), Rev. Walter J. Hintz (1949), and Rev. John A. Beyer (1949-1962). It was in 1957, while Beyer (b. circa 1895; d. Dec. 26, 1975) was serving the Vancouver community, that the deaf members organized themselves into the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf. Attendance grew, and in 1961 Martin A. Hewitt, a local hearing man, began to assist Beyer as a vicar (1961-1962). Because Hewitt lived and worked in Vancouver, it now became possible to hold services on a weekly basis. In addition, monthly services began in the British Columbia cities of Victoria, Surrey, and Richmond.

By 1962, the congregation was ready for a full-time minister. Wayne Charles Bottlinger (b. Dec. 19, 1933), a native of Hamilton, Tex., was the hearing man chosen for the job (1962-1973). He was trained at Concordia Lutheran Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. (B.A., 1954; diploma in theology, 1957). Prior to coming to Vancouver, Bottlinger was field pastor (1957-1962) for Lutheran churches for the deaf in the Memphis, Tenn. area. Beginning in 1966, he was assisted by Alex Brodie as lay assistant, the first time a deaf person had direct responsibility for the services. Soon the congregation began raising funds to erect its own church on School Avenue in Vancouver; the building was dedicated on September 10, 1967.





**Vancouver deaf worshippers in the 1930s**

*Courtesy of Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf (Vancouver, B.C.)*

In 1974, the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf held a 45th anniversary celebration. The worship leader at this event was Frederick Paul Gehrs (b. Feb. 21, 1939), a hearing pastor who began working at the church in 1973. (This was not Gehrs' first deaf congregation, however. Following his training at Concordia Theological Seminary [B.Th., 1964] in Springfield, Ill., he immigrated to Canada and settled in Winnipeg, Man., where he was pastor/chaplain of the now-defunct Jesus Deaf Church Lutheran [1964-1973], a small deaf congregation.) Attending the Trinity Lutheran Church's 45th anniversary event were most of its original pastors, including the Reverends Jonas, Beyer, Bottlinger, and Hewitt. Reid, his wife, and Mrs. Brodie were honoured as founding families (Alex Brodie was unable to attend). Like many of the other churches for deaf Canadians, the Trinity Lutheran Church has its Dorcas Society for the women members; they provided a luncheon at the 45th anniversary celebration.

Gehrs resigned in 1985, when the subsidy from the Alberta-British Columbia District of the Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) ceased. Bottlinger, who was then working as co-ordinator (1972-1980 and 1985-1989)/departmental head (1980-1985) of programs for the adult deaf at the main campus of the Vancouver Community College, returned to serve as pastor (without pay until he was formally re-installed in 1989). Bottlinger's deaf wife, the former Bernice Theresa Shedeck (b. July 10, 1930), had been a student at the Oklahoma School for the Deaf in Sulphur (1937-1950) and Gallaudet College (1951-1952).

In 1989, the church building on School Avenue in Vancouver was sold; services have since been held at Killarney Park Lutheran Church, a hearing church located at

East 49th Avenue and Lancaster (the same site where the Trinity Lutheran Church had its services from 1962 to 1967). On September 24, 1994, the Trinity Lutheran Church for the Deaf celebrated its 65th year of worship in British Columbia. It was the same year that the Lutheran Deaf Ministry in North America celebrated its 100th anniversary.

## The Catholic Church and the Deaf Community

### Deaf Nuns

Marguerite (Margaret) Hanley (b. Sept. 19, 1842; d. Mar. 16, 1860) was the first deaf Canadian woman to become a nun when she took her vows in 1860. Born in Kingston, Ont., Hanley lost her hearing at the age of five from typhoid fever. When she was almost 10 years old, she was sent to the New York Institution for the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb (1852-1854). Her stay there must not have been very successful. After her return, Hanley's father, a hotel keeper, entrusted his motherless child to the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor, who ran a boarding school for hearing girls in the little town of Longue-Pointe, Québec.<sup>60</sup> He wanted to "keep her out of harm's way as he knew she could not be taught."<sup>61</sup> Sister Marie de Bon Secours, the former Albine Gadbois (b. 1830; d. Oct. 31, 1874), proved Hanley's father to be wrong. She successfully taught Margaret and another deaf girl, Georgiana Lavellée, how to read, write, and pray. This tiny class — a young hearing nun and her two deaf pupils meeting in a room



in the school's attic — became the nucleus of Québec's Catholic school for deaf girls. Consecrating herself to God's work, Hanley obtained permission from Bishop Ignace Bourget to enter the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor as a novice on August 24, 1858. Desperately ill, she took her vows under the name of Sister Marguerite du Sacre-Coeur on February 4, 1860, while confined to her deathbed at the Hospice Saint Joseph in Montréal. Five weeks later, on March 16, 1860, she died from tuberculosis at the age of 17 years, 5 months, and 25 days.<sup>62</sup>

The second deaf Canadian nun was Marie Olive Mondor (b. June 20, 1842; d. Sept. 26, 1933). She was born profoundly deaf to hearing parents in Saint-Thomas de Joliette, Québec. In 1852, when Mondor was 10 years old, her mother learned that two Sisters of Providence (Sisters Marie de Bon Secours and Marie de l'Incarnation) had arrived in town to study more sign language. She went to them for advice concerning an education for her daughter and son, Michel, who was also deaf. On November 4th of that year, Mondor became a pupil of Sister Marie de Bon Secours, who was already teaching two other deaf girls — Marguerite Hanley and Georgiana Lavellée — in Longue-Pointe.

Mondor developed an interest in religious life sometime



**Sister Côme de la Providence, Canada's second deaf nun**

*Courtesy of Archives Providence, Providence Mother House (Montréal, Québec)*

after the Catholic school for deaf girls was moved in 1858 to the Hospice St. Joseph (on Mignonne Street near the Providence Asile) in Montréal. She entered the Congregation of the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor as a novice on September 22, 1860. Two years later, on November 19, 1862, she took her vows under the name of Sister Côme de la Providence. When the new Institution Catholique des Sourdes-Muettes opened on St. Denis Street in Montréal in 1864, Mondor moved there and spent the rest of her life living and working in the Institution. She had various responsibilities including "teaching the aged, ignorant deaf-mutes, the sacristy, the weaving and knitting departments, dressmaker, and charge of linens."<sup>63</sup> A model nun, she inspired several deaf girls to follow her religious example and become members of a new religious community of deaf nuns, known as the Congregation of the Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows (Les Petites Soeurs de Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs).<sup>64</sup> A fractured hip from a severe fall in 1930 confined Mondor to bed for the rest of her life. Blind and comatose for the last few days of her life, she died at the Institution on September 26, 1933.

Not much is known about Elise Routhier (Sister Priscille) (b. Apr. 11, 1850; d. Oct. 21, 1933), the third deaf nun to join the Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Poor. She was born deaf in the town of Saint-Thomas de Joliette. Later, she studied religion at the Gadbois family home for two years before entering the novitiate on November 19, 1878. A few months later, on June 29, 1879, she took the Holy Habit and entered the profession on August 17, 1880. She remained at the Institution for the rest of her life, working, teaching catechism to other deaf workers, and instructing groups of young hearing Sisters in sign language. She became blind seven years before her death, but continued to feel her way through the corridors of the Institution. She died there in 1933, 25 days after the death of Sister Côme de la Providence.

## **Congrégation des Petites Soeurs de Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs (The Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows)**

A religious community of deaf nuns has been in existence in Montréal for a little more than a century. This group, first known as the Congrégation des Petites Soeurs de Notre-Dame des Sept Douleurs (Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows), is unique for being the only one of its kind in North America.<sup>65</sup> The community was the inspiration of the Rev. Canon François Xavier Trépanier of Montréal, who served as the first chaplain of the Institution Catholique des Sourdes-Muettes (Catholic Institution for Deaf and Dumb Females) from 1871 to 1906. While on a trip to Europe, Father Trépanier met with two French congregations of deaf nuns — one founded by the Daughters of Wisdom at Larnay and the other by the Sisters of Calvary at Bourg-la-Reine. Thus began his idea of founding a similar community of deaf Sisters in Canada.

After his return to Montréal, Father Trépanier explained his plan to Sister Philippe de Jésus, the Superior at the Catholic

girls' school. She was in favour of the idea and contacted the Sisters at Larnay for advice, who provided as much information as they could, including copies of their order's rules and constitution. Sister Philippe de Jésus then prepared a written proposal for the establishment of a religious congregation of deaf Sisters. In her request, she noted that several of the deaf females at the school had expressed an interest in such a religious vocation. On November 6, 1885, she sent her proposal to Mother Amable, Superior General of the Institute of Sisters of Providence. The request was turned down because Mother Amable and her council did not have the authority to establish such a community.

