

S. S. No. 2 (Fairplay) School

A special meeting of School Section No. 13, Sandwich East, was held on the 6th day of January, 1881, for the purpose of choosing a site for a new school.

John Copeland presided and Dennis Perrin, who lived where Gordon Battersby lived in 1953, acted as secretary. He kept this position until March, 1908 when James Quick was appointed, who carried on until 1919 when Wm. Magnuson took over. Among those entering the discussion were Messrs. Fairbairn, F. Bruillet, P. Levin, G. Little, J. MacKenzie, E. Mooney, T. Perry and R. Hurst, who was an uncle of Mrs. Ray Ure and who gave the community "Fairplay" and the school its name.

Of three sites suggested the one chosen was on the farm owned by James MacKenzie.

On February 7th, 1881, a tender was accepted from Wright & Sedgewick, of Kingsville for the erection and completion of the new school building at a cost of \$600.

Until the Fall of 1881 when the first wall was dug by Chas. Dixon (an uncle of the Ure's), each child was assessed .05¢ to pay for water hauling. Board walks were put down in 1882 made of pine plank set on oak blocks. Also in this year a strap was purchased for .10¢ and a visitor's book for .15¢.

There was a platform in the centre front of the school on which the teacher's desk and two arm chairs were placed. The desk and chairs were purchased for \$7 and \$2.50 respectively. A large box stove was bought for \$6. Cordwood at that time was worth \$1.25 a cord.

A board fence was put up at the time the school was built with a stile, which was used as an entrance to the schoolyard and remained until 1911 when it was replaced by 40 rods of Sarnia fence costing \$13.

Rosie I. Burke was the first teacher, who received a salary of \$300 a year; the second being Miss Lisetta Kerr, now Mrs. Walter R. Donaldson, of Vera Place, Windsor who taught at Fairplay School from 1895 to 1900.

Things were pretty rough in 1882 when the Beard had to borrow \$25 to pay the teacher's salary.

School Section No. 13, Sandwich East, became Section No. 2 Sandwich South in 1895, following the formation of the Township of Sandwich South in 1893.

In Jan. 1906, Gerald B. Mooney, a graduate of Essex High School was engaged to teach at Fairplay School.

In 1907 a woodshed was built for \$14 which stood on the property until the late forties. In 1915 an upright furnace with jacket and cold air pipes was purchased for \$50.15 which also served until the late forties. In 1922 the old fashioned folding desks were replaced with a more modern type; in 1931, inside toilets were installed and a few years later one of the outside Parliament Buildings was sold for \$4. The present well was drilled 100 ft., 8 inches to the rock and four feet into the rock in 1936.

The Books of Knowledge were purchased in 1939 and perhaps by coincidence, Hydro lighting was installed about the same time.

The Township School Area of Sandwich South was inaugurated in Jan. 1946, with Marshall Jessop as chairman and Kenneth MacKenzie representing Fairplay.

Since the school by this time had passed its 65th birthday and was becoming cold and drafty, repairs were made during the Easter vacation. The foundation was repaired, new doors and window frames were put on and the outside was covered with insulbrick siding and oil heating was also installed.

In 1953, the interior was covered with tentest; green boards were put up and other efforts made to make the classroom brighter and more attractive. The Home & School Association was also organized at that time in May, when Mrs. Percy Miller of Chatham, District Chairman for the Ontario Federation of Home & Schools presided. The following officers were installed: Mrs. W. S. Snyder, president; Mrs. Frank Gullick and Mrs. Heman St. Louis, vice-presidents; Mrs. Harry Battersby, secretary; Mrs. Lloyd Reeb, treasurer. They met the second Tuesday evening of each month.

Prior to this in 1948 with Mr. Ray Ure as its first president, a combined Home & School Association was formed bringing a closer relationship between the parents teachers and children of these two community schools, No. 1 & No. 2. This combined Association functioned for five years together and celebrated their fifth anniversary with Mrs. Wilbert Snyder as president. They then disbanded.

By Sept. 1954, the attendance had climbed to 55 pupils. It was decided that additional space would have to be provided and plans were begun for the new school. The last class was held in the old Fairplay School on April 7th, 1955. The building was sold by tender for \$400. It was moved to Cember on May 20th, 1955 to be remodelled as a home. It was purchased by Kenneth Frankfurth.

July 15th, 1955 - The first re-union of the former teachers and pupils of Fairplay Public School, Sandwich South was held at the school on July 16th with over 300 in attendance.

Mrs. Harvey Washbrook (in a lovely old-fashioned gown) assisted by Mrs. Frank Gullick presided over the display of school records dating back to 1881, old pictures and snapshots and a book containing the family history of all the families in North Essex. Also at this table souvenir booklets "The History of Fairplay Public School" were obtainable. The research in preparation of this booklet having been done by Roy Fairbairn.

Mrs. George Talbot, Mrs. Frank Orford, Mrs. John Robert and Mrs. Douglas Watson were in charge of the attractive teatables over which much reminiscing and visiting was done. Stewart MacKenzie, N.P.D. was responsible for the beautiful floral arrangements.

