
Skipping Village Gazette

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church

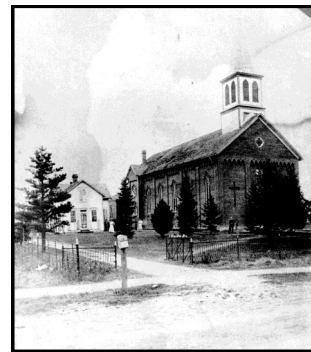
Written by Carol Wentz

The story of this church in McCartyville actually had its beginnings before churches of any kind were established in our area. French priests first provided occasional religious services for fur traders and the early pioneers in the late 1700's. Masses were celebrated in open fields, barns, and log cabins.

Beginning in the late 1820's Irish immigrants began arriving to work on building the Miami-Erie Canal. These Irish workers and their families settled near what eventually became McCartyville, and the names McCarty, Brown, Custy, Gunning, Phalen, Grady, Hannan, Fealey, and O'Reilly, among others were commonly heard.

At first, the Irish immigrants found solace in attending German Catholic masses in the nearby settlements of Minster and Ft. Loramie until the Rev. Patrick Henneberry CPPS of Wapakoneta started a congregation near St. Patricks in 1859 to serve the Irish families of McCartyville. After meeting in members' homes, a log church was built in 1863 at St. Patricks. One of the early Irish described the weekly trip to St. Patricks as a trek through dense woods, on a path called Donnelly's Lane, which contained an old bog, where the men carried the women and girls across.

In 1882, the twenty Irish families of McCartyville decided to build a church of their own. Three acres of ground for the church was donated by Thomas Fealey, Sr. and William Hahhan, and the parishioners, along with their priest, Fr. Dominic Schunk, began working side by side to build the structure.



First church in McCartyville built
in 1882 by Fr. Dominic Schunk
and 20 Irish families

These same parishioners, who worked at building the church during the day, performed variety shows and sponsored socials to help pay for the church. The socials were held in Custy's Woods (now Gehret's woods), and the variety shows were held in Fealey's barn located near the present day Parish

Activity Center. Church services were also held in the barn.

Because of Tom Fealey's insistence, the 40 ft. by 60 ft. church, was built of brick which came from a brickyard established at the intersection of SR 29 and SR 274 to build a brick house for the Sollmann family (the house still stands at that intersection). The church seated 200 and was heated by two big stoves. The parish house was erected a short time later, and Fr. Schunk who had lived in Minster became the first resident pastor.

By the late 1890's many of the Irish families were forced to move to nearby cities to find work in the factories such as the new National Cash Register Company in Dayton. German families gladly purchased their farm land and moved into the McCartyville area. However, these German families preferred to worship in Minster where the sermons were given in German. Later a

New ADHS Lifetime Membership...

Stan and Sally Baumer

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Anna District Historical Society.***

compromise was reached to have shared German and English sermons, and the Germans and Irish families began worshipping together at Sacred Heart Church.

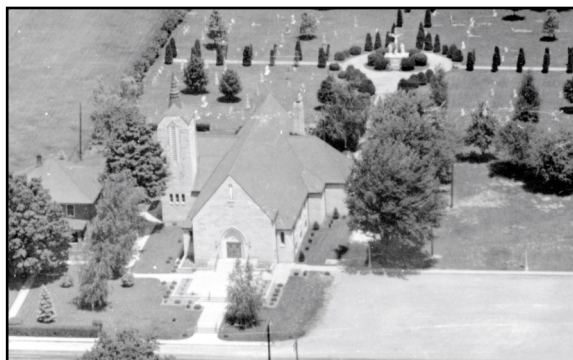
At noon on March 19, 1948 an 80mph wind from the southwest left a gaping holes in the walls and roof of the church. Rain poured into the building and weakened



Damage to church from 1948 storm

the walls to such an extent that the building had to be condemned. The church pews and other church items were moved into the gymnasium of the school next door where church services were held for the next four years.

After receiving an approximate insurance settlement for \$80,000 the parishioners themselves took down the old building and began building a new church. The cornerstone was laid in May of 1952, and the church was dedicated on March 19, 1953.



Sacred Heart Church 1953 - 2006

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Church continued to grow and thrive into the next century. By 2006, it was decided that the church building needed to be enlarged, and on June 17, 2007 the newly renovated and enlarged church was dedicated.



Renovation of church 2006 - 2007



HELP US PRESERVE OUR HISTORY

Please consider becoming a member of the Anna District Historical Society.

