

When building the entryway extension, we took the opportunity to open the time capsule behind the cornerstone. We displayed it's contents for a week for anyone who was interested. Kip Lof, 91 at the time, and his son Gene came over to take a look. We decided to do an impromptu interview of the last living member of the original building committee. The video was done on a Samsung s9 phone and without microphones. In the video Kip's responses are soft, especially compared to Pastor Neubauer's big voice. Because of that, and because we are not sure how long USB drives and mp4 videos will be able to be accessed, we decided to produce a transcript and a volume adjusted mp3 audio file. Most of the transcript was computer generated with corrections along the way. We hope you enjoy!

Pastor Neubauer:

So, hello 2065 or whenever the time capsule gets open. We thought that it might be fun to include a little video provided that, you know, you can still read mp4 format.

I wanted to take an opportunity to just interview Kip Lof. I'm Pastor Neubauer, if I have faded from memory.

Kip Lof was on the original building Committee for the new church out here on highway 34. Kip is here today wanting to look at the time capsule stuff that was laid out and just take a tour around the church again. He's been living in Detroit Lakes for the last couple of years and hasn't been able to be here.

So, Kip, I don't know exactly what stuff I'm going to ask you. But do you want to just share any memories about, you know, getting the building committee together and how that all came about?

Kip Lof:

I've don't know really how, I guess by volunteer. People that were plumbers, who was a doctor. There was a body repair guy and I was one of them.

PN: Just for posterity sake. I know why you were on it. What were you doing at the time? What was your vocation at the time?

KL: The other last person passed away about two years ago.

PN: Yep. Mel. Mel died about two years ago. And so Kip is our last living member of the building committee. At the time, though, you were the owner of Nevis Lumber correct?

KP: Yes. It was probably twice a week I came in. During construction. We had a good contractor. Walker.

There is a clip cut in which we were trying to figure out the name of the foreman. His son owned a bait shop in PR.

KP: I remember him building this cross and building right here on the on the deck.

PN: Okay. The cross is huge. And that must have been quite an undertaking to get that constructed. And so just a note about the cross, which you can see glowing in the background. I always wonder how come we never replaced any light bulbs, because I'm thinking it's a fluorescent thing. And you know, just naively, it turns out, about two years ago, we had to replace the original neon lighting that used to light up on the cross. So it lasted over 50 years. We had a little problem with a transformer, it would hum sometimes. And we had a group Classic Chorale that sings here on a regular basis, and they wouldn't turn the cross on because when the transformer started humming, it would throw their singers off. But it was a two maybe three years ago. We got the neon lighting replaced then with LED strips. So, I don't think it looks quite as nice as the original glow, but it's pretty close.

KL: The other light bulbs are good in this cross for the other stained glass.

PN: Yep. I think that's got about 100.

KL: Yeah. I don't think they'll ever burn out

PN: Yeah. When we built the new organ 10 years ago, we had had up in the back of the church a stained glass window of Jesus praying in the garden. And in order to preserve the organ we took that glass out so that there wouldn't be so much temperature changing going on with the organ. Kip built a frame for it, and behind it, put a bunch of LED lights, strips of LED lights. And that is now what's hanging in our fellowship hall. People were a little sad because they enjoyed looking at that picture of Jesus coming away from communion. But honestly, it gets seen a lot more where it is now.

KL: And it's lit 24 hours a day

PN: Always on. We haven't lost a single led element yet. And that's, like I said, that's, well, it's more than 10 years because you probably took that out 11 years ago.

KL: Was that right?

PN: Yeah. Because that was out significantly before the organ came in. It was one of the first projects we did.

KL: I can't keep track of time.

PN: Yeah. So Kip's done a lot of things around the church being on the building committee. And then, oh I know, I was going to ask when we put on the addition in the 80's. Were you on that building committee to?

KL: The addition there? I drew up the plan.

PN: Oh, you did? Okay. So I guess you were pretty involved with that too.

KL: One thing I didn't think about it was that one post, you know?

PN: Oh, yeah. In the fellowship hall.

KL: We decided to just go around it. Rather than take it down and try to brace it.