A second request was made on October 15, 1886, addressed to the delegates of the general chapter meeting being held at the Mother House of the Sisters of Providence. This time the request reached the right people, and permission was granted. The founding of the Congregation of the Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows took place at the Institution Catholique des Sourdes-Muettes on April 1, 1887 (the word "Little" was later dropped from the name). Sister Aimé de la Providence became the director. Of the first nine deaf postulants admitted, six took the Holy Habit on the 9th of April 1888, and five — one English-Canadian and four French-Canadians — took their final vows on September 22, 1890 and became the founding Sisters of the Congregation.<sup>66</sup> For many years, the deaf Sisters were required to renew their vows annually, unlike their hearing counterparts, whose final vows were taken once for a lifetime. It was not until 1985 that the deaf nuns were finally allowed to take perpetual vows.<sup>67</sup>

Since the founding of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows in 1887, 149 deaf girls have entered the community. Of these, 87 remained to take their vows as nuns.



**The first nine deaf postulants admitted in April 1887**

*Courtesy of Sister Elizabeth Kass (Edmonton, Alta.)*

The names of the postulants are identified by numbers imprinted on their right shoulders as follows (the religious names of the first five professed Sisters in the Congregation of the Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows are in parentheses): 1. Catherine Beston (Sister Marie de Bonsecours); 2. Elizabeth Baxter; 3. Clara Aumond; 4. Rosalie Geoffroy (Sister François-Xavier); 5. Clara Perron; 6. Alexina Boivin (Sister François-de-Sales); 7. Emilie [Emélie] Montpellier (Sister Marie-Ignace); 8. Ellie Cronin; and 9. Eugénie Lemire (Sister Marie-Victor).

The majority have been French-Canadians and former pupils of the Institution; a few also came from the United States. Although they no longer reside in the Institution, which was taken over by the Québec provincial government and closed in 1975, those Sisters who are physically able continue to work with the Deaf community in various ways today. They now live in a building on rue Grenet.

The growth of the order appears to have been directly tied to its proximity to the residential school. Most novitiates had been students there, inspired by the example of the deaf nuns who assisted in their education. But after the school closed and the deaf girls were educated elsewhere, the influence of these deaf nuns began to wane. It has become more difficult to get new recruits to enter the order, and there have been no new members added since 1965.<sup>68</sup> It appears the future of the Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows is in jeopardy.

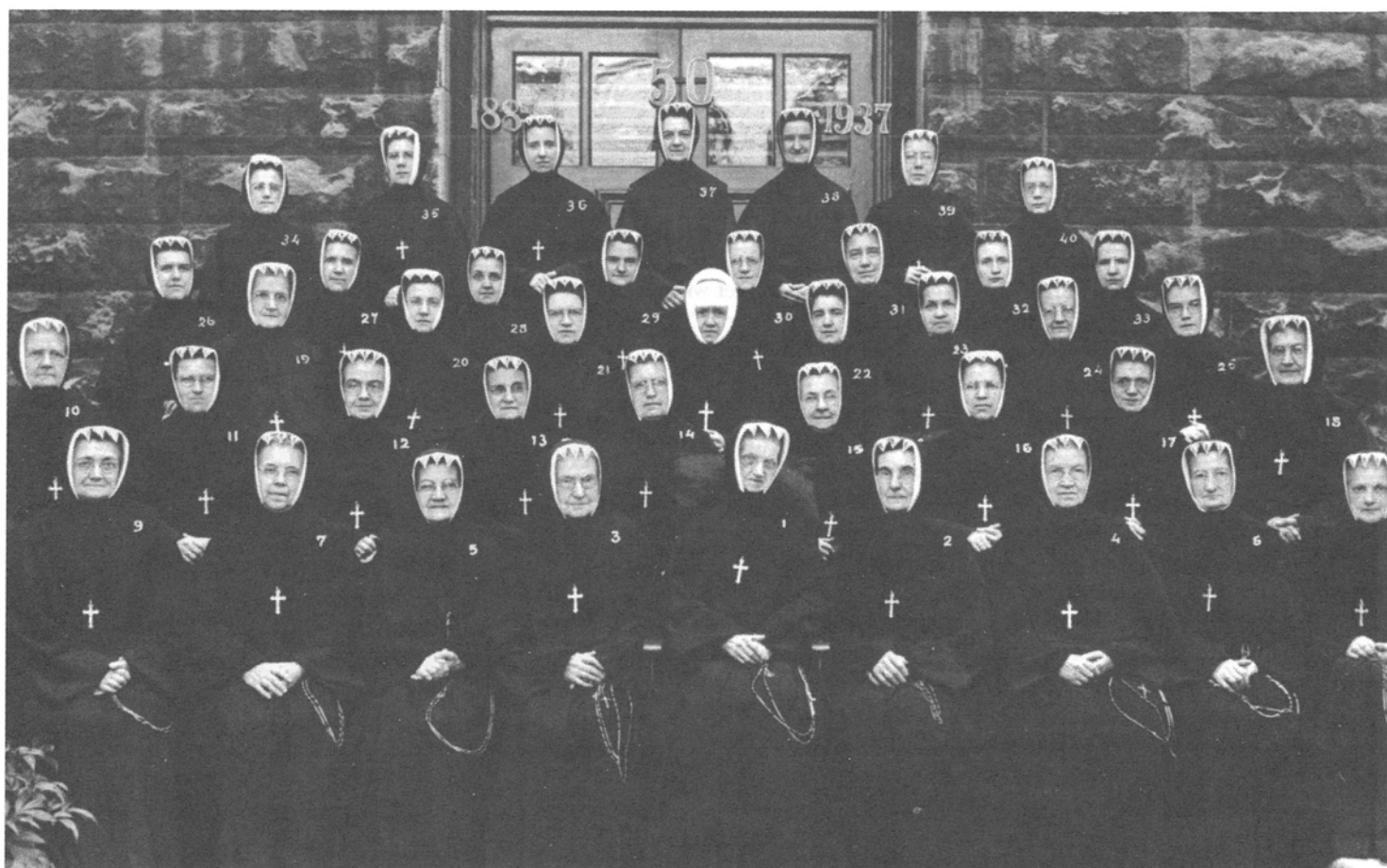
## A Deaf Canadian Nun in the United States

Not all of the deaf nuns from Canada joined the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows, however. At least one is known to have entered an order in the United States. Deaf since birth, Adeline MacLean (b. Feb. 14, 1894; d. Nov. 27, 1954) was raised in McLeanville, N.S., and graduated from the School for the Deaf in Halifax, N.S. (1903-1913). (Her well-known deaf sister, Mary Ann [b. Jan. 22, 1884; d. Sept. 26, 1960], had also attended this school [1893-1902] and later worked as principal's clerk [1902-1931] and teacher [1931-1954]). In 1929, Sister Adeline took her final vows with



**Sister Adeline**

*The Deaf Herald/Eastern Canada Association of the Deaf*



### 50th anniversary of the Congregation of Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows, 1887-1937

*Courtesy of Sister Elizabeth Kass (Edmonton, Alta.)*

Identified by numbers imprinted on their left shoulders, from left to right.

**FIRST ROW:** 9. Sister Alphonse-Marie (Zélia Therrien); 7. Sister Emmanuel (Margaret Lefoley); 5. Sister Marie-Philomène (Adèle Aubé); 3. Sister Marie-Victor (Eugénie Lemire); 1. Sister François de Sales (Alexina Boivin); 2. Sister Marie-Ignace (Emilie Montpellier); 4. Sister Marie du Bon Conseil (Rosalie Larochelle); 6. Sister Mary Theresa (Ouida Erd); Sister Marie du Rosaire (Adèle Fournier).

**SECOND ROW:** 10. Sister Marie de l'Espérance (Claudia Pauzé); 11. Sister Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jésus (Marie-Reine Cloutier); 12. Sister Marguerite-Marie (Diana Ouellette); 13. Sister Marie-des-Sept-Douleurs (Eva Boulanger); 14. Sister Marie-Albert (Louisa Holmes); 15. Sister Louis-Joseph (Lydia Perrier); 16. Sister Marie-Rose (Adélina Bouchard); 17. Sister Marie de Lourdes (Ida Hughes); 18. Sister Marie-Damase (Odélide Sabourin).

**THIRD ROW:** 19. Sister Thomas de Jésus (Katherine Molloy); 20. Sister Marie-du-Sacré-Cœur (Stéphanie Lessard); 21. Sister Jeanne d'Arc (Annie Campbell); Sister Charles-Alexandre [Director - Sister of Providence — hearing]; 22. Sister Marie-Bernadette (Dora Moss); 23. Sister Marie-Amable (Delphine Bouchard); 24. Sister Marie du Perpétuel Secours (Josephine Scannell); 25. Sister Marie-Siméon (Régina LaSalle).

