

## Manitoba Wood Frame Churches

The three decades from 1900 to 1930 produced more churches – and most of these fairly modest wood frame structures – than any other period: at least 120. This wealth of productivity almost guarantees certain anomalies; the most noteworthy of these involves discrepancies between construction dates and sophistication of designs. A particular parish might be able to afford a very sophisticated building in 1905 complete with an internally expressed dome, while another parish constructing its church in 1925 – and expected to benefit from earlier examples – might build a considerably simpler structure. The building technologies involved in wood frame construction were clearly available to Ukrainian congregations at an early date; that they were not always used to their maximum effect can best be explained by depressed economic circumstances.

Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church at Horod was erected between 1922-23 under the direction of Michael Hawrysh, a local carpenter/builder (Figure 31). The original cost of this structure was approximately \$2,500 and the building was probably constructed with much volunteer labour. Although the church has a gable roof – marked by three banyas – the interior boasts a barrel vault finished with tongue-and-groove boards with V-joints (Figure 32). The barrel vault is painted with representations of clouds upon a blue background. The walls are also decorated with a cloud motif, while the painted wainscotting is finished with a stenciled leaf pattern. The central opening of the iconostas is barred by a heavily-gilded pair of round-arched gates. These contain four medallion icons representing the Evangelists – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – traditional portraits found on the Royal Doors.



**Figure 31.** Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Horod. This small white and green building is a noted local landmark.



**Figure 32.**

Holy Eucharist Church, Horod. View of the church from the central or Royal Gate in the iconostas looking west to the rear and the cantor's loft.

The Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church at Merridale, built in 1923, conforms to the three frame plan with the central section in this case larger than the outer two (Figure 33). However, the roof of this church reflects a style more prevalent throughout Ukraine; unlike, for example the Gardenton church, which at first was of a more regional character. While the sequence of internal spaces – vestibule, nave, sanctuary – is followed at Merridale, the interior of this church is a departure from the previous examples in terms of its limited applied ornament (Figure 34). There is no iconostas, although there are several small icons on the walls of the sanctuary with a large oil painting behind the main altar. Upon the altar is an elaborately-bound Bible. The handmade tabernacle, flanked by tall brass candlesticks, takes the form of a traditional Ukrainian church, with a large central dome and banyas (Figure 35). While the fine religious objects show fine ornamentation, the overall interior effect remains one of considerable simplicity.



**Figure 33.**  
Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church,  
Merridale.



**Figure 34.**  
Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church,  
Merridale. View down the nave showing the  
barrel vault, chancel and altar.



**Figure 35.**  
Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church,  
Merridale. The tabernacle on the altar is a  
miniature Ukrainian Cathedral.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Olha (Figure 36) was erected in 1904 under the supervision of John and Peter Kowtecki. This wood frame house of worship replaced a small log church of 1901 which served the Oakburn-Dolyny area until the 1930s. The plan of St. Michael's is cross-shaped and can be considered five-framed. The short arms of the cross – the apsidal transepts – contain side altars (Figure 37). Two towers with banyas adorn the front facade of the structure, with a small central cupola atop a two tier drum at the centre of the gable crossing. The interior of St. Michael's features many colourful wall murals and portraits, as well as gold stars painted on a heavenly blue vault (Figures 38 and 39). Banners and faux marble – painted wood and plaster – wainscotting add to the overall impact. The iconostas is a solid wall adorned with gold leaf and small individual icons.



**Left: Figure 36.**

St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Olha.

**Above: Figure 37.**

St. Michael's Church, Olha. This view shows the apsidal transept and chancel.



**Figure 38.**

St. Michael's Church, Olha. The vaulted apsidal chapels and nave contribute to the sense of spaciousness in the church.



**Figure 39.**

St. Michael's Church, Olha. From the middle of the ceiling the sun shines down in painted radiance, the interstices between the roof segments gilded in imitation of solar rays.

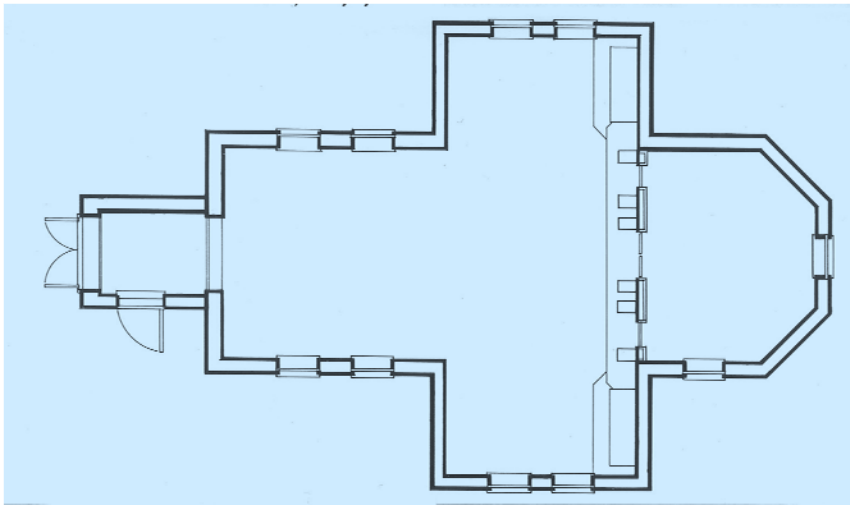
Construction on St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church at Dolyny (Figure 40) probably began in 1904 and concluded in 1907. The church was built on a cross plan with apsidal transepts (Figure 41). It bears round-arched windows, rose windows and the traditional banyas. The large dome at the crossing is a remarkable feature. Whereas many other Ukrainian churches of this era used a small dome at the crossing as a purely external decoration, the builders at Dolyny opened their large spherical dome to the interior. The interior is not only physically lighted by the windows in the dome, but its addition creates an airy sensation in the whole building. Within, the hand-carved iconostas dates from 1928 (Figure 42). From the vault of heaven – the inside of the dome – hangs a massive crystal chandelier suspended from a large central star representing the sun (Figure 43). The stained glass for a number of the windows was donated by individual parishioners. Such artistic adornments as faux marble, stenciled wall clouds, and decorative edging animate the whole interior.

**Below: Figure 40.**

St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Dolyny.

**Left: Figure 41.**

Floor plan. St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Dolyny.





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**Figure 42.**

St. John the Baptist Church, Dolyny. Iconostas.



**Figure 43.**

St. John the Baptist Church, Dolyny. Interior of cupola.