

First Presbyterian History Compiled Of 'Harvest Home'

INTRODUCTION

In 1877, the Andover Presbyterian Church initiated a program which turned into a tradition that lasted for 75 continuous years with the name "Harvest Home" being given to the annual event in 1879.

"Harvest Home" was originally initiated as a feast of the harvest when corn, potatoes and all of the vegetables of the harvest could be utilized. However, throughout the years, the dates and menus were changed as the times changed.

The seventy-fifth and final "Harvest Home" was held in 1951 with the Presbyterian Church losing its regular pastor the following year and the supply minister that served in the interim until a full-time pastor could be selected failed to furnish the necessary "spark" to keep the tradition alive.

In the fall of 1975 as plans were being drawn up for Andover's part in the Bi-Centennial Celebration for 1976 and an application for the Designation of Andover as a Bi-Centennial Community was being considered, it was suggested to investigate the possibility of a revival of the traditional "Harvest Home".

At a meeting of the United Presbyterian Women on Feb. 10, 1976 a letter was read from Chamber of Commerce President Rosemary Burger inquiring into the possibility of the Presbyterian Church reviving their former "Harvest Home". The subject was discussed and the members voted to hold a Turkey Dinner on Sunday, October 10, 1976 that would consist of two servings, one at 12:30 and one at 1:30 by advance sale of tickets and reservations only at \$3.50 per ticket.

Following the dinner, a free program will be held at 3 p. m. with former Pastor Rev. Albert Rogers of Alfred accepting the invitation to be the main speaker. Richard Wittie, local Photographer has also consented to show colored slides of many scenes from the past History of Andover that he compiled at the time of Andover's Sesqui-Centennial, and has added to since that time. Several musical selections will round out the program.

This "Harvest Home" program was added to the Annual Maple Festival by the Andover Lions Club, and the Annual 4th of July Celebration by the Fourth of July Committee, and in due time, Andover received its Official Designation as a Bi-Centennial Community.

Since many new families have settled in Andover since 1951 who are not aware of the "Harvest Home" tradition, News Editor "Red" Allen requested Margaret Wood, President of the United Presbyterian Women, to compile a history of this tradition which will appear in The Andover News starting with this issue.

The following is a Chronological History compiled by Margaret Wood taken from the Files of The Andover News as well as other sources of information that were made available to her which took many hours of research.

History - as it was recorded!

The Rev. A. C. Titus came to Andover from Trenton, N. J., in October, 1876 and in 1877 was the instigator of a church picnic at which they had a roast pork dinner which was very successful.

In 1878, the next year, they repeated the picnic and invited the Band from Ulysses, Pa., to come over and furnish music for the affair. The band came over in a "Band-Wagon", stopping off at Ben Conley's place to decorate the wagon and put out the flags after the 20 mile trip and before they toured the Village for their playing engagement.

In 1879, the third year, a Chicken Dinner was put on in Baker's Grove, and it was then named "Harvest Home". It was held in early September, the idea being to have a "feast of the har-

vest" when they might use corn, potatoes, and all the vegetables of the harvest.

Later on, when the County Fairs came into "vogue", the date was moved ahead until it reached a date around August 15th so that it wouldn't conflict with any of the Fairs.

It fell upon Newell Baker, the late Michael Folsing, and other men to draw the large milk cans of water and milk, as well as wood for the stoves for the preparation of the meal. Later on, gas and water lines were laid up to the Grove which put an end to these chores.

On September 12, 1893, the event was held in the Prest Opera House because of rainy weather with a good attendance in spite of the unfavorable weather. The Rev. W. G. White of Cuba gave a very interesting talk on the World's Fair. He was followed by Rev. G. W. Gibson and Jesse S. Phillips who gave a very interesting talk to the audience as he always did. The day netted the Church a profit of \$86 with music furnished by the "Cornet Band" and the Enterpe Club composed of eight Andover young men. The "Enterpe Club" was a Musical Organization composed of the following members: Thomas Regan, Earl Richardson, Arthur and Frank Burrows, Miles Herrick, William, James and John Cannon.

