

## Marieon Mara

June 25, 2014

My twin sister and I were born in 1924. I grew up in London and lived at 435 Ridout Street North, where the old Bank of Upper Canada stood. My mother was a World War I Army Nurse. Before the Cenotaph was built in Victoria Park in 1934, my twin sister and I, plus my parents, would stand on the corner of Dufferin and Wellington where our Church stands, to watch the Armistice Day parade every year (1920s), without fail. Sometimes we would sit on the church steps to watch the parade. I have so many memories of all the old churches, cathedrals and houses that surrounded Victoria Park. They reflect our British heritage.

After my father came from Ireland during the 1<sup>st</sup> World War years, he bought a house and ran a “printing” store which still stands on the corner of Albert Street. Someone in the family ran a pub in the same neighbourhood. The Sansone Fruit Company was part of the community in those days. My family was buried in St. Paul’s Cemetery until St. Paul’s Cathedral moved the family to Woodland Cemetery because they wanted the land.

My father was concerned about us as kids when we would cross Richmond Street because it was a big street with buggies. So, my sister and I attended a Baptist Church nearby (Talbot Street) and didn’t have to cross Richmond Street. We sang in the choirs. The Baptists love to sing, and the music was amazing. I was married in the Baptist Church on Talbot Street.

I first entered Metropolitan United Church to attend a Sunday night gathering known as the Fireside Hour. We would meet in Metropolitan’s lovely parlour complete with a large fireplace. Rev. MacNiven was the pastor. He wanted to attract more young people to the church, and started our Youth ministry. T.C. Chattoe was the organist and choir director. During my high school years, I sang in the Choir. Then World War II came along. The younger generation was scouted and went off to war.

I was involved in and enjoyed a lot of activities at Metropolitan and have had many good times here over the years. Thanks for “letting us in.”

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