

Limehouse School— 50 years later

It's funny how some things remain etched in your brain.

When I was little, I attended Grades 1-6 at SS No. 9, Gibraltar School—the old stone school located on the Fifth Line.

In June of my Grade 6 year, the stone school was closed, and the kids were diverted to the new, 'huge' school, built right in the middle of the village of Limehouse.

It was 50 years ago in September that I entered the new Limehouse School, to start my Grade 7 year. The school was built to accommodate students from four outlying schools— Bannockburn, Gibraltar, Blue Mountain and Limehouse— all one-room schools that had served their purpose, but were retired as student enrolments soared in the 1960s.

In 1962, Limehouse only had six classrooms and no gym. Neither was there a library, a Kindergarten, or a music room.

Everyone from Grades 1-8 attended the school— there were no middle schools.

Eric Balkind was the first principal and he also taught Grades 7 and 8, with Mrs. Wilson, a principal's relief teacher, stepping in two half-days a week so he could look after administrative duties at the school.

The opening of the school back then suffered a few hiccups— the most memorable being the lack of desks. Yup, no desks. They were locked up in a tractor-trailer parked in the yard, but we couldn't use 'em.

Apparently there was a feud going on between the contractor and the supplier about payment. So, for the first two weeks of school that year, we sat on the floor.

Grade 6 teacher Mr. Dickson was resourceful— he took a large cardboard box and made it into his teacher's desk until the real thing arrived.

Thinking back, other teachers come to mind, like Miss Munn— such a 'cute' name for a Grade 1 teacher, or our music teacher Mrs. Kidney.

My favourite was Sid Kirkpatrick, the school custodian. Sid and his wife Caroline were longtime Limehouse residents, living just around the corner on what is now called Kirkpatrick Lane.

Ted Brown



Every once in a while, I drop by Limehouse School to cover an event. It's fun to look in on some of the rooms to reminisce— especially in Room 6, my old Grade 7-8 classroom.

The room is pretty much the same as back in 1962, with a few extra coats of paint on the walls, and the same view of 22 Sideroad. We used to watch the gravel trucks from Duff's pit drive through the village when we were supposed to be doing school work.

I recall the door at the back which opened into the principal's office— a place I had occasion to frequent. The door is now sealed.

In 1962 the staff room was located where the secretary's office is today. It seems small today, but there were only six teachers, and no secretary.

Another memory— if one of the students had a need to knock on the staff room door during lunch, a wall of cigarette smoke rolled out to greet the kid.

With no school secretary, and the principal's office adjacent to Room Six, one of the Grade 8 kids answered the phone. The privilege of answering the telephone was passed around to the Grade 8 students.

At Limehouse School, there are many changes, yet many things have remained the same.

For those who did attend the school, there is an opportunity to drop by this coming weekend, to wander around the halls, reminisce with friends, and take a trip down memory lane. From 2-4 p.m. Saturday (June 9) former students are invited to visit the school, and go back a few years— perhaps even 50 years.

And in doing so, renew some acquaintances, and bring old friends up to date.

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Mike and Judy Payne are thrilled to announce the engagement of their son

Matthew Payne
to
Cassandra Corbett
daughter of
Donna and Wayne Brown & Chris and Lynn Corbett.

Wedding to take place
September 8, 2012
at the Limehouse
Presbyterian Church.

Stag 'n' Doe

Amy Gilroy and Mark Robinson

Saturday, June 9, 2012
7 pm to 1 am

Georgetown Lions Hall
(Behind Memorial Arena)

Tickets \$10 at the door - Age of Majority
Games • Prizes • DJ • Midnight Lunch

It gives great joy to announce

Heather Terry and Cam Owsienko
exchanged vows on
April 20, 2012.

May your life together be blessed with much joy, laughter and love.

Love Mom & Dad, Matthew & Alexandra, Natalie & Nicole

STAG & DOE

Dave Cairns & Kristin Marshall

SAT. JUNE 23, 2012

Georgetown Lions Club
8pm

A Black & White Night
Prizes! Black Jack! Pie Auction!
Games! Food & Drinks!

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See Angie at Napo for tickets