

# McConaghy's final students

For the next few weeks, The Liberal will present, in this space, the final classes of students to attend McConaghy Public School.

Richmond Hill Public School March 5, 1915, will close its doors for good.

In 1957, the name was changed to M.L. McConaghy Public School.

And in 1979, the York County Board of

Education made its decision to close the school.

Therefore, we thought we'd like to record the names and photos of those children who were at McConaghy during its final year.

In June, the school, which opened as

## Letters

### Joan Connolly - job "well done"

On behalf of all the former teachers, students and friends of M.L. McConaghy Public School who attended our "Memories Night" on June 21, I would, through your column, like to express our deepest thanks to Joan Connolly for a job "well done".

When it became apparent that our school would definitely close this June, it was Joan who strongly felt that something should be done for the last students of McConaghy School.

Hence was born the idea of a McConaghy Year Book.

It was through Joan's continuing and determined efforts that our year book went from an idea of 22 pages to a final

56 page book. She has said it was a pleasure to put this book together, but I can say it was a pleasure to work with her on our year book.

When interest was expressed by some former students for a last chance to rewalk the halls, revisit with our classmates, and see our favorite teachers again, it was Joan who once more undertook the mammoth task of organizing many of the activities for our "Memories Night".

In a very short time contacts had been made with former teachers who wished to return to the school.

Joan spent many hours on the phone reminiscing with these teachers and former students.

She was also responsible for organizing many of the displays of old photographs, scrapbooks, report cards and other interesting memorabilia.

I know that Joan didn't do that much but for those who have been associated with her in this "Memories Night" and in the year book, we know that without her devotion to an idea, her pleasing warm personality and her total enthusiasm, our year book and our "Memories Night" would have been impossible.

Once again a great thank you, Joan, for a super job "well done".

Mrs. Avonelle Monkman,  
49 Harding Boulevard,  
Richmond Hill.



The final Grade 7 and 8 class at McConaghy School posed proudly for this picture. They are: front row left to right: Silvana DiGaetano, Bonnie DiMatteo, Julie Markham, Sandra Connolly, Patricia Zeppieri, Kathleen Campbell, Louise

Shirlaw and Kathleen McCully. Middle row: Jamie Crocker, Rich Wallace, Jay Fleming, Sanjeer Jawanda, Lisa Knight, Lisa Hirtz, Amanda Peach, Norm Creasor, Rick Mole, Audrey McLaron and Paul Lyons. Back row: David Back, Michael

LeBlanc, Scott Edwards, Joe Moyer, Bill Gamble, Ray Robertson, Rick Gruttenden, Chris Ambrose, Mark Mueller, Mark Hoogenboom, Tim Vermeulen and Don Wilson. (Photo by Canadian School Studios)

## Association says "thanks" to Joan

A hearty congratulatory note is extended to Mrs. Joan Connolly for organizing the M.L. McConaghy Public School Reunion, Thursday, June 21, 1979.

People from Magnetawan, Callander, Orillia, Portland, Cambridge, Kingston, Brampton and many, many other places too numerous to mention,

attended the gathering. Forty-eight former teachers registered and received a yellow rose, kindly donated by Bill Rice.

"McConaghy's Last Students 1810-1979" will again go into another printing to fill the demand for more copies.

A special thanks to all those who helped Joan by making posters, hanging

pictures, printing and looking for material, providing refreshments, and lastly to those who helped clean up.

Thanks, Joan, you made a very special day in history for a lot of people with very dear memories of M.L. McConaghy.

(Mrs.) Kathryn Payne,  
Public Relations  
McConaghy Association

## Former students, teachers together again



There I am, says Elsie Bone of Elizabeth Street, Richmond Hill. She was taught by Mrs. McConaghy in Third Book (Grade 3) and at

tended the M.L. McConaghy School from 1927 to 1934.



Former student Velma Monkman of Centre Street, Richmond Hill, signs a book belonging to her one-time teacher, Ruth Webb, right. The teacher and student were at McConaghy from 1925 to 1932.

## McConaghy - a confrontation between democracy-bureaucracy

The saddest aspect of the closing of McConaghy School will live with us a long time.

Its final effect on Richmond Hill is not fully apparent.

I live with an uncanny malaise that we are embarked upon our 40 years in the wilderness.

We have witnessed a direct confrontation between Democracy and Bureaucracy. Let there be no doubt in any mind.

Democracy represents and carries out the will of the people.

Bureaucracy is a self-perpetuating mindless fungus, quietly creeping across our land, effacing whatever it confronts which fails to reflect its own image. It brooks no interference, hears nothing, sees nothing, feels nothing, if not endangered.

We made it. Are we capable of reducing it to a more proportionate size, malleable to our needs. Apparently not.

And yet we have the old original machinery. Can we re-learn its use? Have

we written it off entirely? It is ancient and respectable though rusty. It needs fresh paint, oil and a few new parts.

If we wish to salvage items of more than intrinsic value, it's time to remove it from dead storage and buy a large oil can, while we still have the oil to fill it.

I can hear the fungus growing like the grass on the lawn, but its roots are deeper.

Dorothy Lowe,  
31 Aubrey Ave.,  
Oak Ridges

## She supports York's Yellow Brick House

I fully support the Yellow Brick House, the women's hostel in Newmarket which offers emergency housing for troubled women in York Region.

I understand that the hostel may close because it lacks sufficient funds.

A good friend of mine was abused as a child along with her mother in the late 1940s and early 1950s when family violence was still an unmentionable topic.

The beatings she received then as a child

and teenager permanently disabled her with a serious bone deterioration condition.

