

# Seeley's Bay Specs

THERE IS NEW HOPE  
FOR SWEET'S CORNERS SCHOOL

## CENTENNIAL WEEKEND

at

### SEELEYS BAY UNITED CHURCH

A most successful Centennial "Come Home" weekend was held at Seeleys Bay United Church on July 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Activities began on Friday night when the musical film "Gospel Road" with Johnny Cash was shown at the Sweet's Corners Elementary School.

Saturday was a busy day. Games in the park kept the children occupied while John McKinley and his committee were getting the Centennial Park set up for the Chicken Barbecue. The weather was perfect and over 500 enjoyed the outdoor meal and stayed around to visit. It was fun for all - especially the women because the men did the work. (A great job in organizing, ment!). The evening rap session was attended by over fifty young people.

The highlight of the weekend was having Dr. & Mrs. Robert C. McClure as our guests. For more than two years we corresponded with Dr. McClure to finalize our plans. Dr. McClure is a former moderator of the United Church, and at the age of 77 is supposed to be retired from his active life as a missionary doctor. However, the next day after preaching at our Church, he left to spend four months in volunteer surgery at an interdenominational hospital in Zaire, Africa.

The church was filled to overflowing. Many expected to hear a reminiscent talk, but were surprised to encounter a speaker with a vigorous and challenging message. "Actions always speak louder than words, and if I have ever seen a sermon it was him", said one person. A video tape was made of Dr. McClure's sermon and we plan to show it soon. (Watch for the exact date in next 'Lantern').

It was also a pleasure to have Rev. Dr. Delve and Rev. W. Sunter assist our minister, Rev. McLean in this service. A social hour on the lawn of Mr. & Mrs. Pat Simes provided a wonderful opportunity to renew friendships.

To complete our festivities, an evening of fellowship was held in the Park. Lyndhurst U.C.W. served supper, followed by an old time Hymn Sing led by Mr. Graham Cameron of Ottawa. Rev. J.C. McLean, assisted by other clergy, led in an outdoor communion service. Leaves of bread and bunches of grapes were the symbolic elements used. More than 300 attended this service.

It was a memorable weekend - long to be remembered.

As is well known at this point, in May of this year the Sweet's Corners School Committee made a submission to the Leeds and Grenville Board of Education expressing their concern about the educational progress many of the students were making, and pointing out a number of areas in which the school could be improved. As a result the Board appointed a committee to look into this matter. The committee recently published their findings and recommendations. Based on these, the Director of Education, Dr. Dennis, outlined a series of steps which will be taken to encourage the proper functioning of the school.

As an initial step, Messrs. Leeson and Ellis were transferred and Messrs. Eyre and MacLennan have been appointed as principal and superintendent, respectively. Many people in the area regret the transfer of these men as it implies they are fully responsible for the results obtained in the school. Though there is no question that responsibility lies partly with them, a fairer statement would be if responsibility was taken by all parties involved, i.e. The Board, the superintendent, the principal, the staff and the parents of the community.

The Board must shoulder the responsibility for its initial insensitivity to the wishes of the community in the location and type of school, at the time it was established; and for its lack of proper supervision of the school performance even though problems have come to the fore on many occasions.

The parents of the community have to be chided for their apathy in not taking a closer interest and by not being closer involved in the school. By being more active in their school committee, by questioning the teachers and principal more thoroughly on the progress made by their children, and for allowing themselves to become discouraged rather than collectively taking constructive action.

Be this as it may, now that the Board of Education has made a commitment to see to it that the Sweet's Corners pupils become what they can be, it is a must that all parties, i.e. parents, staff and Board work together to see these children who are behind in their school work, catch up, even though this may mean extra homework and greater parental involvement. They must co-operate together in keeping channels of communication open by listening and learning from one another; reinforcing in the school the standards and attitudes displayed at home, and vice versa. Parents must come to realize that education and behaviour is just not taught by teachers in a school but that the parents are responsible in the first place. Hence there is no room for apathy and leaving these vital areas of a child's development to the school only, or without close involvement of the parents.

Going through an experience similar to the one which has taken place at Sweet's Corners is hard on all parties involved. It is almost inevitable that someone gets hurt in the process. On the other hand, many things can be learned from it and

opportunities for a fresh start can be created. Though any hurts are regretted, we do trust that we have learned that there is a need for close co-operation between Board and parents; that one cannot make decisions without listening to the desires of the community; that parents want the basics of education taught well so that these stepping stones to future learning are ingrained in their children; that parents want their children to behave themselves in a way reflecting respect for authority, for one another, for the laws of the land and by standards commonly expressed by the "golden rule"; that on the part of the parents there is no room for apathy - they must be interested in their children's progress.

If we have learned these lessons, there is hope for the Sweet's Corners School, and it will be an institution of learning the whole community can be proud of. With the action taken and promised by the Board there is no reason why the school should - given a reasonable amount of time - do well. It is up to all of us to make it work.

We wish the new principal and superintendent well in their challenging new jobs. We are also confident that Mr. Leeson and Mr. Ellis will see the transfer not as a "slight" on them, but as a needed move to give Sweet's Corners a new beginning, and they themselves a relief from the burden they have experienced over the last four years.

*Robson Pottery*

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