

MRS. BALL:

(St. Alban's Anglican Church)

INTERVIEWED:

March 11, 1975

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Mrs. Ball was baptised at St. Alban's in September, 1926, at the age of 6. It was a new church and the new minister was baptising all those not baptised in the area. The other churches on Lulu Island had been St. Anne's, Steveston, St. Jeromes and St. Alban's Mission - the last two having closed 1915 and 1912 respectively.

Rev. A. T. F. Holmes, working from St. Augustine's, Marpole, started the congregation in the Brighthouse area.

Mrs. Ball reads a prepared report on History of St. Alban's -
QUOTE:- (Note: * -Info. Not on Tape)

"In 1893, a 57 year old Australian clergyman, the Reverend J. M. Donaldson, arrived here with his wife and bought his own private residence in Steveston from some Baptists. Mr. Donaldson served here for 21 years, retired, then presumeably died soon after. His wife lived here for more than a decade after her husband's death. A note in the parish's first register gives a hint of an interesting story, "Purchased from Mrs. Donaldson in April, 1928".

From 1914 until 1925 the clergy of Marpole ministered here and then the Rev. A. T. F. Holmes joined the Rector of Marpole, Rev. R. Axon, being given charge of this area. On Sunday, Oct. 11, 1925, at 11:15 A.M., Mr. Holmes conducted the first service for this congregation and served until 1930.

Coming from the mission field in Honan, China, Rev. A. J. Williams was to stay with us through the next 12 years, until 1942.

At a time when our country was at war, we were pleased to welcome Rev. W. E. Gilbert, coming out of retirement and no doubt

.../2

inspired by the service of his son who was on active duty with the Air Force.

In 1946, Rev. P.R. Ellis, after serving his country on active service in the R.C.A.F. came to St. Alban's until he was called to St. Paul's Church, Vancouver - a vacancy created when the Rev. G.P. Gower was elevated to Bishop. It was during Rev. Ellis's stay that the present church was opened in 1950.

Post war period saw many changes in the occupants of the Rectory, reflecting of course the instability of the world in general after such a conflict. Rev. R.L. Armitage became Rector in 1951 and remained until 1953 when he left to go to Scotland and later to become chaplain of Pearson Hospital.

In 1953, from the mission field in Northern Alberta, Rev. G.P. Chant became Rector. During his tenure, the church was consecrated and became self-supporting. Mr. Chant left in 1957 to work among the Sarcee Indians in Southern Alberta.

Our present Rector, Rev. H.J. McSherry, again a missionary, this time from Hiroshima, Japan, has served with us for 16 years and in his time we have seen the building of a new Parish Hall.

* The following list will enable readers to recall events in their correct setting:

Bishops of the New Westminster Diocese

Rt. Rev. A. W. Sillitoe	1879-1894
Rt. Rev. J. Dart	1895-1910
Rt. Rev. A. U. De Pencier	1910-1940
Rt. Rev. F. C. Heathcote	1941-1950
Rt. Rev. G. P. Gower	1951-present

.../3

Rectors of the Parish

Rev. J. M. Donaldson	1893-1913
Rev. A. T. F. Holmes	1925-1930
Rev. A. J. Williams	1930-1942
Rev. W. E. Gilbert	1942-1945
Rev. P. R. Ellis	1946-1951
Rev. R. L. Armitage	1951-1953
Rev. G. P. Chant	1953-1957
Rev. H. J. McSherry	1957-1973**
Rev. Grant Dale	**1974-present

** -Canon Reeve interim priest.

This history of St. Alban's Church can be put down in a list of statistics but primarily it is a group of people. "Our daily round the common task should furnish all we ought to ask". How these people, in doing their common task were able to create a church, makes quite an interesting story. Let us look at a beautiful crocheted tablecloth or, perhaps for the benefit of children and perhaps men who do not appreciate the art of crochet, a string of beads. These beads are small, some large, some brilliant, some not so brilliant, some, unless placed beside the proper mate can not be appreciated, some intricate, having an outer shell which until this shell is penetrated cannot be seen. Some are quite complex and have many parts. If you take these beads in your hands you will find they have different facets and, depending on what light is shining, they will have different appearances.

In order to understand fully the pleasures and problems encountered by parishioners over the last forty-nine years, we must take away the television set and instead of worrying about the pitch of the bass or treble on the radio, how thankful we were for a sound first on earphones then on the larger more conventional set. We must also consider the great depression. What great hardship was forced on Canadians, not to mention two great Wars. The chief means of transportation between Lulu Island and Vancouver was the Inter-urban tram which travelled from Steveston to Davie and Seymour Streets in Vancouver, taking exactly one hour to make this journey.

