

The Histories of Winfield,  
Oyama, Okanagan Centre and the  
Commonage Schools  
By Sandra Bernardo  
Challenge Grant 1996



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AND THE COMMONAGE  
SCHOOLS by SANDRA  
BERNARDO CHALLENGE  
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The 1996 Lake Country Museum research project began as the history of the original schools in Lake Country: Winfield School, Oyama School and Okanagan Centre School. The original idea was to document the individual histories of these three schools and to add some colour to these facts by including memories of former students from different time periods. As the summer progressed the museum began to get information on an area known as Sunnywold which I later found out was the original name for Carrs Landing. I also discovered that there were schools in that district at one time. Fortunately, due to a coincidence, I discovered that there was a former student and a former teacher of Sunnyside School that still lived in the area. Sunnyside was near Sunnywold in the area we now call the Commonage. The project expanded to include a brief history of the schools in the Commonage and some memories from Mr. Archie Tompson (former student at Sunnyside School) and Mrs. Phyllis Paige (a former teacher there). This coincidence has proved interesting as I, with some help, have tried to find out as much as possible about these Commonage schools that we didn't even know existed.

I would like to offer my sincerest thanks to all those who helped me put together the histories of the schools. I would also like to thank those who were willing to share their memories as it has been enjoyable to listen to them reminisce. Thank you again to all who contributed their time, effort and materials. Some of the details in the report are based on people's memories. Every effort has been made to be as accurate as possible, but in some cases I have had to estimate dates as exact dates can't be remembered. If anyone has additional information or something more accurate I would be pleased to make any adjustments. I would like to thank the following people for their efforts:

Ross McDonagh	Jack Gunn
Doug Elliot	Marg Groen
Jane Arnold	Faye Stowe
Pat Richards	Susan Seib
Umeno Sakamoto	Judy Mohr
Kathleen Greenwood	Sigh Kobayashi
Ruth Whitson	Allan Claridge
Arnold & Gladys Trehitt	Archie Tompson

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## WINFIELD SCHOOL

### THE HISTORY OF WINFIELD SCHOOL

By 1899 there were enough children in the Fir Valley and in the area now known as Winfield to start a school. So in 1899 a school was built by volunteer labour near the junction of Beaver Lake road and Intake road. It was named Duck Lake School and was the first school in the Winfield area. The first teacher at Duck Lake School was Miss Effie Etheridge. The first students attending the school were: Mrs. J. Sommerville and her brother Archie from Winfield, the four McClure children from Fir Valley, the five Bailey children from the canyon by Wood's Creek, the four Simpson children and finally the three MacDougall children.

Ten years later, in 1909, there were so many more settlers in the area that it was decided that the Duck Lake School was no longer suitable as far as its size and its location. Therefore in the summer of 1909 the first meeting of the Wood's Lake School District was held in the home of James Pearce. The members of a provisional Board of Trustees were elected: James Pearce, Sherman Jones and J.W. Fowler. A school was opened in February 1910 in a small house owned by the Dacres. The first teacher at Winfield School was Mrs. Asher. The students at the time were: Harvey and Charles Simpson, Mrs. Avery Phillips, Margaret Metcalfe and Hazel Lidstone. The permanent Winfield School was built close to where the Winfield Memorial Hall is now. It opened in September of 1910 housing grades one to eight. It was used as the school until the new one was built where it still stands today as Winfield Elementary. Mrs. Shanks, wife of E.C. Shanks, was a teacher at the old school and later on acted as a substitute when necessary. In 1921 M.P. Williams and W.R. Powley went to Victoria and received a gift from the Provincial Government consisting of the land and the building of the old school. Then in 1923 a new school was built on the corner of what is now Berry road and Highway 97, directly west of the original school. The old school

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became the community hall and the present Winfield Memorial Hall was built many years later.

The new school built in 1923 consisted of two large rooms with two identical basement rooms directly underneath. It also went from grade one to grade eight. These rooms were called the "basement" rooms but they were actually on ground level so a more appropriate name would have been the "downstairs" rooms. The school had its doors at the front of the school facing east (the highway). These doors opened to a large steep stairway that ran between the two rooms of the school. If you went left or right from this point you would be in one of the basement rooms. If you continued up the stairs you would find a cloak room at the top. The two original rooms upstairs each had a door that opened into the cloak room. These doorways can still be seen in those rooms today, but they have been sealed off because the area that used to be the top of the stairway and the cloak room is now the school office.

As can be seen today when looking at the original part of Winfield Elementary the school was built with many large windows. This was done because at that time electricity wasn't available so they needed to get as much light into the room as possible. There were also many coal oil lanterns that hung from the ceilings that were used when necessary. During the twenties and thirties the two basement rooms were used as play rooms. The girls played in the north room and the boys in the south room. The boys would play soccer and ping pong down there and the girls would skip and play ping pong as well. There were two ping pong tables in the boys' room in the late thirties and early forties.

Indoor plumbing was not put in until the late thirties so the only option before then was the outhouses. There was a boys' and a girls' outhouse with four stalls in each, located on the west side of the school close to where the gymnasium is now. The children would have to raise their hand when they had to go to the bathroom and get permission to go outside. The outhouses weren't heated and former students remember rushing to the outhouse, quickly doing their business, and rushing back into the school when it was winter. When the school was built coal was used as the source of heating and there was a small coal shed just outside the school. In the thirties a wood furnace was used that burned four foot pieces of wood and the coal shed then became known as the wood shed.

During the years 1921 to 1924 the Winfield Women's Institute made significant contributions to Winfield School. They bought an organ for the school and sponsored music lessons, giving prizes to the best students in music. They also

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donated books and sewing materials to the school. The Women's Institute bought a flag pole for the new school and provided the cement, ropes and pulleys needed to set it up. The first sports equipment for the students, such as a baseball, bat, glove and soccer ball, were purchased by the Institute. The ladies of the organization provided demonstrations on rag rug making and pine needle basket weaving. They also played a major role in the annual Christmas concerts by providing the presents and treats for all the children as well as helping out where ever was necessary.

Mr. George F. Elliot was hired in 1923 to be one of the two teachers and the principal of Winfield School. He was an excellent teacher who was well-liked and greatly respected by his students. He taught all the intermediate students (grades five to eight) in one of the two rooms. When Mr. Elliot applied for the job in 1923 there were thirty or forty applicants for the job of principal/teacher. Back then the local trustees were responsible for hiring the teachers. All they had to make their decision were the resumes of the applicants as it was too difficult to arrange interviews. The trustees had narrowed it down to three candidates, but were unsure of how to choose from there. Mr. E.C. Shanks, one of the school trustees, loved baseball and noticed that Mr. Elliot had included on his resume that he was a baseball player so Mr. Shanks suggested that they hire him, and so they did!

Mr. Elliot is remembered as having been very strict, but fair. Doug Elliot (George's son) remembers that his father was especially strict with him and his brother because he didn't want the other students to think that he was favouring his own kids. Mr. Elliot was very skilled at throwing chalk. He always wore suits and had small pieces of chalk in his pant pocket. If he was working with a student at one end of the room and saw or heard someone being mischievous on the other end he'd throw a piece of chalk and hit the student's desk right on target. There were a few rules in Mr. Elliot's classroom that had to be strictly obeyed. One was no chewing gum and another was absolutely no talking in class. A student would have to raise his or her hand to ask permission to talk to another student. Doug Elliot remembers that his father liked all the students so much and he really hated to punish them. One time Sus Taiji received the strap, the one and only time he got it, Mr. Elliot hit him and Sus said, "That hurts!". Mr. Elliot replied, "It hurts me more than you". "No it doesn't!", Sus boldly answered.

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when he went to Vancouver Normal School to become a teacher they were specifically taught how to write neatly on the blackboard. Many former students of that era of Winfield School have these and many other memories of Mr. George Elliot as he was a teacher and the principal from 1923 until he died in 1949. He still lives through all the stories and incidents that his students remember and still smile about today. The other teachers at Winfield School from the years 1923 to 1950 were: Edna Johnston, Isabel Johnston, Vera Evans (Towgood), Ida Reekie (Duggan), S.E. Thorlakson, Kathleen Botting (Irvine), Ellen Gleed, A. Heit, M. Chernecki, Stan Robinson, Margaret Allan (Lovick), Nancy Lemon (Powley), Jean Barber (Elliot), Jane Weddell (Arnold) and Edwin Hintz.

After completing grade eight at Winfield School the students had to go to Oyama school to get their high school education. At one time Oyama had the only high school (grades nine to twelve) between Vernon and Rutland. At first the high school students from Winfield were driven to Oyama in the "Winfield School Bus" which was really a car driven by Eldred Berry. Then in the early forties the Winfield School Board purchased a van with benches along each side to transport students to Oyama. The bus was driven by Mr. Bissell, a high school teacher in Oyama. The Winfield students had to pay tuition fees to the Oyama School Board which were paid by the parents and/or the Winfield School Board. This went on until 1945 when the school boards between Oyama and Kelowna amalgamated to form School District No. 23. At this time high school students from Oyama, Winfield and Okanagan Centre were bused to Rutland. Then in 1959 George Elliot High School opened and the students of Lake Country had their own high school.

Winfield School was built on to three times in its history. The first addition came in 1946. One more classroom was built on the west end (back) of the school which made it a three room school and added another basement room. The second stairwell opposite the office of the current school was also built at this time. The bathrooms were at the bottom of these stairs where the entrance to the gym is now. Back then that was where the building ended because the gym hadn't been built yet. At this time the girls basement room also became a classroom.

The second addition came in 1950. It was built south of the original school and if you look at Winfield Elementary from the front you can see where the 1950 addition joins the original building. This addition included one long hallway that

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ran from the original two rooms to the new classroom. There was also another basement room directly underneath. This new room faced Berry road and Jane Weddell (now Arnold) was the first teacher to teach there. Margaret Berry (now Groen) in Miss Weddell's grade one class when this room was completed. She remembers the day her class moved into the new room upstairs from one of the basement rooms. The grade sixers carried the grade one children's desks into the new room from them, and Marg remembers that they each had to carry their own chairs up to the new room. The third addition to the school was the gymnasium which was built on westward to the addition of 1946. It was built in the early 1960's definitely before 1965.

In the fifties one of the basement rooms became the lunch room. In one corner of the basement there is a small room now, in the fifties it was used to prepare hot lunches for the students. At that time there was a sink and a hotplate in there to prepare the hot lunches. Marg Groen remembers Mrs. Kennerly who used to come in on certain days and prepare the lunches and hot chocolate for the students. The grade six students used to get to help Mrs. Kennerly and this was thought to be a great privilege that everyone looked forward to.

In the corner opposite the small room with the sink was the Okanagan Regional lending library. It was organized into locked cupboards that contained the books of the public library. Mrs. Kennerly would come to the school on certain days to act as the librarian. The Winfield branch of the library was first located in Clement's store, but it soon moved to the school because of lack of space. The library cupboard for the school was near the grade six room.

Two of the basement rooms in the fifties were still play rooms. The girls would skip and play ball in their room while the boys played ping pong, soccer and other games in their room. During that time Marg Groen remembers that the front entrance (originally the only entrance) was not to be used by students; it was for teachers and visitors only. The only time the students could use that entrance was on open house night when they visited the school with their parents. It was pretty special to go through "the teachers'" entrance on that one evening of the year. Today the entrance is used only by the kindergarten classes because the kindergarten room is in the original south basement room. The school library now occupies the other two basement rooms. The teachers at Winfield Elementary from 1951 to 1960 were: James Berteig who was also the principal of Winfield, Oyama and Okanagan Centre schools, Helen Jackson, Ron Haskins, Dorothy Uwehand, Jane Weddell, Ilo Hembling, Eleanor Nichols, Pearl

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Bolton, Joyce Wolfe, Wendy Amor, Tillie Thompson, C. Hopper, J. May Gleddie, Sarah Unger, H. Tanemura, T. Bosley, Owen Irwin, Carolyn Burke, Owen Smith, M. Ablett, and S.A. Johnson.

Ralph Berry Senior was the first custodian at Winfield school. He did the job from 1923 to about 1933. His wife Holly would have to come down to the school during the day to stoke the furnace because Ralph would be out in the orchard by then. After Ralph Berry, Mr. Lodge Senior was the custodian for a while.

There was a teacherage on the Winfield School property. It was located on the far north end of the property right on the fence line of the cemetery that is there now. The teacherage was built during the time that George Elliot was teaching. Before the teacherage the Elliots rented houses in Winfield and were faced with the problem of having to move often. After eight or ten years of this the School Board encouraged Mr. Elliot to buy property, but he could not afford to do this on his salary of \$1500 per year. Finally in the early thirties the Board built a teacherage on the school property which cost \$2400 to complete. There was a narrow dirt road that ran just past the west end of the school building and all the way along to the teacherage. The Elliots moved into the teacherage in about 1932 because Doug Elliot remembers that they moved in there about one year before he started school which was in 1933. The School board charged Mr. Elliot \$20 per month in rent. When the school districts were amalgamated in 1945 to form School District No. 23 a Mr. Barton sent a letter to Mr. Elliot explaining that \$20 per month rent was ridiculous and that his rent would now be \$50 per month. After Mr. Elliot passed away in 1949, Mrs. Elliot continued to live in the teacherage for a short time and then moved out. Other teachers that lived in the teacherage were Stan Robinson and Jim Berteig.

After the gymnasium was added in the early sixties there weren't many big changes at Winfield Elementary. In 1967 Susan Seib, who was in grade three at the time, remembers that they got brand new desks. Until then they still had the old desks with the ink wells. All the students would put their glue bottles in the ink well of their desks. By 1968 or so the incandescent lights that looked like "giant light bulbs in the ceiling" were starting to be replaced by the more modern fluorescent lights. For a few years after Wood Lake Elementary was built in 1965, students only went as far as grade four at Winfield and then they went to Wood Lake for grades five to seven. Later on the school changed to include kindergarten to grade seven. In recent years Winfield Elementary has seen large

Bolton, Joyce Wolfe, Wendy Amor, Tillie Thompson, C. Hopper, J. May Gleddie, Sarah Unger, H. Tanemura, T. Bosley, Owen Irwin, Carolyn Burke, Owen Smith, M. Ablett, and S.A. Johnson.

