

ST. BRIDGET DAY - MAY 26

Come and Join Us

St. Bridget Church's Architectural Significance

by Chari Johnson-Reynolds



Interior of Church showing Gothic style architecture. Its suspended vault ceiling. Photo courtesy of Chari Johnson-Reynolds, Johnson Restoration, Vermillion, Kansas

Gothic: "of or pertaining to a style of architecture prevalent in Western Europe from 12th to 16th century, characterized by having pointed arches, ribbed vaulting, flying buttresses, rich ornamentation, and a progressive lightening of the structure," as defined by Webster's Dictionary.

St. Bridget Church is an American adaptation of the Gothic style. Attention to detail in construction, ornamentation used in the building and finishings, and the suspended ribbed vaulting system are Gothic characteristics found at St. Bridget Church.

Delicate patterns emerge from the placement of bricks as they rise high on the native limestone foundation, framing windows and doors and accentuating the rise to the central peak of the roof. Although flying buttresses are common in Gothic architecture, St. Bridget Church has no flying buttresses. Instead stepped buttresses flank the north and south walls. Each step in the buttresses is accentuated by a concrete cap, creating a visual pause. This suggests nave, gallery, triforium and clerestory, the four levels characteristic of Early Gothic Architecture.

In the construction of the building, all window openings, doorways, and ceiling vaults end in a pointed arch. This characteristic is also present in the shaped woodwork comprising the balcony rail, main altar rail, side altars, confessional and pews.

One of the most unique features of St. Bridget Church is the suspended vault system. Huge beams form the framework for the

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ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

Announcing! The 1996 Annual Meeting of the St. Bridget Historical Society will be held on Sunday, May 26, 1996 at 1:30 p.m. at St. Bridget Church. The proposed agenda for the meeting is as follows:

- ◆ Opening Prayer
- ◆ Minutes of 1995 Meeting
- ◆ Treasurer's Report
- ◆ Old Business: Status of application: State / National Historical Societies
- ◆ New Business: Workday 1996
- ◆ Other Business:
- ◆ Election of President
- ◆ Closing Prayer

We reserve the right to make last minute changes to our agenda.

The Day's Activities

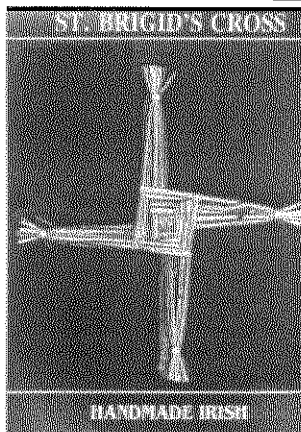
This year's St. Bridget Day celebration will be a little less hectic than last year's gala 25th anniversary. The annual Business Meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. at the church followed by Mass at 3:00 p.m. Father Tom Dolezal will be the celebrant as well as any other visiting priests who may be present. Following the Mass will be our traditional potluck dinner in the church basement. Drinks and table service will be provided by the St. Bridget Historical Society. Families are asked to bring **one meat dish** and **one other dish** for the potluck.

As in past years, the **Mass will be offered for deceased members** of both the St. Bridget Historical Society and old St. Bridget parish.

St. Bridget News

Rural Axtell, Kansas

SPRING 1996 NEWSLETTER



Did You Know?

WHAT IS THE ST. BRIGID'S CROSS?

St. Brigid (the Irish spelling of Bridget) is one of the first Irish Saints. She was known as "Mary of the Gael," co-patroness of Ireland. She was born in the year 453 A.D. near Dundalk at Fochard. The town of Kildare was the venue of her first Irish Convent. Her feast day falls on the first day of spring - February 1 - the day on which she died in the year 524 A.D. Her body lies at Down-Patrick, beside the graves of St. Patrick and St. Columba.

St. Brigid's father was a pagan chieftain. When the time of his death was drawing near she sat by him in prayer. While she kept her long watch she passed away the time by weaving her first Cross from the rushes at her feet (rush and rush matting was the floor covering at the time). Her father, seeing the Cross, asked her to explain its meaning, and as a result he became deeply interested in the Cross of Christ - **the Christian symbol**, and he eventually died a Christian, and the **Rush Cross** became St. Brigid's emblem ever since.