With few exceptions she lives a life of continuous pain.

She can only walk two blocks a day. She can only work a few hours each day before the pain becomes intolerable.

Her survival both physically and mentally is a testament to human strength.

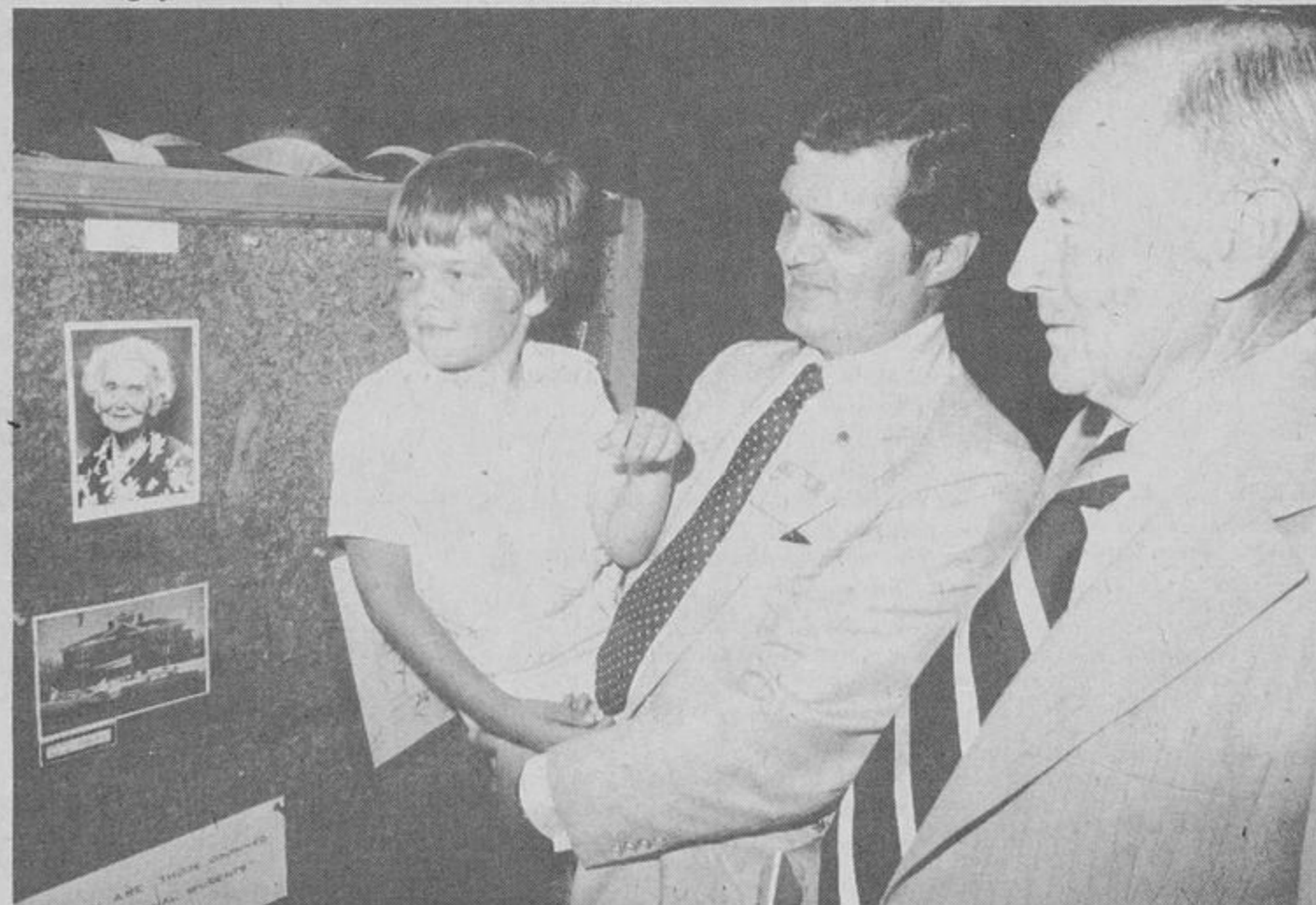
If hostels and other support services for troubled women had been

available to her when she was growing up, she would have had a better chance for a normal life. I urge people in York Region to give the Yellow Brick House their full support.

Ms. Ruth Bishop  
Richmond Hill

More letters

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Three generations of Langstaffs and Mrs. McConaghy's photo on the board makes four. From left, Bruce Langstaff Jr., 7, Bruce

Langstaff, and James Langstaff, admire the photo of Mrs. McConaghy, who was James' aunt.

Photos by Bruce Hogg



Avonelle Monkman taught at McConaghy from 1956 to 1966, and her son, Jamie, 12, is Grade 6 student there. Here, he shows mom his picture in McConaghy's last year book, now in its second printing.



Grade 6 and 7 teacher Lesle Lavery signs autographs for students Schean Kerrigan, 8; Cheryl Primok, 11; and Larry Donofrio, 11; during McConaghy's Memories Night held last Thursday. About 500 people showed up and packed the place.

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By **BOB RICE**

## Bob Rice (sniff) will return (sob)

Bob Rice's column is absent from its usual spot this week for two reasons.

The first is obvious — his space is filled with photos highlighting last Thursday's McConaghy Memories Night.

The second is a little more subtle. We offered him space elsewhere, and he accepted, but every time he tried to start a column about his feelings

during the McConaghy extravaganza, he'd burst into tears.

We're still attempting to get the rust off three perfectly good typewriters, and have instructed him to pen his thoughts on paper for next week. Assuming the water marks don't render the copy incoherent, Rice should return to this page next Wednesday.