.../4

The physical features of our parish in 1926 were somewhat different from 1975. Take away the sub-division surrounding Garden City School and there was the 80-acre farm of William Beecham. Take away the sub-division between Blundell & Granville; No. 3 Rd. and Gilbert, and we had another extensive farm. The Richmond Square Shopping Centre stands now where once the Brighthouse Racetrack stood. Broadmore sub-division was the farm of H. M. Fullerton, where beautiful race horses spent their off-season. How I remember being considerably late for Sunday School one day as my sister and I watched while a herdsman rescued an unfortunate cow from No. 3 Rd. ditch. St. Alban's Rd., until about 1948, was known as The Lane. On our way to church we might encounter several cows quietly grazing, tethered at the end of a length of chain.

St. Alban's has seen many changes and is now considered, I might venture to say, an urban parish.

In 1926, Rev. A. T. F. Holmes, a vigorous young clergyman, was very interested in young people and with the help of wardens Mr. F. A. Tomsett and Mr. R. Duckett, held services in the Richmond Municipal Council Chamber for almost one year. The parish hall, built by Mr. Bassett and Mr. A. Carlross, was opened in Sept., 1926. This is known today as the Scout Hall. I'm sure some found it difficult to adjust to the practice of using the parish hall for all sorts of activities during the week and then on Sunday rearranging the furnishings to form a church.

The entrance at this time was at the north east corner, there being a small entrance hall, and large washrooms at the north, and the W.A. room and kitchen at the south end - all heated by coal and wood stoves. On Sunday morning, or perhaps Saturday night, an Altar was wheeled into place with suitable hangings placed on it and behind it. This altar cloth, provided by Kendal Parish in the Lake District of England, through the efforts of Mrs. Fleming and her sister, Miss M. Gornall. A lectern to be used as the pulpit also was placed to the right

.../5

of the altar. In 1928, through the efforts of Mr. R. Duckett, a Bible was presented by Rev. and Mrs. Whish of Lympsham Rectory of Somerset, England. The pews were benches with a back-rest and chairs which would serve during the week for other activities. Later, at the prompting of Rev. W. E. Gilbert, Mr. W. Prescott built a communion rail which added much to the appearance of our hall-turned-church.

During this period, the congregation consisted of people of English origin. I shall mention - Mr. & Mrs. R. Duckett, Mr. & Mrs. H. Skuse, Mr. & Mrs. H. Hammett, Mr. & Mrs. Fleming, Mr. & Mrs. F. A. Tomsett, Mr. & Mrs. F. Plumley, Mrs. Marshall-Wright, Mrs. Butler, Mr. & Mrs. H. Anderson, Mr. & Mrs. Bassett, Mr. & Mrs. Hamson, Mr. C. H. Bradbury, and Mr. & Mrs. Baker.

In 1928, Mr. J. H. Marshall became People's Warden, and served in this capacity for 16 years. His son Ron, later served for 4 years. We must, of course, note the contribution to the parish family life of the Marshall family. Mr. Ernest Marshall, brother of the Warden Jack Marshall, served as Sunday School superintendent. Blessed with a large family, Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Marshall were always present with some of their children; whether it was Sunday School or the Harvest Supper or to take part in the Dramatic Club plays.

In 1930, another family which was to play a very great part in the development of St. Alban's came with Rector, Rev. A. J. Williams. Mrs. Williams, a qualified Nurse in her own right, gave unstintingly of herself. Always a parish visitor with her husband, at a time when there was no Resident Doctor or V.O.N. on the Island, her advice, so freely given, was very much appreciated. On Sunday, an active member of the Sunday School staff, she was also a very good soprano for the choir. Their children, Phyllis, Dick, Flo and Jimmy, also gave great assistance, not to mention Grandpa, Mrs. Williams' father. On Sunday, Grandpa Howland, a very distinguished looking gentleman with white hair and beard,

.../6

was a very valuable tenor in the choir and on weekdays was the janitor. This was not an official position. He received no remuneration for all his years of service, but what a splendid job he did.

During Mr. Williams tenure the great depression took place and because "Necessity is the mother of invention", St. Alban's fellowship flourished. The fertile land of the mighty Fraser delta attracted many people from the parched fields of the Prairies and although money was scarce, food was plentiful in Richmond and people were able to withstand the economic struggle.

