

FAIRPLAY REUNION

1881 - 1955



Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

The topic of this evening's meeting is entitled "Rural Life", but it does not signify whether it is to be past or present, and after some consideration, but mostly curiosity on my part, I decided that perhaps you would be interested in some of the history of the community. Many of you are direct descendants of the original founders of this community, and those who aren't have been residents for several years.

Realizing that the schools are uppermost in our minds, I delved into history by talking to some of the descendants, and checking original records. I think I have been quite successful in securing some very interesting information.

First, this particular school was originally, School Section No. 13, Sandwich East, and was built by a Mr. Sedgewick of Kingsville, in 1881. In the year 1895 the name was changed to School Section No. 2, Sandwich South, at which time the township of Sandwich South was formed, and is practically the same today as when built.

There was a platform in the center front, for the teachers desk with two arm chairs. Original desks were bought in 1882, which were mostly double desks and these remained until the present seats were put in about ten year ago. The stove was a box type with a metal frame around the outside, installed in 1915 (I could find no record of previous stove). About ten or twelve years ago it was replaced by a newer type, and in 1948, the present oil burner was installed. There was a large place out in the

SS#2 Fairplay

SS#1

(2)
time the school was built, which had a stile to get into the school yard, it remained till the year 1911, when it was replaced by 40 rod of Sarnia fence, costing \$13.00.

The first secretary was Mr. Dennis Perrin, who lived where Mr. Gordon Battersby now lives, he kept this position until March, 1908, at which time Mr. Jas. Quick was appointed and he carried on until the year 1919, when Mr. Wm. Nagoreson, took over.

Mr. Chas. Dixon dug the well in 1881. (An uncle of the Ures)

In 1882 a strap was purchased for 10¢ and a visitor's book for .15¢.

Board walks were put down in 1882, made of pine plank set on oak b locks.

In the year 1919 the school board was instructed to take out a tornado insurance policy.

In the year 1899, a post office was started, at the home of Mr. Dennis Perrin, which Mr. Robert Hurst, who was an uncle of Mrs. Ray Ure, named "Fair Play", where this school and immediate community got its name. The mail was picked up at Tecumseh every Tuesday and Friday and taken to the post office, and delivered by Mr. Perrin, until the year 1909, when the post office was moved to Mr. Sam MacKenzie's home and from there the mail was delivered by Mr. Jas. Quick. This continued until Rural Mail Delivery was started from Maidstone, in approximately the year 1912.

So much for Fair Play or No. 2, now we will go away back to 1862, and start with a log school built across from Nelson Ure, on No. 2 Highway in Sandwich East, where

they used benches for seats with nothing for the children to write on, the girls sat at the front and the boys at the back. Mr. William Ure, grandfather of Elmer, used to tell the story of he and George Hurst being punished. The teacher would ask how they would like to be punished, by a strapping or sitting with the girls? Mr. Hurst said, he would sit with the girls and Mr. Ure said he would be strapped. In as much as Mr. Hurst was quite a ladies' man, the teacher just reversed the punishment.

I haven't any more detail of this building, but on the site of the present school, No. 1, there was a frame building almost identical to No. 2, with center platform and a porch across the front of the building, built in 1877 - 74 years ago. Mr. Wm. Ure was secretary-treasurer for 40 years.

In 1905, Mrs. Fred Frith, the teacher at that time, had 69 pupils in a building this size and approximately 15% were coloured. The salaries in those days ran around \$350.00 to \$400.00 per year. If you boarded out, the rate was from \$1.60 to \$1.75 per week. In music the Singing Master used tuning forks, they were metal forks with two prongs.

Now, as all school children, our wish was that the school burn, and it did happen to us, just before Christmas in 1919, but we still had to go to school, it was held in a hall, called "The Independent Order of Good Templars", which stood at the back of the Bethel Church. In 1920 the present brick school was built by Ebert Bros. of Windsor.

In 1946, the Junior School was moved from Belleville, Ontario, where, it had been used by the army, to

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

John ~~Copeland~~ presided and Dennis Perrin acted as secretary. Among those entering the discussion were Messrs. Fairbairn, F. Bruillet, P. Lavin, G. Little, J. MacKenzie, E. Mooney, T. Ferry, and R. Hurst.

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

On February 7 th. 1881 a tender was accepted from Wright and Sedgewick of Kingsville for the erection and completion of the school building at a cost of \$600.00.