**FOURTH ROW:** 26. Sister Joseph de la Providence (M.-Marguerite Laplante); 27. Sister Marie de Bonsecours (Béatrice Léger); 28. Sister Marie-Gertrude (Thérèse Tremblay); 29. Sister Marie-Geneviève (Victorine Bourassa); 30. Sister Marie-Elisabeth (Eva Perron); 31. Sister Marie-Rita (Genevieve Smith); 32. Sister Marie-Mectilde (Clara Labelle); 33. Sister Marie de l'Assomption (Carmen Proulx).

**FIFTH ROW:** 34. Sister Charles de Jésus (Fleurette Tull); 35. Sister Marie-Immaculée (Marie-Blanche Gagnon); 36. Sister Marie du Carmel (Juliette Pépin); 37. Jeanne Beauvais (novice - later Sister Marie des Victoires); 38. Marie Bourassa (novice - later Sister Marie Dolorès); 39. Sister Thérèse-Marie (Blanche Bélanger); 40. Cécile Ayotte (novice - later Sister Marie des Anges).

the Sisters of Charity of Mount St. Joseph in Clinton, Ind. She spent many years at the Glockner Penrose Hospital in Colorado Springs, Colo., where she used her artistic skills to paint and hand-letter birth certificates, scrolls, and prayers for patients and other Sisters at the hospital. She died at a convent in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1954.

## Deaf Brothers and the Oblats de Saint-Viateur

As early as 1896, efforts were being made to permit deaf men to join the order called Clercs (Clerics [clergymen]) de Saint-Viateur (CSV), a religious congregation of fathers and

brothers. The CSV had been founded by Father Louis-Marie Querbes in Vourles (near Lyon), France in 1831, and came to Canada — primarily to the area of L'Industrie (now Joliette), Québec — in 1847. Deaf men, however, were not eligible for admission at that time, according to Article XXIV of the CSV Statutes. Support for the inclusion of deaf brothers began to grow after the CSV observed the successful establishment in April 1887 of the Little Sisters of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows at the Institution Catholique des Sourdes-Muettes in Montréal. Father Alfred Bélanger, director (1863-1884 and 1895-1900) of Montréal's Institution Catholique des Sourdes-Muets (Catholic Institution for Deaf and Dumb Males) and a member of the CSV order, contacted Monseigneur Édouard-Charles Fabre



(then Archbishop of Montréal) for permission to create a separate order for deaf males under the auspices of the CSV. The idea was approved by Fabre, as well as by Father Pascal Drogue-Lajoie, the Superior General of Montréal.

However, plans for the new order had to be shelved when a fire destroyed the Institution's workshop building in 1897 and placed the school under financial strain. Sixteen years later, in 1913, Father Emile Foucher, CSV, who had assumed directorship of the religious province of Montréal, made a second attempt to create an order for deaf men, but he also met with no success. No further action was taken until October 1921, when Father Michel Cadieux, director of the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets (1900-1936) and a member of the CSV order, repeated the proposal one more time. He contacted Father Joseph Charlebois, who suggested naming the order the "Brothers of Saint François-de-Sales" in honour of a 17th-century hearing bishop who had taught and given the sacraments to his deaf-mute servant. After several months of bureaucratic delay within the Church hierarchy, the request was approved. On September 22, 1923, a dossier was sent to Cardinal Laurenti at the Vatican in Rome. He, too, gave his seal of approval, provided that the new brotherhood be set up as an association under the CSV rather than as an order. By February 27, 1927, the new group was given a name — the Oblats (Oblates [Lay Brothers]) de Saint-Viateur.

## Oblats de Saint-Viateur

The association known as the Oblats de Saint-Viateur (OSV) was officially formed on the evening of May 4, 1927. During the ceremony, the chapel of the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets was filled with students, teachers, and townsfolk who had braved heavy rain and wind to attend the unique event. Monseigneur Georges Gauthier, Archbishop of Montréal, opened the ceremony by reading the Canonical Decree by which the first association of deaf-mute oblates in the world was established. The reading was translated orally by Brother Emery Noiseux and into signs by Brother Herménégilde Gaudet. The first director and teacher of the novices was Father Lucien Pagé (1927-1934).

Four deaf French Canadians were initiated into this religious organization in 1927. Arthur Clément of Valleyfield, Québec (b. July 8, 1906; d. Apr. 11, 1989), a graduate of the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets (1917-1926), took his first vows in 1929 and his final vows in 1955. While an Oblate, he worked as a dressmaker, cared for the deaf-blind students, and helped maintain the dormitories, workshops, and classrooms. Lucien Valiquette of Montréal (b. Mar. 10, 1907) was also a graduate of the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets (1921-1926). He took his vows in 1929 and worked as a dressmaker, room inspector, printer, bookbinder, carpenter, and nurse. He still lives at the Clercs de Saint-Viateur. Adolphe Collette of Varennes, Québec (b. Sept. 7, 1902; d. Apr. 15, 1983), was a graduate of the oral program at the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets (1912-1922). After taking his vows, he served as a teacher in the oral classes, typographer, and classroom supervisor. He was buried in the cemetery belonging to



**First four deaf novices, Oblats de Saint-Viateur (1927)**

*L'Ami des Sourds-Muets/Gallaudet University Archives*

**Left to right:** Lucien Valiquette, Antoine Picard, Adolphe Collette, Arthur Clément

the CSV in Rigaud, Québec. The last of the four original Oblates, Antoine Picard (b. Dec. 7, 1908; d. Unknown), a graduate of the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets (1919-1927), left the clergy in June of 1936 without taking his vows.

Others followed in the footsteps of the original four. Among the deaf French Canadians from the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets who joined the OSV are Marcel Gagnon (b. Oct. 10, 1911; d. Mar. 7, 1992), who entered in 1930; Clermont Champagne (b. Feb. 21, 1938), who joined in 1960; and Réginald Loignon (b. Mar. 13, 1942), the last French Canadian to join the order in 1963. Two deaf anglophone Canadians also became Oblates. Camille Carrière (b. Aug. 20, 1912), the first English Canadian to enter in 1932, was a graduate of the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville (1918-1931). As a member of the OSV, he taught printing to the students at the school. The next deaf anglophone to enter was John Fitzpatrick (b. Sept. 12, 1921) of St. John's, Nfld., a graduate of the School for the Deaf in Halifax, N.S. (1931-1941). He joined in 1941.

Deaf Americans also travelled to Canada to become Oblates. John Doyle (b. June 22, 1912; d. Jan. 7, 1995), who attended public schools in Chicago, Ill. (1915-1931), was the first to join in 1933. The second American, Joseph Max Wasch (b. Mar. 17, 1912; d. Mar. 12, 1995), was admitted in 1935. He was a graduate of Le Couteulx St. Mary's Institution for the Improved Instruction for the Deaf (now St. Mary's School for



the Deaf) in Buffalo, N.Y. (1919-1935). Raphaël Hornung (b. June 17, 1921), who attended the St. John's Institute for Deaf-Mutes in Milwaukee, Wisc. (1927-1935 and 1936-1937) and St. Rita School for the Deaf in Cincinnati, Ohio (1939-1944), entered in 1944. William Robidoux (b. Feb. 4, 1924; d. Aug. 2, 1990), who had attended the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets for three years (1931-1934), entered the OSV in 1946. And Ronald Bélisle (b. Aug. 30, 1925; d. May 25, 1989), the last American to become an Oblate, joined in 1954.<sup>69</sup>

The deaf brothers, like the deaf nuns, were not on an equal status with their hearing peers. Prior to 1955, the Oblates were permitted to take only first vows. In 1955, the regulations were changed to permit them to take their final vows, provided 10 years had passed since the taking of the first vows. Though not quite equal in official status with the CSV, the Oblates lived with them within the walls of the Institution Catholique des Sourds-Muets and performed a variety of duties. At one time or another, many worked in the laundry and cafeteria, served as dorm and hall supervisors, taught classes or worked with deaf-blind students, and functioned in such roles as dressmaker, bookbinder, carpenter, janitor, groundskeeper, nurse, and printer. In October 1983, Father Jacques Berthelet, Provincial Superior of Montréal, petitioned the Vatican to allow the Oblats de Saint-Viateur to join the Order of Clercs de Saint-Viateur. By February 11, 1984, the Oblates were finally recognized and officially initiated as true brothers of CSV, and the OSV ceased to exist as a separate entity.

## International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA)

The International Catholic Deaf Association came into existence in July 1949. This organization was founded in Toronto through the combined efforts of its predecessors, the Saint Francis de Sales Deaf Society and the Ontario Catholic Deaf Association.