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After the gymnasium was added in the early sixties there weren't many big changes at Winfield Elementary. In 1967 Susan Seib, who was in grade three at the time, remembers that they got brand new desks. Until then they still had the old desks with the ink wells. All the students would put their glue bottles in the ink well of their desks. By 1968 or so the incandescent lights that looked like "giant light bulbs in the ceiling" were starting to be replaced by the more modern fluorescent lights. For a few years after Wood Lake Elementary was built in 1965, students only went as far as grade four at Winfield and then they went to Wood Lake for grades five to seven. Later on the school changed to include kindergarten to grade seven. In recent years Winfield Elementary has seen large

increases in enrolment which has made it necessary to bring three portables onto the school grounds.

In 1993 Winfield Elementary School celebrated its seventieth year. The event was marked by a reunion which took place on the May long weekend. Many former teachers and over 300 students returned to the school on the hill to renew old friendships and to reminisce. The school gym walls were covered with the names of all the students enrolled since 1923. There were several displays set up with memorabilia from every decade. There were also old school books, report cards, clothing, the hand-held school bell and even one of the old straps that was used. The former teachers that were in attendance were: Jim Berteig, Tillie Milligan (nee Thompson), Philips Jones, Stan Robinson, Ed Hintz, A. Heit, Jane Arnold (nee Weddell), Jean Elliot (Barber), Adie Maharaja (Takenaka), Nancy Powley (Lemon), John Mandoli, Margaret Groen (Berry), Kathleen Irving (Botting), Gladys Schunaman, Linda Schmidt and Ron Haskins. Former students from the class of 1923 that attended were: Holly Murrell (nee Berry), Art and Ethel Arnold, Vera Pow, Margaret Griffiths, Edwina Hart and Hilda Mitchell who was the oldest student at the reunion at 88 years. Winnie Harue Taguchi (nee Koyama) also attended the reunion. She started grade one at age five in 1923. Her classmates were: Edith Gunn, Glen Wallop and May Petrie. She remembers her teacher was Mr. Harold Thorlakson.

Winfield Elementary will be entering its 73rd year in September 1996. It currently goes from kindergarten to grade seven. The special events these days include: the Christmas concerts in the gym, play days where all grades participate in activities together and track meets at the Apple Bowl. The current staff continues to keep the school closely linked to the community as has been the tradition for over seventy years. They also try to keep the history alive so that everyone associated with the school can appreciate its roots. It seems like a few things have stayed the same throughout the years!

#### MEMORIES OF WINFIELD SCHOOL

##### Ross, Doug and Jack Reminisce

Ross McDonagh attended Winfield School from September 1927 to June 1936 completing grades one to eight. After a month of grade one he got rheumatic fever and could not attend school again until 1928. He remembers

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Ross McDonagh attended Winfield School from September 1927 to June 1936 completing grades one to eight. After a month of grade one he got rheumatic fever and could not attend school again until 1928. He remembers

having Ida Reekie for the first month he went to school, and then when he returned after being sick he had Miss Kathleen Botting for grades two to four. Doug Elliot started at Winfield in 1933 and completed grade eight in 1941. He had Miss Botting as well for the first part of grade one, but then in January 1934 Miss Ellen Gleed became his teacher because Miss Botting had gotten married and in those days married women were not allowed to teach. Jack Gunn attended Winfield School from 1936 to 1944 also completing grades one to eight. Jack had Miss Ellen Gleed for grades one to four.

These three remember their primary grades teachers well. Doug and Ross remember Miss Botting as being a "sweetheart". She was a very petite woman as Doug describes her as being "four foot nothing". She may have been small but she had control of her students. She had all her students' respect by being firm in her discipline, but still always smiling. She began her teaching career at a school near Mabel Lake that had tough reputation. Most teachers didn't stay at the school long, but to the surprise of the local trustees Miss Botting stayed for a few years. Miss Gleed was a very nice and competent teacher who was very particular about teaching the basics. The boys remember her as being shy and keeping to herself. Jack said the Miss Gleed used to drive a 1928 Chrysler to school and at the end of the day Jack and his friends would hang on to the bumper to try to stop the car from moving. This was fun until one day the principal Mr. Elliot caught them.

They all vividly remember the morning routine: when the hand bell was rung they would line up in front of the doors of the school by grade. The youngest (grade one) would line up closest to the doors and the higher grades would be further back. After everyone was assembled the flag would be raised and everyone walked in to the school in an orderly fashion. They would then take off their coats, hang them in the cloak room and go to their desks standing ready to say the Lord's Prayer before the day began. The older students would have job of raising the flag in the morning and lowering it after school. The responsibility was rotated among the seniors in weekly intervals.

For grades five to eight they were all in Mr. Elliot's class. The boys have very fond memories of the days in Mr. Elliot's class. He is remembered as a man who demanded respect for himself and for the rules. He was firm when it came to discipline, but the boys say they never saw him lose his temper or even get angry. Jack Gunn remembers when three boys decided to put thumb tacks on Mr. Elliot's chair. All the students knew about the prank and they all watched with

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anticipation when Mr. Elliot went to sit down. He sat down and didn't squirm or say a word. He had no reaction at all. He knew who had done it so he calmly got up and asked who was responsible. The boys stood up and admitted to it. To punish them Mr. Elliot grabbed a chair and put tacks on the seat. He then told the boys to sit on the chair one at a time. Jack remembers another incident where Eldred Berry and another boy were talking in class. Mr. Elliot grabbed each of the boys by the hair, pulled them out of their desks and knocked their heads together. Eldred looked at Mr. Elliot and said, "That hurts!". Mr. Elliot calmly replied "It was supposed to".

The boys remember Mr. Elliot's punishments well because he was so adamant about good behaviour. Chewing gum was not allowed in class and if a student was caught they would be told to go sit at the front of the class and to keep chewing away. This was so humiliating for the student because all the other kids would laugh at him or her. Jack remembers that Mr. Elliot would also grab a bit of the students hair just above the forehead putting the hair between his fingers. He'd then hold the hair and rattle his knuckles against the student's head. The two most common punishments were writing lines and staying after school. Staying after school was the worst of them all. Sometimes you'd have to stay and do homework or usually you'd just have to sit in your desk which was even worse. It was awful because as the student sat inside he or she could hear their friends playing outside. The best part of the day was playing after school and then walking home with your friends so having a detention was just terrible.

In the winter the problem of throwing snowballs became an issue. The students were strictly forbidden to do it, but of course they did it anyway. When Jack Gunn was in grade six snowball throwing was becoming a big problem. Finally Mr. Elliot said that the next person he caught throwing snowballs would get the strap. One day afterschool Jack threw a snowball right passed the door of the school just as Mr. Elliot was coming out. The snowball missed his nose by just a couple of inches. Mr. Elliot called Jack in who was terrified because he had never been strapped before. He was told to sit down at his desk. Mr. Elliot went to his own desk and sat down to do work. Jack thinks Mr. Elliot didn't really have anything to do, he was just teaching Jack a lesson. Jack sat there doing absolutely nothing and waiting for the moment when Mr. Elliot would get up to strap him, but Mr. Elliot didn't do anything. After an hour Mr. Elliot told Jack that he could leave. Jack said he will never forget that incident and that it would have been easier to get the strap.

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In those days everyone walked to school or rode their bikes. There were a few students who came on horseback. Doug Elliot remembers that there were even kids in school that lived in a house right where the Glenmore dump is now. These kids probably rode horses to school. Mary, Melvin and Doug McClelland rode horses from the Fir Valley and would leave them in Mrs. Swalwell's barn. George Reiswig who lived where Reiswig park is now also rode a horse to school. The Cooks, Archie and Andy, lived about two miles away on Okanagan Centre road and they probably had to walk the furthest. There were also some children who lived at the end of Shanks road that walked to Winfield School.

The boys remember that Mr. Elliot was always addressed as "Sir" and if not, then definitely as "Mr. Elliot". Ross McDonagh remembers that one time he saw Mr. and Mrs. Elliot drive by on their way to a baseball game. As he drove by Ross said, "Hi George!". The next morning at school when the students were lining up to go inside Mr. Elliot asked Ross to step out of the line and to wait for him outside. He then went over and asked Ross if he had heard Ross call him "George" the previous evening. Ross admitted he did and Mr. Elliot told him to make sure it didn't happen again.

During the years that Ross, Doug and Jack attended Winfield School there were always between forty and fifty students in the school. Doug said there were six or seven in his grade every year. Jack remembers his classroom having five rows of desks with five desks per row. Doug remembers a year when there were sixty students and said that as he was going into his later years the classes seemed to get larger and larger.

All three were active in sports during their school years. Ross remembers that there was a post with a basketball hoop in the front of the school and further along there was a pine tree that served as the other post. They would play basketball on the packed gravel, but the ball would wear out quickly so the hoops weren't there for long as Jack and Doug remember that there weren't any hoops there when they were at the school. The bottom area below the school where the portables are now used to be the playground. Jack also remembers playing in the small area between the outhouses. The most common sport then was baseball. The boys remember playing baseball at lunch and afterschool. Even in the evenings, the summer and on weekends they used to go to the school take out the ball, bat and glove and play. In those days the school was never locked so as long as they returned the equipment there was never a problem. They were always careful to take care of the equipment because the School Board did

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not have the money to replace equipment often. Jack Gunn can remember having to crawl in to the outhouses to get the baseball because they only had one ball to play with. George Berry used to take the baseball home in the evenings and stitch it up to keep it going a bit longer. Another popular game was Prisoner's Base that the kids used to play in the hills north of the school where the field is now. Jack remembers that his older sister Joyce hated that game, but enjoyed playing ping pong with Mr. Elliot after school.

In the winter the most fun thing to do was sledding down Camp road. They would start right at the top of Camp and slide all the way down to the school. In those days this was safe because there were so few cars in the winter time. Fred Duggan used to drive his truck down what is now Berry road and he'd always try to go through the fresh snow to make tracks for the kids' sleighs. Jack says that hockey was also popular in school. They would walk down to the Community Hall where the skating rink was. It was a great rink down there; it even had lights. Many volunteers spent many countless hours flooding and maintaining the rink.

Once spring came it was time to get ready for the Kelowna Rural Track Meet. The kids would be transported to City Park or to Rutland, depending on where the meet was that year, by a flat deck truck. The truck had wooden sides and all the kids would just stand in the back all the way to Kelowna on the gravel roads. Usually Nelson Arnold or Stan Duggan would volunteer their trucks and time to drive the kids. Jack remembers that his Mom would give him 25 cents to spend at the track meet which would be a big treat. Soccer came along in later years and the boys remember playing against the Oyama and Ellison teams. Transportation would always depend on parents, but they'd always ask the parents who they knew would be willing to drive.

At the end of grade eight students had to leave Winfield School to attend high school. Ross McDonagh went to Penticton where he boarded with his older sister and her husband. Both Jack Gunn and Doug Elliot went to Oyama School for grades nine to twelve.

#### Memories of Jim Berteig: A Former Principal

Mr. Berteig's first year as principal of Winfield Elementary was 1952, he remembers that his salary was \$1800 per year when he started. Every Monday morning all the classes would line up and file outside to the flag pole for the flag raising ceremony and then sing O Canada. He remembers that the school yard was on a slope then, not as flat as it is today. Back then the school bell was rung

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by hand. Mr. Berteig would ring it out the window and everyone would immediately run inside. Mr. Berteig and his wife lived in the teacherage.

#### Memories of Jane Arnold: A Former Teacher

Miss Weddell, as she was known back then, taught at Winfield School from September 1948 to June 1952. In her first two years the school was overcrowded so she taught in the United Church that was next to the school. The church burned down after her second year, but by then the addition of 1950 was under way so she would be the first to teach in the new classroom which faced Berry road. At the time Miss Weddell was courting Gilbert Arnold who would often drive down Berry road in his truck. Miss Weddell would wave to him out the window as he went by and the children could see her blushing. The children would giggle because they knew exactly who had gone by.

In her first year at Winfield School Jane taught grade three. Then in her second year she taught grade one and also helped to substitute in Mr. George Elliot's grade six class because he was sick. In her final two years Jane taught a split class of grade twos and threes. She always had more than thirty students in her class and found her room to be overcrowded. She also remembers not having enough time to spend with students individually. Other staff members at the time were: Stan Robinson, Helen Jackson, Ron Haskins, Ed Hintz, Dorothy Ouwehand, Eleanor Nichols and Mary Lane. Mr. Elliot passed away while she was teaching there.

Mrs. Arnold (then Miss Weddell) used to organize her classes by putting the children into groups depending on ability or grade when she taught a split class. She would then work with one group at a time while the others worked independently. She found it to be busy all the time, but the children were always so helpful which made it easier. Mrs. Arnold remembers an incident where a new boy came into her class. He and his family had just immigrated from Holland so the little boy spoke no English. At first she could not understand him or give him directions, but luckily the other students were able to use "sign language" to communicate with him. They used their hands to act out things so that they could understand each other. It was a big help to her because she just couldn't figure out how to explain things to this little boy.

When Thanksgiving came along no one had explained to the boy that there was no school on Monday because it was holiday. That Monday morning Jane and Gilbert were driving to the store and as they passed the school they saw the

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little boy playing by himself in the playground. He was just waiting for school to start because he didn't realize it was a holiday. Jane and Gilbert stopped and tried to explain to him that there was no school today and then took him home.

Mrs. Arnold remembers the annual Christmas concerts as being a lot of work. The staff would work together to organize the event and to make costumes and props. There would usually be one play and singing by individual classes. Then Santa would come on the roof of the community hall at the end of the concert and bring the kids treats. Santa Claus was always a lucky volunteer from the Winfield Farmer's Institute. Mrs. Arnold remembers her students as being very well behaved. Discipline was not really an issue. Occasionally she would have to solve disputes between children, but rarely did they give her problems directly. The children were always polite and liked their teachers. She remembers the first day of school when the children would always be polished up in their best clothes. Some of Miss Weddell's students were: the Stubbs children, the Tyndalls, Takenakas, Hikichis, Shishidos, McCarthys, McDonaghs, Jones', Cooks, Koyamas, Lodges, Powleys, Simpsons, Baileys and many others. Miss Weddell's grade one class was one the first classes to graduated from George Elliot Secondary School.

