

JUNIOR BRANCH

Douglas Memorial Hospital Auxiliary

FORT ERIE

Apr. 8th., 1957.

Mr. Louis McDermott,
High Street,
Fort Erie, Ont.

Dear Louis,

The help you gave me, as convenor,
and the committee as a whole, was a contributing factor to the
wonderful success our bridge luncheon and fashion show was.
Without your fashions, and pictures, it would have amounted to
very little.

If you should need any help with your
fashions etc, for the Centennial, we will be very happy to
reciprocate. Please don't hesitate to ask us.

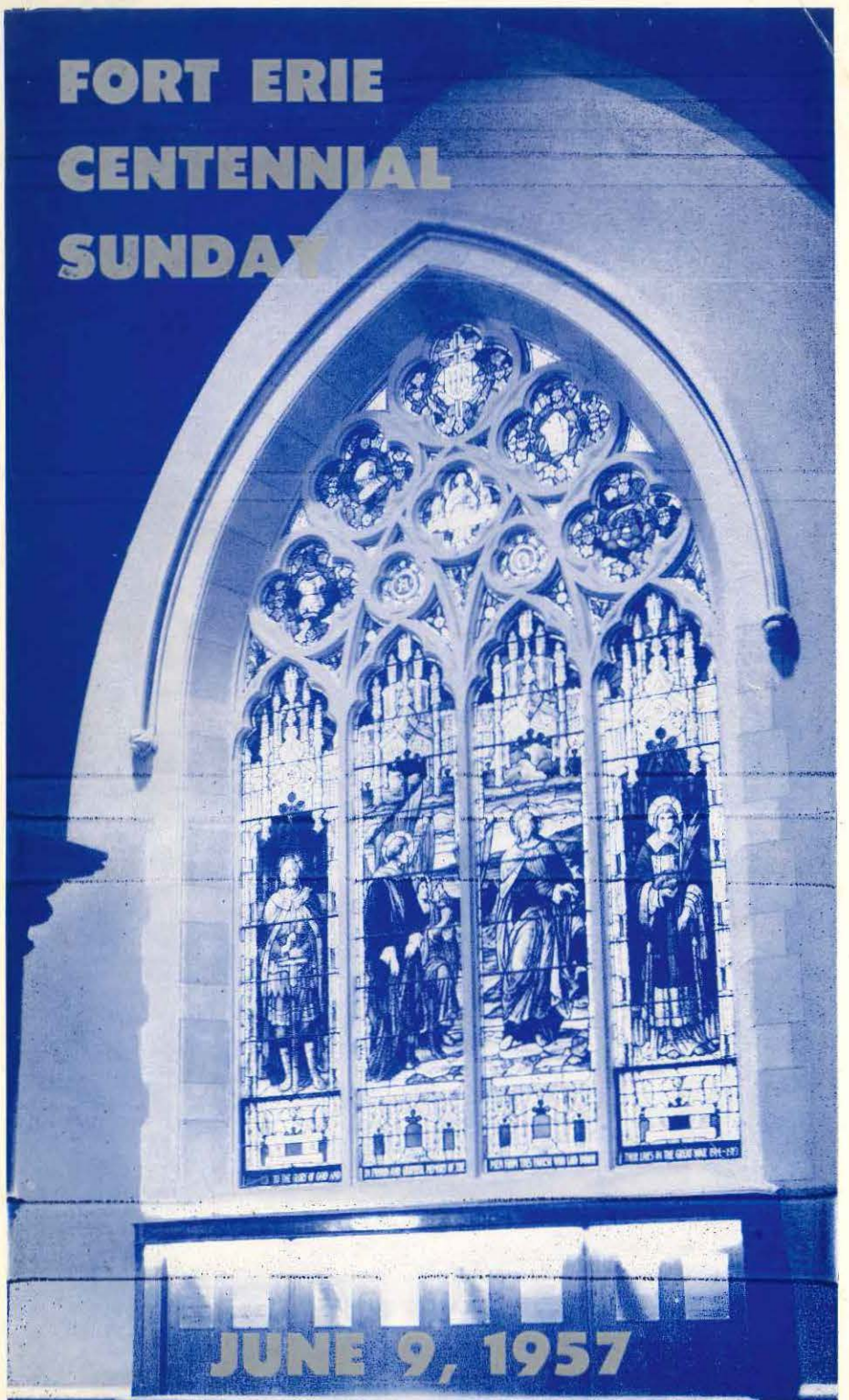
Once again, thanking you,

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stella Ziff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

1957, Bridge Luncheon Convenor.
(Mrs. Louis Ziff).

**FORT ERIE
CENTENNIAL
SUNDAY**



JUNE 9, 1957

1857 ★ Fort Erie ★ 1957

Fort Erie, in this Centennial Year, really marks two hundred years of history. It was born of the need for transportation and transportation has been its life-line ever since.

Indian tribes first came here to obtain the valuable chert for their rude utensils and tools of war, until the coming of the white man made Niagara River the first great pathway of our era for soldiers, sailors and settlers, when in 1764 a wooden fort was built at the water's edge by Captain John Montrossor, under orders of General Bradstreet, as a military post and wharf. Because of the lake it was named Fort Erie and was the only port at the foot of the lake.

Twice destroyed by icy gales, the fort was finally rebuilt of stone on the hill above and was in use until captured and blown up by the Americans in the War of 1812. Restored by the Niagara Parks Commission in 1939, this historic site has become a mecca for summer tourists.

In the meantime, thousands of United Empire Loyalists, Quakers and Pennsylvania Dutch, seeking security from the Revolutionary War in the States, came to Canada, some 180 families settling in Bertie township, and a small settlement had grown up around the grist mill, a mile down stream from the fort, called Fort Erie Mills or Waterloo. The place thrived through its ferry connections with Black Rock, across the river, the lone place of entry to Canada from western New York and trade and travel passed through to the old stagecoach route to Newark, York (Toronto) and Montreal. In fact, as a trading center, the community was outdistancing Buffalo.

But the building of the two canals, Welland and Erie, in 1824-25 diverted trade elsewhere and relegated Waterloo to a sleepy little village. An upsurge, however, was experienced later, with the building of a rail line and car ferry to Buffalo, and Waterloo, with a population of 900 was incorporated as the village of Fort Erie in 1857, with great expectations for the future, when the opening of the International Railway Bridge in 1873, a mile down stream, made the car ferry obsolete and again diverted commerce from Fort Erie.

With the building of this bridge and the subsequent settlement there, industry and population swept down to the new village of Victoria incorporated in 1894 and as the Town of Bridgeburg in 1916.

Then in 1927 the Peace Bridge was built — the greatest memorial of international goodwill between two friendly nations — and the old town of Fort Erie came into its own again. This was the age of the automobile and the bridge became the main artery for vehicular traffic.

Finally, seeking the advantages of amalgamation, the two towns became one on January 1st, 1932, retaining the old historic name of Fort Erie.

Since then growth has been steady and with a population nearing 9000 the town is fast achieving city status. With the two bridges bringing in tremendous trade and traffic, Fort Erie has become one of the largest ports of entry in Canada. It offers all facilities to industry, is well endowed with modern utilities and has all the amenities of the good life.

The years, indeed, have brought wondrous changes from the days of the Indian trail to the days of railways, highways and skyways of this modern era; and while Fort Erie looks back reminiscently to its historic past, in this, its Centennial Year, it also looks forward hopefully to an ever flourishing future.

*Courtesy of
Marguerite A. Raymond
Historian*