St. Alban's Dramatic Club was formed in the 30's and became well known for its production of three-act plays. In fact, I would say St. Alban's Parish was the cultural centre of the community. Talent was remarkable, perhaps originating on the English music hall stage. One production, "The Monkey's Paw", was exceptionally well done. Here, we must mention some names - Mr. & Mrs. R. Willitt, Mr. & Mrs. D. Smith, Misses' Audrey & Phyllis Knutton, Mr. B. Miles, the Marshall family, Mr. & Mrs. P. Sowden, Mr. & Mrs. J. Cunningham, Mr. & Mrs. H. May, and, of course, the Rector, Mr. Williams. The stage for these productions had to be constructed of planks and large sawhorses. Many hours of hard work were spent by these faithful people. The properties consisted often of the furniture from the Rectory living room. During intermission there was always some musical treat. Mr. O. Plumley would sing, "I'm Burlington Bertie from Bow", or "Albert and the Lion", and the Knutton sisters would favour us with a tap dance all in beautiful costume.

St. Alban's Sunday School has seen many changes. In 1925, classes were held in the Municipal Hall and later the General Currie School was made available. After the building of the Parish Hall, Sunday School was held there. In the early years, the Sunday School Picnic or perhaps the Lulu Island Parish Picnic was something to remember. A double-header inter-urban tram was made available on a Saturday in June to travel to Stanley Park. The tram, bedecked with a large banner proclaiming Lulu Island Parish Picnic, would pick up a happy crowd from the three congregations and proceed to

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the Park being routed over the city street car lines, down Davie and along Denman Street and thence to the Park entrance via Alberni Street. After a walk through the park, we made our headquarters by the duck pond. While the ladies of the W.A. prepared the lunch, Mr. Duckett would organize a baseball game to occupy the time of some of the gathering; others would watch the weekly cricket game at Brockton Point, or swim, or just explore the Park. At 8 P.M. the tram left on its homeward journey with a happy, singing group.

Preparations for this occasion were begun in January, so that the tram was reserved as well as the tables and all other necessary arrangements which made this day a memorable success.

Wartime was a period of discipline and the Sunday School Picnic was one pleasure that was cut to a minimum. Following the war, our picnic has been held at King George Park in Richmond, at Squamish, and for several years now at White Rock.

Rev. P. R. Ellis, having served as chaplain in the R.C.A.F., realized the need for contact with veterans and their families housed in the Army Huts of what is now Richmond Gardens. He asked Mrs. Brangwyn to take the Sunday School to the Army Camp. For a period of adjustment to civilian life, a very successful St. Alban's Sunday School brought religious contact to children who have since grown to take an active part in Church life.

Under the leadership of Mrs. P. Brangwyn and Mr. R. Marshall, the Sunday School grew to an almost impossible size. Impossible from the point of giving efficient instruction. Our little hall was becoming too small to meet the need of the growing Sunday School.

The change of leadership in the ensuing years indicate the inadequacy of the little hall and perhaps the chief reason for the building of the new structure we see today. However, we must give credit to some people who realized the real need for religious instruction to the young;- Mrs. A. Bevington, Mr. G. Mavety, Mr. Smart, Mr. Ambeault, Mrs. Haddon - then on into the new hall:- Mrs.

.../8

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H. Milligan, Mrs. Embleton and Mr. Clyne.

No Anglican church would be complete without music. Miss Thel Fleming played the piano for services until the harmonium was in use. Shortly after the arrival of Mr. Williams, Mrs. T. T. Kneale, took care of the choir and music. An English music teacher in her own right, she was able to bring the choir to a point when they were invited to sing on radio and form the nucleus of the Richmond Choral Society conducted by another Anglican from Steveston, Mr. J. Mathew. In 1936, the choir was lead by Miss P. Williams, with Mr. J. Homan at the organ with some relief from Mrs. C. Jones and Miss M. Church. This brings us to the war years when Mrs. J. H. Bridge became organist with Mr. R. Blake choir master. Mrs. Bridge was to continue in this capacity for about 12 years. Mr. Ellis made the first attempt at forming a boys choir, assisted by Mrs. M. Gray. The Junior Choir, made up of about 30 boys and girls, were able to take the services with Oliver Tetlock at the organ.

At this time, the new church having been built, we were fortunate in having Mr. J. Grisdale as organist. Through the efforts of Mr. J. Grisdale and public donation, a pipe organ was obtained from St. Helen's, West Point Grey. We acknowledge also Mr. Grisdale's assistance in auditing the church accounts. Up to this date the organists of St. Alban's gave of their time and talent. Under Mr. Grisdale's tutoring, we then had Miss Penny Hinde at the organ. It was quite an accomplishment for a 16 year old girl to handle a pipe organ so efficiently. Another young woman, Miss C. Haddon, also gave valuable assistance. Coming closer to present day, Mrs. J. Thomas was organist. Mrs. Thomas provided the mirror above the choir stalls as a memento of her service with St. Alban's choir. Dr. Percival-Smith provided leadership for the choir.