**Marg Groen (nee Berry): A Former Student and Current Teacher/Librarian**

Many of Mrs. Groen's memories have been included in the history section of Winfield School. She went to Winfield Elementary from 1950 to 1956 completing grades one to six. One of her memories is of being a member of the first class that was in the new classroom built in 1950. She remembers that day in grade one when the grade six students helped her class move into the new classroom. Marg remembers when all the girls in her class played jacks in that long hallway that connected the new addition to the rest of the school. Back then there seemed to be so much space and the hallway appeared to be so long, but it doesn't seem to be as big anymore. She also remembers that in grade one the desks were made for two students each. If a girl was bad she would have to sit in a double desk with a boy which was so embarrassing.

Mrs. Groen has distinct memories of the Christmas concerts in the fifties. They were held down at the Winfield Memorial Hall which was always drafty and cold. Miss Thompson would play a big part in organizing the concerts. She always made sure that all the costumes and props were made. Dress rehearsal was always the day before the concert. The children would walk down to the hall

little boy playing by himself in the playground. He was just waiting for school to start because he didn't realize it was a holiday. Jane and Gilbert stopped and tried to explain to him that there was no school today and then took him home.

Mrs. Arnold remembers the annual Christmas concerts as being a lot of work. The staff would work together to organize the event and to make costumes and props. There would usually be one play and singing by individual classes. Then Santa would come on the roof of the community hall at the end of the concert and bring the kids treats. Santa Claus was always a lucky volunteer from the Winfield Farmer's Institute. Mrs. Arnold remembers her students as being very well behaved. Discipline was not really an issue. Occasionally she would have to solve disputes between children, but rarely did they give her problems directly. The children were always polite and liked their teachers. She remembers the first day of school when the children would always be polished up in their best clothes. Some of Miss Weddell's students were: the Stubbs children, the Tyndalls, Takenakas, Hikichis, Shishidos, McCarthys, McDonaghs, Jones', Cooks, Koyamas, Lodges, Powleys, Simpsons, Baileys and many others. Miss Weddell's grade one class was one the first classes to graduated from George Elliot Secondary School.

**Marg Groen (nee Berry): A Former Student and Current Teacher/Librarian**

Many of Mrs. Groen's memories have been included in the history section of Winfield School. She went to Winfield Elementary from 1950 to 1956 completing grades one to six. One of her memories is of being a member of the first class that was in the new classroom built in 1950. She remembers that day in grade one when the grade six students helped her class move into the new classroom. Marg remembers when all the girls in her class played jacks in that long hallway that connected the new addition to the rest of the school. Back then there seemed to be so much space and the hallway appeared to be so long, but it doesn't seem to be as big anymore. She also remembers that in grade one the desks were made for two students each. If a girl was bad she would have to sit in a double desk with a boy which was so embarrassing.

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carrying their chairs which would be for the audience to sit on. The concert was on the stage and the kitchen of the hall was used as the dressing room. In grade two or three Marg remembers that her class performed the play Frosty the Snowman. They were all to wear their snowsuits as costumes which was clever on the teacher's part because these costumes didn't cost anything. The biggest part of the evening was when Santa arrived. The Winfield Women's Institute would make sure that every child got a bag with peanuts, candy and a mandarin orange. The students would go up on stage class by class to get their presents from Santa.

#### Umeno Sakamoto's Memories of the Christmas Concerts in the Thirties

Practices for the plays, skits and carols would begin weeks before the date of the concert which was usually on the last Friday evening before the Christmas holidays. After school on that day the students would all go down to the old community hall to rehearse. When the night finally came everyone in the community gathered in the hall which was nice and warm by then as Mr. Lodge had stoked the furnace hours before. There was always a huge fir tree that had been carefully selected to be the Christmas tree. It was the first thing that caught your eye when you entered the hall. It stood to one side of the stage and was decorated with tinsel, different shaped ornaments and a bright star on top. The best decorations were the golden horns that made music and the colourful birds that chirped, these fascinated the children.

Mr. Jack Seaton played the piano and Mr. Powley was the Master of Ceremonies. All the students participated in the concert. If they weren't in the plays and skits then they would sing Christmas carols. Excitement and anticipation filled the hall that evening. The children always wore their Sunday best and Miss Gleed ensured that everyone had something nice to wear. The concert would usually run smoothly, but sometimes someone would get stage fright and forget his lines. At the end of the concert Santa arrived; Justin McCarthy always made the best Santa. He would come down the aisle with his red bag full of goodies. All the children in the community, school age or not, received a present and a bag full of candy, nuts, and a mandarin orange.

#### Memories From the Sixties

Susan Seib attended Winfield School from grade one to four in 1965 to 1969. In grade one she remembers being in a downstairs classroom. Her teacher was

carrying their chairs which would be for the audience to sit on. The concert was on the stage and the kitchen of the hall was used as the dressing room. In grade two or three Marg remembers that her class performed the play Frosty the Snowman. They were all to wear their snowsuits as costumes which was clever on the teacher's part because these costumes didn't cost anything. The biggest part of the evening was when Santa arrived. The Winfield Women's Institute would make sure that every child got a bag with peanuts, candy and a mandarin orange. The students would go up on stage class by class to get their presents from Santa.

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Miss Tillie Thompson. Miss Thompson was very strict about the girls' appearance. The girls had to always wear dresses or skirts to school. They could only wear pants on those days when it was extremely cold. Nail polished finger nails were not allowed. One time a girl came to school with red nail polish on and Miss Thompson made her go scrape it off until it was all gone. Susan remembers that one time her aunt came to visit and put clear nail polish on her nails. Susan was so scared to go to school with her nails done so she scraped it all off before she went.

In grade two, 1966 to 1967, Susan had Mrs. Somilo. She vividly remembers that year because 1967 was Canada's Centennial year. In June 1967 there was an assembly run by Mr. Berteig the principal to celebrate Canada's one hundredth birthday. After the assembly in the gym they all went outside where Mr. Sigh Kobayashi planted a tree in front of the school. A plaque was placed in front of the tree to commemorate the event. On the last day of school that year each student received a gold Centennial coin and a small crest that read 1867-1967.

Mrs. Morrison was Susan's grade three teacher. Mrs. Morrison always gave them neat art projects to do. She would have them bring in lace, fabric, beads, buttons and any other scraps from home, they would then use these things to make wonderful collages. Mrs. Somilo was her grade four teacher for the first two weeks. Then one day all of sudden Mrs. Somilo hastily gathered her things and left the room looking very sick. For the rest of the afternoon that day the school secretary read the class stories. She later found out that Mrs. Somilo had died of a heart attack.

Mrs. Minchin replaced Mrs. Somilo. She was from Australia and used to tell them so many stories of the land down under. She'd teach them Australian songs and instead of PE she taught the students dancing which everyone enjoyed. Susan remembers her as the only teacher who took them for walks. One day they walked to Wood Lake and then they went to the Tyndall Farm for a tour. That year brought one of the coldest winters on record and Susan remembers that Mrs. Minchin was so excited. She loved the snow and would often look out the window to see the snow falling. It was because of Mrs. Minchin that the students were allowed to come in early in the morning when it was cold and to stay inside at lunch time. The other teachers weren't as sympathetic which made the students like Mrs. Minchin even more. After grade four Susan Seib went to the brand new Wood Lake Elementary because at that time Winfield Elementary went only to grade four.

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## OYAMA SCHOOL

### THE HISTORY OF OYAMA SCHOOL

By 1909 there were six school age children in Oyama. This was not enough students to start a Provincial school so the parents hired their own teacher and a room in the Lloyd's house on the east side of the lake was used as the first school. The children attending the first school were: Jack Towood, Male Irvine, Edna and Floyd Whipple and the two Geer children. The first teacher was Barbara Irving. According to the records, a meeting was held in 1910 to elect the first School Board in Oyama. Dr. W.H. Irvine, A. Geer and A.S. Towgood were the first Trustees. It was their job to hire teachers, manage the finances and maintain the school. The four Towgood children: Jack, Tom, Alice and Robert all completed grades one to eight, being the first Towgood generation to go to Oyama School. As the number of students increased the first school building was erected in the form of a lean-to tar paper shack that stood just west of the Lloyd home. Then in 1911 the one room "little white school house" was built on land across the road from the Railway Section House. This building was also used for meetings, social gatherings and church services.

By 1916 the "little white school house" was also overcrowded so in February 1917 a new two storey school with two classrooms was built. At the School Trustees meeting on February 13, 1917 it was decided that "Oyama School" would be painted on the front of the school. It was also decided that a "No Dogs Admitted" sign would be placed in front of the school and that a gravel path be made leading to the entrance. Just after the School Board requested Long Lake Irrigation for the privilege of transferring their water system to the school, water pipes were installed. The pipes brought water from Oyama Lake to the school. An old cement reservoir stored water for use in the winter. Even though the

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school had a source of water, indoor plumbing was not available and so outhouses were used until 1938.

The basement of the new school consisted of two rooms, one was a girls' play room and the other a boys' play room. The school had a furnace room in between the classrooms. The wood furnace was tended to by the older students. At the time the school accommodated grades one to eight. There were two side entrances, one for the boys and one for the girls. The front entrance was strictly for the teachers and visitors. Each classroom had a cloak room and a small office for each of the two teachers. The teachers at Oyama School from 1909 to 1917 were: Miss Barbara Irving, Miss Liesters, Miss Binney, Miss Watson, Miss Prescott and Miss Mabel Irvine who was one of the original students when the school first started in the Lloyd's home. In those years the emphasis was on academics as the Board provided no sports equipment at all.

In May 1916 the Kalamalka Women's Institute set up a local scholarship fund to help Oyama students attend high school because at that time high school was not available in Oyama. The students had to go elsewhere for a high school education. A \$100 scholarship was awarded to Winnifred Brown in August 1917 and Raymond Despard received \$50 in August 1918. The Institute also planted an oak tree on the school grounds in 1914 to commemorate the coronation of King George VI. In 1922 the Institute organized that the Vernon school nurse visit Oyama school once a month. They provided hospitality for the nurse and split the cost of this service with the Child Welfare Commission. The first school nurse was Miss Payne.

By 1921 the need for a high school was felt and an extra classroom was added to the back of the school for this purpose. The addition cost \$6000. The high school went from grade nine to eleven at first, which was matriculation, and later on grade twelve was added. Mr. Bendrodt was the first high school teacher and he conducted classes in the kitchen of the Community Hall for the first few months until the new room was finished. The first high school students were: George Hembling, Pat Bowsher, Ken Dobson and Dorothy Rae. Until 1945 Oyama had the only high school between Vernon and Rutland. In 1924 students from Winfield were allowed to attend high school in Oyama, but were limited to the capacity of the room. They also had to pay tuition to the Oyama School Board which was paid by the parents and/or the Winfield School Board. Students were transported from Winfield in the "Winfield School Bus" which was really a

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In 1922 water pipes were installed and a drinking fountain was put in the main hallway upstairs. Most of the teachers in those early days boarded with families in Oyama. They were always frightened when the inspector showed up unexpectedly. Sometimes he would show up with Mr. Wyatt the mailman. The high school teachers from 1921 to 1930 were: Mr. Bendrodt, Mr. Donaldson, Mr. J. Nicoll, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Pritchard, Miss N. Kaye, Mr. Grantham and Mr. White. The elementary teachers were: Miss Brock, Miss C. Redgrave, Miss P. Redgrave, Miss N. Hopkins, Miss H. Jones, Miss Quine, Miss Dobson, Mr. Pritchard, Mr. Chippindale, Miss Hannak, Miss Mercer, Miss Irvine and Miss Baille. At the School board meeting on August 18, 1930 it was decided that Mr. Martlew would be paid \$250 per year and 35 cents per hour extra work to be the janitor of the school.

The thirties brought hard times, but there were some improvements made to the school. In 1935 power lines came to Oyama and all the school rooms were wired for electricity. Mr. Crawford did the job at a cost of \$125. In 1938 the School Board decided to install flush toilets finally making the outhouses obsolete. Chords of four foot long firewood were bought from Mr. Vernon Ellison for the furnace. It was piled in long rows at the back of the school, and one of the older students took care of the furnace.

The students had limited sports equipment due to finances, but still participated in soccer, ping pong, softball and some basketball. A popular game in the thirties was Knobbies or poor kids' lacrosse as it was sometimes called. It was an informal game with few rules. It could be played anywhere there was an open area which was easy to find in those days. The knobbies were made from two pieces of rubber hose each three inches long. They were tied together with a strong cord with about six inches of cord between them. Each player needed a knobby stick which was usually a tree branch shaped like a golf club. A player would scoop up the knobbies on the stick and run with it or pass it to a team mate. The aim was to get the knobbies from your end of the field and through the goal of the opposing team. There would be two or more players per team. The students also enjoyed singing and entered many music festivals under the leadership of Mrs. Darvill. Of course there were always the Christmas concert as well which was held in the community hall every year.

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The big event of the late thirties and early forties was the success of the boys soccer team. Under the excellent coaching of Mr. Claude Bissell the boys won the North Okanagan Pheasant Trophy four times. The Oyama School boys also won the Okanagan Valley Senior High School Soccer Trophy. In the following year the Community Hall was leased for two afternoons a week for athletic purposes at a cost of one dollar per session. The boys only had one soccer ball and Mr. Bissell would buy linseed oil to put on it to keep it in good condition. If it got damaged beyond repair they were unable to play until the School Board replaced it. The team could always count on Mr. Bert Crawford for transportation to the Mackey School in Coldstream or where ever else the games were being held.

During the war years many former students enlisted in the armed forces or remained on the farms and joined the Home Guard. In 1944 several displaced Japanese families from the Lower Mainland were placed in Oyama and their children attended Oyama School. Some of the teachers from 1931 to 1945 were: Miss N. Hopkins, Miss R. Wilson, Miss A. East, Miss L. Shilliam, Miss Gieve, Miss J. Trehearn, Miss McKay, Miss J. Gibb, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Pi Campbell, Mr. G. Hall, Mr. C. Bissell, Miss M. Fulton, Mrs. Pinn and Mr. W. Hall.