The beginnings of this association date back to 1917. John Edward Crough (b. Dec. 27, 1880; d. Oct. 14, 1967) and Edward Cuddy (b. Jan. 29, 1889; d. Feb. 13, 1920), former students at the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb in Belleville (1888-1897 and 1901-1907 respectively), wanted to do something to provide religious services for Ontario's Catholic deaf people.<sup>70</sup> Crough had a more personal concern as well — he was planning on marrying a non-Catholic deaf woman. She had agreed to convert but could not find anyone to provide her with Catholic religious instruction in sign language. While searching for a solution to this problem, he was informed of a hearing nun at Loretto Abbey who might be able to help. Mother Mary Columbière (b. Sept. 12, 1857; d. May 14, 1937) (known as Catherine ["Kate"] H. White prior to her entrance on June 13, 1890 into the Order called the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary) had taught several years at a Catholic school in her hometown of Trenton, Ont. and two years at the school for deaf students in Belleville, Ont. (1885-1887). Crough urged Mother Columbière to contact the Archbishop, Rev. Neil McNeil, on behalf of the 25 or so deaf Catholics in Toronto (and his bride-to-be). The project to estab-

lish religious services for them quickly won the support of Archbishop McNeil, who is reported to have said to Mother Columbière: "For a long time I have been worried about that portion of my flock, but who could understand them and be able to take charge of them, I did not know. Now I give my blessing to the work, and ask you to take care of the Catholic deaf of Toronto."<sup>71</sup>

The social and religious activities of the Toronto Catholic Deaf Association began on November 18, 1917 in a room at Loretto College. The first elected officers (all deaf) were John Edward Crough, organizer; Edward Cuddy, president; Eugene McCarthy, vice-president; Charles Dorschner, secretary; and James Kelly, treasurer. Meetings were held from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. every Sunday. Priests from St. Augustine's Seminary on Kingston Road were given special permission to leave the Seminary on Sunday afternoons so they could meet the deaf Catholics and learn about their needs and concerns firsthand. Mother Columbière introduced the first annual mission in 1919, where, for three days each year, invited clergymen delivered sermons and conducted services. However, no sign language interpreters were provided at the first few missions until a Mrs. Ellis Murphy, the hearing daughter of deaf parents, began to assume interpreting responsibilities for the delegates. Later, to meet the urgent and obvious need for interpreters and for more priests who could sign directly with their congregation, a sign language class was set up at St. Augustine's Seminary, and many theological students enrolled in this optional course. (It was not until 1966 that official Vatican permission for the celebration of Mass in sign language was granted by Pope Paul VI. This occurred at the urging of bishops after the Ecumenical Council of the Vatican had allowed Mass to be celebrated in the language of the congregation rather than in Latin.)

One of the congregation's members, Frank Radbone, a converted deaf Catholic, noticed that nearly every Catholic church was named after a saint. He felt that the name of the Toronto Catholic Deaf Association should conform to this tradition. After some research, Mother Columbière presented the Association with the name of Saint Francis de Sales (b. 1567; d. 1622), 17th-century bishop of Geneva, Switzerland, who once hired a deaf youth as his housekeeper. On October 7, 1923, the Toronto Catholic Deaf Association officially changed its name to the Saint Francis de Sales Deaf Society. Its regular business meetings, weekly Sunday services, and annual missions were held at Loretto Abbey College on Brunswick Avenue in Toronto until 1957, when the Society moved. Various priests, students from St. Augustine's Seminary, and volunteers from the Jesuit and Redemptorist Orders were active in supporting the deaf parishioners' cause. Following the death of Mother Columbière in 1937, Rev. Basil Ellard became official chaplain ("spiritual director") for the Catholic deaf people in the Diocese of Toronto. A hearing man skilled in sign language, Ellard was no stranger to the Catholic Deaf community, having received his religious training at St. Augustine's Seminary.

Endorsed by the Saint Francis de Sales Deaf Society, a separate organization known as the Ontario Catholic Deaf Association was formed in 1946 to meet the spiritual needs of

deaf people outside the city of Toronto. This group soon began printing a provincial newsletter called *The Brunswick Bulletin*, named after the street where Loretto Abbey College was located. The *Bulletin's* editor was Marcel Auguste Warnier (b. Aug. 29, 1902; d. Mar. 19, 1982), a deaf man born in Namur, Belgium who emigrated from his native country to New York City in August 1920. Warnier had been educated at the Catholic deaf school in Brussels and at a Parisian college in France, where he studied chemistry for two years. After a short stay in the United States, he and his parents moved to Canada — first to Montréal, then to Winnipeg where he learned to read and write English at the Manitoba School for the Deaf. He eventually settled in Willowdale, Ont. *The Brunswick Bulletin*, which Warnier edited (assisted by his deaf wife, Nancy [née Sellers]), was warmly received by Deaf communities throughout Ontario; similar enthusiasm was expressed by deaf people from American border cities, especially Detroit, Mich. and Buffalo, N.Y.

As early as 1948, Warnier conceived the idea of an International Catholic Deaf Congress. This idea led the executive committee of the Ontario Catholic Deaf Association to call a special meeting of the general membership. The members selected the city of Toronto as the site for the first Congress, and Warnier was elected convention chairman. The purpose of the congress was “to form a central clearing house where ideas may be exchanged, to discuss common problems pertaining to our faith, to assist missionaries among the Catholic deaf in various localities, and to aid worthy Catholics among the deaf and the hard of hearing.”<sup>72</sup> Some people also thought that the Congress would be a good opportunity to establish an international Catholic Deaf organization. This idea was brought up during the special meeting of the general membership as well. Warnier's brother-in-law, Ernest Wilfred Maitre (b. July 22, 1915), then a resident of Windsor, Ont. and an alumnus of the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville (1923-1933), was a strong supporter of this motion, which was approved by a margin of three votes.

The first International Catholic Deaf Congress, an historic, four-day event, took place in the Crystal Ballroom of Toronto's King Edward Hotel on July 7-10, 1949. Approximately 100 deaf people, mostly from Canada and the U.S., attended. Three Canadian hearing priests (the Reverends P. Malone, James Carrigan, and John Moss), and eight American hearing priests (the Reverends G.B. Hauser, John Barron Gallagher, Everett McPhillips, Thomas Cribbin, Godfrey Reilly, John J. Watson, Raymond Kalter, and Stephen Landherr) also came to the Congress. This small but enthusiastic group founded the International Catholic Deaf Association (ICDA), with Warnier as its first deaf president (1949-1955). The other elected officers (all deaf) were James J. Coughlin of Buffalo, N.Y. as 1st vice-president; Mary Garland of Arlington, Mass. as 2nd vice-president; Frank Meyette of Peterborough, Ont. as 3rd vice-president; Nicholas S. Wojcik of Kitchener, Ont. as secretary-treasurer, and Mary Pontius of Buffalo as financial secretary. William H. McGovern of Toronto became the Canadian treasurer, while Leonard Coughlin of Buffalo, N.Y. became the American treasurer. Following the new association's election of

officers, Howard Joshua Lloyd, a deaf representative of the Ontario Association of the Deaf, jokingly presented Warnier with “a baby bottle full of milk as an emblem of [the group's] infancy.”<sup>73</sup> The Saint Francis de Sales Deaf Society was awarded the ICDA's chapter certificate no. 1.

The Ontario Catholic Deaf Association gradually faded from existence as the International Catholic Deaf Association expanded rapidly across North America (it is ironic that this organization, formed in Canada, grew most rapidly in the U.S.). The organization began its newspaper, *The ICDA News*, in 1952 to help the various chapters keep informed about each other's activities (the name was changed to *The Deaf Catholic* in 1969). Between 1949 and 1960, there were 59 ICDA chapters formed in the United States, two in the United Kingdom (one each in London, England and Glasgow, Scotland), and five in Canada (all in Ontario).<sup>74</sup> In 1993, there were 16 Canadian chapters (not all are active, however), about 106 chapters in the U.S., and seven or eight chapters outside of North America.<sup>75</sup> The first ICDA retreat held in Canada took place in Ontario in 1974. Students from the provincial schools and St. Mary's School for the Deaf in Buffalo attended. The first Canadian-based Cursillo (“little course”) for Catholic deaf priests and laypeople met in Halifax, N.S., October 27-31, 1988. More than 50 people attended. The ICDA banner was created by two deaf Canadians, Mr. and Mrs. André J.H. Bourget of North Bay, Ont. (Bourget was ordained Canada's first born-deaf permanent deacon in 1984 — see “Noted Deaf Individuals from Canada's Religious Communities” later in this chapter.)

Today, the home office for the Canadian Section is in Canada's capital city of Ottawa, Ont., at 169 Sunnyside Avenue. The Toronto chapter is already making preparations to host the ICDA's 50th convention in July, 1999.

