



Mary Onyfryton, 77, with Justin Dutchyshen, 2 mos.

Pioneer brothers' families get together for reunion

Two hundred twenty-five descendants of two pioneer brothers, Jacob and Peter Maksymetz, gathered on the weekend of July 24 and 25 to attend a Maksymetz family reunion.

An executive committee was formed in June, 1981, to organize the two-day celebration. Members included Chairman Mike J. Maksymetz, Vice-chairman Victoria Paskaruk, Secretary Michael L. Maksymetz and Treasurer Walter J. Maksymetz.

Brothers Jacob and Peter Maksymetz were born in the village of Periviatych, in the district of Sokol, province of Halachyna, in the Ukraine, which at that time was under Austria.

Jacob, his wife Pauline and young family arrived in Canada in 1898 and purchased a homestead in the Venlaw district for \$10. Jacob acquired seven quarters of land throughout the years and all but one of the farms still remains in the Maksymetz family.

Jacob and Pauline raised a family of ten children: Luke, John, Max, Nick, Mary, Steve, Mike, Alex, Harry and Rose.

Peter arrived in Canada in 1904 and after working for the Canadian National Railway for a number of years, returned to the Ukraine to bring his wife Nellie and five children back to Canada in 1913.

Their first homestead was in the Zoria district. They settled in the Mink Creek area in 1931.

Peter and Nellie were also blessed with ten children: John, Mike, Eva, Mary, Steve, William, Harry, Nick, Pearl and Alex.

The reunion began with a church service on Saturday, July 24, at St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Venlaw with Father M. Klymchak officiating. Jacob Maksymetz was one of the pioneer organizers responsible for the construction of the church.

A dinner and dance followed at the Ukrai-

nian Orthodox Auditorium in Dauphin with Walter J. Maksymetz acting as master of ceremonies. The Lord's Prayer was led by Kenneth Paskaruk. Mike J. Maksymetz offered his thanks to all those who helped organize the reunion on behalf of the executive.

Nan Puiak, Wes Maksymetz, Victoria Paskaruk and Ken Paskaruk recalled memories of their grandfathers and great-grandfather. Nadia Maksymetz spoke on behalf of the Maksymetz in-laws. Linda Brown read a poem composed by her mother, Olga Lukey, a tribute to her grandfather Jacob.

A short talent program followed the dinner. Charlotte Maksymetz played a piano selection, "The Homecoming"; Ryan Ratushniak performed a Ukrainian dance; and Deborah Krilyk entertained with a vocal solo. The Maksymetz choir consisting of twenty family members concluded with two Ukrainian selections.

The oldest family member attending the reunion was Mary Onyfryton, 77, of Phoenix, Arizona, the eldest daughter of Jacob. The youngest in attendance was two-month-old Justin Dutchyshen of Gilbert Plains, a fifth generation descendant of Jacob.

Also introduced was the youngest member carrying the Maksymetz name, Robert Maksymetz, ten months, of Grande Prairie, Alberta.

Recognition was given to the oldest and youngest descendants from Peter's family: his son Mike of Mink Creek, 78, and Julie Rose Herman, 15 months, of Invermere, B.C., who were both unable to attend.

The oldest married couple in attendance were Steve J. and Mary Maksymetz of Gilbert Plains, who celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1981.

A book, "Maksymetz Memoirs", containing the history of the

Maksymetz family from 1865 to 1982 was published and each family member received a copy, as well as souvenir cups and plates.

On Sunday, July 25, Kenneth Paskaruk, great-grandson of Peter, was ordained as a deacon at St. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church at Ethelbert.

The original homesteads were visited in the afternoon and a picnic at the Gilbert Plains Centennial Park concluded the reunion.