The highlight of the years 1946 to 1959 was the annual May Day celebrations that were organized by the Community Club. Every year there was a parade from the school to the Hall which included a band, the Queen's float, decorated

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bicycles, wagons and carriages. The first May Queen, May Petereder, was chosen in 1945 and Connie Haber was the last May Queen in 1961. By 1954 a school bus was purchased to take the children from the east side of Oyama to school and the first bus driver was Mr. A. Appleton. George Elliot Secondary School was completed in 1959 and from then on Oyama students from grade eight to twelve went there instead of having to go all the way to Rutland. By this time grade seven students were also being bused to Winfield Elementary. Some of the teachers during this period were: Miss Dewar, Miss Hromic, Mr. Braun, Mrs. Norman, Miss Myrtle, Miss Pollington, Miss Roberts, Miss Kraft, Mr. Schunaman, Miss Seale and Miss Ferworm.

The sixties was a decade of gradual transition for Oyama School. There was a great deal of teacher turnover and several established traditions were lost. The population of the school increased dramatically in the sixties. By 1962 a portable was added for the grade six and seven classes. The basement room was divided into a library, nurse's room and an office. A new classroom was constructed in the basement. In 1963 the grade sevens were bused to Winfield and the portable was removed. After Mrs. Schunaman retired in 1966, Mrs. Eliza Fritz became the head teacher and Mr. Berteig was the principal for Winfield, Okanagan Centre and Oyama Schools. During the sixties there was strong Parent-Teacher Association at the Oyama School. The PTA supported the Christmas concerts and parties, May Day events and the annual school Fun Days. At one meeting of the School Board many parents attended in order to get improvements made on the school. As a result improvements were made to the plumbing, heating, fire escapes and basement. In September 1969 a fire started in the janitor's room. All the students were evacuated to the former B.C. Shippers building. The Oyama Fire Department quickly responded to contain the fire to the basement room only. Some of the teachers during this time were: Miss Pound, Miss J. Freeborn, Miss V. Harridan, Mrs. M. Demosky, Mrs. J. Young, Miss J. Klieg, Miss L. Malahoff, Mrs. E. Wedded, Mrs. S. Johnson, Mr. C. Goodman, Mr. M. MacDonald, Mrs. G. Schulman, Mrs. Stoochinoff, Miss M. Seater, Miss C. Leon, Mrs. H. Hoover, and Miss P. Jarosinski.

In 1970 Oyama School went from kindergarten to grade three only. Grades five to seven attended Wood Lake Elementary. The school grounds were equipped with underground sprinklers, sod and an adventure playground. The old "girls" room in the basement was renovated and converted to the new kindergarten classroom in 1974. The kindergarten teacher then was Martha

bicycles, wagons and carriages. The first May Queen, May Petereder, was chosen in 1945 and Connie Haber was the last May Queen in 1961. By 1954 a school bus was purchased to take the children from the east side of Oyama to school and the first bus driver was Mr. A. Appleton. George Elliot Secondary School was completed in 1959 and from then on Oyama students from grade eight to twelve went there instead of having to go all the way to Rutland. By this time grade seven students were also being bused to Winfield Elementary. Some of the teachers during this period were: Miss Dewar, Miss Hromic, Mr. Braun, Mrs. Norman, Miss Myrtle, Miss Pollington, Miss Roberts, Miss Kraft, Mr. Schunaman, Miss Seale and Miss Ferworm.

The sixties was a decade of gradual transition for Oyama School. There was a great deal of teacher turnover and several established traditions were lost. The population of the school increased dramatically in the sixties. By 1962 a portable was added for the grade six and seven classes. The basement room was divided into a library, nurse's room and an office. A new classroom was constructed in the basement. In 1963 the grade sevens were bused to Winfield and the portable was removed. After Mrs. Schunaman retired in 1966, Mrs. Eliza Fritz became the head teacher and Mr. Berteig was the principal for Winfield, Okanagan Centre and Oyama Schools. During the sixties there was strong Parent-Teacher Association at the Oyama School. The PTA supported the Christmas concerts and parties, May Day events and the annual school Fun Days. At one meeting of the School Board many parents attended in order to get improvements made on the school. As a result improvements were made to the plumbing, heating, fire escapes and basement. In September 1969 a fire started in the janitor's room. All the students were evacuated to the former B.C. Shippers building. The Oyama Fire Department quickly responded to contain the fire to the basement room only. Some of the teachers during this time were: Miss Pound, Miss J. Freeborn, Miss V. Harridan, Mrs. M. Demosky, Mrs. J. Young, Miss J. Klieg, Miss L. Malahoff, Mrs. E. Wedded, Mrs. S. Johnson, Mr. C. Goodman, Mr. M. MacDonald, Mrs. G. Schulman, Mrs. Stoochinoff, Miss M. Seater, Miss C. Leon, Mrs. H. Hoover, and Miss P. Jarosinski.

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Stobbe. In September 1975 grade four returned to Oyama Elementary while grades five went to Winfield Elementary. The grade six and seven students attended Okanagan Centre School.

In September 1976 a new cement block building with four new rooms was built on the old baseball field north of the old school's location. The grade four to seven students attended this new building. A gymnasium was added in September 1977. In the spring of 1977 two more classrooms and a kindergarten were added. The year 1979 would be the last year that the old Oyama School of 1917 would be used. The old school said good-bye to its last students on June 28, 1979. In September 1979 all students would be attending the new school. Those that taught in the school's final years were: Miss M. Hoover, Miss P. Jarosinski, Miss C. Lowen, Miss G. Wilner, Mrs. S. McCoubrey, Miss N. Sheristobitoff, Miss W. Evans, Miss M. Stobbe, Miss W. Evans, Miss L. Peutz, Miss B. Wright, Mrs. Milbrant and Miss L. Deacon (principal). The old school was demolished in November 1979 as the building was found to be structurally unsafe.

On October 7, 1979 a closing ceremony was held for the old Oyama School. The special day drew over 400 people from a period of over fifty years. The day was organized by a committee led by Mrs. Gladys Trewitt. Mr. Allan Claridge also played a large part in the event. Every teacher and student from 1917 to 1979 had been included in the invitations. Former students and teachers from as far as Los Angeles and from across Canada gathered to reunite and to honour the days gone by. All nine of Gladys and Arnold Trewitt's children who were students at the old Oyama School were there except for one who lives in Newfoundland. The old school was open to visitors and class pictures were on display. Many former teachers spoke on their days at Oyama School include Mr. Claude Bissell and Mr. Pi Campbell. It was a day of reminiscing and nostalgia.

#### MEMORIES OF OYAMA SCHOOL

Taken From Oyama School 1933 to 1936 by Margaret Smith

Mr. "Pi" Campbell taught grades five to eight at Oyama School for the 1933-34 school year. He then taught grades nine to twelve in the one room high school from 1934-36. Mr. Campbell remembers that his salary in 1933-34 was \$1000 per year paid at \$100 per month. By 1935-36 he was making a much

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improved \$1550 per year. The rooms in the school had blackboards covering two or three wall and windows along another side. The students remember the high ceilings and the bright classrooms. Desks were arranged in four rows, each row being a grade. The floors upstairs were wooden, but the basement had a dirt floor. The front of the high school classroom had a teacher's desk and the "office" which had a closet for storage supplies. Mrs. Weddell, a former teacher, remembers that in 1926-27 the total supplies for grade one were pencils, paper, crayons, plasticene, one pair of scissors and an Eaton's catalogue! Students in the thirties remember the large bottles of ink, the wall portrait of King George V and Queen Mary, the globe and the library cupboard. The clock was of prime importance as it counted the minutes until school was over.

The chemistry table was in the high school room and held chemicals and science equipment relating to Physics and Chemistry courses. Certain experiment had to be completed and written up in the students' laboratory books. These books would then be appraised by the Inspector and were required to meet certain set standards. Former students remember chemistry lessons lasting thirty minutes a week and involving "experiments".

Most of the Oyama students walked to school while a few rode bicycles. The Gallachers and the Rawesthorns had the longest walks of about four miles. The high school students from Winfield would come in a car driven by Eldred Berry. In the winter the children could skate across Wood Lake to go to school or even use their sleighs.

In 1933-34 there were about twenty five children between the ages of eleven and fifteen in Mr. Campbell's class. In 1934-35 there were about eleven students in grades nine to twelve and thirteen in the 1935-36 academic year. Mr. Campbell remembers that lunch was eaten on the playground in good weather and in the classroom when it was too cold outside. In the winter months the children were inside practically all day. At recess they'd play checkers, cards, battleship, hangman or do corrections in their school work. For exercise they would be sent to run around the school yard or play "Fox and Geese" in the new snow. In good weather the boys would play soccer or join the girls in a softball game. In the spring marbles would appear and even the teachers would occasionally join in. Knobbies, a form of lacrosse, was also popular. There was no physical education during school hours. The children were exercised from their walks to and from school! "If things got too sluggish in the room, we'd do a

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Former students remember lessons in geography, math, spelling and history. Several can recall having to memorize poetry which they can still recite today. Boys received basic carpentry lessons during the half hour period each week called Manual Training. This subject arose in the early twenties when it consisted of handicraft experiences dealing with whittling and wood carving. The boys would learn to use jack planes, hammers, saws and other basic tools. They would eventually proceed to completing little projects.

The school Christmas Party was the event of the year for both the school and the community. Preparations took place most noon hours, recess, before and after school and, even some class time, for several weeks before the party. Finally a day or two before the big show, each class would rehearse in the Oyama Community Hall stage before going through a full dress rehearsal. On the night of the concert there would be standing room only. Maurice Stephen took part in all the concerts but particularly remembers the year he had to "wear a pair of beach pajamas which belonged to his mother". Charles Gallacher was not dramatically inclined, "so I did some of the more menial tasks such as raising and lowering the curtain".

Other extra activities were limited. Some soccer was played on the back field and there a few invitational games usually against Rutland. Some basketball was played on the outdoor court. In the winter there was usually a skating party and wiener roast. In late spring the class would go on a hike. One year they hiked all the way up the mountain to Oyama Lake. The Kelowna and District Rural Track Meet was a highlight of the school year. The Oyama participants trained on Oyama Park field. Practices were usually at 6:30 in the morning. The meet involved all the rural schools from Peachland to Oyama. Former pupils remember the various races, and Maurice Stephen modestly remembers that he was never beaten in the one hundred year dash!

#### Memories of the Inspectors in the Late Thirties

"Mr. De Long was a very tall, slim man. I am sure he arrived unannounced judging by the reaction of the teacher... the second inspector was a Mr. Matheson." -Charles Gallacher

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"Mr. De Long was a big man with glasses. I think he was dreaded by everyone, even the teacher. There would be a slight tap on the door and in he would walk. He probably stood outside the door for a while and had a good earful before he came in. For that whole day we were all on edge. He would take over and drill them quite thoroughly. If you were lucky he might pass by one grade on that trip. When he left there was a great sigh of relief." -Gilbert Berry

Maurice Stephen recalls the following incident: "We lifted up the back end of Mr. A.S. Matheson's car, putting a block of wood under the rear axle. To say he was upset would be the understatement of the year." This would appear to agree with the trustees when they told Mr. Campbell of the "tough, bad lot of kids" in Oyama.

#### Winfield Boys Go to High School in Oyama

When Doug Elliot and Jack Gunn completed grade eight at Winfield School it was time to go to Oyama School for grades nine to twelve. When Doug first started going there was a car that acted as a school bus from Winfield to Oyama. Unfortunately, there came a time when there was no more room in the car so Doug and a friend would ride their bikes to Oyama. This would have been around 1942. They would ride to school no matter how cold or how much snow there was. One morning the boys started out as usual, but it was a very cold day with the wind coming from the north. They got as far as where the Shell station is today and then had to turn around and go back. Sometimes if they were lucky Tom Duggan who worked in the packing house in Oyama would give them a ride. They'd get to the packing house by eight in the morning and just hang around until school started at nine. Then after school they'd wait around until Mr. Duggan got off work at five to go home.

Doug and Jack remember that the Winfield School Board paid the Oyama Board for them to attend high school there. Later on the Winfield Trustees decided to buy a school bus which was actually a van. Jack was a couple of years younger than Doug so by the time he reached grade nine "the bus" was already running. Jack remembers that there were benches along either side of the van. The kids would sit on the benches and rock the van so that it swayed back and forth. Claude Bissell, a high school teacher in Oyama, would drive the

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#### Early Oyama School Days Written By Allan Claridge

The thoughts expressed here cover the period 1931-1938 which it should be borne in mind cover most of the years of the Great Depression. In some instances these thoughts reflect that difficult time. The school had twelve grades in three rooms during that time with four grades in each of three rooms. The subjects taught were more basic than today. The fact that there were several grades in each room didn't seem to distract greatly, and in fact appeared to help when one got into the next grade. Some teachers were strict and did not allow much leeway, while others did not have the control that was necessary. The books *Treasure Island* and *Lady of the Lake* were required literature items and a good teacher almost made the characters live and the learning worthwhile.

The school was heated by wood furnace, using four foot long wood. While the custodian was responsible for getting the heat going in the morning, one of the high school students kept it going during the day. I believe that a sum of two dollars a month was paid for this extra task. The room housing the high school, also had its own heater using coal in small quantities. There were no indoor toilets, but rather a shed like building containing those facilities with no running water. There was however a drinking fountain in the general area of the school where the hallways converged.

When King Edward abdicated, a local electrician (Elmer Crawford) loaned a radio to the school to hear the speech which was of historical significance. The railroad tracks passed the school and dozens of unemployed men who used to ride the top of the boxcars from place to place became etched in your memory. Aldred's Store, located next to the school, sold many things. Of greatest interest was the amount of one cent candy available, and if one was fortunate enough to have five cents (which wasn't often) that would buy a full sized chocolate bar or two bars of slightly smaller size. The hobnailing of boots to make them last longer was accepted even though they weren't kind to the floors. The clothes worn reflected the difficult financial times, but didn't really matter.

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The strap was part of the school rules and for the most part was fairly applied. An infraction of the rules severe enough to warrant strapping could result in two strokes on each hand and a more serious problem might warrant five hits on each hand. Kids generally well behaved and did not live in dread of punishment.

Considering the economic problems of the times I think it was remarkable that the school in Oyama offered the opportunity it did and attracted teachers of the quality necessary. Teaching was not a well paid profession and the support staff and learning tools of today were not available then.