The 18th Harvest Home was held on August 23, 1894 at the Maple Grove, with Hon. Fred Robbins of Angelica, member of the Assembly from the County, as main speaker. Other speakers were Rev. D. A. Blake of Belmont, and F. C. White of Whitesville, with the Andover Coronet Band furnishing the music.

On August 28, 1901, the Presbyterian Church, under the supervision of Rev. G. M. Jones, observed the 25th Anniversary of the Harvest Home. The Rev. A. C. Titus of Trenton, N. J., the founder of Harvest Home, delivered the address. The Baker Brothers Band furnished the music of which the oldest member was 30 years old, and the youngest was 7 years old - all from the family of Newell Baker.

In 1904, Hon. James T. Roger addressed the 28th Annual Harvest Home selecting the topic of "Our Duty and Our Destiny" for his speech.

In 1906, 550 dinners were served at the annual event. For several years, homemade Ice Cream was one of the main attractions, with the women of the Church making the custard the day before and on the day of the event the men would go to the Church early and turn the old-fashioned hand cranks to freeze it for them. Then the youth group of the Church would sell it for five cents a large dish.

An interesting point in the history is the fact that the chickens were not purchased but were donated by local farmers - both Catholics as well as Protestants. The chickens were brought home by the men of the Church and killed and dressed for the women to prepare the chicken pies.

The Harvest Home was a time for home-coming for all former friends of the Church and Community with the local stores and banks closing during the festivities. Local farmers would also plan their work ahead so that they could attend.

One Harvest Home of importance was in the World War I year of 1918 when the entire proceeds of the dinner was donated to the Red Cross with over 1,088 dinners being served.

The Harvest Home was held in the Maple Grove thru 1919 but then in 1920 a cyclone destroyed most of the Grove so a tent was purchased and the site of the annual event was moved to the Presbyterian Church Grounds.

In 1923, 400 dinners were served at the 47th Annual Harvest Home. The 50th Harvest Home was held on the Church Lawn, August 21, 1926. The attendance and receipts of the day was the next to the largest of any of the preceding years with the event showing a net profit of over \$240.

The program that year was a unique change and in harmony with the 50th Anniversary, consisting

of a pageant with tableaux and addresses appropriate to each period.

The entertainment was introduced by the Chairman of the Harvest Home and Church Organist Mrs. Margaret Baker, who then played a selection on the Church Pipe Organ. Then the orchestra composed of Mr. and Mrs. Archie Bloss, C. C. Backus, and Miss Alice Rogers rendered several musical selections.

Members taking part in the Tableaux were Margaret Folsing Ruby Robinson, B. S. Brundage Bernadine Hann, Naomi Stickler Katherine O'Donnell, Lillian Holmes, Ruth Slocum, and Florence Mulholland. A. D. Fuller, C. H. Watson, and Rev. F. A. Hassold were the principal speakers. The 51st Harvest Home was again held on the Church Grounds with the newly organized 60 piece "Boys Band" playing musical selections during the dinner. Five more tickets were sold than the year before and J. W. McGovern was the main speaker.

For the 58th Harvest Home in 1934, the music was furnished by the American Legion Band. Among the speakers for the program were Harold Hardy, Mrs. Anna Betzner Sission, and J. Knox Miller. A long list of ministers and elders who served the Church since the beginning of the annual event then made a few remarks. Rev. H. D. Bacon, a former pastor, also gave a short talk. The audience then rose for a moment's silence in memory and tribute for Rev. F. H. Bisbee who had recently passed away. Prof. Franklin Cannon of New York City, then played a few musical selections on the Church pipe organ. Mr. Arling Baker served as chairman of the Annual Harvest Home for 20 years from 1915 until 1935.