PN: Yeah. One of the other things we found we replaced carpeting for I think that was must have been our 100th anniversary. And we've replaced the carpeting in a lot of the building. And one of the things that I thought was fun was in the fellowship hall that had been a tile floor. And they actually had, oh, now I can't think of the name, shuffle. They actually had a shuffleboard board down on one side of the fellowship hall.

KP: So I don't think that lasted very long.

PN: I don't Yeah, I don't know. I don't know when they decided to put carpeting in. But there was there preserved very well. Yeah, so you came a couple of times a week. Did you deliver materials when you came?

KP: I didn't sell much. I did provide the material for the riser there.

PN: He used his guys, his suppliers?

KP: Okay, most of it, you know is manufactured stuff anyway.

PN: Right. Right. So, Pastor Malotky was the pastor at the time. Do you think that this building would have happened without his pushing and his instigation?

KL: There was a push from the congregation. There was resistance but we worked around it.

PN: Yeah. I think he was the guy for the job, though, wasn't he? Pastor Malotky was just this rather tall, big man who was just outgoing and friendly. And you know, just like your wonderful, cuddly teddy bear. He could get people to go in the same direction.

PN: So did the did the project run into any big problems once it got started?

KL: I don't think so. The property was donated to us. I made the drawings for the garage out here.

PN: Oh, did you for the bus garage? Okay.

KL: But one thing I built it for what we had, and then we increased the size (of the bus). I put a garage door on the north side. Come to find out when you come in the railing was in the way.

PN: Yep. Yep. Right the bus, the bus we had when we built the garage was a little bit shorter. It

was a little wider and a little shorter, I think. So my personal experience in back in the bus in was I was the one who decided to take out the railing for the North door the garage door. And, ah, fortunately, Virg Eskola is a great worker and contractor and he fixed it back up. You can't even tell.

KL: I thought we could have doings out there. If you have rain or whatever, you could still use it, you know?

PN: Yep. And we have. We like to use that North door. We just had Vacation Bible School last year outside. And so we use that North door to go in and out for a number of prop things. So yeah.

KL: I don't know about the other garage, where that came in?

PN: Yeah, I know it was here when I got here and early on, you guys added about 10 feet to it or so, because we couldn't store the lawn mower or something.

KL: I don't know the history of it. For some reason, yeah.

We edited out a segment on the model of the first church what was built by Frank Mitchell for the 100th Anniversary of the congregation. Just a note about Frank. His grandfather was a civil war veteran!

PN: What was your favorite memory about the construction of this church or the moving into it or What do you most fondly remember about the project?

KL: Well I... just really proud of what we did. *Pointing to the balcony* We had to extend that.

PN: Oh, yeah. That's right. The original balcony was was, well, three pews shorter. So when did that go in pretty quickly after the church was built? Or was that quite a few years later?

KL: In the last 10 years, 20 years? *(Note: It was extended before 1994, the year I started).* We just designed it and did it ourselves.

PN: Now, the original organ was that installed right away when the church opened? Yeah. Okay. We discovered in looking at the *original* organ, we are having a lot of issues with it. And we discovered that it actually had been a used organ that we had purchased and put in there. And so it was older than 1965. We found some interesting things like the bellows, the pressure on the bellows was a can of rocks that help maintain the pressure air pressure on the bellows. So when we had done a couple of things with the balcony, and we had the original organ console sat, facing the back, and our organist learned to look in the mirror to see what was going. One of the things we did in a remodels is we shifted organ bench over, and we had a couple of guys, Mike Poole and Gil Kath, I remember spent a week or so cutting every wire and splicing in an extension on the wire for all the controls for the pipes. Yeah, meticulous,

painstaking work. And then that that was probably about 10 years before we decided that we were going to get a new organ. So I don't remember were you in favor of the new organ or did you want to go with the other electronic? Do you remember? Were you in favor of the new pipe organ?

KL: I was kinda on the fence about it. I didn't object it.

PN: Yeah, we had for myself, it was one of the most tense voters meetings, because, you know, some people wanted to go with the \$400,000 pipe organ. Other people wanted to go more practical with an electronic organ at around \$120,000 I think. And, and in normal St. John's fashion, I don't think there was a whole lot of "drawing up" on sides. But just sort of knew who wanted a pipe organ and who didn't and

KL: It was always the pricing.

