

Richmond School

# Future of school in doubt



RICHMOND SCHOOL, alias Christie, alias Kelso, better known as No. 6 is a one-room structure located on Appleby Line, south of Highway 401. It began as a frame building in 1863 and the present stone structure was built in 1886. It was closed in 1965. The future use and ownership of the school is presently the subject of political bantering.

The future of the Richmond School house becomes a more tangled mystery with each passing day. It has been tossed from pillar to post since it was closed in 1965 and today it's anyone's guess as to who owns it or who even wants it.

Richmond School, alias Christie, alias Kelso, better known as No. 6 is a one-room structure located on Appleby Line, south of Highway 401. It began as a frame building in 1863, the present stone structure being built in 1886. It was the last of the schools in Nassagaweya to be closed with the amalgamation of one-room-schools to Brookville.

**Open concept**

It is a prime example of open concept architecture. Mrs. Edwina Parsons, teacher at the school from 1947 until it closed in 1965, was quoted then as saying, "These schools have something to give to students, they have to learn to work for themselves."

Nassagaweya Township donated the building to Halton County Museum Board in 1965. According to Judy Goebelle, a board member, the agreement at the time stipulated it could be used for anything from a workshop to a tea-room, anything pertaining to the

work of the museum. It could even be restored to its original condition as an example of one-room school houses.

Mayor Anne MacArthur, the Reeve of Nassagaweya and now Mayor of the Town of Milton is of the same opinion today as she was in 1965. She would like to see the schoolhouse restored.

**Changed hands**

When Nassagaweya became part of the Town of Milton at the beginning of this year the schoolhouse once again changed hands. It was now the property of the Regional Municipality of Halton. As such it became the responsibility of the Community Services committee. A few weeks ago the committee voted the school be offered for sale for 50 cents to the Town of Milton. This motion was considered by some of the committee members to be a joke. Nevertheless it was a legal motion. To date the Town of Milton has refused to pay the 50 cents as they consider it rightly belongs to Milton in the first place.

**No joke**

Judy Goebelle, president of the "Friends of the Museum", finds the controversy far from funny. She and her co-workers have been trying to get money to restore

the building for years. "Our funds always had to go for restoration purposes at the museum itself and there was never enough money for work on the school," she explains.

She also considers it no joke the way the schoolhouse is being bantered about. "I wouldn't have been so upset if they'd decided the fate of the schoolhouse at a community services meeting with Erla (museum curator, Mrs. Britton) present," she angrily commented. "I object to the way it was done." The Friends have called an

emergency meeting this evening at 8 p.m. at the future of the Halton Museum to discuss the in general.

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## Remove dead trees

Six dead trees on Main St., Milton will be removed between Bell St. and Bronte St. on the south side of the street.

Halton Regional Public Works committee approved of that action at a recent meeting. It was noted the trees on the boulevard are in a dangerous condition. The street is a regional road.

Canada's flag was ceremoniously proclaimed February 15, 1965.

## Richmond dates to 1863 awaits restoration plans

Richmond School closed its doors on the last class ever to attend on Tuesday June 29, 1965. It was the last one-room schoolhouse in Halton County.

Mrs. Edwina Parsons, who taught at the school since 1947, was the teacher for the last class of 30 children in grades one to five. Mrs. Parsons also taught at the school for one year back in 1927 as Miss Allan and had 65 children in that class.

The school has been known as the Richmond, the Christie and the Kelso. It was the school for all children in the area called School Section No. 6 which extended from the Base Line to No. 10 Sideroad, and from the Town Line to between the third and fourth concessions.

**Scotch pioneers**  
Scotch pioneers settled the district early in the 19th Century. Alexander, Smith, Scot, Elliot, Moffat, Christie and Campbell are names of some of the first families to clear land and establish homesteads in the area.

By 1863 the population had increased and a frame school, which served until 1886 when it became the woodshed for a new school, was built in the centre of the section. Peter McGibbon, James McGibbon, James McLean and W.G. Stewart (who was also a writer and an old country school teacher) taught in the original school.

**Present building**  
The present stone structure was built by a stone mason,

Mr. Shultz of Morrison, in 1886 on the same grounds as the old school. Mr. McLenahan was the first teacher in this school which was heated by a stove and had double seats for the students. Mr. McLenahan later became Dr. McLenahan and served for several years on the Halton and Peel Board of Health. The students competed with students from all schools in Nassagaweya for prizes and promotions which were won for marks in examinations held once a year in the Brookville Hall. A Presbyterian minister, Mr. Little, was the first inspector. He was succeeded by a Mr. Deacon and then J.M. Denyes.

**Basement**  
Several years after the building was completed, a basement was dug and a furnace installed in the school. Ethel Chapman, who became well known as a writer for farm magazines, taught at the school in 1907. She was followed by A.J. Stephenson and J.W. Campbell. During this period, the school was the social centre of the community and literary meetings were held there regularly.

Six people taught at the school from 1912 to 1920. Janice Reid, a local girl, W. Cunningham who became a doctor and moved to Grimbsy, Miss A. Stanley, Miss K. Mahon from Aberfoyle, Miss S. McPherson from Guelph and Miss L. Clark from London were the teachers.

**Divided rooms**  
In 1921 the attendance was so large that the school was divided into junior and senior rooms. Harry Belyea and then Mrs. E. Patterson of Milton taught the senior room and Miss M. Boyd of Milton taught the junior children. In September 1924 Laura Black, a community resident, began to teach and was followed the next year by Miss Langford of Waterdown who taught at the Kelso school for two years. Miss Allan (who later became Mrs. Parsons) of Milton, G. Green of Burlington and Mrs. Melvin of Toronto followed in the next three years.