Name of member _____

Name of spouse (family memberships) _____

Children under 18 (family memberships) _____

Address _____

Phone _____

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Dr. Milliette Level _____ (\$50 per month)

Anna Carey Thirkield Level _____ (\$25 per month)

Lois Lenski Level _____ (\$10 per month)

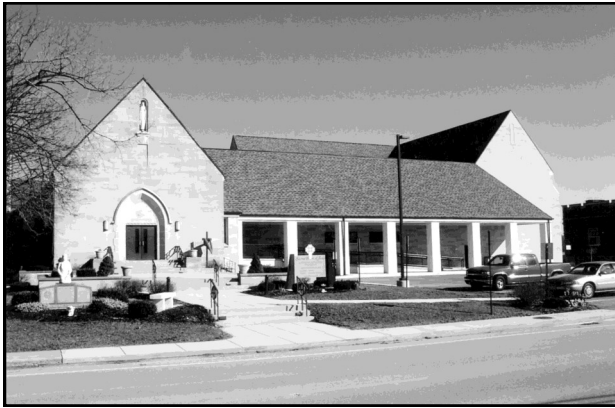
Single Membership - \$20 yearly _____

Family Membership - \$25 yearly _____

Lifetime Membership - \$500 _____

Mail to: ANNA DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. Box 133, Anna, OH 45302

Contact Susan Bertsch at 937.394.3072 for more information on leveled giving.



Sacred Heart of Jesus Church as It Appears Today

Sacred Heart's three large church bells, named Joseph (weighing 1188 lbs.), Christian (836 lbs.), and Maria (583 lbs.) were first brought to McCartyville from St. Louis in 1893 and hung in the original church the following year. By 1963 the original riggings on the bells had become so worn that the bells were unsafe to ring. They hung mute for twenty years. Then in 1983, under the leadership of the Rev. Charles Rohrkemper, the parish took on the task of raising \$20,000 to repair the bells and riggings. Since that time, they have rung out across the houses and farmland surrounding McCartyville once again. Inscribed on the Joseph bell are the words, "God Speed to All Our People." May it be so for many years to come.

Thanks from the ADHS

The members of the Anna District Historical Society wish to thank our community for their support of the recent tax levy renewal for the County Wide Historical Alliance. The monies from that levy will continue to help our local society as we continue to update and also maintain our local Packer Historical Center. We are also able to offer educational programming to our community residents as well as students from the Anna Local Schools.

Among the updates and educational programs made possible by the passage of the levy:

- Second floor chair lift to make the upstairs rooms of the Packer Center handicap accessible
- Parking lot at rear entrance to the Packer Center
- Replacement of first and second story windows
- Santa's Workshop for the Anna Elementary first graders
- Lois Lenski educational programs for both adults and students

First Graders Participate in Santa's Workshop

Nearly a hundred first grade students came to the Packer Historical Center in December to purchase gifts for their parents and step-parents. Two classes were bussed at a time to shop. One class listened to *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and *The Night Before Christmas* in another room while the other class shopped. After a half hour the classes switched places. Each student paid \$2 per gift, and the ADHS funded the remainder of the costs for the gifts and gift bags. Thanks to all of the first grade grandparents who gave their time to help with the workshop. It was indeed a "Merry" Christmas morning for students, teachers, and all the adult volunteers!



Linda Glessner, at left, giving first graders their shopping instructions at the Packer Historical Center as elementary principal, Denise Johnson, looks on.

Archival Room to Be Repaired and Updated

The Archival/Office room upstairs at the Packer Center is finally being repaired and refreshed. The Troyer Drywall Company has made all the necessary repairs to the ceiling and walls in the room. Additionally, the room will be painted and the hardwood floor refinished. A new oak office and shelving unit which will completely cover the east wall is currently in the construction process as well. This will make the room much more useful for storing and cataloging the archival collection of the ADHS. This room represents the final phase of refurbishing all of the rooms in the Packer Historical Center.

Anna District Historical Society

112 West Main Street

P.O. Box 133

Anna, OH 45302

POSTAL CUSTOMER

ANNA, OH 45302



View of tornado damage at the old Sacred Heart Church



Sacred Heart Men's Choir 1930

(l-r): Ray Riethman, Urban Bornhorst, Tony Watercutter,
Lester Bornhorst, Bill Koverman, Harry Koverman, Leo Watercutter,
Clem Aselage

Anna District Historical Society

112 W. Main Street, P.O. Box 133

Anna, OH 45302

Phone: 937-646-0011

**The Packer Center is now open by appointment
only. Call 937.646.0011 to schedule
a private tour.**



McCartyville School Twins, 1943-1944

Front Row (l-r): Erma and Norma Sturwold, Norbert and Norman
Platfoot, John and Joan Buehler

Back Row (l-r): Marcellus and Marcella Hoying, Doris and Delores
Barhorst, Wilbur and Wilbert Hoying, Wilbur and Gilbert Sturwold