The usual day for the blessing of the St. Brigid's crosses is traditionally the **first day of Spring** and it is piously believed that this emblem keeps evil and hunger from the homes in which it is displayed and so, down through the ages, these crosses have been woven and used in Irish Christian homes.

It's an ancient Irish tradition to give a cross as a way of marking St. Brigid's day.

In some parts of Ireland the custom still survives that when a young couple are married and move into a new home, a St. Brigid's Cross is taken from the old house and placed in the new to indicate the continuity of family and faith.

It is still exchanged among some farming families and hung in outbuildings to protect the harvest and livestock from the dangers of lightning and disease.

Now you know about the St. Brigid Cross!

(The above information was taken from the packaging of a St. Brigid

WANTED: SOMEONE WITH MASONRY EXPERIENCE!



The St. Bridget Historical Society is looking for someone who can help us tuckpoint some places on the church. We are looking for an experienced person who can show our volunteers the proper way to tuckpoint and the proper mortar consistency. If you can assist us, please contact **Bill & Elsie Sunneberg** (402-852-2655) or **Terry or Norma Stallbaumer** (913-736-2910) or **Leo or Doris Glynn** (402-248-6243).

St. Bridget Cemetery News



You can help us maintain the cemetery if when you plant new flowers, etc., you would place them *between the stones* instead of in front of the stones. Planting flowers in front eventually covers the names on the stones and makes it much harder to mow and maintain our cemetery. We are thankful to the Stallbaumer family for the excellent job they do in mowing and trimming around the cemetery.

ITEMS FOR SALE

by the St. Bridget Historical Society

St. Bridget Cookbook - Reprint of a 1927 Cookbook published by St. Bridget Parish. Contains many advertisements from local and distance merchants. Indexed - \$10.00 each or two for \$15.00.

St. Bridget Commemorative Plate - \$15.00

History of St. Bridget Parish, published in 1994, the revised and expanded book - Indexed, 91 pages at \$17.50.

Who Said That? A 1995 publication. A Companion book to the history book. Contains reprints from newspapers, County histories, personal accounts, etc. about St. Bridget Parish. Some of these reprints were used in the parish history book, but many were not. - 42 pages at \$10.00.

St. Bridget Cross [imported from Ireland] - \$ 8.00

FOR THE GENEALOGIST:

Reprints of St. Bridget Baptismal records (1860 - 1967) - \$15.00 or **Reprints of Marriage records** (1863 - 1965) - \$10.00 or **Reprints of Death / Burial records** (1862 - 1995) - \$10.00 - All three record books are listed alphabetical and chronological.

Make checks payable to **St. Bridget Historical Society**. If ordering through the U.S. Mail, please add \$3.00 to total price for postage.

AN UNPLANNED WORK DAY
April 10, 1996

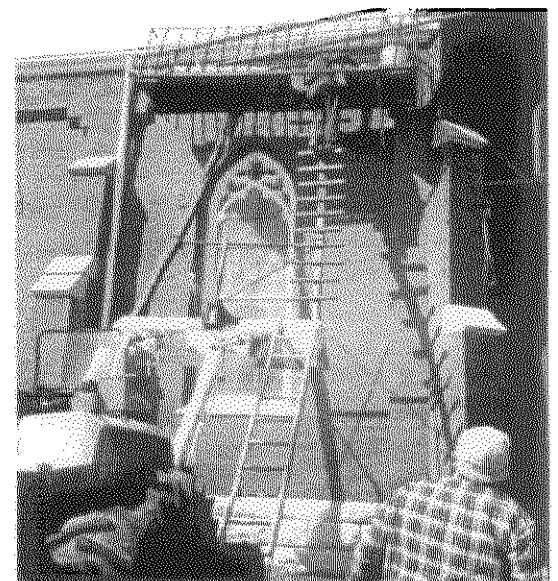
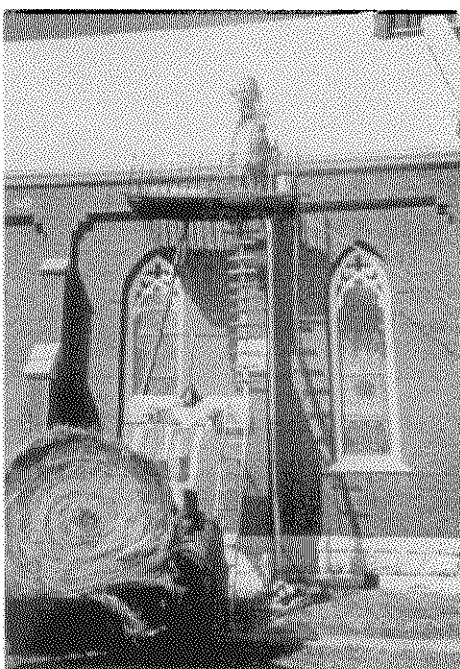
An unexpected workday was called on April 10, 1996 for repairs of wind damage to the roof of St. Bridget Church.

