

## Hockley Village marking 125 and 150 year anniversaries

By Constance Scrafield

Said Janice Mason, "This will be a lovely anniversary talk and a gathering ? not a church service at all. Between what's been going on we wanted to put together this anniversary because we think that's what the village and the hall deserve."

What has been going on in the Village of Hockley is the consequence of a recent incident that achieved a lot of publicity ? the crash of an automobile into the centre window of the General Store, causing severe damage to the building and killing the driver. The store is undergoing extensive repairs.

Ms. Mason explained that the gathering at the church will be at noon this Sunday, October 6. ?Rob Leverty is the guest speaker. He's the Executive Director for the Ontario Historical Society.?

She had high praise for Mr. Leverty: "Rob is a very engaging speaker, very knowledgeable and very intent on preserving Ontario's history. ?If it weren't for the grass roots, like [our] group', he said, 'this wouldn't happen.'"

By "our group," Janice Mason was referring to the Hockley Historic Community Hall and Church (CCHCH), a now incorporated, charged and accepting of that with responsibility for the care, maintenance and running of both buildings.

The church, first Methodist, then United, has been given to the community by the United Church.

The Adjala Historic Church and Cemetery is a sister organization, based on the same principles, caring for Adjala United and its cemetery. Adjala is nearby on the 4th Concession and 5 Sideroad. These were part of the three-point charge of which the United Church at Mono Mills was the third and the largest of them and is still in operation.

Just before going to press, we had the chance to speak to Mr. Leverty by telephone.

"Sunday is a great occasion.,?" said he. "It's a beautiful church ? it's priceless ? Hockley Church has a special quality. You can't recreate authenticity.

"We're the only not-for-profit that, in 1899, the legislature of Ontario gave us authority to incorporate other not-for-profit organizations. It made sense that we would help citizens, who are all volunteers, doing what they can to preserve these historical buildings So, we incorporated [the Hockley Historical Community Hall and Church]. The Board of Directors voted for it on April 5, 2018.

"We have memberships all across the province ? about 800 organizations, caring for lighthouses, halls, houses. I'm deeply impressed with them all. They are the stewards and they are a charity and so, legally, they are working for the public benefit.

"We've been creating legal entities. This organization was created in 1888 by grass-roots communities. Since the financial crash of 2008, we've been incorporating almost one group a month. That's because governments and churches have been divesting themselves of these buildings ever since. Unless these groups continue to save these buildings, they will be lost."

"After Rob's talk, there will be lunch and there will be cake in the hall.?" Ms. Mason assured us. "And the memorabilia in the hall that people can look at while they're having a lunch. Nancy and Bill Watson at Adjala might know more of the people in the photos.?"

She said, "This is actually a celebration of the past, present and future and the pioneers. ?It was incorporated as a not for profit through the Ontario Historical Society.?"

She continued with a plug: "The cake will be a very simple affair but I think it will be funny. I'm getting it from a wonderful place in Barrie because they guarantee it'll be nut-free and so on."

To support the costs of maintaining the buildings, they must be useful.

"There are activities in hall," she was pleased to tell us. "Euchre's starting up again on 17 October on alternate Thursday evenings. It's just so much fun. We decided we wouldn't make this a whole lot of work - \$5 to get in. Everybody chips in and puts the chairs away. Tai chi just started up, on Wednesday and Friday evening with Dan 7:30 to 9:00 p.m."

Harkening back to the celebration: "I have to tell you I found this memorabilia. There's photos but we don't know peoples' names. There's really cool pictures, lovely old pictures of Lawrence lodge.

"People can give a donation and now we can give a charity tax receipt," she went on to say, "for the maintenance on the buildings? that church will never have aluminum siding," she declared.

"There will be a donation box but," emphatically, "this is not a fundraiser. It is for the community to come together and celebrate history where too many historical halls in this country are disregarded and levelled? a lot of these halls are disappearing."

Ms. Mason said, "That's one thing my mother put into to me is volunteering? there's a lot of people that do have the time but they just don't understand the importance of it. It's good and you meet a lot of people? it's a great way to meet people."

The gathering/get-together? everyone is invited? celebration of very local history in Hockley Village starts at noon this Sunday, October 6 at the Hockley Historical Church, now 150 years old, for Rod Leverty's talk about the specifics and generalities of the history of the locale. From there, all are welcomed to move next door to the Historical Community Hall, 125 years old, for lunch, camaraderie and a walk through history.

Hockley Village is located at the stop sign at Hockley Road and the Mono-Adjala Townline. The buildings are immediately south of the intersection.