The 60th Harvest Home was held on August 20, 1936 with Mrs. Sara Harder and Mrs. Ila Snyder as co-chairmen. The Andover American Legion Band played musical selections during the dinner hour. Rev. Eric Clithers, a friend of Pastor R. E. Dronsfeld was speaker and told of his travels in Europe for three years where he had recently returned from.

In 1944, the Harvest Home Celebration was cancelled due to the Polio Epidemic scare, with families making a donation to the Church instead.

At the 70th Harvest Home in 1946, a Turkey-Dinner was served to 213 people.

In 1947, a Turkey Dinner was served to 51 people with Helen Boyd and Gertrude Kupp serving as co-chairmen.

On August 19, 1948, a Chicken Pie Dinner was served to 219 people at the 72nd Annual Harvest Home with Gertrude Kupp and Betty Bostwick as co-chairmen. The Andover Town Band played during the meal and Phyllis Temple rendered a vocal solo. The Rev. S. R. McKinstrey was the speaker with Rev. Albert Rogers also giving a fine talk. Price of the dinner that year was \$1.25.

The 73rd Harvest Home was held on August 18, 1949, with 200 people being served dinner. A musical program was presented under the directionship of Audrey Baker.

On July 20, 1950, at the 74th Harvest Home, a 5 p. m. Chicken Dinner was served to 194 persons instead of at noon as it was felt that working people would not be able to attend dinner at 12.

The 75th Harvest Home (and last one to date) saw a Fried Chicken Dinner served to 234 people at 5 p. m., on July 26, 1951. The Andover Town Band played musical selections during the dinner hour and Rev. O. B. Hill was the guest speaker. Dorothy Grossman and Hazel Barlow were co-chairmen of which turned out to be the final chapter of a 75-year tradition. And, who knows, perhaps the Bi-Centennial revival of this tradition may give it enough impetus to survive for another 75 years.

Attention Lions !!

There will be a Board of Directors Meeting Monday, August 9th at 7:30 p. m., at the Catholic Hall. Lion President, Donald Baker

Alvin W. Edwards

Alvin W. Edwards of Sinclair, Wyoming, died Tuesday, July 27, 1976 at his home after a brief illness.

He was born May 10, 1913, in Greenwood, N. Y., the son of Walter P. and Clara Edwards. He married the former Mildred Dodson, who died in 1963. He later married the former Jean Jones, who survives.

Mr. Edwards was an operator for the former Sinclair Refining Company in Wellsville, N. Y.

Surviving, in addition to his widow, are a son, Theodore D. Edwards and a daughter, Mrs. James (Patricia) Reisman, both of the Town of Willing, N. Y.; six grandchildren two brothers, Nathan Edwards of Dansville, N. Y., and Donald Edwards of Andover, N. Y.; six sisters, Mrs. Angie Williamson of Florida, Mrs. Alice Knowles of Wellsville, Mrs. Ella Albert of Orlando, Florida, Mrs. Florence Pfaff of Arkport, N. Y., Mrs. Anna Willington of Hornell, N. Y., and Mrs. Cecelia Lewison of Seattle, Washington; and several nieces and nephews.

Friends were received at the Embser Funeral Home, Wellsville, Friday. Funeral services were held at the funeral home Saturday July 31, 1976 at 11:00 a. m. Burial was in Valley Brook Cemetery, Andover.

Andover Summer Playground

The summer is swiftly passing by, so swiftly that there wasn't time to write an article last week. We had the most fantastic trip in the history of the Playground. We went to the Genesee Country Museum, in Mumfords, N. Y. Despite the rain the children were spellbound by the 18 Century Village. The first thing we noticed was a carriage step and to our amazement saw printed in it "Made in 1879 by A. O'Donnell Andover, N. Y." It was quite a day enjoyed by everyone.

The Staff wishes to thank everyone for donating odds and ends to the Playground. The response was overwhelming and now we have a shortage of space to store the items. We appreciate all you have donated and now have enough things for Crafts all summer.

We received supplies last week from Allegany Co., this has helped immensely.