#### Memories of Our School days in Oyama 1930 to 1942

Written by Arnold and Gladys Trehwitt

##### Routine

The high school teacher always rang the school hand-bell at 9 am, recess, noon hour and at 3 pm when school was dismissed. At 9 am the pupils assembled at the flag pole and stood at attention and saluted for the raising of the flag (the Union Jack). Then the boys and girls lined up at their separate entrances and two-by-two they marched up the stairs to their classrooms. The Lord's Prayer was repeated by the students every morning. Our school subjects were: arithmetic, writing, spelling, reading, geography, history, science and art.

The School Board hired Mrs. Darvill to teach music once a week. Under her leadership our school choir entered many Music Festivals. One time we took first place in Vernon. We can still remember singing "Green Sleeves" and the "Roses of Tralee". Our Christmas concerts were always held in the Oyama Community Hall. One time during one of the concerts, the electric power failed, but the show went on with the use of lanterns, lamps and candles. One play that we both participated in was "The Toymaker of Nuremberg". Since it was such a great success our teacher, Mr. Bissell, decided that we should enter it in the Vernon Drama Festival. To our disgust it meant more daily practices, but I guess it was worth it because we took second place which was a big achievement for our small school.

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#### Sports

Soccer was the main sport for the boys. Mr. Bissell was an excellent coach and under his supervision the boys won the North Okanagan Pheasant Trophy four times. They could always count on Mr. Bert Crawford for transportation to the Mackey School in Coldstream or wherever the games were being held. He always volunteered to go so it was a familiar sight to see his car at the school waiting to pick up the boys. He never missed a game. The girls played softball most of the time and they too had problems with equipment. They had two bats and one ball and when the ball needed repair Mr. Bissell would take it home and re-stitch it for them.

Basketball games were played in the Oyama Community Hall and ping pong was played in the room under the high school. It had a dirt floor, and we can remember when the School Board covered it and part of the grounds around the school with cinders from the Railway. This was to prevent the mud from being tracked into the school. However, the cinders were soon removed because the pupils' clothes, faces and hands were always black from the coal dust. Our high school teacher, Mr. Hall, also enjoyed playing soccer and we can recall the time when he was so involved in the game at recess time that he forgot to ring the bell and the game continued on until noon hour. An annual Sports Day was held at the oval in Kelowna and students from our school participated in races, high jumping, broad jumping etc. Our school had swings and teeter-totters for the younger students and at certain times of the year skipping, hop-scotch and marbles were popular past times.

#### Other Activities

The teachers who taught us were: Miss Ruth Wilson, Miss A. East, Mr. J. Gibb, Mr. C. Bissell, Mr. G. Hall, and Miss M. Fulton. Most of them were very good teachers. When Mr. Bissell was hired by the School Board he had been told by the school authorities in Victoria that he would have to deal with a "discipline problem" in the Oyama School. Consequently at the beginning he was very strict and we were all "scared stiff" of him. However, within a year or so, apart from the odd student jumping out the window, discipline was no longer a criteria. Whenever the School Inspector arrived it was obvious the teachers were nervous and under a lot of tension. When he entered the classroom we all had to stand at attention beside our desks and repeat in unison, "Good morning Mr. De Long". We will never forget him. He had huge ears and always jingled money in his pocket.

#### Sports

Soccer was the main sport for the boys. Mr. Bissell was an excellent coach and under his supervision the boys won the North Okanagan Pheasant Trophy four times. They could always count on Mr. Bert Crawford for transportation to the Mackey School in Coldstream or wherever the games were being held. He always volunteered to go so it was a familiar sight to see his car at the school waiting to pick up the boys. He never missed a game. The girls played softball most of the time and they too had problems with equipment. They had two bats and one ball and when the ball needed repair Mr. Bissell would take it home and re-stitch it for them.

Basketball games were played in the Oyama Community Hall and ping pong was played in the room under the high school. It had a dirt floor, and we can remember when the School Board covered it and part of the grounds around the school with cinders from the Railway. This was to prevent the mud from being tracked into the school. However, the cinders were soon removed because the pupils' clothes, faces and hands were always black from the coal dust. Our high school teacher, Mr. Hall, also enjoyed playing soccer and we can recall the time when he was so involved in the game at recess time that he forgot to ring the bell and the game continued on until noon hour. An annual Sports Day was held at the oval in Kelowna and students from our school participated in races, high jumping, broad jumping etc. Our school had swings and teeter-totters for the younger students and at certain times of the year skipping, hop-scotch and marbles were popular past times.

#### Other Activities

On one school outing I can remember Mr. Bissell taking us on a hike to First Lake. It was a lot of fun. We had a paper-chase on the way there. During the winter we skated on a rink near the Canal or on Wood Lake, if it froze. Some of the boys played hockey. Halloween night was fun too. We paraded down the road with "Guy Fon" and burned him in a big bon fire in an open field near the Community Hall. Then we would go into the Hall for fun and games and drinking [bobbing] for apples. One Halloween some energetic students moved the "two-holer" [outhouse] from the Railway Station and took it up the front entrance of the school to the main hallway. The next morning the teachers and students were greeted with a sign in front of the outhouse, reading, "HOME MADE ICE CREAM FOR SALE".

#### Students

We remember the Oyama School students as being a friendly, energetic, carefree bunch of kids. There were only about sixty five students in the school so we knew them all. Nearly everyone lived on an orchard or some kind of a farm. This was during the Depression years so it was a difficult time for most everyone. We can remember seeing the transients riding on top railway freight cars. It was a familiar sight to see them from the school grounds.

Although most of us had to help our parents on the farm with thinning or picking of apples, milking cows and many other chores we still found time to enjoy fishing, hiking, swimming, hunting and boating. It was a good, clean healthy country lifestyle. We did a lot of walking in those days. Whenever there was a party or dance at the Community Hall on a Friday night it meant an extra six miles of walking for some of us.

Some of the boys took their guns to school so that they could go hunting ducks at noon hour and afterschool. During school hours the guns were kept in the teacher's office. One time when our high school teacher, Mr. Hall, had left our classroom for a few minutes the students decided to change the time on the clock by putting the hands ahead. They coaxed one of the girls to do it. The clock was on a high shelf at the front of the room and all went well until she proceeded to put it back on the shelf. At that moment Mr. Hall came back into the room and because the clock hadn't been pushed back far enough it toppled to the floor with a big crash! The poor girl had to pay for a new clock.

Oyama had the only high school between Vernon and Rutland so students from Winfield attended our school. One of them drove a car and transported the students to and from school. One morning when Gilbert Berry was driving the

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steering mechanism on his car broke and it went off the bridge into the Canal. Fortunately the students suffered only minor injuries. One day when the school nurse was coming we heard that everyone would have to take their clothes off and be checked by her. Three of the boys didn't want to have any part in that and so they left the school without permission and went hunting. When they returned the teacher gave them the strap on both their hands. Aldred's Store was close to the school so most of the students went there for their school supplies and penny candy such as jaw breakers and toffee suckers.

The Oyama Post Office was close to the school. The Oyama mail was brought out from Vernon and was sorted in the Post Office, but there was no mail delivery back then. So some of us would pack the mail home after school for our neighbours and receive twenty five to fifty cents a month for doing this. Some of the parents who had cars took turns driving their children to school when they were in grade one and two if they lived two and a half to three miles away. After that most of us walked until we were able to ride bikes. It was a long hike especially during the winter because the road was snow plowed only half the distance we had to walk. The plough, which was made out of wood, was V-shaped and was pulled behind a truck. Some of the kids rode down hills to school on sleighs or on bob sleds. Oyama got its first real school bus in 1954.

One student lived over at Geer's Bay where rattlesnakes could always be found. One morning he killed four of them and brought them to school. The boy put them in the girls' desk drawers. Needless to say that caused a commotion.

## **OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL**

### **THE HISTORY OF OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL**

In the early 1900's Okanagan Centre was a thriving community because of the CPR steamboats that would stop in on their way down the lake, the fertile land and the roads connecting it to Winfield. The population was increasing dramatically and by 1911 the residents of the Centre saw the need for a school to be established. There were not enough children in the Centre itself to have a Rural Assisted School. Therefore children from other areas, such as the west side of the lake and the Fir Valley, were boarded in Okanagan Centre during the

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week so that the required number could be met. In September 1911 the first school, offering grades one to eight, opened with an enrolment of sixteen children. The teacher that year was Miss Florence A. Wentworth.

The school was located in St. Paul's Presbyterian Church which used to be where the cold storage building is now, behind the Store. The one room was heated by two barrel stoves on either side of the room with their great lengths of stove pipe reaching to mid roof. It had a high ceiling and there was a stage in the room where the church organ sat. The blackboards were behind the stage. There was one blackboard on wheels so that it could be moved around the room. There were hooks along the back wall for the children to hang their coats on. By the 1912-13 school year the population of Okanagan Centre had doubled, but strangely enough the school population decreased to thirteen. Miss Scott-Coward was the teacher for that academic year.

During the First World War, when many men left to go overseas, the school population remained constant. There were always between thirteen and eighteen students until the mid twenties. The teachers at Okanagan Centre School from 1913 until the new school was built in 1932 were: Miss Brett, Miss McMaster from Fir Valley, Miss Lucy Faircloth who later became Mrs. Harry Macfarlane, Miss Marjorie Campbell-Brown and Mrs. Ida Parker. Mrs. Parker was the teacher at Okanagan Centre School at both locations, the church and the new school. She taught in the school from September 1921 until June 1949.

In 1926 the Canadian Pacific Railway finished its route from Vernon to Kelowna which completely bypassed the Centre. It would have been thought that the economy of the area would decline significantly and that some residents would leave, but that year the enrolment jumped to twenty-five students. Around 1930 the Okanagan Valley Land Company needed the property where the church was to build a cold storage. This property was directly across from the Company's packing house on the lake. Therefore it was convenient to build the cold storage there because a conveyor belt was to be added to go from the packing house, over the road and in to the cold storage building. This would make it easier to transfer boxed fruit from the packing house to the cold storage.

So in 1932 a new one room school was built further south on a lot given by the Okanagan Valley Land Company. It was built by Mr. Teddy Hare. This original building is now the south room of the Lake Country Museum. The new school continued to house grades one to eight. Throughout the thirties the population of the school was between fifteen and twenty-two students. From

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1941 to 1945 there were twenty-two to twenty-nine students. Then in September of '45 the enrolment dramatically increased to forty students, but the following year the population was again at twenty-three.

In 1952 another classroom was built on to the north end of the original room. Now grades one to three were taught in one of the rooms and grades four to six in the other. The grade seven and eight students were bused to Rutland Junior High School. Indoor plumbing was also added along with the new room, much to the delight of the students and teachers. After the new addition the enrollment went up to forty-two. It remained between thirty-three and forty-two until the mid sixties. At that time the grade sevens were attending Winfield Elementary instead of Rutland, and as of 1959 the grade eights went to George Elliot Secondary School. In 1965 the new Wood Lake Elementary School opened causing Okanagan Centre School's population to drop from thirty-three to seventeen. At that time the school came under the administration of the Wood Lake principal. From 1952 to 1965 Mr. Jim Berteig served as the traveling principal for Okanagan Centre, Winfield and Oyama Schools. Only grades one to three were offered at Okanagan Centre School as grade four to seven students were sent to Wood Lake Elementary.

By 1969 Okanagan Centre School's enrolment was down to ten. In the following year enrolment jumped to sixty-seven as students were bused in from the overcrowded Wood Lake Elementary. In 1971 the school was closed temporarily as the School District decided to put in portables at Wood Lake rather than busing students to the Centre. The school re-opened to accommodate Oyama students while their new school was being built. When the new school was complete in Oyama the Centre School temporarily closed again. The children in the Centre were bused to Winfield Elementary. Then in 1974 when Winfield Elementary became overcrowded the Okanagan Centre School opened again.

From 1978 to 1984 the two grade five classes from Wood Lake Elementary were bused to OK Centre School. The students at Wood Lake looked forward to their grade five year at Okanagan Centre School. Former students remember that year as a happy and peaceful time. They enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere of having the school all to themselves. They also enjoyed the luxury of being on the lake by having lunches on the beach with a fire to roast wieners on. The students participated in special extra curricular activities like swimming, canoeing, hiking

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and camping. They also went to the Okanagan Centre Community Hall for gymnastic activities.

In June 1984 the Okanagan Centre School closed permanently due to the completion of Davidson Road Elementary. The school was open from 1911 to 1984, a total of seventy-three years. In the fall of 1984 the community began the process of making the school building in to a museum. The Lake Country Museum opened in the summer of 1985 and now, in 1996, the museum and the property make up a municipal park of the District of Lake Country.

The teachers of Okanagan Centre School were as follows: 1911-12 Miss Florence Wentworth, 1912-17 Miss Scot-Coward, Miss McMaster, Miss Brett, 1917-21 Miss Campbell-Brown, 1921-49 Mrs. Ida Parker, 1949-52 Mrs. Franklin. The teachers from 1953 to June 1983 were: Miss Jeane Brown, Miss Pauline Bradshaw, Miss Audrey Bonnett, Miss Margaret Van Santen, Miss Judy Middlemass, Miss Emilie de Montreuil, Miss Watts, Miss Koskamaki, Mrs. Dain, Mr. Owen Erwin, Mr. George Fast, Mr. Williams, Mr. Corrado, Mr. Sam Pestes, Miss Agnes Dobie, Miss Mann, Mrs. Vivian Davis, Mr. Don King, Mrs. Bowman and Mr. Guenette. In the school's final year, 1983-1984, the teachers were Mr. Jules Morris and Mr. Bob Hewitson.

One of the most remembered people associated with Okanagan Centre School is Mrs. Nellie Carter. Mrs. Carter came to OK Centre in 1919 with her husband Charles Devlin "Curly" Carter. Mr. Carter died in 1923, leaving Mrs. Carter with two young girls. Mrs. Carter was the Okanagan Centre School custodian from 1919 to 1956 when she retired. She did the job wonderfully for thirty-seven years, first at the Presbyterian Church and then at the new school. She kept the school room and the outhouses clean. She cleaned the windows inside and outside as well as watered the lawn. Mrs. Carter would clean the school in the mornings and be there early to light the fire in the stove so that it would be warm by the time the children arrived.

