

Did you know that ST. RAPHAELS ...

1. was once the administrative centre of the church in Upper Canada, under the leadership of Bishop Alexander Macdonell (1760-1840) Bishop of Kingston.
2. once boasted a congregation size of six thousand as it was the only Catholic church in the area.
3. was designated a historical landmark for the benefit of the citizens of Ontario by the Ontario Heritage Foundation in 1974 whereby it was stabilized and landscaped.
4. was built with limestone from a quarry here in Glengarry.
5. was settled by Scottish immigrants in 1786 led by their parish priest Reverend Alexander Macdonell (Scotus) who founded the parish, one of Ontario's oldest Roman Catholic congregations.
6. was gutted by a devastating fire on August 10th, 1970, destroying the interior of the magnificent structure.
7. had a military parade square where the Glengarry Fencibles, now the S. D. & G. Highlanders, trained and became an important strength for the Canadian Forces at Queenston, Crysler Farm, and other battles throughout the 1812-14 War.
8. was also an early education centre. By 1825, Iona College for the training of priests was opened by Bishop Macdonell, while modest in structure the school produced many missionaries for Upper Canada.
9. was recently visited by British Heritage conservationist John Ashurst and pronounced the ashlar facing masonry as "of the finest workmanship" and the edifice itself as "the best monument of its type in Canada."
10. is a fine example of Canadian Neo-Classic design. Pegs replaced nails and caretung stressed rafters made pillars unnecessary.
11. makes a striking outdoor theatre with excellent acoustics. Many concerts have been held here during the summer months providing great enjoyment for the residents of Glengarry.
12. ownership was assumed in December, 1994, by a new committee called The Friends of the Ruins and launched its HELP SAVE THE ST. RAPHAELS RUINS appeal.
13. is a birthplace of the first premier of Ontario, John Sandfield MacDonald.
14. in 1997, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada declared the St. Raphael's Ruins a National Historic Site.