PN: Yeah, price was a big thing. I, as a pastor, was very grateful it passed something like 62 to 33. So I appreciated that it was a very solid majority in favor the pipe organ. I was at the time, I was thinking that, you know, if it was within 10 votes that I was going to recommend that we have to call another meeting to discuss it more. So I was, I personally, was grateful that it went the way it did. But, or I should say, as clearly as it did.

We edited out a little clip about crows ability to get water out of a jar by putting rocks into the container to raise the water level.

PN: Any anything else that you'd like to share Kip?

KL: No, I guess not. Strange that I'm the last guy alive from that board.

PN: Yeah, sure. You were a young guy, you and you and Mel, we're both pretty young guys on that board weren't you? Well, let's see if you're 91 you would have been in your late 30s, probably then. And that's a good reminder to us to keep including the younger people in the congregation and that sense of ownership that comes from it. And that sense of joy. Now, Kip also made lights for the nave. And that was probably in in late 80s. Early 90s. Yeah, yeah. Because I know that they were in they were in when I came in 94. But I don't think they had been in a very long time. Because what I remember is I remember you guys going through and cutting off the ends to try to get rid of some of the spotlight in effect from your original design. And so you went up and you you cut off probably something like four inches from each, each of those metal tubes. One of those crazy times when they put plywood on the pews and put a 40 foot ladder up on top of the plywood. Fortunately, there are people who enjoy doing things like that. But I don't I don't remember, did you maybe you probably took them down individually or something like that. I don't remember how you did it.

KL: I believe we put in scaffolding. *Can't quite understand or remember what Kip said here.*

PN: The original Lights for the church though we're all can lights up at the very top of the ceiling. Is that right? They were all of them were can lights like bowls, right? The silver ones? Yeah. Okay. And they all they all sat up there and then in order to get more light, I think is the reason for [the new lights]

KL: I think when we first put them in that center light was a dark spot in there, and so we had to redo it and put the light in the center there. The light was going out.

PN: Nothing in the middle.

KL: Right, didn't think of that.

PN: Not a lighting specialist, right?

KL: We're glad they don't have to change light bulbs very often anymore.

PN: Yeah, that's that's probably been, that's also got to be eight to 10 years ago now. We swapped out we got a discount or a rebate for putting in LED lights and all of our fixtures. And so the cost to us was minimal. But we haven't had replaced one yet. So and that's good, because that was those were hard to do.

KL: I made the rack for the banner there. Where they set in, I made those.

PN: Yep the angle irons. Yep. So we have banners and Easter and Christmas banners, and Kip did the iron work, building the holders. And then you did the pinials [sic. Finials]? The tops? I think we may have purchased those. I think Rod Helm might have put together the poles

KL: He did. I just made the holders

PN: Yep. And then a number of years later, Kip built the dresser for us to store the banners. And because they were getting I don't even remember how we were storing them before but they were getting sort of beat up. So we're really good. It does. Yep. Yep. In fact, we have to take the banners down. This tomorrow is Ascension (May 13, 2021). And so we always take the banners down after Ascension. We're still in the Easter season for one more week. But we take them down as a symbol of Christ's ascension and no longer physically present with his disciples.

KL: I think that covers it.

PN: Yep, that covers it. So just just as we wrap up here, it is sort of odd for Kip and I to be sitting this close to each other. We just came off of the year of 2020. When we had social distancing, and mask wearing, the only reason you see us like this is because both of us are fully immunized and just comfortable doing our interview this way. So I want to say thank you very much Kip for all of your faithful service to St. John's and to the church at large.

And for your support throughout the years for the congregation, for its ministry here and its ministry abroad. We, We really appreciate all that you and your family have done at St. John's and for St. John's.

KL: I appreciate you also, you're a top pastor.

PN: Thanks, I appreciate that. Let me blush. So thanks everybody. Blessings to you and hopefully you can see this. We're going to put a transcript of the interview in the time capsule also saw you know, if you can still read in 2065 you can at least read it. Thanks a lot. Blessings.

So that last remark about being able to read? What I was thinking was that at the rate of change we been experiencing in the last 20 years, nobody will be reading anything, just watching and listening.