Mrs. Carter and Mrs. Harrop, as members of the Okanagan Centre Women's Institute, always bought gifts and candy for the children for the annual Christmas concert and party. Mr. Pixton was always Santa Claus at this event. Mrs. Carter also helped out at the annual school picnic on the beach at Siwash Bay. She also helped throughout the year wherever was necessary. When the public library was located in the school Mrs. Carter also acted as the librarian for the two days a week it was open. Mrs. Carter loved children. When she came visiting she'd always talk about what the children were doing in school. The most

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mischievous boys were always her favourite as she came from a family of five brothers.

### Memories of Okanagan Centre School

#### Memories of Winna Bernau

Winna Caesar, as was her name back then, started grade one at the school in the Presbyterian Church in 1914. She attended the school until Easter of 1919 and then went to boarding school in Vernon. She remembers that her last year at Okanagan Centre School was the year that little Sigh Kobayashi was in grade one. Winna Caesar's first teacher was Miss Brett who was there from 1914 to 1915. The following year her teacher was Miss Lucy Faircloth who would come to school by horse and buggy.

Miss Faircloth married Mr. Harry Macfarlane that year and taught for only one more term afterwards because in those days married women were not allowed to teach. Mrs. Bernau remembers that the year Miss Faircloth got married the girls in the class had a little wedding shower for her. The day of the shower they all dressed up for school and disappeared quickly at the end of the day. Mrs. Caesar (Winna's mother) had invited Miss Faircloth for tea that afternoon so by the time Miss Faircloth arrived the girls had already reached the Caesar home and surprised their unknowing teacher. They gave Miss Faircloth a fancy serving dish as a present.

In her last year at Okanagan Centre School Winna had Miss Campbell-Brown for a teacher. Mrs. Bernau also remembers that before 1911 there was a male teacher at Okanagan Centre School, and that he lived in a teacherage close to where Bryan Cooney's house is now. I found this piece of information very interesting because in all my research I could not find any records of a school in Okanagan Centre before 1911. I also never read about a teacherage. This may have been something that has never recorded until now.

Mrs. Bernau remembers that there was only one other student in her grade at school; his name was Cunliffe Pixton. He lived up on the hill and every morning on the way to school they would meet at the bottom of the hill and walk the rest of the way together. One time in the winter her and Cunliffe walked through all the deep snow all the way to school and were thoroughly late. In the winter school started at 9:30 whereas in the spring and fall it started at 9:00. Mrs.

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Bernau remembers two families of Copeland children were in her class. Sam Copeland's children were Victor and Hilda. Victor was a couple years older than her and she remembers that he would come galloping down the hill earlier than everyone else to light the stoves in the school. Fred Copeland's children, Flora and Frederick, were quite a bit older than Winna. They lived close to where Mick Wentworth lives today. Bobby Brixton was also in her class as well as the Leenie boy who lived across the lake. He disliked school and did not want his mother to leave him in the mornings. She would often stay for quite a while which didn't help him learn to be independent. He boarded with the Brixtons and went home on the weekends. He was not used to other children, but Mrs. Bernau remembers that he was very good at badminton. The Joslyn family lived in the Westbury Hotel and they had three children who attended the school: Herbert, Sadie and Ada. Mrs. Bernau remembers that there were always about thirteen or fourteen students per year.

Mrs. Bernau's memories of school include big books, little desks with ink wells and the big stove in the middle of the room. Later on two stoves were put in on either side of the room which was much better. She remembers that the ink used to freeze in the winter. The classroom had a stage and the blackboards were behind it. There was also one blackboard on wheels so that it could be moved around the room. In later years Mrs. Bernau remembers sitting in a double desk with John Duke. He was quiet and well behaved, but his younger brother Robby was a real nuisance. There were two outhouses outside the school, one for the girls and one for the boys. The horses shed was in between the outhouses. Mrs. Bernau remembers that you would have to raise your hand to get permission to go the washroom and that you weren't supposed to speak in class. She also remembers that classes were very organized. The teacher would get the younger ones working first and then make her way to the older students. She would then teach one grade at a time while the other grades worked.

There was a Christmas concert every year. When Mrs. Bernau was in grade one she was a fairy with huge wings. The concerts were held in the Presbyterian Church (the school) on the stage. She remembers that one year there weren't enough students and so the parents put on a concert. There was always a beautiful Christmas tree and Mr. Pixton was Santa Claus every year. One year the white fluffy fur on Santa's cuff touched one of the candles on the tree and lit

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Mrs. Bernau's memories of school include big books, little desks with ink wells and the big stove in the middle of the room. Later on two stoves were put in on either side of the room which was much better. She remembers that the ink used to freeze in the winter. The classroom had a stage and the blackboards were behind it. There was also one blackboard on wheels so that it could be moved around the room. In later years Mrs. Bernau remembers sitting in a double desk with John Duke. He was quiet and well behaved, but his younger brother Robby was a real nuisance. There were two outhouses outside the school, one for the girls and one for the boys. The horses shed was in between the outhouses. Mrs. Bernau remembers that you would have to raise your hand to get permission to go the washroom and that you weren't supposed to speak in class. She also remembers that classes were very organized. The teacher would get the younger ones working first and then make her way to the older students. She would then teach one grade at a time while the other grades worked.

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poor old Santa on fire! Mrs. Bernau remembers that they used to get nice presents from Santa like dolls and books.

#### Memories of Sigh Kobayashi

Little Sigh started grade one at the Presbyterian Church after Easter 1921. He turned six on April 8th, 1921 and started school right after. He was supposed to start grade one in September 1920 with all the other kids but that year there was too much snow and he couldn't get to school. Sigh did two months of grade one and then went into grade two in September 1921. He finished grade eight at Okanagan Centre School in June 1929. Miss Margaret Campbell-Brown was Sigh's teacher for the two months he was in grade one. He said that he used to speak Japanese to her, not that she understood him, but at that time he spoke little or no English. She helped him to pick up the language quickly. Miss Campbell-Brown left Okanagan Centre School at the end of the school year to get married. The following September (1921) Mrs. Ida Parker came to Okanagan Centre School where she taught until 1949. Mrs. Parker previously taught at a school in Eholt, a town between Greenwood and Grand Forks, that no longer exists. Sigh had Mrs. Parker until the end of grade eight.

Sigh remembers Mrs. Parker as a very good teacher. She absolutely loved classical music and was well educated in the subject. He recalls having music appreciation class for half an hour per week. All the students would sit silently in their desks and listen while Mrs. Parker played 78's records of classical music on the Edison phonograph. Sigh found music appreciation class very boring, but when he looks back now he realizes that he learned a lot about different composers and their music. Mrs. Parker was very adamant about teaching her students the three R's (reading, writing and arithmetic). Sigh remembers that she often taught them about literature and that she "pounded" proper grammar when students made errors. Mrs. Parker also emphasized history and geography, especially history. They would have to memorize the dates that different battles occurred and the names of the Army Generals. They also learned about historical statues and monuments. Sigh says that when he went to Europe in 1984 he recognized a lot of the statues and monuments and remembered what Mrs. P had taught them about the individual monuments. She must have done a good job if Sigh remembers all that nearly sixty years later!

When Sigh was eight or nine his father (Sigh Sr) was working at the Occidental Cannery that was on the lake just across from where Bryan Cooney's

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When Sigh was eight or nine his father (Sigh Sr) was working at the Occidental Cannery that was on the lake just across from where Bryan Cooney's

house is now. He would walk to the cannery after school and wait for his father to finish work at 6 pm because he couldn't walk home alone. School got out at 3 pm so he would just hang around until six. One afternoon when he was just sitting around the manager of the cannery went up to him and told him that he couldn't just sit around waiting for his dad so he have little Sigh a job. Sigh was told to fill the lanterns throughout the cannery with naphtha and to make sure they were always full. Sigh laughs about this now saying, "I could have blown the whole place up!"

In the winter time when there was three or four feet of snow Sigh's dad would walk in front of him and stomp out a path so that Sigh wouldn't get stuck on the way to school. Eventually Sigh Sr had to do this for Sigh Jr and his other children, who would walk on the freshly made path in single file. Sigh remembers that no matter how much snow or how cold it was Sigh Sr would lead his children to the school.

Sigh found his school life to be very busy, there was always something to do. They went on lots of picnics as a class, mostly down to the lake. Mrs. Parker divided the area around the school (church) so that each students had a garden plot. Each student was responsible for planting and caring for his or her plot. They planted many different kinds of flowers and a few vegetables. At the end of June Mrs. Parker would judge the gardens and give a prize for the best one. Unfortunately, Sigh never won. He can remember working on his garden during lunch and recess. Once in a while the class would walk up Camp road to go the Lakeshore Inn, this would be considered a field trip. Sigh also remembers walking to Winfield to go skating on the rink at the old Winfield Community Hall.

Sigh remembers that there were about thirty kids in the school every year. They were mostly younger children as Sigh recalls that one year there were only two grade eights. The older students would help the younger ones with their work. Hilda Copeland and Ellen Gleed were older than Sigh and they would help him with his schoolwork. Sigh's other classmates were Roy Clark, Claude Williams, Mike Washer and the Mulvihill brothers (Randolph and William) and their sister Eleanor. The Mulvihills were from a very small community by Bella Coola where their father owned a dairy farm. There was no school there so the children were sent to live with their uncle Sam Copeland so that they could go to school. Another of Sigh's classmates was Bill Pixton. Bill and Sigh were in the same grade and didn't get a long very often. They used to hit each other all the time. In fact Sigh was very fond of throwing rocks which would often get him in

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trouble. When they were ten Sigh hit Bill in the head with a rock. Another time Sigh threw a rock and broke Mary Carter's glasses. His dad had to pay for them and Sigh was sent to Mrs. Carter's house to apologize. He remembers being so embarrassed when he had to go do this.

Despite some animosity Sigh and Bill did have some fun together. There were two cut hole outhouses in one small building outside. A wall separated the two holes with one side being for the girls and the other for the boys. One time Sigh and Bill cut a hole in the separating wall so they could peak at the girls. When Mrs. Parker found out who had done it the boys were in a lot of trouble. Sigh used to go over the Pixtons to learn to play the guitar as Mrs. Pixton was a very talented musician. Mrs. Pixton would sing the notes and Sigh would play them on his guitar while Bill played them on the piano. Sigh says that he really didn't enjoy learning to play the guitar, but he went to Mrs. Pixton's because she gave him very good candies.

One year for the annual Christmas concert the students performed the Christmas Carol. Sigh played Bob Cratchitt. He remembers that they started practicing for the play at least one month before the big day. They would practice before and after school and at lunch time. When the concert day was close they would even use class time. Sigh remembers that Mrs. Parker would coach them through the play and that they would also sing Christmas carols. Mrs. Macfarlane or Mrs. Pixton would play the piano to accompany them. The concerts were held at the Okanagan Centre Community Hall.

Classes were organized into half hour sessions, they would work on one subject for half an hour and then change to something else. When it came time to change subjects they would just put down the book they were using and pick up the one they needed next. The classroom was about thirty by fifty feet in size with high ceilings. There were two stoves in the room, one on each side of the room. When it was cold the kids would stand around the stoves. There was a raised platform in the room where the teacher's desk was. There was also an organ in the room which was used during church services, but never during school. Sigh remembers the Edison phonograph distinctly because it had a diamond point that never wore out. Sigh remembers that Mrs. Carter helped out Mrs. Parker and made the children behave because Mrs. Carter wanted the school to be kept clean. She would go to the school early in the morning to light the fire and then return after school to do the cleaning. When Mr. Carter died in 1923 the funeral was held at the Hall. Sigh remembers that on the day of the

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funeral Mrs. Parker shut all the windows and doors so that the children could not see the hurst go by.

Sigh finished grade eight at OK Centre School and wrote his high school entrance exams. He then took grade nine by correspondence because there was no high school in the area. Sigh recently found the issue of The Province newspaper that would have been from 1929 that had the results and names of the students who wrote the High School Entrance Examinations. Later on he ran into an old friend he had gone to school with and told him that he had gotten a score of 374 on the exams. The friend asked how Sigh knew his score and so Sigh showed him the paper. They reminisced about the other students and picked out the names of the pretty girls that they had both asked out. Unfortunately these girls had turned both of them down.

#### **Osam Kobayashi's Memories of Mrs. Ida Parker**

Osam went to Okanagan Centre School in the thirties and remembers Mrs. Parker as being an extraordinary teacher. Mrs. Parker was loyal to the British Crown. Every morning they would gather around the cracked wooden flagpole and a senior student would raise the Union Jack as the other children sang "God Save the King". Osam remembers that Mrs. P strictly taught the basics of the three R's, English grammar was drilled to the point of saturation. British history class made sure that the students knew every monarch from William the Conqueror to George V. Art, home economics and industrial arts were also part of the curriculum. Physical Education included softball, baseball and calisthenics. Mrs. Parker always maintained order and exercised discipline firmly and fairly. Osam remembers their little garden patches which were to teach them "training for living". On the last day of the school year the annual "Exhibition" was held. The ladies of the Women's Institute would come and judge the gardens. Prizes of Blackie's books were awarded. The parents could also see the results of the school year on that day. Osam fondly remembers journeys in the back of Mrs. Parker's Fargo truck to the movies in Kelowna and to the Armstrong fair. These were their field trips.

#### **School Days at Okanagan Centre From 1933 to 1940 By Pat Richards (nee Cheesman)**

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teacher. The original school room is now The Nellie Carter Room in the Lake Country Museum. The main and only door was the one on the south end of the building where the wheelchair ramp is today. There was no indoor plumbing or central heating then. The older students often helped the younger ones with their school work and in the winter they helped to bundle them up for the long walk home. In those days buses were unheard of and few people had cars. The older students tended the stove when the teacher was busy. If the wood supply ran low on those very cold days one of the boys would go out to the wood shed and fetch more. Mrs. Carter made sure that this did not happen often.

Mrs. Parker taught the basic three R's but was firm believer in the educational experience. She dug up a five or six foot strip around the east and south walls of the school which she then divided among the students so we could learn to be gardeners. Books (bought by Mrs. Parker) were awarded as prizes at the end of June for the best gardens. One January Mrs. Parker took a holiday to Mexico. Upon her return we were treated to many different things among which were Mexican Jumping Beans. She also brought a little gizmo with which we made a type of braided rug from pieces of everyone's old clothes. This we raffled off and we bought sports equipment with the money earned.