## Judaism and Deaf Canadians

There are few services specifically for deaf Jewish people across Canada. To date, there are no synagogues established by deaf people, with services led by deaf rabbis or hearing rabbis who can sign. In a few cases, religious leaders from the United States (such as Rabbi Elyse Goldstein from New York City) have come to Canada to conduct services in sign language. Other hearing congregations have sign language interpreters available for services on High Holy days. Not much information was available from the Canadian Jewish Deaf community, so there may be more congregations serving Jewish deaf people than are mentioned below.

## Montreal Hebrew Deaf-Mute Society

Like other religious groups, the early organizations for the Jewish Deaf community were both social and religious in nature. For example, as early as 1922, Jewish deaf people residing in Montréal, Québec, gathered under the auspices of their own organization known as the Montreal Hebrew Deaf-Mute Society. The word “mute” was removed from its title when

incorporation status was granted a year later. The original aim of the society was “to further the friendship amongst the Jewish deaf-mutes and to keep them adherent to the Jewish faith.”<sup>76</sup> The first officers elected for the 1922-1923 term were Joseph Schwartzman (president), David Tatavsky (vice-president), and Alexander Goldstein (secretary). The treasurer’s position was intentionally left vacant at that time. Weekly meetings and events such as birthday parties, lectures, stories, and receptions were held at members’ homes on a rotating basis. The members also made contributions to the Hebrew orphans at the Montefiore Orphan’s Home. The Montreal Hebrew Deaf Society apparently became inactive after mid-1925, following the resignation of its founding president, Joseph Schwartzman, who moved to New York City.

## The Jewish Deaf Community of Toronto, Ont.

One of the earliest leaders of Toronto’s Jewish Deaf community was Joseph Nathan Rosnick (b. Dec. 12, 1901; d. Sept. 13, 1981). Rosnick was born in Oroshka, Ukraine. He and his family came to Canada when he was 11. His hearing father was a Talmud scholar and taught his son to be proud of his Jewish heritage. Rosnick was fluent in Yiddish, having learned the language from his father before he became deaf at the age of nine from scarlet fever. He could read and write both Russian and Hebrew, but he did not know English or sign language. He first learned to sign from his bride-to-be, Lena English (b. Dec. 25, 1900; d. May 8, 1978), who had immigrated to Canada from Ludov, Poland as a very young child.<sup>77</sup> She had attended the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville (1909-1917), and later helped her husband learn written English. (One of Rosnick’s English notebooks indicate that, to learn the language, he first translated sentences from Russian to Hebrew and then from Hebrew to English.) The Rosnicks were married by a Rabbi Lovey on June 3, 1923 in the Sons of England Congregational Church in Toronto, and were a popular couple in the Toronto Deaf community for many years. Their hearing sons (Harold and Bert) remember the house being filled with other deaf Torontonians, who would gather both to socialize and to work on community projects. According to Harold, “Mother knitted hundreds of pairs of socks for the soldiers during the Second World War, and I can remember saving bacon fat in tins and then giving it to the government to use in making munitions. She taught lipreading sometimes, and I remember my father working closely with Conn Smythe to raise money for the Deaf centre [what later became known as the “Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf”]. He was the first to move in when the centre opened in early 1979.”<sup>78</sup> Lena and Joe Rosnick are buried in Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park (a Jewish cemetery in Toronto).

In addition to being an active member of several deaf organizations (including the Canadian Association of the Deaf, the Toronto Association of the Deaf, and the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf — Toronto Division No. 98), Rosnick (a former tailor) operated an interior decorating business (Domus Studio) at 483 Eglinton Avenue West. The company, which specialized in “venetian blinds, drapery, period furniture, and high



**Joseph Nathan Rosnick**

*Courtesy of Harold and Bert Rosnick (Toronto and Hamilton, Ont.)*

class furniture repairing,” opened in 1949.<sup>79</sup> In the 1930s and 1940s, Rosnick encouraged local deaf Jews to gather together for social events, and deaf people from Montréal, Ottawa, and Winnipeg would travel to Toronto to take part in some of these activities as well. (These gatherings were suspended during the Second World War, and the group remained semi-inactive until the late 1970s.) Rosnick had a liberal view of life and embraced people of different faiths. Because there were no local rabbis who could sign, he asked a protestant minister, Rev. Robert L. Rumball, to help with special events. So Rumball, hearing pastor of the Evangelical Church of the Deaf in Toronto, conducted bar mitzvahs and for a number of years served as “unofficial rabbi” to Rosnick, David Peikoff, and some of the other older Jewish deaf leaders in the city.<sup>80</sup>

One of the difficulties facing Jewish deaf Canadians was the lack of accessible services for them. This is illustrated by the Rosnick family history. The entire family was part of the congregation of the Evangelical Church of the Deaf in Toronto. Every week they would join in the worship services and then retire to the basement of the church, where they would socialize with other deaf adults while their hearing sons played with the other hearing children. It has only been recently that Jewish deaf people could attend signed or interpreted services of their own.

For deaf Jewish teenagers, participating in such milestones as a bar/bat mitzvah presents special challenges. During this celebration, the boy or girl is expected to sing and read aloud from the Torah. Until recently, little or no provisions were made for deaf people in Canada who wanted to use sign lan-





**Joe and Lena Rosnick on their 1923 wedding day (attended by two of Lena's sisters, Sadie and Minnie)**  
*Courtesy of Harold and Bert Rosnick (Toronto and Hamilton, Ont.)*

guage rather than spoken Hebrew during this ceremony; it was assumed that they would recite the prayers orally like everyone else. In 1957, for example, Edward ("Eddie") Wiesblatt (b. Apr. 28, 1944) had to receive special tutoring (through lipreading and phonetic spelling) to learn how to pronounce the Hebrew prayers required during the bar mitzvah. Wiesblatt was born deaf, and from 1947 to 1962 attended local schools in Toronto (King Edward Public School, Clinton Street Public School, Sunny View School, and Northern Technical Commercial School). He recited his bar mitzvah prayers orally in front of more than 175 people in the synagogue.

By the 1990s, the situation had changed so that deaf worshippers could use sign language during the special service. One deaf teenager, Jason Matthew Goldstein (b. May 26, 1980) of Mississauga, Ont., used both spoken Hebrew and American Sign Language during his 1993 bar mitzvah at Temple Solel. In addition, a sign language interpreter was provided for the many deaf guests. According to Jason's mother, Karyn Goldstein, "Many hearing parents of deaf Jewish children think that they're not able to read Hebrew and prepare for a bar mitzvah."<sup>81</sup> Both she and her husband, Martin, are deaf and teach at the Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton, Ont.; they have made sure that their children participate in Jewish community activities wherever they have lived. Their son believes



**Jason Goldstein at his bar mitzvah, 1993**  
*Courtesy of Karyn Goldstein (Mississauga, Ont.)*

"that it's important to keep religious tradition. He would advise other deaf Jewish children to learn Hebrew, keep going to services," and prepare for bar or bat mitzvahs.<sup>82</sup>

## **The Toronto Jewish Society for the Hearing Impaired / The Toronto Jewish Association of the Deaf**

In 1980, one individual noted that it was "hard for any deaf Jewish person to define himself as Jewish. Primarily, his needs as a deaf person have to be answered first," and these needs were not being met by the Jewish community at that time.<sup>83</sup> Concerned about this lack of service to the Jewish Deaf community, the National Council of Jewish Women, Toronto Section, initiated a pilot project in 1980 to encourage deaf Jews to participate in Judaism. The result of their project was the formation of the Toronto Jewish Society for the Hearing Impaired (TJSHI), which held its first meeting at the Council House of Jewish Women in August 1980. The TJSHI has grown from the first few members to an organization with more than 100 on the membership roles and a mailing list of more than 200 (mostly in the Toronto area).

The first Jewish holiday celebrated by the TJSHI was a Succot celebration on September 28, 1980, attended by deaf Jewish people and their families. In addition to the National Council of Jewish Women, other local Jewish organizations cooperated in this Succot celebration, including the Baycrest Centre, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda synagogue, B'nai B'rith, Coordinated Services to Jewish Elderly, the Jewish Community Centre, and the North American Jewish Students Network. Deaf children participated in the building of the succah in preparation for the celebration.<sup>84</sup> Rabbi Joseph Kelman, from Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda synagogue, told the story of Succot, which was interpreted into American Sign Language (ASL). After the success of this event, other services followed, including what may have been the first Canadian Rosh Hashanah service translated from Hebrew into English and then signed in ASL (at Holy Blossom synagogue, Toronto, September 30, 1981).<sup>85</sup> The leader of the service, Rabbi Harvey Fields, commented that "for too long, the hearing impaired — and disabled generally — have been on the sidelines of Jewish life, certainly not included in Jewish ceremonial life. The exclusion of the Jewish disabled from most of Jewish organizational life, including religious, has meant a loss for all."<sup>86</sup>

One of TJSHI's primary goals in the beginning was to establish a congregation with a rabbi who could conduct services using ASL. The members also wanted to learn more about their own Jewish culture and faith through programs on the history of the Torah, the origins of Judaism, Jewish holidays, the Hebrew language, the history of Israel, Jewish foods and Kosher, and the milestones in Jewish life (circumcision, bar/bat mitzvah, marriage, and death). Although in 1994 there were still no deaf rabbis, interpreted services were being offered in Ontario at three sites in Toronto (Holy Blossom Temple [Reform], Beth Tikvah synagogue [Conservative], and Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda synagogue [Conservative], and at Solel Congregation [Reform], Mississauga).

