

Miles and Catherine Kennedy



Miles John Kennedy, born May 18, 1850 and Catherine MacDonald, born August 21, 1857 were united in holy matrimony on February 21, 1887 at St. Alexander's Church in Lochiel, Glengarry County, Ontario. Eight children were born in Glengarry County. Alexander (Alex) who remained single and was wounded in the First World War. Angus, who also remained single and would look after the original family home. Margaret, who nursed in England and France during World War 1, married Earl Horton and lived in Winnipeg. Hugh married Georgiana Letourneau and resided in Victoria. John served in World War 1 and was killed in action April 9, 1917. Christine (Tina) married Alex Perron, brother of Hector and Eugene Perron. Eugene operated Perron's store at the south west corner of St. Anne Street and Perron Street. Alex and Tina would later reside in Hawthorne, California. Donald (Dan) served in World War 1 and was killed in action September 26, 1916. Isabella (Belle) married Bill Pare and resided in St. Albert. Both brothers, John and Dan, have their names engraved on the local cenotaph on St. Anne Street.

In December of 1893, Miles, who suffered from severe asthma, travelled west to purchase land. He chose River Lot # 58, the present location of the Sturgeon Valley Golf Course. In the spring of 1894, Miles and Catherine and their family of eight children settled in a log home built near the Sturgeon River. This structure was built with the first brick chimney west of Winnipeg. This chimney was built by the neighbours, the Sinclair family, who were Scottish Masons.

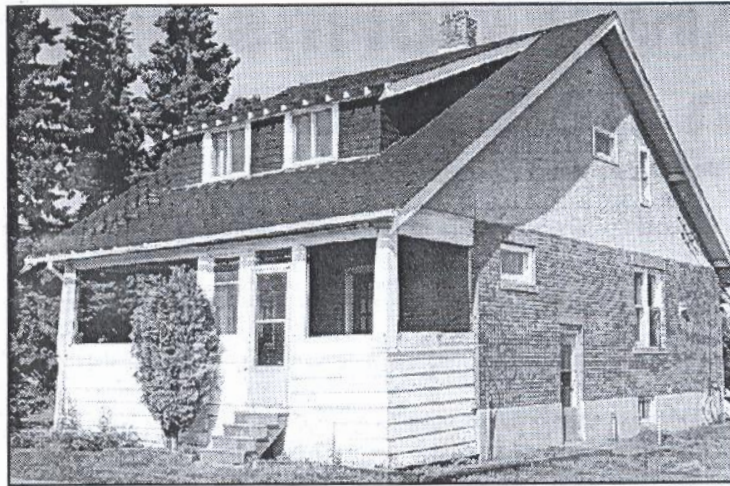
Four additional children were born in St. Albert: Elizabeth (Lizzie) married John Deane and nursed at the Edmonton General Hospital and also did private duty nursing for families of the district; her son Jack Deane and three members of his family still reside in St. Albert. Albert married Marguerite Coffey and resided in Nanaimo, B.C. Andrew married Bertha Brennand. Bertha Kennedy taught school for many years in St. Albert and district and has a local elementary school on Larose Drive named after her. She was also very active in many ways within our parish community. Bertha participated in many celebrations as the organist at Sunday Masses, weddings, funerals and years ago during the Christmas season, she would play Christmas hymns on the pipe organ in the church choir loft. Joyful Christmas melodies could be heard from the church all around Mission hill and down to Perron Street for residents and shoppers to enjoy. She was also a member of a local musical group called "*The Groovy Gang*". The youngest of the children, Catherine (Kay), married Hector Lamer, who owned and operated Lamer's General Store at the north east corner of St. Anne Street and Perron Street.

Over the years, Miles purchased about 800 acres which now included River Lots # 57 and #59 and the quarter section # 62 across the railway tracks. The family carried on a most successful mixed farming and cattle operation. Catherine carried out the household duties without any hired help. These tasks including making soap, butter, clothes for the children and preserving fruits, vegetables, meat and curing hams. Weekends were always busy, with Saturday being spent cooking and baking in anticipation of the large number of friends who would gather at the Kennedy home for Sunday dinner.

Entertainment hours were few but were well-filled with ball games, dances and ice skating. An ideal Sunday afternoon would be spent skating on the Sturgeon River to Big Lake and back, on skate blades strapped to winter boots. The Sturgeon River also served as the "old swimming hole" during the summer months. Other outings included trips to St. Albert for Sunday church services and shopping, and on very special occasions a trip to Edmonton for large purchase items and machinery.

On New Year's Day each year friends and neighbours visited the Parish Rectory for the Bishop's Blessing. The party then moved from house to house and finally to the Kennedy family home for a big party and dance with Bertha Kennedy at the piano. This custom continued to 1941, where the party moved to the St. Albert Community Hall.

In 1925, Miles contracted Jack Peters, who was married to Margaret MacDonald, first cousin of the Kennedy's, to construct their second home on the south end of the property. The two storey house was moved on August 26, 1997 a short distance and is now home to the Namao Museum and Tea House.



Miles passed away at home on October 27, 1926 from a massive heart attack. Catherine also died at home on April 3, 1928 due to cancer. Miles, Catherine and six of their children and extended family members are buried in the Church Cemetery. They include Alex, Angus, Bill and Belle Pare, Elizabeth Deane, Andrew and Bertha Kennedy, Hector and Kay Lamer.

In celebration of the 100th Anniversary arrival of the Kennedy Family in St. Albert, a large family reunion was held at Cardiff Hall during the weekend of July 16-18 of 1993. Sunday afternoon the family toured the old family home which was filled with many, many memories. Younger members of the family were delighted to discover their roots, while older members revelled in family relationships.