



# Church sacristy comes 'back home'

Last Wednesday, Oct. 21, was "moving day," as part of a landmark Thompson church was brought back home, returning to a spot very close to its original location.

The complex move was the latest project of the Thompson Historical Advisory Committee, which wanted to see the sacristy from the former St. Frederick's Catholic Church brought back into public view after years of being "hidden away" on private property nearby.

According to historical records, the church was built in early 1900 and stood on the north side of Pine Street in Thompson, the street where the township hall is located, on the second lot east of Bluff Street, where US-2 now crosses.

The well-known IXL Lumber Company provided the white maple for the floor. Charles Sitters and Emery Haskins were the carpenters in charge of construction. They were assisted by three Thompson men: Aldred Bouschor, Morton Miller and Earl Hruska

Among the early priests who served Thompson was Father Geers, who baptized the first babies in the village before the church was built. Alice Bell was baptized on April 20, 1884, and Edward Herrick on Nov. 7, 1885.

Father LaForest came to the village on Saturday afternoons starting in 1905, traveling by horse from Manistique. He recited the Rosary Saturday evenings, stayed overnight in parishioners' homes and celebrated Mass on Sundays. Some of the residents who furnished a room for the priest were Casper Gilmet and Fred Miller, while Henry Voisine provided barn space for the horses.

Other early families of the St. Frederick Parish were Bousechor, Hursh, Vincent, Quinlan, Moran, Brown and Fitzgerald.

The church served the area for many years before being purchased

by Joseph Hoholik, who moved it to his farm, located two miles north on M-149.

That property, which was later owned by Walter Smith and currently belongs to Michael and Kathy Haynes, was where the sacristy was still standing until last week.

The Haynes family donated the sacristy to the township. Kathy Haynes is pictured with the structure in the top left photograph above.

The move was carried out by Vandermissen and Son House Movers and Crane Service of Escanaba. Members of the crew included Tony Vandermissen, who has 45 years experience in moving buildings, Tony Vandermissen Jr., Cody Vandermissen and Jeff McGraw.

The sacristy was carefully raised and secured, then brought out to M-149 for the slow trip south to US-2. It was then placed on a foundation built by volunteers Jody and Meg Wnuk, Don Zorn and Fred Jasmin, with concrete and materials from Manistique Rentals Inc.

The new location at the intersection of US-2 and Little Harbor Road, adjacent to the township hall, is not only close to the church's original home but also clearly visible to residents and visitors.

The Thompson Historical Advisory Committee will eventually repair age- and weather-related damage to the structure and restore it for use as a township historical museum.