

## St. Peter the Apostle Roman Catholic Church

SITE #030501

GC1VA63

Written & Researched by Angela Wynton

### SITE IDENTIFICATION

Nearest Community: Clinton, V0K 1K0  
 Location/Parking: N 51°05.303'  
 W 121°35.771'  
 Geocache Location: N 51°05.273'  
 W 121°35.781'  
 Accuracy: 4 meters  
 Letterboxing Clues: Refer to letterboxing clues page  
 UTM: East 0598305;  
 North 5660535 10U  
 Geocache altitude: 900 m./2,953 ft.  
 Overall difficulty: 1  
 Terrain difficulty: 1  
 (1=easiest; 5=hardest)  
 Date Established: 1865  
 Ownership: Church Property  
 Access: • Public Road  
 • Year-round  
 • Vehicle accessible  
 • From Hwy #97N, turn west on the Kelly Lake Road.  
 • Parking available in church lot.



Following the Cariboo Wagon Road, along with the Gold Rush adventurers, came those in the service of God. It was 1864 when Bishop Louis-Joseph D'Herbomez and his priests became responsible for the missions of the colony and the conversion of the natives to Catholicism.

Traveling priests baptized native families throughout the

colony, but it was not until about 1865 that a church was erected above the wagon road in Clinton. The simple log structure soon became the holy gathering house of the newly converted.

In 1892 the church was rebuilt by Father Maurice Marchal and the Pavilion villagers out of logs and materials from the first structure. The log structure was rough and the bell tower short. Although

For more information or to report a problem with this site please contact:  
 Gold Country Communities Society  
 P.O. Box 933 Cache Creek, B.C. V0K 1H0  
 Tel: 1-877-453-9467  
 email: [info@exploregoldcountry.com](mailto:info@exploregoldcountry.com)

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*The original church, built around 1865*



Father Thomas once claimed, “...Father Marchal was an excellent carpenter...”, the Church of St. Peter the Apostle was not evidence to justify such a claim. It was one of the most primitive of the mission churches.

By the mid-1940s the church had become very dilapidated. In 1949 Father Gerald Dunlop wrote to Monsignor McDonagh requesting a new church for his one hundred souls. While some services were ‘enlightening, as the sun shone through the roof upon the congregation’ others were ‘disheartening, as the cold rains dampened spirits’. Ringing out the word of God could be a dangerous endeavor, even for the most devout, as debris from the crumbling bell tower would rain upon the bell ringer.

Joining Father Dunlop to rebuild, across from the original site, was Father Jackie Ryan, Father Wilfred Scott and Bill Swan, a Scottish carpenter. St. Peter the Apostle, church structure three, was completed and

blessed in 1952. The original altar from the first church, the picture of The Last Supper, the first statues and other artifacts were moved to the current church and remain there today. The church bell from England, that rang havoc of debris, now rings joyfully and crisply, echoing the toll of the Gold Rush and the First Nation Catholics of the Clinton Valley. Father Marchal, Father Ryan, Father Scott and Father Dunlop are long gone but their memory lives on in the soul of St. Peter the Apostle Church in the heart of Gold Country.

This lovely little white church can be seen from the highway as you are traveling north, just as you enter Clinton.

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#### BIBLIOGRAPHY & SOURCES

Scott, W. (c1980). Handwritten Letter to Ed. In *Clinton Historical Museum Archives*.

Veillette, J. & White, G. (1977). *Early Indian Village Churches*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Village of Clinton. (Undated). *Historical Walking Tour*. Self-guided Booklet.