

# Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church Historical Society Inc. Newsletter

November/December 2012

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## Greetings!

Hello everyone! Wow! How time flies! It has been a year since we met in Tolstoi with Archbishop LeGatt to discuss the fate of the Tolstoi Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church. During that meeting the message was clear: honour our history; respect the sacrifices and hard work of our grandparents and parents; and preserve the past for future generations. With these goals in mind, a working group of volunteers was formed and they were tasked with determining how to move ahead. Since that time, progress has been made and we are excited to share the results. A lot of work remains to be done but we are well on our way to ensuring that the Tolstoi Holy Trinity Catholic Church history will be honoured and the building and grounds will remain as a monument to our hardworking parish families.

This newsletter will be published twice a year to keep members and other interested persons informed and to offer opportunities for persons to get involved including volunteering time, contributing financially or providing valuable historical parish information. Enjoy the newsletter and let us know what you think!

## Update from the Working Group

A working group of volunteers was formed as a result of the September 2011 meeting with Archbishop LeGatt. The group included Denise Lubiansky, Pat Tkachuk, Sandra Drewniak, Jo-Anne Drewniak, Monique Mayner, Joyce Fisher, Raymond Fisher, Marie Probizanski, Mary-Ann Drewniak and John Drewniak.

The working group was to determine if it would be feasible to take ownership of the Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church from the Diocese. To reach a decision on the issue of ownership, a number of things were considered including short-term and long-term costs and how to pay for them. The group also researched the steps to be taken to gain ownership of the church, which included obtaining charitable status.

After a lot of research and discussion, the group decided there was enough support to set up a permanent organization and to pursue purchasing the church and property. The **Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church Historical Society Inc.** was chosen as the official name and the Society was registered with the Province of Manitoba as a non-profit corporation. The organization's first directors were drawn from the volunteers of the working group and will remain until the first Annual General Meeting is held.

The Diocese has approved our efforts and is willing to turn the church over to the Society once the organization becomes a charity.

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## Becoming a Charitable Organization

The Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church Historical Society Inc. is planning to hold its first Annual General Meeting in spring 2013. This meeting is critical to establishing the Society and receiving approval to become a charitable organization. During the meeting a new board of directors will be elected, a set of rules or bylaws will be approved and a variety of topics will be discussed including the vision for the Society, future plans for the church and grounds, fundraising and support.

The election of the new board of directors is important to setting up the organization. The members will need to elect a new board of directors which will represent everyone. In order to become a charity it is also a requirement that less than half the directors are related to each other.

After the meeting, the new board of directors will apply to the Government of Canada for charitable status. Not only will this allow the Society to obtain title to the church, but it will also be able to issue tax receipts for donations.

## Church and Grounds

Following the September 2011 meeting with Archbishop LeGatt, a building inspector assessed the church's structure. Concerns had been raised at the meeting that the church was no longer in a good state of repair and it may only be a matter of time before it would need to be torn down. The inspector reported that the building was still in good repair putting to rest any concerns about the current state of the building. He did, however, recommend that steps be taken immediately to waterproof the building. The Diocese agreed to provide funds to the working group to conduct the work.

During the past year, volunteers have stabilized and waterproofed the church structure. Work included:

- Installing poly-sheeting in the crawl space,
- Adding gravel to the crawl space and creating a sump pump hole,
- Sealing the foundation,
- Sloping the ground away from the foundation, and
- Replacing fascia and eavestroughs.

This work has eliminated the wicking of any ground moisture into the church preventing further deterioration. In addition, the carpet was removed from the inside of the church so that the wood floors could remain dry.

Although the paint on the ceiling is peeling and will need to be removed before any painting can be done, the church's good bones shine through! We continue to marvel at the beauty and simplicity of the building. It is definitely a gem worth preserving.

Finally, because of the state of disrepair of the rectory, it was demolished and the site was cleaned up. The costs were covered by the Diocese and any reusable building materials were donated to a northern Parish. All furniture and household effects left in the rectory were moved to the garage and church for safe keeping. Anything of historical value to the church will be kept. Everything else will be disposed of in a garage sale or similar event, and the funds will be used to help maintain the church and grounds.



## Want to become a member?

All successful organizations need interested members and the Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church Historical Society Inc. is no exception. All members will have a say and a vote in how the Society is run. Although it would be wonderful if all members played an active role in supporting the Society; we would also be happy with your moral support and participation at our annual meetings.

If you are interested in joining the Society, please fill out the membership form attached to this newsletter. Send the completed form to the group's address at P.O. Box 123, Tolstoi, Manitoba, R0A 2E0. (A website is being set up and eventually online membership applications will also be accepted.)

There is no cost for membership and any interested person can apply. If you are interested in preserving the church or belonging to a historical group this is your chance.

## How can you help?

There are many different ways that you can lend us your support.

**Membership:** Most importantly by becoming a member you will help to ensure that the organization is viable and will be around for many years to come.

**Information and Photos:** You can provide us with information on the parish, church or Tolstoi community. Any Holy Trinity Parish or Tolstoi area photographs are welcomed! This parish was part of the community and we want to ensure that the town is represented in historical displays.

**Interviews:** You can also volunteer to participate in a living history interview where you will have the opportunity to tell us your recollections of parish life. These interviews will be conducted by volunteers and can take place in your home or even by phone! The goal is to gather information which will be used by the Society to preserve the history of the parish.

**Volunteer:** We are always looking for volunteers to help with the restoration of the church and grounds. Give us your name and contact information and we will let you know of the next planned work party!

**Donations:** You can contribute to our future planned fundraising events! As well cash donations are always welcome.

**Participate at fundraising events:** For our first event, we will be at the Vita Arena Flea Market on December 8 selling baked goodies. Come out to the market and buy some delicious baking for your Christmas holidays!



## Contact us

By Email: [tolstoichurch@gmail.com](mailto:tolstoichurch@gmail.com)

By letter: Box 123, Tolstoi, Manitoba, R0A 2E0

You can also contact one of the volunteers to get more information:

Denise Lubiansky (204)425-3095

Jo-Anne Drewniak (204)275-1694

Sandra Drewniak (204)425-3556

## Upcoming Events

Please mark these upcoming events on your calendar.

<b>Bake sale at the Vita Arena Flea Market</b>	December 8
<b>Annual General Meeting</b>	Spring 2013
<b>Spring cleanup</b>	May 2013
<b>Fall Planning Meeting</b>	Fall 2013

## Did you know?

The Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church Historical Society Inc. is not responsible for the cemetery. A separate cemetery committee has been set up under the Parish of St. Malo.

If you are looking for information about the Tolstoi Holy Trinity Church cemetery please contact:

Sandra Drewniak (204)425-3556

Raymond Fisher (204)427-3328

Pat Tkachuk (204)425-3582

Father Dominic La Fleur (204) 347-5518

