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# Margaret Scott "graduates" after 25 years at Plantagenet Public School

By Margaret MacMillan  
PLANTAGENET - "You do your best..."

It was the first week of July and there was an eery quietness in the corridors of Plantagenet Public School. Behind her desk in the basement-level "nerve centre" of the school, secretary Margaret Scott was doing what she has done for the past quarter-century, compiling end-of-year statistics, tying up loose ends, sifting through files for material to put through the shredder.

Only this year, along with the familiarity of the routines was a sense of entering unfamiliar territory - a realization she was doing these things for the last time, and would soon be saying goodbye to a school she has served since September, 1976.

All the fuss being made about her retirement has caught her by surprise, especially a flood of gifts, cards and messages from students and their families.

**"It's incredible!"**

"I've got so many cards and letters to write," she said, shaking her head. "It's incredible; everyone has been so kind and generous."

At the graduation ceremony, each grade presented her with a rose, and from the whole school she received a large flowering Mandeville plant.

The Grade 8's even devoted a page to "Mrs. Scott" in their souvenir booklet, *My Own Memories*. In it, they told her she was graduating along with them, only to retirement instead of high school, and that they would miss her as someone who was always there to tend



(photo M. MacMillan)

**It took 25 years, but Plantagenet Public School secretary Margaret Scott "graduated" this year - to retirement, that is. Shown in the office that has been her domain all these years, she reflected the school "started out with a typewriter that had just one font, and now we have all sorts of computer programs". Like most school staff from the pre-computer era, Scott mastered the new technology through on-the-job training, experience, trial and error.**

their hurts, help them call home, and remember to turn on 'O, Canada' on the loudspeaker each morning.

Born Margaret MacDonald, Scott grew up near Maxville on the family

farm at St. Elmo. She worked briefly for a tobacco wholesaler in Ottawa before marrying Wray Scott and taking up farming with him on the Scotch River Road.

The couple had a family of four: Catherine, Allen, Christena and Neil.

While her kids were growing up, Margaret took a break from office work and spent "20 years at home in the kitchen." In 1975 she took an office job with a hardware wholesale firm in Ottawa, but the new secretarial post at PPS beckoned and she became its first secretary.

**A new start for an old building**

In 1976, the Prescott-Russell public board had