

MR. DOUG ROBERTSON - (Steveston Gospel Chapel)

INTERVIEWED:

April 21, 1975

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Mr. Robertson became connected with the group in 1958 when it was an outreach group to children under the leadership of Mr. & Mrs. Cameron Moore, of other Gospel churches in Vancouver.

Mr. Robertson was volunteer leader of a children's camp run by these churches and met Mr. Moore.

The adult leaders of the program were holding meetings in the old Municipal Hall in Steveston "the Green Hall". The building was too small for the group, and it overflowed into the school auditorium in Steveston. Because of overcrowding, they had to move, and in 1962 they started holding meetings in the Orange Hall on Steveston Highway. Mr. & Mrs. Moore built a home on No. 2 Road, Richmond, and this became a 7-day a week open house. They involved some hundreds of children, among about 20 workers.

1967 Undertook construction of church on No. 1 Road under a building committee from the Christian Brethren churches of Vancouver. Lot had been purchased about 2 years previously as 2 acres at 1035 No. 1 Road. It was part of a cow pasture with very few houses around.

Architect

Mr. Will Wilding (member of church in Vancouver).

Contractor

Mr. John Osborne (also a member of a similar church).
Had a crew of hired workers, plus volunteer labour.

Cost

\$50,000. for lot and building.

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Financing

Mortgages of \$35,000 through Stewards Foundation in Toronto, balance raised by donations.

Building

Frame construction on concrete slab, running east and west facing south. Flat tar and gravel roof with broken silhouette over the entrances.

Rooms

Main auditorium seats approximately 200 people. There is a smaller auditorium at the side of the main entrance. Both halls have movable seats rather than pews. Facing the foyer is a nursery room next to this are washrooms and furnace room. There are two smaller rooms used as Bible Study rooms.

Ministry

There is no minister. The work is undertaken by lay people - not sufficient cash flow as the congregation is very young. There are many gifts from other churches to help in the upkeep.

Heating

2 gas-fired furnaces, in the flooring.

Lighting

Incandescent.

Groups

Regular services on Sunday. On Sunday, afternoon, there is a Youth Group for social activities or Bible Study. Groups go to 4 school gymns. in Richmond. On Friday night they have sports events and skiing week-ends and picnics and ball games. Well attended girl's hobby evening. Youth Bible Study Night on Tuesday evening. ~~Mr.~~ Moore's home is still open to any children.

Congregation

Approximately 40 recognized members, plus others interested in Bible teaching. Many visitors are from associated churches, giving their support to a smaller church. Primarily the congregation is drawn from the west corner of the Island. Originally the work was among th

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Japanese children but has grown to include many ethnic groups.

Role of Women & Youth

There are ^{no} Deaconesses in the church - teaching children and social work. Youth workers are active and are recognized as Deacons in peer groupings.

Alliances

Each church under the Christian Brethren is self-expressing and not under the control of any other church. There is an inter-relationship of doctrine between churches. Each congregation comes under the authority of Elders who have spiritual or business experience to guide the congregation. The Christian Brethren are world-wide with many missionaries. There are about 16 churches in the Vancouver area and from one end of Canada to the other. Easter time is the time for Conferences at the spiritual level but because of the autonomy of each church there is no business discussed.

There is no leader of the Christian Brethren as such, but there are certain men of authority of doctrine around the world. There is at the present time at U.B.C. (Regent College) a group who are authorities in the interpretation of the New Testament teaching.

Sunday School Bus

Started about 1968. The bus was purchased from B.C.Hydro. It is used for the Sunday School programme and also for taking them to special events and to camp on Anvil Island. There are 3 qualified drivers who volunteer.

Upkeep

There are no collections taken at public meetings, but free-will offerings are made among the assembly of members. Some other churches contribute toward the upkeep.

Special Events

The whole success of the church and its outreach is the main source of special achievement.

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Role of Mr. Robertson

Mr. Robertson is a member of the Board of Trustees (there is no Minister).

Plans for the Future

Provisions were made by the architect to allow for the addition of Sunday School rooms, but this will not be undertaken until the existing first mortgage has been substantially reduced or repaid.

There are desires to make the church more involved in the community. The first incursion was made this year when a Brownie group was allowed to take service.

There are also hopes for a full-time minister to handle the growing needs of the group.