On Thursday August 12, the Playground will go to the State Lumber Museum, located on Rt. 6 between Galeton and Couderdport. A limit of forty will be allowed to go. Please pick-up permission slips at shed.

Next Tuesday, August 10, will be the Playground's first annual "Clean-Up Day". Consult Playground bulletin for more details. The Playground wishes to thank Mr. Elmo Barden for the new bulletin boards he has made us and also the sawhorses. They were both very badly needed.

Friday, August 13, will be our third annual Playground Swim Meet. All grades are encouraged to participate in this afternoon of competition and fun.

Please read the schedules available at the shed for more detailed list of the weeks events.

Calling All Kids !!

On Tuesday, August 10, the Playground will sponsor the First Annual Playground "Clean-Up Day". We will meet at the Playground Shed at 9 A. M., and organize into groups. At 9:30 A. M. we will have a tree planting ceremony behind the shed at which time we will plant our own pine tree. The rest of the morning groups will clean-up the papers and cans around town, clean-up the Library lawn, Legion Park and possibly plant flowers on the "Island".

This is your Town, let's all pitch in and show Andover how proud they should be of their youth. Bring rakes, brooms, gloves for hands, and lots of ambition and enthusiasm. For further information contact the Playground Staff



James H. Kessler is a patient in the Jones Memorial Hospital, admitted Sunday, suffering from a fractured wrist and hip, sustained in a fall, Sunday.

Mrs. Paul McCormick Sr., underwent major surgery, Monday at the St. James Mercy Hospital.

Michael Dodge is a patient in the St. James Mercy Hospital. Mrs. Camilla Harris, a medical patient in the St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell, has been discharged.

Mrs. Charles Caple is a medical patient in the St. James Mercy Hospital.

Mrs. Sylvester Pelton has been discharged from the St. James Mercy Hospital and is convalescing at her home.

Clyde Neu, a patient in the Jones Memorial Hospital, has been discharged.

Rebecca Slawson, a surgical patient in Children's Hospital, Buffalo, returned home, Monday.

New Arrivals

Mr. and Mrs. Duane Cook of Water Street, are parents of a daughter, Heidi Lyn, born Friday, July 16, 1976 at the St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell, N. Y. Mr. and Mrs. George Brown are the maternal grandparents and Mr. and Mrs. Gussie O'Dell are the maternal great-grandparents.

Greenwood Bicentennial Vesper Service In Word And Song

The Community of Greenwood will initiate its observance of the Bicentennial of our Nation with a Community-wide Vesper Service of Patriotic and Sacred Music this Sunday, August 8th, at 8:00 P. M.

The service being sponsored by the Churches of the Community and Bicentennial Committee will be held at the Greenwood United Methodist Church. There will be several instrumental and vocal musical selections, scripture and a brief message.

The committee making arrangements for the service is Mrs. June Rollins, Rev. Ray Albaugh and Rev. Carol Bassett. Everyone of the community and surrounding area is invited to attend.

Notice!

If there are any new families in the Andover School District who have not registered their children (pre-school or in school) with the school office, will you please call 478-8491 or stop in at the school office as soon as possible.

Golden Age Club News

The Golden Age Club will meet at the Grange Hall, Monday, August 9th.

Committee will be Hazel Barlow, Ruth Connors and Hazel Callaghan. Cake will be furnished by the Committee.

Hope to see everyone out

Grange News

No. 1098

Andover Grange will meet at the Grange Hall, Wednesday night at 8 o'clock on August 11. They will have a business meeting and election of officers, so let's have a good turn out. Mrs. Winifred Perkins, Lect.

Rescue Squad Report For The Month of July

The Andover Rescue Squad report for the month of July shows that Ambulance 2-A-9 made 6 runs for a total of 24 man hours and 307 miles.

Ambulance 2-A-17 made 8 runs with 38 man hours and 596 miles. Respectfully submitted, James R. Haugh, Captain

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