

**ST. EDWARD'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
KINNEAR
1915-1981
Ethel Griebel
(piece submitted to a booklet
celebrating the 75th birthday of Riverton)**

St. Edward's Catholic Church was built at Pilot Butte in 1915 and was served by the Jesuit priests from St. Stephen's Mission.

In 1935 the white wooden frame church building was moved to Morton. The location was about a half mile east of the Wind River School, tucked in between two small hills which made it easy prey for burglary. In 1960 the tabernacle and chalice were in fact stolen, though they were found a few miles away along the highway. Another problem with the location was the hazard of driving from the churchyard out to the highway because it was not possible to see in either direction due to the two hills. A number of parishioners complained because they feared for the lives of their families. Also, after investigating the deeds for the mission, it was discovered that the church did not own all of the property on which the building was located. Consequently, in 1975, Father Ronald Stolcis asked the parishioners if anyone would be willing to donate some land to which the church could be moved.

Mrs. George (Ethel) Griebel of Kinnear donated what land was needed along the highway, providing a full view of the highway from both directions. The three and one-half acres included an attractive outcropping of limestone rock next to which the church and little house would nestle. At the time the foundation slab was poured, it was decided to add a reconciliation room and restroom. As a memorial to Mary Snider, a shrine of Our Lady of the Wind Rivers was erected on top of the limestone outcropping above the church; it can be seen from Highway 26 between Morton and Kinnear. St. Edward's was rededicated at the new location in 1977 by Bishop Joseph Hart.