The Edifices Are Imposing In B’field

BY SALLY BURF Special Writer

An apple orchard, a social hall, a church and a humble beginning of the present Unitarian Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and Christ Episcopal Church, Crestbrook in Bloomfield Hills.

Today, their imposing edifices belies this early history and like the early Christians who gathered in small rooms so did the pioneers of these churches.

In the 1840s, the Reverend Robert Marshall, a Unitarian leader, was visiting the area and called on the early believers. They built a small meeting house, but it burned in 1846.

In 1851, Mrs. Pardee assumed leadership of the church and invited the community to join and work together. They met weekly in the homes of the faithful.

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ST. HUGO’S WAS BUILT AS A MEMORIAL

BY ELIZABETH VAN LOAN

St. Hugo’s of the Hills, the first Catholic church within the city limits of Bloomfield Hills, is set back from the Olympian Road on a knoll above the village community. It was consecrated on September 8, 1897.

This church is a gem of Gothic architecture and is surrounded by tall and stately trees. It is a beautiful and tranquil setting that is perfect for spiritual retreats.

The church is named after St. Hugo, a 6th-century religious leader who is known for his dedication to the poor and the sick.

St. Hugo’s was dedicated in June 1896. Twenty families, originally members of Holy Name Church in Birmingham, made up the congregation.

Through the years, the congregation has grown to include about 200 families. The church now has 630 families.

The parochial school at the north end of the property was built in 1940’s by Walter O. Briggs, who was an active parishioner.

The school was supported by the Holy Name Society and relied on the support of the community for its success.

In 1965, a new building was added to the school to accommodate the growing number of students.

FUTURE PLANS include a new parish center, a new auditorium and a new parish hall.

The church community is vibrant and active, with many faith-based activities, including a Youth Group, a Women’s Guild, and a Men’s Club.

St. Hugo’s is truly a spiritual oasis in Bloomfield Hills, offering a place of refuge and solace to those who seek it.

Not Many Here Now!

Proceeds from the recent auction and school festival put on by the teachers and pupils of the Union school house (Hill school) in 1879 were used to buy one of the vacant rooms in the school house for the accommodation of students at the school examinations.

The school was closed in 1879 due to financial difficulties. It was later sold to a local family who converted it into a home.

No Books Were Lost

At the annual meeting of the Ladies Library Society in 1879, records show that there were 764 books in the library. Since the society had started in 1869, nearly $2,000 had been passed through the hands of the society.

The society’s minutes were kept in a box at the local post office, and it was reported that the book from their library had even been lost up to that date.