In 1991, the organization changed its name to the Toronto Jewish Association of the Deaf (TJAD). TJAD hosted the 20th Biennial Convention of the National Congress of Jewish Deaf (NCJD) on August 7-14, 1994 at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in downtown Toronto (this was the first time that the national organization had held a convention in Canada). The theme was "Yours to Discover: The Canadian Jewish Deaf Community." More than 300 Jewish deaf people, primarily from the U.S. and Canada, had the opportunity to share information, attend workshops, and network with each other. The next NCJD convention is scheduled for Chicago in 1996. And training is now available to Jewish deaf and hearing people interested in serving the spiritual needs of Jewish Deaf communities. The Hebrew Seminary of the Deaf in Skokie, Ill. offers courses (interpreted in ASL) on Jewish ethics, thought, religion, history, and Deaf culture.

The Canadian Jewish Deaf community is beginning to stir, and in the future may take its place as another of the vibrant threads that make up the Canadian cultural tapestry.

## Noted Deaf Individuals from Canada's Religious Communities

The following six sketches have been chosen to illustrate the diversity of deaf individuals who have contributed in some way to the religious experience of Canada's deaf population. Some of these people left Canada to minister to people in other countries, while others came to Canada to fill a need in the Canadian Deaf community.

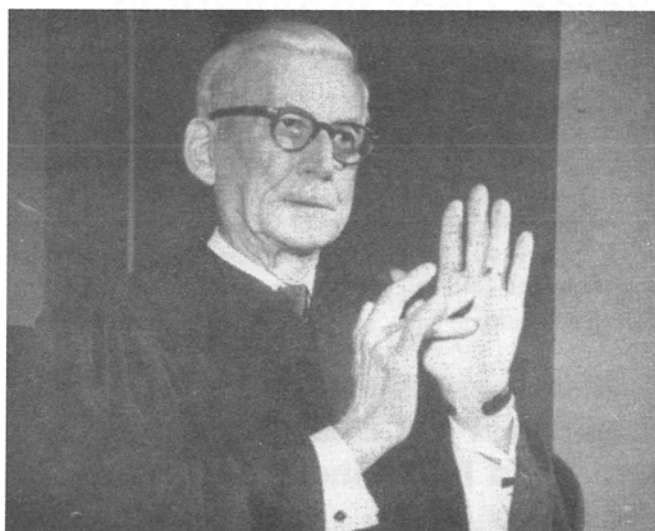
### Rev. Augustus Henry John Staubitz, First Deaf Minister Ordained in Canada

The distinction of being the first deaf person ever to be ordained as a minister in Canada belongs to Augustus Henry John Staubitz (b. July 27, 1884; d. Dec. 22, 1957), an American citizen. This historical event took place in Kitchener, Ont. in 1924. Staubitz was born in Buffalo, N.Y., where his father worked for the police department as a patrolman. When he was about 18 months old, Staubitz became deaf following a bout of spinal meningitis. He attended the Western New York Institution for Deaf-Mutes in Rochester (now the Rochester School for the Deaf) for 10 years (1890-1900). While there, he met the famous deaf and blind woman, Helen Keller, who was visiting the institution. She asked Staubitz what he would like to be after leaving school. He responded that he wanted to become a minister to deaf people, but added that this would not be possible because of his deafness. Keller encouraged Staubitz not to give up on his dream.

More than 20 years passed before he fulfilled his goal, however. In the meantime, he became a skilled draftsman, completing a course in mechanical drawing from an international correspondence school in Erie, Pa. in the winter of 1909-1910, and then working for the Pierce Arrow Motor Company in Buffalo, N.Y. On the 9th of June, 1909, Staubitz married Florence Agnes Gardiner (b. May 3, 1877; d. Dec. 29, 1924) of Mount Forest, Ont., a graduate of the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb in Belleville (1886-1894). They made their home in Buffalo.

After a few years, recalling the inspirational words of Helen Keller, Staubitz decided to dedicate his life to the ministry. He moved to Kitchener, Ont. where he was licensed in 1915 as a lay reader and assigned to spread the gospel of Christ in the province. In the early 1920s, he was admitted as a theological student at the Moody Bible Institute in Kitchener. At the same time, he became an active member of the Deaf community. Staubitz was secretary of the Ontario Association of the Deaf (1922-1924) and also helped found Toronto Division No. 98 of the National Fraternal Society of the Deaf in March 1924.

On May 21, 1924, seven months before his wife passed away, Staubitz was ordained a minister in a ceremony held at the Benton Street Baptist Church in Kitchener. Following his wife's death, he returned alone to New York, where he preached to deaf congregations in Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Rochester,



**Rev. A.H.J. Staubitz in his later years**

*Courtesy of Kathleen V.F. (née Stinson) Staubitz/Riley (Winnipeg, Man.)*

Binghamton, Elmira, and Lockport. While living in Corning, N.Y., Staubitz organized the Northern Baptist Evangelical Association of the Deaf. In 1926, he married a local deaf woman, Laura Berry Minkle, who passed away 13 years later.

In September 1928, Staubitz became an elder of the Ohio Methodist Episcopal Conference and pastor at the Methodist Episcopal Church of the Deaf in Cincinnati, Ohio. He started a campaign to raise funds to obtain a church building for his congregation, which had been meeting in a hearing church. After sufficient funds were collected, the Pearl Street Methodist Church was purchased and renamed the Cameron United Methodist Church of the Deaf in honour of its Deaconess founder, Mary Virginia Cameron. This building was later sold and the congregation relocated to a building on Sycamore Street. Under Staubitz's guidance, the church grew to include more than 300 members. Its inter-denominational and inter-racial services were available to deaf people from all areas of greater Cincinnati.

Staubitz married for the third time in August 1943 to Kathleen Victoria Fleming Stinson (b. Sept. 24, 1900; d. Jan. 14, 1989) of Winnipeg, Man. An alumna of the Manitoba School for the Deaf (1908-1918) and Gallaudet College (1919-1922), Stinson had taught at schools for the deaf in Manitoba (1922-1924), Montana (1924-1929) and Saskatchewan (1931-1943) prior to her marriage to Staubitz. Following his retirement on June 22, 1956 after 32 years of pastoral work, Staubitz and his wife moved to Silver Creek, N.Y. He passed away at Buffalo General Hospital 18 months later at the age of 73, and is buried in the First Church of Evans' Cemetery in Derby, N.Y.

## Isabel Alice Hartley Crawford, Missionary to American Indian Tribes

Isabel Alice Hartley Crawford (b. May 26, 1865; d. Nov. 18, 1961) (known as "Belle" to her friends) was a deafened

Canadian-born missionary who worked among North American Indians (1883-1906). Crawford was born in Cheltenham, a little village near Toronto, Ont. When she was still young, her family moved to Woodstock, Ont., where her father taught in the theology department at the Baptist college there. She received her elementary education at the Canadian Literary Institute, a local Baptist school (1875-1878).<sup>87</sup> She also studied music and French at home. The family was very religious and worshipped every morning and evening. By the time she was 10 years old, Crawford expressed an interest in becoming a missionary. When she was 11, she organized and taught her first Sunday School class, composed of a group of boys her own age who were described as "the toughest urchins ever to enter a Sunday School."<sup>88</sup>

In October 1881, at the age of 16, Crawford passed the entrance examination to high school on her second try, and then moved with her family to Rapid City, Man. She attended Prairie College (the local Baptist college founded by her father in 1880) until it closed in 1883, after which the family moved once again, this time to the U.S. During this time, Crawford became sick and spent six months in bed. The doctor ordered her to consume nothing but milk and quinine, an anti-malarial drug. She later wrote, "The quinine took possession of my ears. The milk saved my life."<sup>89</sup> From that time on, her ability to hear was greatly reduced. Crawford spent the next six years with her family in St. Thomas, N.D. To raise money to go to missionary school, she taught art classes and sold her paintings. In 1891, after a five-year search for an appropriate institution, she enrolled in the Baptist Missionary Training School for Women, a school run by the Women's Baptist Home Missionary Society in Chicago, Ill. She paid the \$300 fee and entered the school with "two trunks, a cast iron constitution, a Scottish backbone, and a fully developed Irish funny-bone."<sup>90</sup> After two years preparing for missionary service, Crawford graduated on June 8, 1893. Her first appointment was to the Kiowa Blanket Indian Tribe of Oklahoma. Although she was not at all pleased with this assignment, she left for Oklahoma a short time after graduation.<sup>91</sup>