In 1930 attendance again grew and the school was split into senior and junior classes taught by Miss C. Young of Westport and Miss Smith respectively.

**Remodelled**  
In the summer of 1931 the school was remodelled. The windows were all put on one side of the building, the school was painted both inside and out, the basement was enlarged and deepened, the furnace was reconditioned, a new floor was laid, new blackboards were installed, the stonework was repainted, and single seats replaced the double ones.

Two teachers taught in the school in 1932. Miss Hurren of Campbellville taught till Christmas and K. Steinburgh of London stayed till June. Miss M.C. Martin was the class teacher in 1933. In March 1935 music was intro-

duced in the school and Miss G. Johnstone of Omagh was the music teacher. When George VI was crowned in May of 1937 a new flagpole was erected commemorating the occasion.

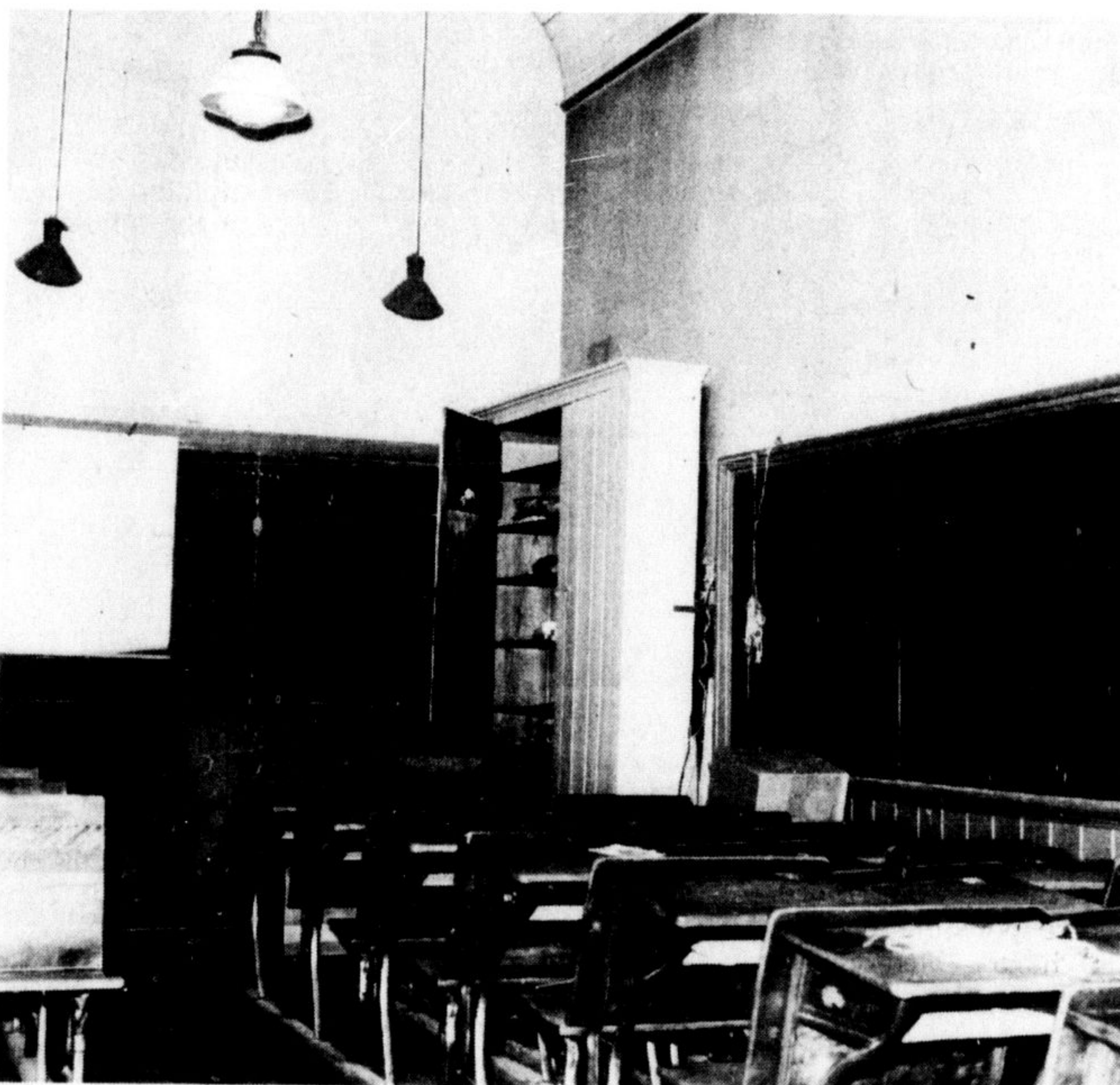
Miss Martin resigned in June 1938, and Miss L. Gunby of Campbellville became the teacher. That year, inspector J.M. Denyes also resigned and was replaced by Lorne Skuce of Sudbury. Miss Helen McPhail was appointed music teacher that September to replace Miss Johnstone, J.A. Partridge became the inspector in 1939 when Mr. Skuce became a teacher at the Hamilton Normal School.

Charles Sayers of Milton taught at the school for three months in 1940. Mrs. McDowell of Milton finished the year and was followed by Miss E. Foley and Miss M. O'Reilly, who both spent two years teaching there.

In 1947 Mrs. Florence Parsons began her 18 years of teaching pupils at the Kelso school. In January 1965 the school section was taken over by No. 1 Nassagaweya School Area Board.

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