Leo Glynn, Bill Sunneberg, Galen Runnebaum and Terry Stallbaumer worked till evening to repair parts of the tin roof that was ripped up by the wind storm. The men repaired and screwed down all the remaining loose tin on the roof. Hopefully, this will hold another twenty-five years.

This project could not have been accomplished without the ingenious "invention" of Leo Glynn's 970 Case tractor and loader. You can see part of this invention in the accompanying pictures. But you simply had to see it to believe it.

We thank these men for their time and ingenuity in fixing what could have developed into a serious problem.

(Pictures & story courtesy of Norma Stallbaumer, Axtell, KS.)



Upper Left:

Ground Crew: Galen Runnebaum and Bill Sunneberg holding safety lines.

Center Left:

Terry Stallbaumer repairing tin. Ladder being secured by Leo Glynn on platform.

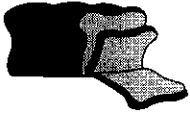
Bottom Left:

A better picture of Leo Glynn's invention. Still a dangerous job, but a much safer way to repair the roof. The large round bale of hay was used for balance.

Bottom Right:

Terry Stallbaumer, after completing the job, watching Leo Glynn descend from the platform.

Does This Sound Good?



NUT BREAD

One egg, 1 cupful sugar, 1 1/2 cupfuls milk, 4 cupfuls flour (1/2 whole wheat improves it), 4 teaspoonfuls baking powder, 1 cup nut meats, 1 cupful raisins, 1 teaspoonful salt.

Let stand 10 minutes before putting in oven. This recipe makes 1 large and 1 small loaf.

(Recipe taken from the 1927 St. Bridget Cookbook. This cookbook is available at old St. Bridget Church or from one of the officers).

Membership Dues For 1996 now Due

Annual Dues For Membership In St. Bridget Historical Society
is \$5.00 - mail dues to:

Leo Glynn
Rt. 1 - Box 56
Summerfield, KS 66541

Architecture: Continued from page 1

suspended ceiling. The entire system of vaults is hanging, free of pillars, free of visible support. This allows the entire floor to be open. The vaults have no visible ribs. Instead, the vault planes terminate in a clean crisp line formed by the finish plaster, a simplification of form

Light entering the building creates a masterpiece of shadow and light, as it plays on the surface of the intersecting vaults. The impression is one of openness, stability, lightness and tranquillity; mass encompassing vast space, precisely divided by intersecting planes.

St. Bridget Church has a high degree of architectural integrity and is exemplary of superior craftsmanship, design, artistry and engineering. It is an excellent example of American Gothic Architecture.

NATIONAL REGISTER UPDATE!

On April 9, 1996 a call was placed to Martha Hagedorn-Krass at the Kansas Historic Preservation Office regarding the status of St. Bridget Church's application to the National Register. Ms. Hagedorn-Krass stated that she is adding the final touches to the nomination. When this is completed, it will be sent to Washington, D.C. for consideration. When this occurs, notification will be made to all involved with this process.

Copies of the nomination will be sent to local historical societies and newspapers.

St. Bridget News

St. Michael Church
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