Our Christmas concerts were quite spectacular. In fact word got back to the School Inspector who made it clear that more scholastics and less dramatics were in order. Speaking of the School Inspector a visit from him, a surprise of course, turned the calmest teacher into nervous wrecks and the most unruly children into pagans of virtue. Of course the moment he drove away life returned to normal followed by an early dismissal by an exhausted teacher. One of the more scary events of our rural school life was the visit from the school doctor armed with his black bag full of torture equipment or so we thought. His name was Dr. Utmar and I believe he was Dutch. He had a long beard and fairly long hair with a bald spot on top. He was accompanied by a Health Nurse, Miss Grinden, who wore a very tight blue uniform. By the time they left most of the little ones were crying and the older ones were rubbing their arms from one kind of immunization or other.

One memory which brings back a chuckle was of Mr. Parker bringing his wife to school in a wheelbarrow and taking her home the same way after school. This was quite a feat as their home was at the top of 6th Street. I believe Mrs. Parker had gout or had sprained her ankle at that time. Mrs. Parker was the only teacher, except for the occasional substitute, who taught at Okanagan Centre

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School the seven years I was there. I don't believe any were more colourful than her.

**Memories of September 1935 to June 1943 by Karleen Greenwood (nee Hare)**

This was a one room school with the cloak room on the front. Desks ranged in sizes to accommodate grades one to eight. Our teacher, Mrs. Ida Parker gave many of us an appreciation of art and music. We had annual Christmas concerts with practices starting a good month prior to the big performance. I'm sure all students took part in at least one thing. We had piano solos and duets as well as singing solos, duets and groups. We also took part in plays. I can remember Cinderella particularly with the help of Mrs. Macfarlane going through her magical trunk upstairs. She would come down with marvelous treasures such as fancy dresses, hats, feathers, shoes with curved heels which could have been a perfect glass slipper. We would walk to Mrs. Macfarlane's for practices.

I believe Mrs. Pixton came to our rescue at times too as both ladies were talented on the piano. Mrs. "Mac", as we affectionately called her, used to surprise us once in a while with a treat of lacy ginger cookies which were usually rolled like a cornucopia. The big Christmas concert was held in the Community Hall. There was always a huge beautiful Christmas tree set up in the corner. I'm sure it nearly touched the ceiling! The very active Women's Institute made sure Santa had a gift for all the boys and girls of the Centre whether they were in school or not. Mr. Pixton made a very agile Santa. He would come leaping onto the stage and then jump off in our midst. What an excitement as we waited for our gift which would usually be something we had wished for—wonderful Santa helpers!

Early in the spring we all prepared our garden plots. We planted them, most of them had perennials, and were to give them TLC. At the end of the year they would be judged. We never had enough students for a boys' ball team so we made mixed scrub teams. This was good training for later on when we had to go into town for high school. Most of us could slug the ball pretty convincingly. We had a big old wind-up RCA Victrola record player from which much of our music appreciation was to come from.

At that time of course we didn't appreciate all the hard work Mrs. Nellie Carter put in to keep our school smelling nice and clean and keeping it warm in winter. We had a big stove along one wall which had to be stoked up before we

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all arrived, and then it had to be fed all day. I guess the latter was the teacher's job during school hours. Mrs. Carter also shoveled the snow from the paths and steps. She kept the school yard neat and tidy. We had two outdoor toilets, one for the boys and one for the girls, they were quite the fancy buildings. We used to play Anti-I-Over over the girls "biffy" and once in a while we would lose the ball down the ventilator spaces along the ridge of the roof. In the winter there were always games in the snow like "Fox and Goose".

In the early years each school had its own Board. I can remember Ted Nuyens and Sue Hare being chairman and secretary-treasurer for a while. Discipline didn't seem to be much of a problem with this mixture of ages. I can remember being a little horrified when the odd piece of chalk would get thrown at one of the older boys when they were getting a little boisterous at the back of the room. There were wonderful community picnics with all the school families and others, held down at 'the south road'. Some years they were held at Carrs Landing. I can remember practicing hard for track meets that were held in Kelowna with all the districts attending.

Looking back at these memories I noticed that most seem to be the extra curricular activities and not the scholastic ones. I can remember having to draw the heads of the English Kings and have to memorize the years they were on the throne. I can also remember having to memorize lines of poetry. I don't think any of us had any problems when we had to integrate into the big city when grade nine came along. I have fond memories of life at Okanagan Centre, it was a great place to grow up.

#### **Judy Mohr's Memories**

She attended Okanagan Centre School from 1957 to 1961. I remember Mrs. Carter always putting an orange and candies on our desks the day before Christmas holidays. We played "Anti-I-Over" over the old "biffy" outside. Our first year of school the teacher did not teach us the alphabet or phonics for the first six months of school which drove our parents nuts. We also had a superintendent that came to the school regularly to check on the teachers. I remember having my knuckles rapped for writing with my left hand. My dad came to the school and complained to the "super" to allow me to be a south paw.

They used a hand bell to call us into the school. Sports Days were the best as they were always a lot of fun. Since there were three of us that looked identical (we were triplets) we used to switch places in the classroom which drove

all arrived, and then it had to be fed all day. I guess the latter was the teachers job during school hours. Mrs. Carter also shoveled the snow from the paths and steps. She kept the school yard neat and tidy. We had two outdoor toilets, one for the boys and one for the girls, they were quite the fancy buildings. We used to play Anti-I-Over over the girls "biffy" and once in a while we would lose the ball down the ventilator spaces along the ridge of the roof. In the winter there were always games in the snow like "Fox and Goose".

In the early years each school had its own Board. I can remember Ted Nuyens and Sue Hare being chairman and secretary-treasurer for a while. Discipline didn't seem to be much of a problem with this mixture of ages. I can remember being a little horrified when the odd piece of chalk would get thrown at one of the older boys when they were getting a little boisterous at the back of the room. There were wonderful community picnics with all the school families and others, held down at 'the south road'. Some years they were held at Carrs Landing. I can remember practicing hard for track meets that were held in Kelowna with all the districts attending.

Looking back at these memories I noticed that most seem to be the extra curricular activities and not the scholastic ones. I can remember having to draw the heads of the English Kings and have to memorize the years they were on the throne. I can also remember having to memorize lines of poetry. I don't think any of us had any problems when we had to integrate into the big city when grade nine came along. I have fond memories of life at Okanagan Centre, it was a great place to grow up.

#### **Judy Mohr's Memories**

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the teacher around the bend. We thought it was a lot of fun. A wood furnace in the basement used to periodically smoke, you would have thought you were around a campfire. We were a small group of students and all of us were friends, there was no class "segregation". No one dared talk back to the teacher because if you did you would have gotten in trouble at home. The strap was in use then and we all feared it. The fear of punishment ensured that was never any theft or vandalism. School Christmas concerts were always at the Hall. Santa came to visit us and there was always food afterwards.

**Memories of Ruth Whitson (nee Nuyens) From the Thirties**

**Remember When:**

The first dental plan was offered, for one dollar all your teeth would be filled. Everyone of my brother's fillings fell out and had to be refilled by another dentist. I passed out when the dentist hit a nerve and poor Isabel Crandelmire had the reddest, bloody swollen face I had ever seen. To this day I fear dentists!

Osam Kobayashi jumped so hard on the swings that he went right over. His hair was still standing up two hours later!

On our annual nature study, usually in June, we went along the 'south road' and, went up I'm sure what was the steepest part of the bank to what is now Tyndall road. We were pushing and pulling our beloved Mrs. Parker; she was a brave lady!

On cold snowy mornings the guard around our stove was covered with wet toques, mitts and coats while our boots were on the floor beside it. By ten o'clock everything was steaming and smelly!

In penmanship class Teddy Clarke, a real character, said he couldn't do left-hand ovals because he was right-handed.

Our garden plots were judged at the end of the school year and Pat Cheesman (Richards) won every year because she had the most columbines in bloom. Thus began my love of columbines.

Recess, in the mornings and afternoons, sometimes went on for thirty to sixty minutes especially on the beautiful spring days. We played "scrub" by the hour.

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Can anyone forget Karleen Hare (Greenwood) as the doormouse in the classic by Alice Traugh, *The Looking Glass*. It was one of our Christmas concert efforts. It was a carefree age for most of the children. We didn't have many material things, but we were well cared for and loved--the most important ingredients for a happy childhood.

## THE SCHOOLS OF THE COMMONAGE

### THE HISTORY OF THE SCHOOLS IN THE COMMONAGE

One of the first school buildings in the North Okanagan was the Commonage School near Vernon built in 1898. It was located in Okanagan Landing. Before the school was built, classes were held in the Thorlakson home. The area was called the Commonage because at that time the Natives and the white men had equal grazing rights to the area. The estimated value of the school building was \$20. It was built on farmland by settlers at no expense to the government. The structure was made of Logs and furnished with hand-made desks. The walls and floors were made of roughly hewn logs, and the building had a "shake" roof. There was a small porch where the outer clothing would be hung. Eventually, as families moved away, there was no longer the required minimum of seven children that was needed to keep the school open. It closed in 1912. The building was given to Paddlewheel Park at Okanagan Landing in 1975 as a historical building.

In 1920 a new school called the Sunnyside School was built about four miles south of the original Commonage School as there were enough students in that area. It was a frame building. This school closed on February 27, 1927 due to lack of students. The Sunnyside School was the third school built in the Commonage. It was much closer to Carrs Landing located about three quarters of a mile from the wharf where the paddle wheel The Sicamous stopped on her

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trip along Okanagan Lake. The building was on top of a hill overlooking the lake. It also closed due to lack of pupils.

### MEMORIES OF SUNNYSIDE SCHOOL

#### Memories of Archie Tompson: A Former Student at Sunnyside School

Archie Tompson was one of the students that attended Sunnyside School from when it first opened in September 1920 until it closed on February 27, 1927. Sunnyside was the first school in the Sunnywold District and it was the first school built in the area after the Commonage School closed down. Before Sunnyside School was built classes were held in the Bottenhammer's home. The Bottenhammer's house was located close to where Sunnywold Ranch is today. This house was further south along the Sunnywold District than where Sunnyside School would be built later on. Archie attended school at the Bottenhammer home from March 1920 until May of that year.

Then in September 1920 Archie went to the brand new Sunnyside School. Archie remembers that the school went through five teachers in the first six months it was open because the teachers could not handle living in such a rural area. Archie had started grade one in England and finished it at the Bottenhammer house. He started grade two at Sunnyside School. Archie remembers that he used to bring his lunch to school in a lard pail. The boys used to shoot trees with their bow and arrows and they even had a target at the back of the school for practice. Archie remembers that a boy from Carrs Landing came to Sunnyside for two months and taught them how to play baseball. Knobbies was also a popular game back then. Archie said that there were many Saskatoon bushes near the school building and when the bushes were full of berries they decorated the area around the school.

There were usually about fourteen students per year at the school except for the last year when there were much fewer. The one room school had a wood stove for heat and when Archie was eleven he was responsible for cutting kindling and keeping the fire going. There was a two hole outhouse next to the school building. Some of Archie's classmates were: Charlie, George and John Henderson, Leslie and Elsie Mills, Trutsie, Homer and Dixie Tronson, Ted, Tom and Doyle Churchill as well as his brother Angus and sister Mary. Archie recalls that the doctor came once a year to give them a check up. One time when he came he asked Tom Churchill when was the last time he had a bath.

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Some of the teachers Archie remembers at Sunnyside School are: Miss Thorlakson, Miss Redgrave and Miss Teague. Miss Teague (now Mrs. Paige) was the teacher from September 1921 to June 1922. She boarded with Archie and his family the year she taught there. Archie was and still is very fond of Miss Teague. He still visits her often in Noric House in Vernon where she lives today. Archie remembers Miss Teague as being very sweet and the best arithmetic teacher he ever had. He remembers walking to school with her every morning and picking wild pink roses for her in the spring. Miss Teague was at one time courting a gentleman of the area and sometimes on Monday morning he would drive her to school in a horse and sleigh after a weekend in Vernon.

The inspector came to the school once a year to see how things were progressing. This made all the students and the teacher especially very nervous. Archie remembers that on February 27, 1927 the inspector came and found that there were not enough students in the school to keep it open. His teacher at the time was Miss Evans. The school closed down permanently at the end of that day. Archie was in grade seven at the time. He attended Sunnyside School the entire time it was open, from September 1920 until February 1927. Mr. Tompson still lives in the Commonage right on Tompson Lake which was named after him. He has lived there for over seventy years.

**Memories of Mrs. Phyllis Paige (nee Teague): Former Teacher at Sunnyside**

Mrs. Phyllis Paige, known as Miss Teague in her teaching years, taught at Sunnyside School from September 1921 to June 1922. She was twenty years old when she taught at the school. The school was located in the Commonage about one mile south east of Tompson Lake. Mrs. Paige remembers her year there as a pleasant one. She boarded with the Tompson family, and recalls that Mrs. Tompson was so sweet and wonderful to her. One of her oldest students at Sunnyside School was Archie Tompson. He was eleven the year she taught there. She remembers him as being very clever and interested in school. Miss Teague and Archie used to walk to and from school together everyday. In the spring he would pick wild pink roses for her. Archie still goes to visit her today at Noric House where she lives. She will be ninety-five years old this year.

Mrs. Paige fondly remembers her year at Sunnyside School. She had about fourteen students that year. Her youngest pupils were two children who were six or seven and enrolled in grade one. She remembers teaching them out of little

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primers, the most basic books for children learning to read. Some of her other students were the three Churchill children, the Henderson children and the Mills children. There were two Mills girls for sure and at least one boy from that family. The Mills children were very helpful and friendly. Gladys Sidden was a little girl who lived quite far from the school and Mrs. Paige remembers that she would sometimes ride a horse to school and sometimes a bicycle.

Mrs. Paige says that the days ran smoothly and quickly. The children enjoyed learning and were always cooperative. She says that things just went naturally and flowed well. She would give students things to work on while she taught some of the others. She remembers the school itself as being a small building, but large enough for their needs. The school was well-equipped with sufficient blackboards, nice desks for the pupils and a nice desk for herself. There was a big stove for heat and two outhouses next to the school. She remembers insisting that the classroom be quiet because there was a time to work and a separate time to play. At lunch and recess the children would play outside; they would skip and play ball. The children also had a favourite spot where there was this big rock that was perfect for hide-and-seek.