The familiar face at the organ at the present time is the very conscientious Mr. Russell Savage. In 1965, Mr. A. F. Murray, a soloist from Christ Church Cathedral, prepared the choir for the

.../9

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Kiwanis Music Festival and won a sheild, an award for small choirs. Dr. Percival-Smith has trained a number of boys from the age of eight until voice change, and these boys have won distinction at the Music Festival for several years. Mr. Ron Weller is the present choir leader.

The W. A., always a tower of strength in any parish, was no exception at St. Alban's. The first president of the W. A. was Mrs. F. A. Tomsett. In 1928, they held their meetings in different members homes. Transportation being a problem, the ladies formed themselves into "Circles" named for the stops on the inter-urban tram line, Lulu, Cambie and Brighthouse. It was in these circles that the beginning of the Church Building Fund was made. To create interest, the ladies called this their "Baby". Yearly functions of the W.A. have always been the November Bazaar and the Strawberry Tea in June. Over the years, the ladies have had a variety of fund-raising projects.

The W.A. has always sponsored youth training in the "Little Helpers", the "Junior W.A.", the "Intermediate W.A.", and later the "Girls Auxiliary". Miss Joy Cox has been assisted in her training at the Anglican Women's Training College in Toronto. Joy graduated in 1967 as a senior student and now serves in a downtown parish.

To cover adequately the activities and contribution of the ladies to St. Alban's, is indeed a story of great length and in the fear of omitting anyone I shall refrain at this point from mentioning names. Let us remember, "They also serve who sit and wait". Besides their duty at home, these ladies have taken responsibility for their commitments to the Diocesan Board of the Anglican Church in Canada.

The men of St. Alban's have from time to time organized themselves into a Men's Club or the Brotherhood of St. Andrew; however, because in the building of a new church there is always work to be

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done, many hours of work given so generously is indeed evident. What personal satisfaction Mr. F. Taylor must feel in having helped by the foundation of the church. I'm sure Mr. A. Hewitt well remembers all the hazards in placing the cross at such a height. The yearly vegetable sale was one of the men's club projects. Realizing the surplus of vegetables grown by parishioners, they took these commodities to one of the city parishes and set up a green grocery; the proceeds going to the building fund. Mr. R. H. Maddocks' contribution in this instance doesn't go unnoticed. Another man active over many years and many tasks was Mr. S. J. Roberts, Warden for 9 years.

The church, built over a period of six years, was consecrated 8 P.M., Friday, April 29, 1955 by Bishop Gower.

The new hall was built by contract (Les Boyd Co.) - the interior being finished by the volunteer labour of some seventy parishioners.

The A.Y.P.A., an organization for young people, has always been at St. Alban's. In 1925, meeting in the Brighthouse Club House, the A. Y. was indeed an asset to our parish. Besides providing wholesome activities for themselves, they have always helped materially. When the Scout Hall was built, the young men put the lining of V Joint on the walls and ceiling.

Mr. O. Plumbley, one of the first members of St. Alban's A.Y.P.A., served this organization at parish level, deanery and provincial, as well as being a representative to the Dominion Council. His service was most commendable, continuing over a period of over 30 years.

During the depression years, the A.Y. had a membership of between 40 & 50 members. At city functions, they often had the highest representation of any in the deanery.

In 1939, with the outbreak of the Second World War, the A.Y.

.../11

.../11

sent her young people. The first man to volunteer from our group was John Gates, who served in Europe only to be killed-in-action just four short months before V.E.Day. The Roll of Honour hangs in the nave of the church today, the artwork done by Mr. R. Blake, himself a veteran of the First War.

* ROLL OF HONOUR

John Gates	Phyllis Williams
John Stephen	Robert W. Duckett
Harold Fielding	Russel Holman
Colin Hobson	Larry Parker
Arthur Hobson	Norman May
James Wenborn	Walter Wheren
Malcolm McLeod	Alfred Ball
James Knutton	Robert Russell
Gerald Halliday	Donald Archer
Jack Halliday	Joseph Fielden
Anthony Maddocks	Roy Bassett
Ernest King	Roy Goldney
Gordon Dolphin	Jack E. Hamson
Roderick Archer	Wilfred G. Hamson
Alexander Horne	Harry L. Hamson
Roy S. Marshall	Reginald Moslin
Russell Foster	Ralph Moslin
Gordon Moss	William Moslin
Harold McKinnon	Walter Swenson
Gordon McKinnon	Harcourt Armev
Harvey Minns	

The Lion's Club of Richmond was organized with the assistance of the Burnaby Club and an interested chairman, also a friend of St. Alban's suggested to Rev. P. Ellis the possibility of a group of ladies to "feed the Lions". The St. Alban's supper club was then formed under the leadership of Mrs. H. Thornton. This group proved to be a very profitable venture and provided large sums of money for the Church Building Fund. "Money being the root of all evil" as the saying goes, The Supper Club ran into competition from the W.A. and it was necessary in later years to curtail activities somewhat. At one time no banquet was too large for these ladies to cater.

