

## **SS #6 [PERCY MCKEE PUBLIC SCHOOL]**

The Percy McKee school is situated on Number Three Highway at the Herdman Sideroad, otherwise appropriately known as 'School Lane'. A rather long frame school house was erected in the later 1880's on a half acre of land donated by Ed. Burke. In 1916 the frame structure was supplanted by a brick building, and in 1929 a frame bungalow costing \$1,500 was attached adjacent to the brick school for additional classroom space. There were now 80 students in the school, and the bungalow was used to accomodate grades one to four. In 1940 another acre was purchased for use as a playground in anticipation of increased attendance. At first, the war-time boom promised fulfillment of their hopes, however, following the end of the war in 1945, class attendance dropped by 50%.

By 1956 the old brick school was showing obvious signs of decay. Parents became frustrated with the antiquated conditions of the school, as there was neither a septic system nor running water. As well, the increased traffic flow of Highway #3 was a constant worry to parents of small school children who had to wend their way down this busy highway to class. In October of 1956, the parents met and demanded that the zone be changed in order that their children could attend school in Sandwich West instead. The proposal was initially turned down, but it did result in the eventual purchase from William Burke of an additional 1 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  acres in April of 1960 for a new school. The new school was ready in Nov. of 1960 and was officially opened on February 10, 1961. On March 31, 1961 the faithful but decaying old structure once housing SS #6, was torn down. SS #6 was entirely phased out in 1970 when the school sections were re-defined by the County Board of Education.

This school's claim to fame belongs to Mr. Garnet McKee who is reported to have invented that one object, without which North Americans would be otherwise housebound in all inclement weather - no, not the umbrella, but certainly as important. Mr. MCKee's brilliant invention is the windshield wiper for automobiles.

Excerpt taken from the book "A Ninety-one Year Old Tree with Two-hundred Years of Roots" by Laura L. Langlois



*The old SS #6 school of Sandwich South located on Highway #3 at the Herdman Sideroad [School Lane] later known as the Percy McKee Public School. Pictured here is the class of 1910 with the school's namesake, Percy McKee, sitting first on the right hand side of the first row sitting on the school's porch.*