

The Port Hoover Methodist Episcopal Church

Abraham (or Abrahm) Hoover came with his family to the Township of Mariposa in 1842. A farmer and deeply religious man, Abraham took an interest in making sure there was a church in his community and was one of the founders of the Port Hoover Methodist Episcopal Church.

Land for the church was secured in the Village of Port Hoover on the lot at 8 Main Street East and a wood frame church was built in the Fall of 1858. On January 2, 1859 the church was dedicated by Bishop Smith at 10:00am, followed by a service at 2:30pm by Rev. H. Dockham of Brooklin. A cemetery was started at the rear of the church.

With the decline of population in Port Hoover in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the church congregation slowly began attending service in Point Pleasant and Valentia.

There are two dates that are attributed to the closure of the church. The Mariposa History Book states that "the church was sold in 1886 and moved to Scugog Island," and Reverend F. G. Weir recounts in his book 'Scugog and its Environs,' that the church was moved in 1880.

The historical records at the Scugog Historical Society show the church being moved in 1880.

The church was in excellent condition and Scugog Island was in need of an additional church for their community, so the Port Hoover Methodist Episcopal Church was sold and carefully dismantled. As described by Rev. Weir, the M.E. Church (at the time known as the Foot Church from Port Hoover) was moved to the Island in 1880. The building was taken down,

"the top structure was piled upon the sleepers and the whole was put on wagons. An attempt was made to cross over the ice, but the plan was abandoned when the wagons broke through...the church was taken off the wagons and put into the water and floated across, the sleepers serving as a raft."

The church was moved to the the Solomon Fralick property on Concession 12, Lot 6 of Scugog Island, based on the notes of Eliza Fralick. This would be Fralicks Beach Road today.



Solomon's son Hiram Fralick owned the farm when the church was moved to his father's property.



The Foot Church standing on the Fralick family property prior to it being torn down.

After serving the community of Scugog Island for just over 60 years, the church was taken down in approximately 1942. The Scugog Historical Society indicates that much of the church was salvaged to rebuild the Scugog Centre Church as it burnt down in 1940- 1941. The historical society also notes that these were the beginning of the war years and materials, especially building supplies, were scarce so people used whatever materials that could be found.

A special note, the bricks for the new church were used from a church being torn down in County Tyrone.

The new church was re-dedicated in 1947 and still operates today, so technically parts of the original Foot Church of Port Hoover still exists.

Resources

Irwin, Ross W., Mariposa, the Banner Township: A History of the Township of Mariposa, Victoria County, Ontario, Ross Irwin Enterprises, Guelph, Ontario, 1984

Weir, Rev. F.G., Scugog and Its Environs, , Star Print, Port Perry, Ontario, 1927

The Scugog Historical Society photographs and information