Until the fall of 1881 when the first well was dug, each child was assessed 5 ¢ to pay for water hauling.

There was a platform in the center front of the school on which the teacher's desk and two arm chairs were placed. The desk and chairs were purchased for \$7.00 and \$2.50 respectively.

A large box stove was bought for \$6.00. Cordwood at that time was worth \$1.25 a cord. The strap cost 10 ¢.

A board fence was put up at the time that the school was built. A stile was used as an entrance to the school yard and remained until 1911 when it was replaced by 40 rods of Sarnia fence costing \$13.00

Rosie I. Burke was the first teacher. She received a salary of \$300.00 a year.

Things were pretty rough in 1882 when the Board had to borrow \$25.00 to pay the teacher's salary.

School Section No. 13 , Sandwich East, became Section No. 2 Sandwich South in 1895.

In 1907 a woodshed was built for \$14.00. It stood on the property until the late forties.

In 1915 an upright furnace with jacket and cold air pipes was purchased for \$50.15. It 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 \$4.06.

The present well was drilled 100 feet 8 inches to the rock and 4 feet into the rock in 1936.

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

The Township School Area of Sandwich South was inaugurated in January 1946.

Since the school by this time had passed its 65 th birthday and was becoming cold and draughty, 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 insul brick siding. Oil heating was also installed.

Two years ago the interior was covered with tintest. Green boards were put up and other efforts made to make the classroom brighter and more attractive. The Home and School Association was also organized at that time.

By September 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 7 th. 1955.

The building was sold by tender for \$100.00. It was moved to Comber on May 20 th. 1955 to be remodelled as a home.

TRUSTEES

1944

John Copeland	George Fairbairn , Jr.
Samuel MacKenzie	Charles Nagorsen
George Little	William D. Ure
Peter Lemire	James Croft
Henry Battersby	George MacKenzie
August Perrin	Thomas McFarland
Patrick Lavin	William Nagorsen
Thomas Ferry	James Battersby
Samuel MacKenzie	Clarence Marshall
Charles Marshall	George R. MacKenzie
George M. Fairbairn, Sr.	Fred MacKenzie
Joseph Baillargeon	Nelson MacKenzie
Edward Mooney	Arthur Brackell
Joseph Ferry	Harry St. Louis
Robert Hurst	Gordon Battersby
Mr. Maître	Roy Fairbairn
Edward Dunn	Robert Croft
Martial Voligny	Harold Porter
James Quick	Hemen St. Louis

TOWNSHIP AREA BOARD 1946

Hubert Shuel	Arnold Axcell
Russel Pettypiece	Henry Hartley
Marshall Jessop	Bruce Banwell
Orville Farough	Milton Farough
Charles Plant	Kenneth MacKenzie
Wilbert Snyder	Elmer Ure

TEACHERS

Rosie I. Burke	1881	Nellie Wisner	1917
Annie Whiteside	1884	Lillian Lakewood	1918
Julia King	1885	Miss L. R. Cree	1919
Miss McCarty	1888	Myrtle Weir	1919
Miss Webb	1889	Dessie Purdy	1920
John J. Sullivan	1890	Winnifred Tilden	1921
Bella Robson	1891	Mr. E. Shrier	1922
Miss Younghusband	1892	Gladys Wills	1922
Kate Brown	1893	Margaret Macdiarmid	1923
Lisetta Kerr	1895	Lucreta Fair	1923
E. A. McEwan	1901	Doris Fair	1923
Emma Wilson	1903	Myrtle Haney	1924
Miss J. Ewing	1904	Miss Heard	1925
Daisy Potts	1905	Lucy Featherston	1925
Miss Avans	1905	Norma Day	1928
Miss G. Mooney	1906	Beulah Hillman	1928
Miss A. Robinson	1907	Rhea Whitehead	1929
Jennie Ure	1907	Gladys Barber	1930
Jessie Ure	1908	Florence Walker	1933
Annie Mullins	1911	Edith Dickson	1934
Bernice Ure	1912	Beverly Omerod	1938
Bell McKinlay	1913	Marjorie Lyons	1939
Lula Wisner	1913	Florence Stein	1940
Margaret Foster	1914	Eleanor Zorzit	1944
Claire Kennedy	1914	William Elford	1947
Miss A. Jones	1915	Fred Wilson	1952
Miss E. Sherman	1916	Anne Brydone	1953-5