

## *History of St. Mary's School*

### *Maidstone Village*

**1960** - The history of St. Mary's school in the village of Maidstone in the Township of Sandwich South, begins on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1960. On this date, the first sod was turned. A new two room block and brick masonry building to accommodate 80 pupils at the estimated cost of **\$55,000** was to be constructed next to the church cemetery, at the suggestion of the bishop.

It was the decision of the rate payers, under the leadership of the chairman of the ***Maidstone & Sandwich South Union Separate School Board, James T. Markham*** to build a new school. The reason was to ease the overcrowding at St. Mary's SS#7, St. Joseph SS#5&8 and Sacred Heart SS#2 schools.

The school board awarded the contract to **Shepley Construction Company**, the lowest bidder for **\$46,200**. A teacher's room and washroom facilities were included. Upon completion, the new school was designated as RCSS #5 and named by the bishop, St. Mary's.

In September of the same year, the grades, 5, 6, 7, & 8 were taught in the church hall until the new school opened. The first two teachers who taught in the new two room school were Sister Aloysia and Sister Mary Catherine of the St. Joseph's Order.

**1963** - Again in 1963, a meeting of the area rate payers was held. Decisions had to be made. St. Malachy's (formerly known as St. Mary's) and St. Joseph's schools were badly needed of repair and were overcrowded. The question was, "Were these structures worth the cost of the repair?" At this meeting, the rate payers voted 40 to 25 to add on to St. Mary's making it into an eight-classroom school and phase out the smaller local two room schools, SS#7 & SS#8 (St. Malachy & St. Joseph).

On June 18<sup>th</sup> 1963, plans for an addition to St. Mary's began. The contract was awarded to **H.T. Reaume** of Tecumseh at an estimate of **\$96,000**, according to the plans of the architect, **J.R. Thompson Associates**.

**1964** - Upon completion, St. Mary's was now a centrally located separate school for Maidstone and Sandwich South Catholic School Board. At the end of 63, the students from St. Malachy's and St. Joseph transferred to the larger and began classes in the beginning of 64 at their larger central St. Mary's school. SS#7 (St. Malachy's) and SS#8 (St. Joseph's) were put up for sale.