She could not speak the Kiowa language, and she could not hear it unless the Indians shouted into the "conversation tube" (acousticon) that hung around her neck. So, Crawford learned the graceful Indian Sign Language that was understood by most tribes. For her first three years in the mission field, she was stationed at Elk Creek, Okla. She travelled around using word and sign to teach and preach to the Indians. In 1896, she received an invitation to live with the Kiowa Indian tribe at Saddle Mountain, Okla., and joined them on April 9, 1896. She stayed with the tribe for the next 10 years. The Indians were impressed by the "white Jesus woman" who lived all alone with them and was not scared.<sup>92</sup> After a couple of weeks, they gave her the Indian name *Gee-ah-ho-an-go-mah*, meaning "She gave us the Jesus way."<sup>93</sup>

After living with them for a time, Crawford began to love the Kiowas. She taught them how to "live in houses, plant seeds, sew [their] clothes, and worship the true God in a church."<sup>94</sup> She helped them to get along with white men, interpreting for them when difficulties arose. Their own mission circle, called *Daw-kee-boom-gee-k'oop* ("God's Light Upon the Mountain"), was





**Crawford demonstrating Indian Sign Language for "Love"**

*Joyful Journey*, by Isabel Crawford, copyright 1951 by Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pa. Used by permission.

organized on May 10, 1898. Soon thereafter, the Kiowas began to raise money for two projects: to send a "Jesus woman" to another Indian tribe, and to build their own church. Both projects were successful. On Nov. 24, 1901, the Kiowas opened a new mission for the Hopi Indians in Arizona. And almost exactly one year later, on November 9, 1902, they laid the cornerstone for their new church, which officially opened on April 12, 1903. Three years later (Dec. 12, 1906), Crawford left Saddle Mountain to lecture across the U.S. on behalf of the Women's American Baptist Home Missionary Society. She travelled from Boston, Mass. to San Francisco, Calif., and from Indian reservation to Indian reservation in New York State. Her headquarters were located in the little village of Red House, N.Y., the only Indian settlement on the railway. Between trips, Crawford studied lipreading at the Niche School for the Hard of Hearing in New York City. In 1915, she wrote her first book, *Kiowa*, which described her experiences living with the Kiowa Indians. She also spent much time "in search of mental improvement" in Chautauqua, N.Y.<sup>95</sup> In 1922, she was granted a diploma from the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle, a four-year reading program.

In 1930, after 23 years of travelling between churches and living out of a suitcase, Crawford retired to Grimsby, Ont., where she lived with two nieces. In 1932, her second book, *A Jolly Journal*, was published, followed by a third book, *Joyful Journey*, in 1951. Crawford died in 1961 at the Loch Sloy Nursing Home in Winona, a small community between Grimsby and Hamilton, Ont. Her body was returned to Oklahoma and was laid to rest in the Saddle Mountain Cemetery on the Kiowa Indian Reserve.

## Rev. Dr. James Stanley Light, American Missionary to Canada

Between 1934 and 1963, the Rev. Dr. James Stanley Light (b. Jan. 11, 1895; d. Dec. 2, 1963), a deaf Episcopal minister from Boston, Mass., travelled to Halifax, N.S. each year to conduct a five-day mission among the adult Protestant deaf. His presence was badly needed at that time, because religious services for deaf people in the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island, and the colony of Newfoundland, were almost nonexistent before the turn of the century and during the first three decades of the 1900s.

One woman, Juliana (Julia) R. Bateman (b. Oct. 22, 1856; d. Sept. [day unknown], 1935), a hearing teacher at the School for the Deaf in Halifax (1881-1904) decided to do something about this situation. She started the Bateman Trust Fund (in memory of her deaf brother, Wellington John [b. Oct. 9, 1860; d. Mar. 1, 1902]) to conduct a mission to deaf people in the area. Her dream was not realized until three decades later, however, when enough funds were raised to cover the travelling expenses and salary of a missionary for a week each year. The first mission was held at Halifax's St. Paul's Anglican Church during the week of May 15, 1934. Conducting the services was the Rev. James Stanley Light, who "spoke and signed simultaneously."<sup>96</sup>

Born deaf in Neponset, a suburb of Boston, Mass., Light was educated orally at the Horace Mann School for the Deaf in Boston and Dorchester High School in Neponset. He then attended Gallaudet College — where he was first exposed to sign language — and received a bachelor of philosophy degree in 1916.<sup>97</sup> Feeling the call to the ministry, Light attended the Episcopal Theological College in Cambridge, Mass. where he completed his studies. On May 27, 1925, he was made a deacon in a ceremony held in Boston, and on January 12, 1926 he was ordained as a minister. In June 1954, Gallaudet College conferred upon him the honorary degree of doctor of humane letters.

Despite his heavy schedule in the dioceses of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, Light managed to come to Halifax for a week once a year for 29 years (1934-1963) to provide confirmation services and a regular series of evening meetings to the Deaf community (all of which were customarily held at St. Paul's Anglican Church). He usually stayed at the principal's residence at the Halifax School for the Deaf and met with the children daily in the morning assembly to direct their attention toward religious matters. In the evenings, he met with the adult Deaf community and with older students from the Halifax School. His services were well attended because "it is a very rare thing for the deaf to have a clergyman who understands them and who knows how to sympathise with and impart knowledge to them ... He [Light] is a graceful sign-maker, a very good speaker and has a very pleasing personality."<sup>98</sup> When the Halifax School was closed permanently in 1961, Light began to visit the new school for the deaf in Amherst, N.S. Death cut his service in Amherst short, however. On Dec. 2, 1963, two days after he witnessed the dedication of his lifelong dream of a chapel of St. Andrews Mission in Brookline, Mass., Light died suddenly of a heart attack at his home.



**Rev. J.S. Light in St. Paul's Anglican Church, Halifax (1943)**

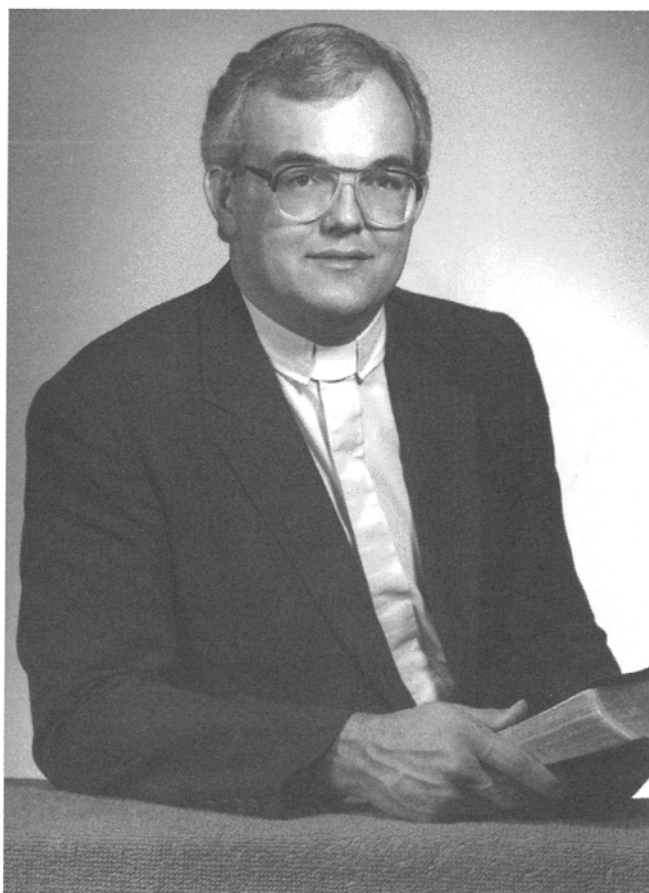
*Courtesy of Edmund and Gladys Duffy (Halifax, N.S.)*

## **Rev. Peter John Virtue, First Deaf Canadian Ordained as a Minister**

Former pastor of the Ottawa Deaf Fellowship in Canada's capital city, Rev. Peter John Virtue (b. Jan. 20, 1949) is especially qualified to minister to the religious needs of the Deaf community. As he has said, "There have been other (hearing) ministers who could use sign language, but I (as a deaf person) have a real understanding of what it means to be deaf."<sup>99</sup>

Born in Chatham, Ont., Virtue became severely hard of hearing as a result of an infection after having his tonsils removed at the age of four. Over the next few years, his hearing gradually deteriorated further, leaving him profoundly deaf by the age of eight. He finished his elementary and secondary education in Chatham public schools (1953-1968), then studied at Gallaudet College (1968-1973). In 1971, he married Joyce Ann Lange (b. Sept. 13, 1951) of Salem, Ore., a Gallaudet alumna (1969-1973). They had three children — two boys (Peter John Jr. [Johnny] and Andrew Keith [Andy]) and a girl (Katie Rosemary). The older son (Johnny) and daughter are hard of hearing.

