



St. Stephen Protomartyr Ukrainian Catholic Church

views from the pews

How it all began . . .

January 28th, 2018

Starting this journey documenting stories of St. Stephen's history, I had to find someone who would be willing to be my liaison between the past and the present. Enter, my friend Don Bobyn. Last Sunday Don arranged for me to have coffee with Ed Samoil who, with his wife Lorraine, were part of the driving force in creating St. Stephen's parish.

Coffee in hand I met with Ed, Don and John (Siroishka). Ed shared many funny and remarkable stories. We heard stories of the first "Young Men's Club", the parish picnics and the many meetings that were held planning the building of a new church, one to be called St. Stephen's. One of my favorite stories was about the first altar that was used when we celebrated Divine Liturgy in St. James Hall (the building we rented to have our Sunday Liturgy before we had our current location). Ed Samoil built a makeshift portable altar with 3 sheets of plywood donated by Nestor Zemlack. His helpers were Jim Herchak and Roman Hawreluk. It took them 1 ½ hours to build, Ed painted it white and the first altar cloth was Lorraine's best tablecloth. Another "Ed" invention is the dolly that we still use in the hall to transport chairs for various events. Ed and Lorraine's contributions were many. Ed still lives in his original home, with the original "rumpus room" where many strategic meetings took place. He misses Lorraine every day.

Loved ones always have a special place in our hearts. Coincidentally, the day I was to meet Ed was the day he had arranged to have PANAKHYDA for Lorraine who passed away 17 years ago. Panakhyda are prayers of remembrance of the deceased. We ask God through the prayers to forgive the sins of the deceased and to keep them in his presence for all eternity. The prayers are also meant for the living to focus on God's mercy. The Panakhyda service was very moving. For some of you that may not know, Panakhyda is also held at the end of a funeral service and at the blessing of the graves that we have every spring after Easter. As the Lenten season is upon us another Ukrainian word that comes to mind is SOROKOUSTY: special prayers during the Lenten season to make present the names of those who have passed away from our parish. May we always remember those who gave so much of themselves over the past 50 years to create the wonderful St. Stephen's parish we enjoy today.

I welcome YOUR stories, so please contact me: laurie.kindrachuk@shaw.ca or cell: 403-614-5581

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- ❖ **Save the dates:** June 1 – June 3, 2018 for the 50th Anniversary **Commemorative Events** – details coming soon!
 - ❖ Please don't forget to sign up for this year's **50th Anniversary** Edition of the St. Stephen's **photo directory**.
 - ❖ **Recipe Collections** for the 50th Anniversary Cookbook - please send as many as you wish. Deadline April 1st. For more information contact Trish Popel at 50anivcookbook@gmail.com or 403-835-3077.