

10-13-05

# Christ Church alterations

BY C.W. LATTIN

**O**ur photo of the front of Christ Episcopal Church in Albion was taken in April 1963. At that time, under the pastorate of Rev. Jack Hillary, the bell tower was rebuilt. The picture shows scaffolding, which surrounded the lower portion of the structure, while the upper part at this point has been removed.

The large tower bell can be seen here from under the top deck, a notice posted on the front door stated: "Open for business as usual during alterations — To the Glory of God."

Recently Christ Church has had some roofing work done to the tower. So it seems appropriate to give some history about it.

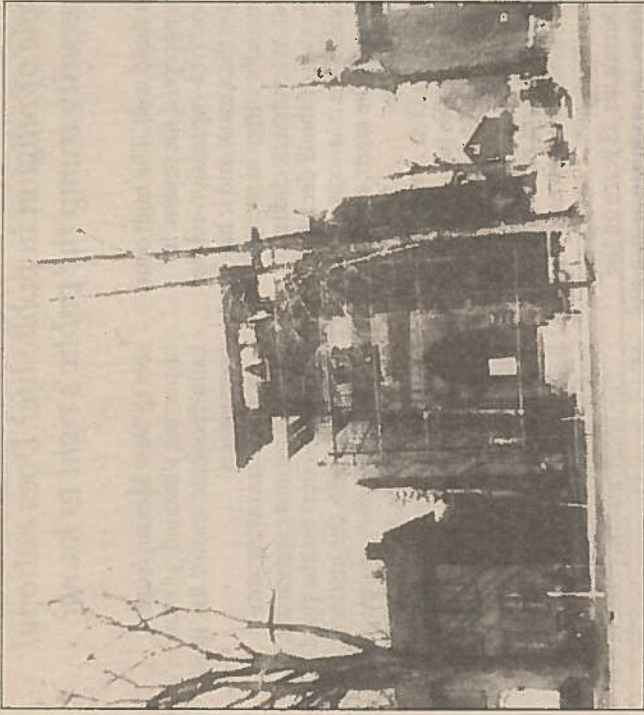
The church building was built in 1830 by Presbyterians as their first meeting house in Albion. The Episcopal congregation

formed in 1844 acquired this church building in 1845 from the Presbyterians. At that time, it had a wooden tower that sat directly on the church roof rather than as a separate entity projecting forward.

This original tower had a high spire, perhaps conical in shape. In 1860 the church building underwent some modeling, which included the removal of the high spire. The remaining tower then received a decorative cross and crown top on its roof. At this same time, a vestibule made of brick was added to the center door.

The side front doors were replaced with stained glass windows, which remain in place today.

In 1919 the old tower of 1830 with its 1860 cross and crown top was in need of repair. At that time it was totally removed and a new brick tower was



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It is obvious to almost anyone who looks at the tower from the ground up that it was built in different stages because of the slight differences in coloration of brick. Essentially from the bottom up the phases of construction are 1860, 1919 and 1963.

Notice: A guided tour of Mount Albion Cemetery will be held at 2 p.m. Oct. 22.

added on top of the 1860 brick vestibule. Hence the tower is rectangular rather than square, as it would be the norm.

By 1963 when our picture was taken, much of the decorative brick work around the top of this 1919 bell tower was in disrepair. Hence, a new top to the tower was rebuilt to house the bell.