After working as a statistician at Gallaudet College for three years (in the Gallaudet Research Institute Office of Demographic Studies), Virtue landed a job as a dormitory counsellor at the Oregon State School for the Deaf in Salem (1975-1978). He also studied deaf education in his spare time at Western Oregon State College in Monmouth (1975-1977). Next, he became a life skills counsellor working with young deaf adults at a program in Portland, Ore., and then an installer with a storm and screen door company. One day while performing the duties of lay leader with the Salem Deaf Fellowship, Virtue felt his call to the ministry. With the aid of a full scholarship, he became the first profoundly deaf person to enrol at Western Evangelical Seminary in Portland, Ore., in Sept. 1982, when the program for deaf students began there. He graduated two years later on May 17, 1984 with a master's degree in theological studies. On the 30th of June 1984, Virtue became the first deaf person to be ordained as a dea-



**Rev. Peter J. Virtue in 1988**

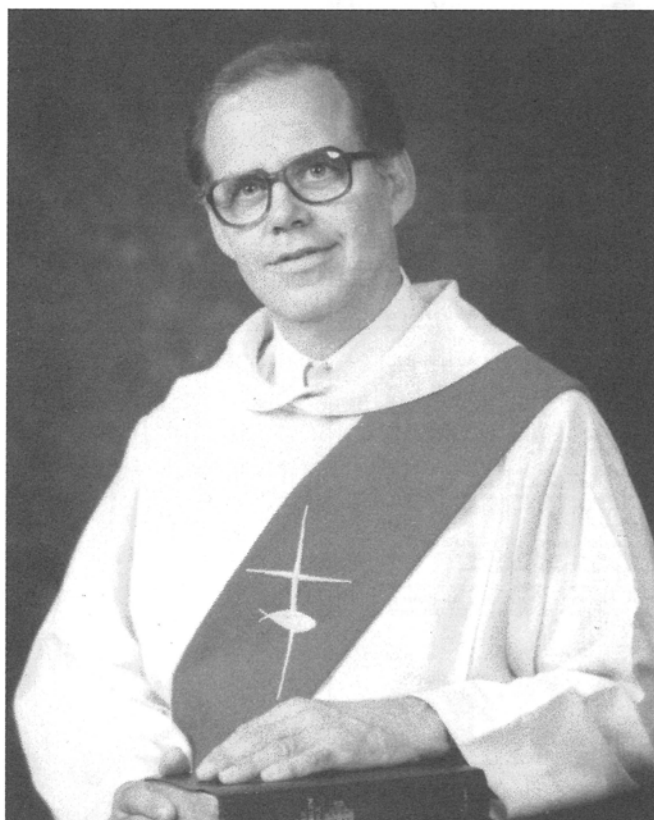
*Courtesy of Peter J. Virtue (Toronto, Ont.)/Photo Credit: Thomas Studio Ltd. (Ottawa, Ont.)*

con in the Free Methodist Church of North America at Bloomfield, Ont., and the second deaf person ever ordained as a minister in Canada.<sup>100</sup>

Through the combined efforts of the Canada East Conference of the Free Methodist Church, the Career Access Program of Canada Manpower, and friends in the capital region of Ottawa, Virtue was appointed as a full-time pastor to the Ottawa Mission to the Deaf within the facilities of the Fifth Avenue Free Methodist Church on Monk Street. Until Virtue arrived, the Ottawa Mission had operated as an outreach program of Toronto's Evangelical Church of the Deaf. It was officially renamed the Ottawa Deaf Fellowship in October 1984. On June 29, 1986, Virtue was ordained as an elder at the Canada East Annual Conference of the Free Methodist Church in Bloomfield, Ont. By all accounts, he is credited with being the first deaf Canadian ever to be seminary-trained and fully ordained as a minister. In 1989, he and his family moved to Toronto, where he served as associate pastor at the Evangelical Church of the Deaf for two years (1989-1991). In the fall of 1991, he left the ministry and accepted an offer to become executive director of Toronto's Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf, a position he held for two years (1991-1993). Following his divorce, Virtue married Lorraine Kathryn Niedbalski (b. July 20, 1965) of Dearborn, Mich. in October 1993; they have one hearing child, Victoria.

## André Joseph Henri Bourget, Roman Catholic Deacon

A dream came true for André Joseph Henri Bourget (b. Jan. 10, 1938) on June 30, 1984 when he was ordained to the Roman Catholic Diaconate and became the first deaf permanent deacon in Canada. Born profoundly deaf in Haileybury, Ont., Bourget was a student for 13 years at the Ontario School for the Deaf in Belleville (1945-1958). Following graduation, he started working as a sign painter-journeyman with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communication (1958-1993).



**Deacon Andre J.H. Bourget**

*Courtesy of André J.H. Bourget (North Bay, Ont.)*

Bourget took a three-year course in the Catholic Ministry Program in Espanola, Ont. (1980-1983). After a one-year training period (1983-1984), he became the first deaf Canadian to ever serve as a deacon. Bourget's congregation meets at the Holy Name of Jesus Christ Church in North Bay, Ont., where he ministers to deaf parishioners and assists the priest in services. He also teaches sign language classes to hearing people. Bourget is known to his friends as "the flying deacon," because he travels around the country so often ministering to deaf Catholics. His born-deaf wife, the former Gertrude Mary Pauline Lacroix (b. May 12, 1941), attended the Institution Catholique des Sourdes-Muettes in Montréal, Québec (1950-1958). The couple has four children. They now reside in Iroquois Falls, Ont., where Bourget also serves as a deacon at St. Cecilia Catholic Church.

## Rev. Pastor John R. Graham

John Ronald Graham (b. Mar. 14, 1959) was born in Elmvale, Ont. and grew up on a farm near Hamilton, Ont. He attended the Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton (1963-1978) and then worked as a carpenter in Kitchener for one year. About that time, Graham became interested in the church ministry and decided to apply to Bible college. He was accepted at Christ for the Nations Bible College in Dallas, Texas in 1981 and received his degree two years later. Graham then returned to Canada, where he served as a minister in Toronto for three years. In 1986, he moved to Rochester, N.Y. (near the National Technical Institute for the Deaf on the campus of the Rochester Institute of Technology), where he established church services for deaf worshippers before returning to his homeland in 1987.

After settling in Hamilton in 1987, Graham again became involved in the Canadian ministry. At first, he and his deaf congregation used the facilities of the Bethel Gospel Tabernacle in Hamilton. Soon, however, the deaf church members had raised \$20,000 and purchased a new, prefabricated building of their own. The building is located on the Bethel Tabernacle grounds.<sup>101</sup> Graham was ordained by the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada on June 17, 1990 in a ceremony held at the Bethel Tabernacle. Once ordained, he was authorized to perform wedding ceremonies and funeral services, in addition to preaching the Gospel.

In April 1991, Rev. Pastor Graham established another church for deaf worshippers in Mississauga, Ont. He preaches in ASL every Sunday at both churches (in a 9:00 a.m. worship service in Mississauga and an 11:00 a.m. service in Hamilton). On Wednesday evenings, he leads a Bible study group at the Hamilton church. He is also involved in the Deaf Evangelist Drama Team at the Bethel Tabernacle, a group composed of members of the deaf congregation there. Although his flock is small (approximately 35 worshippers at the church in Hamilton and another 20 in Mississauga), Graham keeps busy with such activities as working with a prison ministry, where he visits deaf inmates to share the Bible with them. He also works with the school ministry by giving presentations to deaf students, usually at Easter and Christmas. In addition, he visits the sick in hospital, counsels individuals and families, makes home visits, and attends general and pastors' meetings of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. The Hamilton church publishes a bi-monthly newsletter called *Deaf Alive*, which prints information and articles about Deaf culture within the deaf churches.

One of Graham's goals is to establish Pentecostal churches for deaf worshippers in every province. Another goal is to become a full-time evangelist and travel to different countries, preaching and giving drama performances to share the word of God. So far, he has visited South America four times and has travelled through eight other countries overseas, as well as throughout the U.S. and Canada.