

Violent objections heard closing Erin high school

About 300 people packed Erin Legion hall last Wednesday evening for the "crisis" meeting called to discuss the proposed closing of Erin high school.

Violent objections to the plan were heard from elected representatives and citizens. Erin students, at the meeting in large numbers, did not present their case then but indicated they would take it to the next meeting of Wellington Board of Education Monday.

The board has proposed transporting the 301 students of Erin high school to Guelph, where there is a greater range of options.

Erin Reeve James Mundell said the councils of Erin Village, Erin Township and Hillsburgh had met Tuesday of last week and were firm in their decision to not agree, under any circumstances, to the high school closure.

"Students would have to travel a minimum of 46 miles to and from Guelph every day of every week of every year. That is just too much. They would be unable to attend any school functions and be robbed of any community spirit. We want our school," declared Mr. Mundell.

Heartache
Dr. James P. O'Connor arranged the non-vindictive non-political meeting "to demonstrate to our elected representatives the cohesiveness established in our community by this crisis."

He outlined the frustration felt in the Erin area over education. Citizens felt let down by previous decisions on Ospringe kindergarten and the transfer of Principal L. Brown. Now there was great heartache over the idea that Erin would also be losing its high school.

Dr. O'Connor presented a four page brief to the school board. It stressed the wasted time involved in busing students to Guelph and the weakening of association with the home

community. Civic pride was involved in the high school which was built by the community. The high school was an incentive for Erin's growth and there should be continuity in keeping the high school for Erin destined to become a large community.

Erin tolerance
"One can ask if the feelings of the people whose children are being educated are being considered," said Dr. O'Connor. Perhaps the board was beginning to take advantage of the tolerance of Erin. Citizens were beginning to feel helpless under the present system of education.

Eliminating a small community school in favor of a wider variety of subjects was contrary to the spirit of the Hall-Dennis report. Erin people were considering the total education of their children, extra-curricular and community involvement as well as academic.

"People feel that these broader aspects of education can be better served in a smaller community high school, rather than in a large, impersonal monolith," concluded the brief.

Tells reasons
Director of Education Alfred Hanwell outlined the facts which led the board to its decision. Although he personally favored building one large complex to serve Erin and Eramosa he didn't think there was any chance of getting department of education approval. He pointed out the board hadn't closed the door on the alternatives and the Erin proposals would be taken into account, when "the serious consideration is being undertaken."

Reeve Lloyd Lang of Erin Township, said there were children in the township who had to travel over 20 miles to get to Erin — let alone adding another 23 miles to their journeys to get them to Guelph. He warned the audience that the final solution might involve a compromise

location for facilities. Trustee Gordon Gregson said he was certainly not in favor of transportation proposal. Trustee George Day said the needs of both Eramosa and Erin had to be considered. It would be unfair to bus Eramosa students presently attending Guelph schools twice as far to an Erin school to make up a viable student complement.

Minimum expense
John Root, MPP, looked for a solution that would provide the best possible education with a minimum of transportation and expense.

The audience bombarded officials with questions. Mr. Hanwell said growth at Erin high school this year was negative, and nine per cent below projections. He agreed that county boundary lines, which precluded bringing students to Erin from Halton, Peel or Dufferin were not administratively logical and the board had been protesting these lines.

Reeve Mundell said Premier Bill Davis had promised to review county boundaries if they didn't work and if he hadn't given such consideration "he can start right now with Erin."

Options
Principal W. N. Finnie of Erin, said the talk of options did not apply to academic students who were limited to a small group of options. He wanted a school kept in Erin where rural students could be educated in a rural environment.

Mr. Hanwell countered by pointing out 80 per cent of high school students weren't going on to university. They were the majority who needed the rich variety of options available in larger schools.

"Yes, and we hope to see those facilities in Erin," said Mr. Finnie.

"And why can't we have them here?" asked one questioner. A former J. F. Ross C.V.I. student said Erin students at that

school were amazed at the facilities — but they couldn't use them as they had to catch their 4 p.m. buses back home.

Disrupt economy
A minister pointed out that taking rural children off the family farms for longer periods, each day would disrupt the rural economy and could cause youngsters to cut short their education. Many people had gone to live in Erin to get away from cities and to a place where there was a self-sufficient community life. Removing their school would start the "dormitory" process.

Jack Gilchrist, board vice-chairman, revealed he had been disappointed with the majority decision of the board to seriously consider closing Erin school. The basic idea that started the original study was to improve the sub-standard facilities in Erin and he felt that a major consideration had to be to stop the Erin drop out rate, already the highest in the county.

Other questioners suggested the 110 Erin students presently going to Guelph schools be returned to Erin as the nucleus of the larger viable unit. They did not see why Guelph should get new facilities, to house Erin students, and Erin left without a school at all.

"You've dealt with statistics and not the human element. We don't give a damn about those statistics. We are concerned about our children," shouted an Erin resident, to an uproar of applause.

"Hear, hear," said Mr. Hanwell.

Erin stays open

Erin high school will not close.

At its meeting Monday, Wellington county school board decided against the proposal which had provoked so much opposition.

300 young people were faced with the prospect of travelling to Guelph each day to high school.

The board decided instead to embark on a study to improve the secondary and elementary school facilities in Erin and Eramosa. "The Board has come to the right decision," said Reeve James Mundell of Erin. "This move tonight removes any feeling that the Board might be riding roughshod over the people. This is a big improvement for our children."

The students were also reported to be jubilant. They presented a brief in favor of retaining the school. The staff also presented a brief.

