

# Stewarttown school 20th anniversary

Stewarttown Senior school is celebrating 20 years as an educational facility. The school, which now serves Grade 7 and 8 in the west end of Georgetown and a large portion of rural Halton Hills was opened by the Esquesing Township Area School Board in 1958 as a regular public school. There were five classrooms in the original school. It was supposed to replace Stewarttown's original two-room school, take the pupils

from Clay Hill school north of Glen Williams which had been closed in 1956 and its pupils sent to the Glen, and also take the senior students from all the one-room schools near by which were overcrowded. Grade 7 and 8 students were brought in from Stone School and Blue Mountain school on the Seventh Line, Bannockburn on the Fifth Line, and Dublin on the Third Line. Ashgrove school closed at Christmas of that year and

its students also attended. Beth (McEnery) Pearson clearly remembers the opening of the school. Mrs. Pearson, now a teacher at Tara Elementary school had all the Grade 4 and 5 pupils and some of the Grade 6 that year. The rest of Grade 6 and Grade 7 were taught by Doreca Geier. Donna Hiseborough began teaching in Ashgrove school and joined the Stewarttown staff at Christmas. All three girls were straight out of high

school with nothing more than a summer course to prepare them for their careers. Lilah Pollock, the Grade 12 and 3 teacher, was well experienced and helped them greatly as they struggled with their new experiences, Mrs. Pearson says. Mrs. Pollock had taught the primary room in the two-room Stewarttown school prior to the opening of the new school. Robertson Gibbons was the school prin-

cipal and taught Grade 6. He left in 1966. When she entered her classroom the Monday before classes began there wasn't even a desk in it, Mrs. Pearson says. The furniture was in the school but it had to be put into the rooms. The furnishings had been trucked in from the closed schools at Clay Hill and Stewarttown but she and the rest of the staff spent the Labor Day Monday lugging desks and sorting supplies.

Books had also been brought from the closed schools as well as from the higher grades that were removed from other schools. "You had no idea what books were in a box when you opened it," Mrs. Pearson says. "They just cleared out all the ones we were to get so there might be books for a number of subjects and a number of grade levels too in one carton. We had to sort them out and take them to the right rooms as we unpacked."

When the doors opened the next morning Mrs. Pearson had 33 students and she estimates that enrollment would have been about the same in each of the four classes. After Ashgrove school closed all five rooms were in use.

Students arrived at the school on a bus run from Glen Williams, Mrs. Pearson says. A second run picked up students from west of Stewarttown. Ballinacree area pupils arrived by taxi for a time until the bus routes got sorted out, she says.

Eleanor McKeown, who now teaches at E.C. Drury School for the Deaf in Milton, taught at Stewarttown from 1960 to 1967. She became part of the staff when the Stone school which used to stand on the south-east corner of the 22 Sideroad-Highway 7 intersection opposite Park Toyota was closed. The school was already crowded at that point, she says, and chuckles as she recalls having 46 Grade 2 pupils on the first day of school one year.

The teachers going into the new classrooms started their year in quarters completely away from the school. Mrs. Darce and Courtney Saunders, who had Grade 7, were in the old Hornby school which is now converted into the ARC workshop. Margaret McKelvey had Grade 5 in the council chambers in the municipal building on Trafalgar Road.

The school got a total transformation in 1967 when 10 rooms were added and it was converted into the area's first senior school for Grade 7 and 8. It was a model for its time, says Centennial school principal Ron Chatten. Only students from township schools attended it at that time and it wasn't until 1969 when the Halton board of education was formed that students from the west end of



Stewarttown's 1977-78 staff were front row from the l: Thelma Hearn, Angl DeBruyn, Al Zanatta, vice-principal, Logan MacDonald, principal, Mary Waddell, Janet Lawson and Margaret Kallit. Centre row: Robert Khoury, Clare Grigg, secretary, Norbert Gabel, Margaret Gurr, secretary, Joanne Mackie, Michael Ogden and Ray Denny. Back row: Robert Pinkerton, Jim Hildley, Brian Cosgrove, Mike Coates, Dave Lawrence, Gord Bassett, Peter Gardiner and Gus Mikolert.

"We were told the addition would be ready by February but we didn't get into the rooms until the first of May," she says. "I was the only one in the school with a split grade that year. I had about 28 students, all Grade 3 and a handful of Grade 4s."

The building at the intersection of 15 Sideroad and Trafalgar Road is actually, the third school in Stewarttown. A plaque in the entrance of the school says that the village was served by a one-room log cabin until 1873.

Georgetown began going there. Ron Chatten, who became principal of the school in 1966, was the first principal of the senior school and left in 1970. He was followed by Jack Reid and the present principal Logan MacDonald arrived at the school in 1976.

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A two-storey red brick school containing two classrooms was erected on east half lot 15, Concession 7 in that year, and can still be seen there today as Brigg's Upholstering shop. In 1896 the top storey was removed and the entire building was renovated so that the lower floor was turned into two classrooms.

The bell from that school was placed in a cairn in front of the new school as a Centennial project of the Esquesing Women's Institute.



This building is now used as a workshop, was the Stewarttown school until 1957. It was built in 1873 and renovated in 1896. The bell which used to hang in its belfry is now in a cairn in front of the new Stewarttown Senior school.

## Special feature By Maggie Hannah



The first official picture of Stewarttown's staff was taken in 1961-65, the year of its first addition. Staff members were, front row from l: Eleanor McKeown, Grade 2, Margaret McKelvey, Grade 5, Hilda Boyes, Grades 3 and 4, Margaret Lawson, secretary. Back row: Courtney Saunders, Grade 7, Thelma Hearn, Grade 1, Robertson Gibbons, Grade 8 and principal, Barbara Whitmee, Grade 3, Mary Kidney, music specialist, and Andy Blain, Grade 6.



When Stewarttown became a senior school the staff expanded. Teachers in 1967-68 were front row from l: Margaret Ridley, music, Judy Postumus, Hilda Boyes, librarian, Joanne Mackie, home economics, Margaret Lawson, secretary, and Mary Hogan, special education. Middle row: Marlene Elliot, special education, Marie James, Margaret McKelvey, John Lenz, Ron Chatten, principal, Jack Reed, vice-principal, Thelma Hearn, physical education and Jackie Lince. Back row: Dave McFarlane, Ron Burrows, an exchange teacher from Australia, Peter Gardner, Gord Bassett, Dave Lawrence, Barry Brown, physical education, Bob Pinkerton, art.



Stewarttown staff in 1966-67 included front row from l: Barbara Whitmee, Margaret Lawson, secretary, Hilda Boyes, Thelma Hearn, back row: Margaret McKelvey, Peter Gardiner, Ron Chatten, principal, Leonard Jackson, senior opportunity class, Eleanor McKeown, junior opportunity class.

## Garbage crisis

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unrealistic to believe that a major regional landfill site will be ready for use by 1983. An opponent of Halton's plans to develop the regional site in rural Milton, he charged that alternative sites have simply not been studied to the extent needed. Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett also speculated that public opposition may delay the expansion of the existing Oakville dump, since the adjacent land in question is zoned for agricultural use. "This is where you'll get the public input," he said. "Let's get on with the rezoning application and see what the reaction is". Several council members, and particularly Burlington Mayor Mary Munro, nevertheless commended project manager Wally Wells and M.M. Dillon for an "excellent" report that has helped Halton avoid "an emergency situation".

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