The Boy Scout Movement, although technically interdenominational, was introduced to Richmond at St. Alban's through the

.../12

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efforts of Mr. J. White. After an introductory period of leadership by the Scoutmaster from St. Augustine's, Marpole, Mr. Miles, Mr. White became first Scoutmaster of First Richmond Scout Troop. Mr. White's contribution to the life of the community was later acknowledged in that he was awarded the Kiwanis First Citizen Award. He also served as Rector's Warden.

Yet another first for St. Alban's, is the Richmond Day Care Centre which began December, 1966. Here 30 children of working mothers are fed, slept, and well cared for 11 hours a day Monday to Friday every week. Under Mrs. M. McSherry, a parish group of six women and one man form the Board of Directors.

St. Alban's has not been without tragedies, conflicts, and feuds; this is nothing new for the Bible tells us that "There shall be wars and rumors of wars". This is indeed another story, perhaps one better forgotten." -END OF QUOTE.

October 1, 1974

Fire, believed arson, destroyed the furnace room and all in its path - including a brand new organ. Damage was estimated at around \$85,000.00. The church was re-built and first services were held February 23, 1975. Services in the interim had been held in the Church Hall. Some hymn books, robes and linens were destroyed.

Rebuilding

Interior was re-done completely. Pews and altar have been cleaned. In the re-building, a new chapel has been incorporated in the south transcept which they did not have previously. Some windows were damaged, but have been restored.

.../13

List of Memorials

* CHURCH FURNISHINGS

<u>Gift</u>	<u>Donor</u>
Narthex Bookcase	Mr. & Mrs. Alger
Literature Rack	Mrs. Brangwyn
Pews	Mr. & Mrs. Elton - Mr. & Mrs. Eckersley
Nave Carpet	Mr. E. H. Herbert
Clergy Vestry Desk	Mrs. O. Hanna
Altar Guild Room Metal Desk	Mr. S. Potts
Prayer Books	Supper Club & Parishioners
Hymn Books	Sunday School
Pulpit	Mr. & Mrs. Nelson Naylor
Altar & Altar Vases	Mrs. A. I. Johnston
Altar Book	Parishioner & his wife - 1963
Book Rest on Altar	Mrs. J.H. Bridge & Miss E. Smith
Alms Basin	Mr. & Mrs. Elton
Chalice	Mr. & Mrs. Geo. Alger
Chancel Screen, Panelling, Arches, and Lights	Supper Club
Wooden Communion Hall	Mrs. Brangwyn

Clergystoles

- Green	Church School	- for present Rector
- Red	Girl Guides	- for present Rector
- White	Women's Groups	- for the Parish
- Purple	Cubs & Scouts	- for present Rector

<u>Gift</u>	<u>Donor</u>	<u>Person Honoured</u>
Narthex Screen	Rossell Family	Mrs. Rossell
2 Candelabra	Marshall Family	Esther Marie J. H. Marshall
Rector's Prayer Desk	Plumbley & Tomsett Family	F.A. & H.E. Tomsett
Font	Friends & Fellow Workers	Lyall Rossell
Clergy Desk Prayer Book	Green Family	"Bob" Morgan
Chalice	Mr. & Mrs. W.R. Schollon	Walter Fisher Reid
2 Small Candlesticks	Mrs. K. Udy	Mrs. Rossell

.../14

<u>Gift</u>	<u>Donor</u>	<u>Person Honoured</u>
First Small Altar Cross	Mrs. H. Hammett & Mrs. R.C. Palmer	Father & Mother - Mr. & Mrs. Rompkins
Processional Cross	Mrs. F. Bennett	Ethel Pitt
Organ Light	Mrs. Laura Cocks	Mr. Geo. Cocks
Garden Plants, trees, etc.	Mrs. L. Cox	William Cox
Memorial Garden, Book & Stand	Wife & Family	Sydney R. Taylor
Altar Cross	Mr. & Mrs. R.C. Palmer	Robt. Tompkins Palmer

Chancel Flags

2 Veterans of World War I -	Union Jack & Canadian Ensign
Local M.L.A. -	United Nations
Church -	Mrs. Dorothy Hewitt.

MURIEL NOBLE