The Sunday School is holding a Halloween party on Oct. 30.

The board debated two hours before a packed gallery.

Limehouse

Presentation, 4-H hike, wedding, trips in news

By Mrs. A. Benton

Mr. and Mrs. Glsby were guests at the Arsenault-Law wedding at the United Church, Huttonville, on Oct. 9. The bride is Mrs. Glsby's niece.

The Steady Readies 4-H girls met at the home of assistant leader Mrs. Ron Clow on Saturday. Roll call was "An interesting place I have visited". The girls hiked on the conservation property, seeing the old kilns and crossing the creek, went down the old radial line, where they had a view of the valley. Back at the meeting place they recited their pledge and

discussed "How are you?", meaning signs of good health.

Colors beautiful

Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Benton visited Mr. and Mrs. Allan Hadley at Gooderham over the weekend. The autumn colors were beautiful, especially south of Kilmount.

Presentation

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Glsby, recent newlyweds, were honored at a presentation in Limehouse Memorial Hall on Friday evening. After calling the couple to decorated chairs on the stage, Mrs. Bert Benton read an address on behalf of the community, welcoming Susan

and expressing the good opinions of Fred, Mrs. Hale, Mrs. Roughley, Bert Benton and Frank Hale presented the gifts of the community — a G.E. vacuum cleaner, a games table and four chairs, and a sum of money with a suggestion that it be used towards the purchase of a food mixer. Fred thanked all and we joined in "Jolly Good Fellows."

Several passed the plentiful lunch to round out an enjoyable evening.

Mr. Glen Scott and Joe, Stephen and Glen motored to Pennsylvania and back by camper recently.

Services at Limehouse were withdrawn on Sunday on account of the anniversary at Knox, Georgetown. Rev. John Murray of Milton will preach next Sunday, October 24.

Mesdames Mitchell, Noble, Mills and Kirkpatrick enjoyed a motor trip to the Forks of the Credit to view the autumn colors and lunch after, all arranged by the Glen Williams United Church.

Silver-Wood

Read labels in French

By Mrs. George Burt

Silverwood W.I. ladies met at the home of Mrs. Don Lindsay for the October meeting. There were 14 members and two visitors present. The 4-H girls and some of the mothers also attended the meeting.

Mrs. Giffen, president opened the meeting with the opening Ode and Mary Stewart Collect. The roll call was answered by "A Household Label read in French", which quite a few were able to do.

Buy book

It was decided to purchase a book "Ontario Women's W.I. Story" for the branch.

Short course on "Fashion Kews for you" will be at Mrs. Campbell's home on Nov. 25th.

Halton District Day will be at the Master Feeds Research building on Nov. 8 with a speaker from Brampton.

Mrs. Cossar will be the delegate to the convention in Guelph on Oct. 26. Mrs. Don Lindsay, convener of Education, had as her program Mrs. Harding and Mrs. Thompson from Rockwood demonstrate how to make a turkey roll. This was very interesting.

The meeting closed and a delicious lunch served by the committee.

We are sorry to hear of the death of Mr. Gordon Smith, also of the illness of Mrs. Smith.

4-H meeting

We went to Mrs. Clow's home on Saturday morning. The first thing we did was talk about "Health and Good Looking" eg. hair, skin, eyes. Then we went for a hike in the provincial park in Limehouse. We saw some of the places like the shooting gallery. Then we came back and had cookies and milk.

Ebenezer

148th anniversary Ebenezer church

Mrs. Ron McLean

Rev. David Nicholson, of Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church, was the special speaker at Ebenezer's 148th anniversary on Sunday. His topic was "The Work and Worship of the Church". Our world is fast becoming a post-Christian world. This is startling because the basis of education is a Christian philosophy. We cannot depend on our public school system to teach our children Christian morals.

The main purpose for which the church exists is to witness to the world of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Mankind has a capacity to worship, which no other living creature has. We must be able to sincerely acknowledge the absolute worth of the one we worship.

By ourselves, without any outside assistance, we are unable to worship the one who created us. We must accept by faith our Lord as God's gift to the world. We will no longer regard the worship of God as a duty, but a gracious privilege. A worshipping church will also express concern for its neighbors. If Christianity is to survive, we need a fresh revelation of the greatness of God.

Fowl supper

Ebenezer U.C.W. is planning a turkey supper for Oct. 28. Everyone welcome, from 5 till 7.30.

Mrs. Ward, the president,

opened the U.C.W. meeting with a verse, "I'm thankful." The roll call was answered with a verse containing the word, "sheaves".

It is planned to hold the Christmas meeting at Bezek Centre. It is hoped to have Mr. Harold Kitching show pictures of his work next month.

Mrs. H. Weideman agreed to take the vacant post of vice-president; Mrs. E. Ward to continue another year as president.

Program

The conveners for the evening were Mrs. A. Diamond and Mrs. D. Munro. Mrs. Diamond read a selection, "Let us be thankful". Mrs. Finley read the scripture from Psalm 103. Mrs. Weideman and Mrs. McLean read

appropriate items.

Mrs. Munro took the topic on Trinidad. It is the second largest West Indian island. It has a population of 794 thousand. In 1802, it was ceded to Britain and in 1962 Trinidad and Tobago gained independence. 77 per cent of the population is non-Christian, mostly Hindu. Mrs. Munro told the story of a boy who had been raised to work in the sugar cane fields, and who derived an education. He was torn between the desire to go back to the city, and the feeling that he should return home and help educate his less fortunate neighbors.

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