The highlight of the afternoon was a visit from Mrs. Walter R. Donaldson of Windsor, the former Lisetta Kerr, who is the oldest living teacher of this school who taught from 1895 to 1900. Among those present were Mrs. W. Ure, Tom Fairbairn, George Marshall, Nelson MacKenzie, George MacKenzie and James Battersby who were pupils in her class which at one time numbered 81. Herman Boos and his wife of Roseland, were among the visitors, Mr. Boos the oldest pupil present and who attended as early as 1886.

In the evening the guests gathered for a sing-song with Jon Graham at the piano. James Battersby, as honorary chairman, welcomed the guests. Kenneth MacKenzie, acted as chairman for the program, arranged by George Talbot and Lloyd Reeb. The Invocation was by Father Henry J. Baillargeon.

Former teachers presented were Mrs. E. Hibbard, (Jennie Ure), Miss Jessie Ure, Mrs. Fred Frith (Bernice Ure), Mrs. Lulu Wylie (Wisner), Mrs. William Nagorsan (Marg. Foster), Mrs. Nellie Reeb (Wisner), Mrs. W. Anderson (Winnifred Tilden), Miss Gladys Barber, Mrs. J. A. Brown, Edith Dickson), Mrs. Kenneth MacKenzie (Marjorie Lyons) and Miss Anne Brydone.

Father Baillargeon, a former pupil spoke briefly and left his old slate and pencil as a memento of the old days. Others who spoke were Ray D. Ure, Dr. Louis Perrin, Miss Mary Perrin, R. N., and Desmond Deneau a Windsor Barrister. Another graduate, Harold Hillman, sang several solos. The Township School Board was presented Lynn Ure modelled a dress 75 years old. Mrs. Wilbur Snyder, president of the Home & School Association acted as commentator for modelling of what the well dressed teacher wore last year; in the twenties and at the turn of the century. A musical number was given by Mrs. Earl Robinson and Mrs. Elmer Ure in old-fashioned bathing suits, with Caroline O'Neil and Lillian Gullick as modern bathing beauties in the background.

Miss Agnes Hartley, Supt. of Music for the schools of the township, closed the program with the "Queen". Mrs. Irene Prince of California donated a full-length mirror in memory of her brother, Dr. Eli J. Hurst.

June 9th, 1954 - At the June Meeting of Sandwich South School Board held in No. 2 School, on motion of Henry Hartley, seconded by Bruce Barwell and unanimously approved to purchase $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land from George MacKenzie at \$500 an acre, this land to adjoin No. 2 school property, the exact boundaries to be determined by survey. Mr. MacKenzie to make a survey of the land to be purchased by the Board, forwarding a copy of this survey to Forbes B. Geddis, of Essex and that the secretary contact Mr. Geddis asking him to search the title of the property and prepare a deed. The chairman and the secretary was given the power to sign papers in connection with the sale.

June 15th, 1954 - At School Board meeting held in No. 2 School with the foll. members present: Kenneth MacKenzie, chairman, Arnold Excell and Bruce Barwell, L. A. Code, Public School Inspector, and J. W. Storey, architect from Chatham.

Mr. Storey sketched several ideas on the board for a two-roomed school, merits of various layouts were discussed and it was agreed that Mr. Storey should prepare sketch plans for the Board's further discussion at a special meeting.

The secretary was asked to write to the council of the township advising that approval has now been obtained from the Department of Education for the Board to proceed with preliminary plans for a two-roomed school, area to be 3,000 square feet, and asking that approval of the Municipal Board be requested so that debentures totalling \$40,000 may be issued.

Resignation of Mrs. Edith Shearer as Art Supervisor of the area was received.

It was moved by Mr. Arnold Excell and seconded by Mr. Bruce Barwell that the new school to be built on the site of No. 2 be known as "Fairplay Public School".

June 22nd., 1954 - Plans were drawn up in rough sketch form by J. W. Storey were accepted for the new school with minor changes and Mr. Storey was hired as architect. Changes requested included a second door into the west class room, moving of the door into the teacher's room to allow for the placing of a studio couch or cot along one wall and installing a sink in the teacher's room.

Nov. 29th, 1955 - Official opening of Fairplay Public School, corner Baseline & 11th Conc., Sandwich South - the first new school in 40 years for this section and the beginning of a whole new run of schools of which seven would be built in a five year span and would make all public schools in the township new two-room projects.

June 19th, 1959 - T. Roger Penney was hired as principal and teacher of grades 6, 7, and 8 in Fairplay School.

Sept. 27th, 1954 - The Board met in No. 2 School and considered tenders for the new school and on motion of Bruce Barwell, seconded by Elmer Ure it was decided to award the contract to Arthur Fairbairn for \$34,800, this price to include a pumping system of 420 gallon capacity but not including the heating system which is estimated at \$2,800, contract to be let separately. Also decided the secretary was authorized to write to Mr. Geddes informing him that he should incorporate into the deed for additional property the provision that no trees should be planted within 25 feet of the lot line between school yard and adjacent farming land with the exception of ornamental shrubs.

