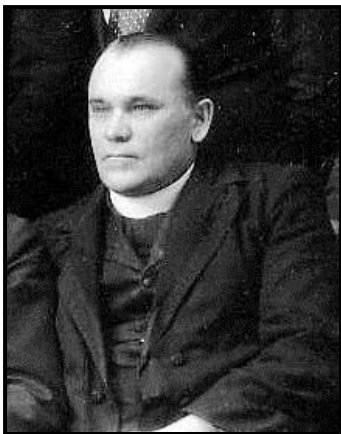


Point Douglas

By the 1920s, Point Douglas, the first city district settled by Ukrainians, was populated by about 500 Ukrainian families, many of them homeowners, and by a large number of single men and women from Galicia and Bukovyna. Local Ukrainians formed a well-defined and compact enclave separate but not prohibitively distant from the hub of Ukrainian activity in the North End. Probably for this reason, no new Ukrainian cultural-educational or fraternal organizations had been established in Point Douglas since the International Reading Club (*Mizhnarodna chytalnia*; later known as the **Taras Shevchenko Reading Club**), established in Cyril Genik's home at 109 Euclid in 1899, had relocated to the North End in 1905.

Prior to 1925, the only Ukrainian institution in Point Douglas was **St Michael's Bukovynian Orthodox church** at 110 Disraeli Street. The congregation had been established in 1918 in a vacant church building purchased from the Anglicans. The founders of St Michael's were former members of the Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church (at the corner Mackenzie Street and Manitoba Avenue) who were dissatisfied with their very ambitious and haughty pastor, the Rev Adam Phillipowsky. The dissatisfaction with Phillipowsky was of a personal nature rather than the result of any theological disputes or a burgeoning sense of Ukrainian nationalism. Most members of the new St Michael's congregation in Point Douglas were Ukrainians from Bukovyna, a small minority identified themselves as Russians. The founders called the congregation a "People's Orthodox Church" (*narodna pravoslavna tserkov*) without specifying



Rev Fr P Bozhyk
(UCEC)

which "people" or nationality they had in mind. It was also popularly referred to as the "Bukovynian Orthodox Church." Unlike Holy Trinity, St Michael's was an 'independent' congregation that incorporated its property with local trustees rather than with the Russian Orthodox mission in North America. From 1919 to 1924 the pastor at St. Michael's was the Rev Panteleimon (Bozyk) Bozhyk (1879-1944), a Ukrainian from Bukovyna who had graduated from a Russian Orthodox seminary in Minneapolis and served in the Russian Orthodox Church since 1911. Unlike most natives of Ukraine who served in that church, Bozhyk had a well-developed sense of Ukrainian identity, was never very happy or comfortable in the Russian Orthodox Church, and briefly published a Ukrainian-language newspaper, *Bukovyna* (1920-21). In 1922, congregation members established **the St Michael's Fraternal Aid Association**, a sick and death benefit society that had more than 100 members by 1928.

When the first efforts to organize a Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church congregation in Winnipeg were made in 1923 the supporters of the new church approached Rev Bozhyk and the trustees of St Michael's hoping that the independent Bukovynian Orthodox congregation would join them. However, things did not turn out as they hoped. Instead of joining the new Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church, the St Michael's congregation split into two factions: one group, which identified itself as Ukrainian, wanted to affiliate with the new church; another group, which continued to identify itself as Bukovynian or Russian, resisted. Litigation ensued as the pro-Ukrainian group and its opponents, who were backed by the Russian Orthodox mission, struggled for control of the congregation and its property. Caught in the middle, Bozhyk, who was wary of the non-canonical status of the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church, left St. Michael's and the Orthodox Church, converted to Catholicism, and joined the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Only after eight years of litigation, in April 1932, would a majority of St. Michael's members vote to

join the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church, and even then, only after being promised a 'Bukovynian' priest (rather than a native of Galicia or central Ukraine).



St Michael's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox congregation 1937 (UCEC)

In September 1925, on the initiative of Father Bozhyk, Petro Hawrysyshyn, and Yosyf Shcherbanevych, a small group of Point Douglas residents established the **Markiian Shashkevych Ukrainian Greek Catholic Heritage School Association** (*Tovarystvo Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Ridna Shkola im Markiiana Shashkevycha*) to teach local children "how to read and write and praise God in our language, and to learn our glorious history." After borrowing



Markiian Shashkevych Ukrainian Heritage School 1926 (UCEC)

some money, they rented an old store at 109 Sutherland Avenue for \$15 a month, purchased 24 old desks from the Norquay Public School, and hired Evhenia Uhryn to teach Monday to Friday, from 5-7 pm, for \$30 a month commencing 1 October 1925. Enrolment quickly grew from 36 to more than 100 pupils, who were charged 50 cents a month for tuition. To raise additional funds, bazaars, dances, concerts, and summer picnics were organized, and teams of carollers were dispatched throughout the district during the Christmas holidays. The first bazaar, held on 16 November 1925, raised over \$315 thereby guaranteeing the teacher's salary for almost a year. Several days later, on Hawrysyshyn's motion, the **Markiian Shashkevych Reading Club** was established in conjunction with the heritage school to attract more dues-paying adult members and supporters into the Association. By May 1926, school enrolment and reading club membership had grown to such an extent that the Association decided to purchase several lots and erect a building of its own, with facilities also for a choir and drama circle. When the new fund raising campaign was launched, the Association's charter was revised making Catholic *and* Orthodox Ukrainians eligible to join the reorganized **Markiian Shashkevych Heritage School Association** (*Tovarystvo Ridna Shkola im Markiiana Shashkevycha*). In 1927 several lots were purchased on Euclid Avenue between Barber and Disraeli Streets and in May 1928 master builder and playwright Semen Kowbel was engaged to draw up the construction plans. By September a contractor had been hired to erect a brick building, 40 feet wide by 80 feet long, with an auditorium, stage, and gallery, for \$11,000. Construction proceeded rapidly and the cornerstone was laid and blessed on 21 October at an elaborate ceremony that featured 4 Ukrainian Catholic priests and the choir of the Canadian Ukrainian Institute 'Prosvita'. Winnipeg Mayor Daniel McLean, representatives of most Ukrainian cultural-educational societies and several parishes, and more than 2,000 local residents attended. The Markiian Shashkevych Heritage School building was formally opened at 49 Euclid Avenue on 13 January 1929.



Markiian Shashkevych Heritage School Association 1926 (UCEC)

Although a majority of the Ukrainians residing in Point Douglas were Catholics, they did not have a parish of their own until 1938 when **St Andrew's Ukrainian Catholic parish** was established and a church built on several lots bordered by Euclid, Jarvis, Hallet and Meade. At about the same time a **Ukrainian Labour Temple** was built on Euclid Avenue near the corner of Main Street.

Books

Mykhailo Marunchak, *Petro Havryshyn; pioner-budivnychi shashkevychivskoi dilnytsi u Vinnipezi* (Winnipeg: Biblioteka pionera, 1962).

Iosyf Shcherbanevych, "Ridna Shkola im. Markiiiana Sashkevycha u Vinnipegu" in *Klenovi lyst* (Winnipeg, 1929).

Website

St Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church

City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee

<http://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/historic/pdf-consv/Disraeli110-long.pdf>