



FIRST-CLASS! This is the very first class of Rockwood's Wellington Hall Academy. Wellington Hall is an independent elementary day school for J.K. to Grade 8 students. Front row, from left: Christopher Viel and Madison VanRyn. Back row: Nick VanRyn, Travis VanRyn, Larissa Viel, teacher Jette Anesen, Dallan Crossman and Peter Dewey. (Doug Harrison photo)

New principal comes home to Centennial

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Rockwood Miller

While the short, timid steps and long faces on some of Rockwood Centennial's 500-plus students suggested otherwise, last Tuesday didn't feel like the first day of school to Marg Graham.

Perhaps she was already settled at her new desk after spending most of July catching up on some reading about the school "where she would like to finish her career" as a principal.

Or was it simply the smiles from youngsters while walking through the halls or the professional and helpful staff members who made her feel more the returning veteran than the rookie phenom?

"For the staff here, this is the job they want to do and where they want to be to do the best job. Those are the kind of signs that have you believing you made the right move," Graham said.

"The kids are very friendly and co-operative with each other. Peo-



MARG GRAHAM

ple have gone out of their way to help."

After 31 years with the Wellington Board of Education, teaching primarily in Guelph, Graham, 51, jumped

at the chance to work at home.

"I liked what I had," noted Graham, who spent the last eight years as principal at Guelph's Brant Avenue Public School, "but when the opportunity for Rockwood came up, I saw it very much as a challenge and so far, it's been delightful."

Not only does the Rockwood resident look forward to working with the older students in Grade 7 and 8, but recognizing and getting acquainted with parents outside the school.

"People get to know you if you work where you live," she said. "And they're more inclined to talk to you. It's important for parents in that if they are concerned about something, they can approach you."

"Plus, this school has such a high reputation. A lot of teachers want to come here. It's a very good academic school and a beautiful spot."

With the older students, Graham, a mother of four and grandmother of three, enjoys their senses of humour and how they interact being the big brother or sister to the young kids.

"It's said that where you start teaching, that's what you like best," said Graham, who began teaching Kindergarten and Grade 1 at Torrence Public School.

"But the Grade 7 and 8s are the people the young ones look up to. It's nice preparation for them before they enter high school when they become 'young ones' again."

A graduate of Sir Wilfrid Laurier University (B.A.) and the Masters of Education program at the University of Toronto, Graham had taught every grade and spent 10 years as a vice-principal before arriving at Brant Avenue.

When she's not at her desk or visiting classrooms, Graham enjoys knitting, curling and golfing. She also enjoys travelling, having taken a year's leave of absence from Brant Avenue for a motor home camping trip to Alaska with her husband, Robert.

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HOMEPLAN OF THE WEEK!

Corner lot home

The garage and front entrance of this home both face streetside, making this design suitable for a corner lot. A dramatic raised entry leads into a foyer brightened by an overhead window. Decorative columns frame the entrance to the living room and dining room. Each area also boasts a high ceiling and feature window. A gourmet style kitchen provides ample cupboard and counter space, a work island, and a walk-in pantry. A carousel nook receives plenty of natural sunlight from surrounding windows. The family room, partially open to the kitchen and nook, offers a spacious atmosphere for informal gatherings. The den, close to the main bath and set apart from the main traffic areas, would make an ideal guest bedroom. Upstairs, all four bedrooms are a good size. The front bedroom features a boxed out window seat. The master boasts a walk-in closet, a carousel sitting area and a four piece ensuite with a raised swirl tub.

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