March 5th, 1962 - Vandals raided Fairplay Public School, where the interior of the building was completely ransacked and damage was estimated to exceed \$3,000. Also the same night the Skyway Drive-In on Hwy. No. 2 vandals ransacked the projection room, office and storage room. Entry at the school was gained by smashing a window in the rear door, vandals tossed ink and paint on the walls and blackboards; \$2000 damage was done the theatre.

Nov. 13, 1952 - Mrs. Lillian Snyder, president of the Fairplay Home & School Association addressed the fifth birthday meeting by saying, "we can be justly proud to be organized here in this rural community and know that we measure up splendidly with the best in the city area". She also pointed out that the proportion of parents who are members in this district is perhaps better than any to be found anywhere. The group was organized in 1947.

The birthday entertainment included a designer and model demonstration by Mrs. Heman St. Louis, Mr. Jon Graham and Mr. Wilfred Libby; an art display presented by Mr. George Broad, Mrs. Jean Hill, Mrs. R. E. Hodges and Mrs. Florence Reeb; Mr. Kenneth MacKenzie did a request song "Dodging Work at Our Home"; a skit presented by Miss Ramona Lanoue, Mrs. Audrey Orford, Mrs. Margaret Talbot and Mr. Harvey Washbrook; stories of more embarrassing moments told by Mrs. Emily Gullick, Mrs. Madeline Jewel, Mr. Kenneth Blake and Mr. Paul Graham; an impromptu debate between Mr. Ray Ure and Mrs. Ellen Wilson, affirmative, and Mrs. Lillie Ure and Mrs. Ruth Danyluk, negative on the topic; "1929 fashions are better than 1952 fashions". A story hour presented by Mrs. Edythe Graham, Miss May McKernan and Mrs. Lillian Snyder; a quotation bee between Mrs. Lillian Washbrook, Miss June St. Louis, Mrs. Elinor Watson and Mrs. Ethel Sales against Mrs. Ann Libby, Mrs. Marjorie Birrell, Mr. Roy Jewel and a sing-song led by Mrs. Jean Robert, Mr. R. E. Hodges, Mrs. Edith Metcalfe and Mr. G. H. Talbot.

Individual candles were lighted on a huge green and white decorated cake. The chairman, Mr. Wm. Sales called on Mr. George Broad former teacher and first president of the association to outline some of the early history. Mr. Kenneth MacKenzie, representative on the Board of Trustees and also a charter member, recalled the first meeting stating that the Home & School Association fills the gap between the ratepayers and the Board and "is certainly a means of contact and good relations between the teacher, pupil, the home, the community and the Board". Mr. Ray Ure, past president, added that the Home & School Association is one organization that should be supported 100% by every parent in the community. Other speakers were Roy Jewel, immediate past president and Mrs. Lillian Snyder, president, who welcomed the guests and members.

May 14th, 1966 - Choirs from two-to-five room schools sang before an audience of 460 persons at the Leamington District Secondary School auditorium to wind up a three-night Essex County Public School Music Festival. Fairplay Public School of Sandwich South placed third. Jan. 1906 - Gerald B. Mooney was engaged to teach at Fairplay.

Aug. 9th, 1966 - Sandwich South Council has made application to Essex County Council to alter the eastern boundary of the township school area, so that it will conform with existing municipal boundaries.

Dec. 1st., 1969 - Members of the staff of the Essex County Board of Education moved to new offices over the weekend at the Inman School near Cottam which had been converted into board offices. Mrs. Jean Cronmiller of Essex was pictured in the Star release.

FURTHER ITEMS ON S.S. NO. 2 (FAIRPLAY)

June 21st., 1955 - At a special meeting June 24th, held at Fairplay School, the Sandwich South School Board decided to award a contract for landscaping the school yard at Fairplay to Stewart MacKenzie for \$625, \$400 to be paid when planting is completed and \$225 next year. This was moved by Bruce Banwell, seconded by Henry Hartl.

June 16th, 1959 - It was decided to hold a special meeting of the Board June 25th, to open tenders for the addition of Fairplay School. It was decided not to take advantage of space at the Ford Oval for the Royal Visit. Special meeting held with H. Gerviveau, architect, present. Tenders were opened from contractors bidding on the one-room addition to Fairplay Public School. On motion of Mr. Ure, seconded by Milton Farough it was decided to consider the tender of D'Amore Construction Company and the architect was asked to refer the tender back for a break-down on sub-contract prices quoted and also for certain alternate prices on extras.

Dec. 2nd., 1963 - Essay Winners of the first essay contest sponsored by the Board of the Essex County Library Co-Operative, Mrs. Norman Mailleux, bookmobile assistant, presented the prizes of which Helen Knight, Grade 8, Fairplay School, Sandwich South, No. 2 was a winner. The winners were pictured in Star release, Dec. 2nd.