Mrs. Paige remembers that a certain gentleman would come to the school often just to make sure everything was running smoothly, but he was not the School Board Inspector. The "real" inspector came once that year. He made her and the children very nervous. She remembers that the inspector sat at the back of the class and watched her work with the children. It was very awkward and she felt she had to be very formal which was difficult because she was like a friend to the children more so than "the teacher".

The school had a Christmas concert that year and Mrs. Paige says it was a lot of work. The concert would be the event of the year as everyone in the community crowded into the school to see the play and hear the singing. The ladies would arrange for tea, coffee and goodies afterwards. Mrs. Paige recalls an event known as the Basket Social. A basket of goods was made and the people of the area would bid on it. It was a way to make some extra money for the school.

Mrs. Paige was not just the teacher at the school, but she was also a friend to everyone in the community. She remembers that Jack Bailey had given her a horse so that she could go to town. She also remembers driving horses and wagons. One of her favourite pass times was going fishing with the parents in the evenings. They would ride horseback to Carrs Landing and go fishing in

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February 26, 1980  
September 10, 1980  
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**APPENDIX**

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THE LLOYD'S HOME WHERE SCHOOL WAS  
FIRST HELD IN OYAMA IN 1909  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



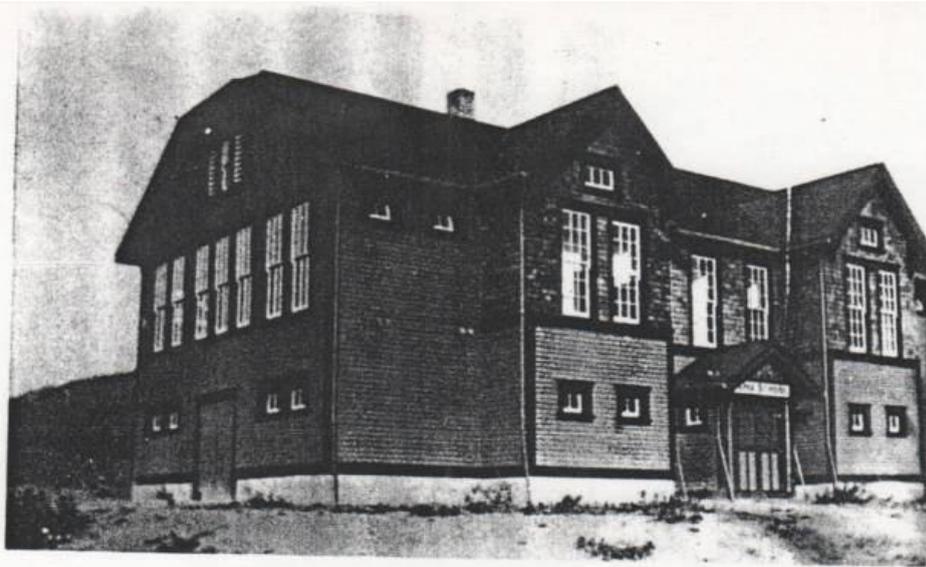
THE TAR PAPER SCHACK  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



THE LITTLE WHITE SCHOOLHOUSE IN 1912  
ALSO SERVED AS THE CHURCH AND THE  
COMMUNITY HALL  
photo: FROM KEN ELLISON TAKEN FROM  
THE OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



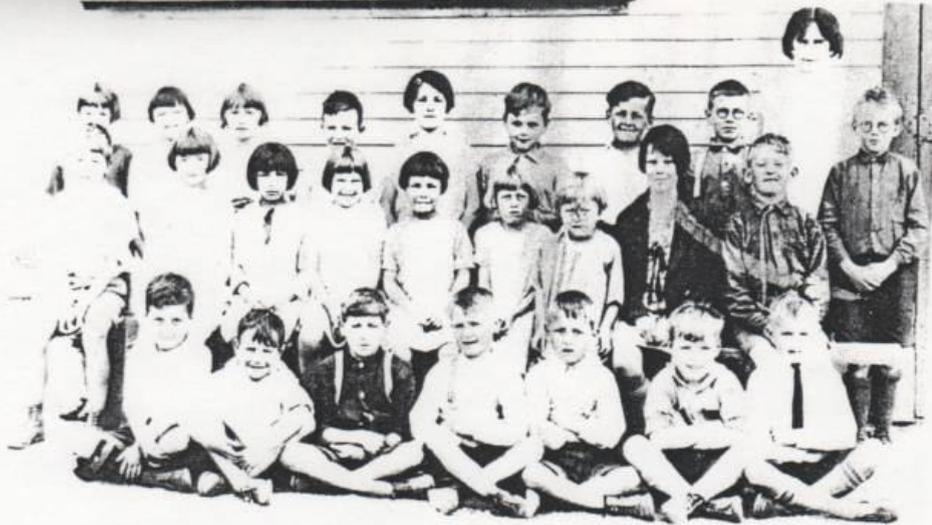
CLASS IN FRONT OF THE LITTLE WHITE  
SCHOOLHOUSE  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



OYAMA SCHOOL CIRCA 1917  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



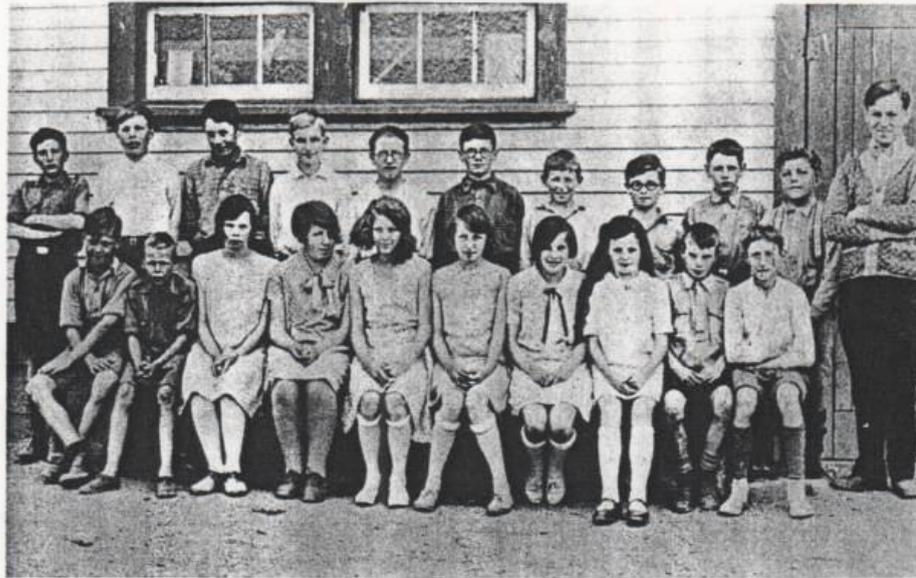
EDITH QUINE, MISS J. BAILLE, MISS KAYE.  
TEACHERS IN THE EARLY DAYS  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



NORA HOPKIN'S CLASS IN THE EARLY 20'S  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



MISS MCKAY'S CLASS IN 1930  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



MR. D. PRITCHARD'S CLASS IN 1931-32  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



MISS WILSON'S CLASS — 1933

Back row: Bill Gallacher, Maurice Stephen, Bernard Gray, John Stephen, Charles Gallacher, Charles Potheary — Dick Claridge;  
Centre row: Renie Lovgren — Gertrude Lovgren, Barbara Gray, Beryl Trehwitt, Barbara Eyles, Mary Shaw-maclaren, Beth Peters — Nancy MacLaren.  
Front row: George Rawsthorne, Arnold Trehwitt, Ken Pearson, Ramsay ShawMaclaren — Malcolm Dewar, Pringle, David Whipple, Frank Allingham.



MR. PI CAMPBELL'S HIGH SCHOOL CLASS 1935  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



MR. CLAUDE BISSELL'S CLASS IN 1938  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



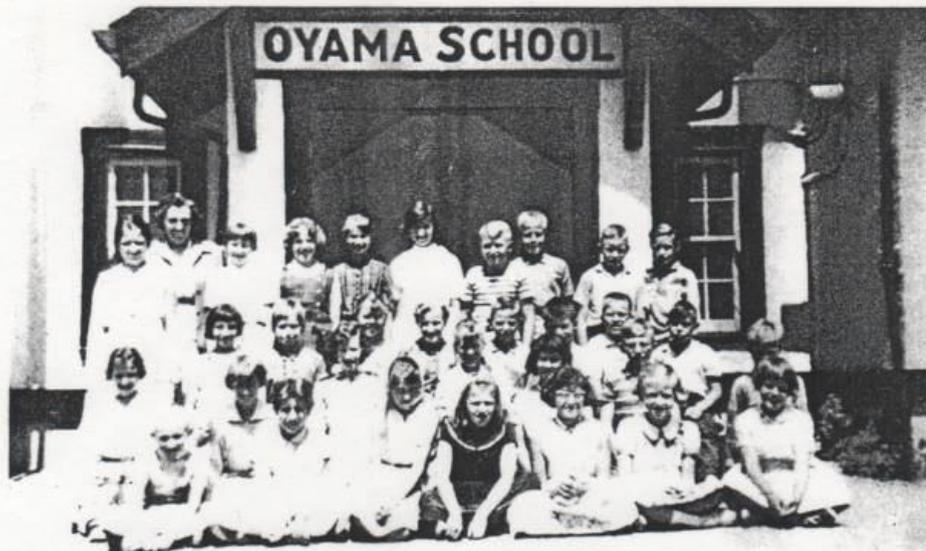
BOYS SOCCER TEAM WITH THE PHEASANT TROPHY  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



THE WINFIELD SCHOOL "BUS"  
HUME POWLEY, ELDRED BERRY  
(DRIVER), WILMA CLEMENT  
AND SADIE DRAPER  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



OYAMA HIGH SCHOOL IN 1944 (INCLUDES WINFIELD STUDENTS).  
BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: ALBERT MEYERS, KEN ELLISON,  
PETE ORASUK, BOB ENDERSLEY, DOUG ELLIOT, CHARLES  
MacLAREN, ROBERT OFFERDAHL. SECOND ROW: S. BISSELL,  
EDNA KOINITSKY, MARY WHITE, MAXINE BROWN, BARBARA CRAIG,  
JOAN BEEBE, MISS FULTON. THIRD ROW: MARGARET McCARTHY,  
K. GLADERY, EDITH SHORE, DARA HALLITSKY, VIVIAN OFFER-  
DAHL, SHIRLEY WHIPPLE, GWEN WHIPPLE. FRONT ROW: KADI  
KOYAMA, MICH SHISHIDO, BUD EDWARDS, DAVE LODGE, GILBERT  
ARNOLD AND SUS TAIJI



MISS YOUNG'S CLASS IN 1963  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET



OYAMA ELEMENTARY, THE FIRE ESCAPE  
WAS BUILT ON IN LATER YEARS  
photo: OYAMA SCHOOL BOOKLET

MEMORIES OF OYAMA SCHOOL  
1917 TO 1979  
photocopied from: OYAMA  
SCHOOL BOOKLET

WERE YOU THERE WHEN . . .

- The goat visited the high school classroom?
- John Beers walked around on his hands?
- Santa came to visit after the Christmas Concert?
- Val Jones sat on Susy Smith's cactus plant?
- The students thought the school nurse's visit required stripping?
- Mr. Schunaman taught square dancing?
- The only baseball had to go home to be re-stitched?
- It was forbidden for the girls and boys to go in each other's basement, so they took a short cut right through the janitor's room?
- School started with the ring of a handbell?
- The first softball league was formed?
- They played the game, "boys after girls, or girls after boys"?
- They played ping-pong in the cinder-floor basement under the high school?
- A certain person fainted and fell head first into the garbage can?
- Dave Whipple came speeding in on his bike every day at 9 a.m.?
- The strap was cut in half for a puppet show?
- Roy Endersby's orchestra played?
- Mr. Claude Bissell's class staged the play "The Toy Maker of Nuremberg"?
- People skated on First Lake and Ellison's skating rink?
- Children bob-sledded to school and had a thrill on Dobson's Hill?
- The snake went down Doris Hembling's back?
- Students burned their names in the beam in the furnace room?
- Rubber bands were put on the wood furnace handles, and by the time the teachers came to investigate the smell, they would be gone?
- The students marched to the corner to see the Prince of Wales?
- Allister Sadler hit the Prince of Wales in the eye with a flower?
- A student brought a revolver to school?
- Scarlet fever broke out and the school was fumigated?
- A big rope hung from Marchuk's tree and children used to do Tarzan swings during recess and lunch hour?
- John Trehwitt designed the school crest? (1975)
- Students used to climb down the drain pipes outside the classroom windows and then climb onto the peak of the roof over the front door and hop through the cloakroom windows? The penalty was 5,000 lines of "It is detrimental to my character to climb in and out of school windows."
- Pete Elliott used to ride his white horse up the stairs which were used for the fire escape? (1930's)
- When the clock fell on the floor just after the hands had been moved ahead?
- When one of the students jumped out the second story window?
- Some energetic students moved the two-hoier from railway station up the front steps of the school to the main hallway and the next morning students and teachers were greeted with a sign in front of the outhouse, reading HOME-MADE ICE CREAM FOR SALE?
- Miss Myrtle's class of grade ones brought her stones as little gifts? By October the collection was quite large, so one day after school she opened the window and out they went. The next morning one little boy came up, hands full of rocks, saying "Oh, Miss Myrtle, someone threw away all our rocks!" She never again threw away rocks where they could be so easily found.
- It was convenient to have Aldred's General Store beside the school? They sold school supplies and at recess students loved to buy penny jaw-breakers from Ruth East. (1930's)
  
- Gilbert Berry drove his car and supplied transportation for Winfield students going to Oyama School? One morning the steering mechanism broke on his car and it ended up in the Canal.
- Pi Campbell had the task of teaching a bad, tough lot who would likely run him out of the classroom? They proved to be a grand bunch of kids. (1933-36)
- Oyama School had Educational Display nights and Mrs. Schunaman decided that each child use a number instead of their name? Parents could judge and compare their child's work and not make personal comparisons. A great idea!
- The first piano was purchased for the school? (1919)
- The drinking fountain was installed in the school? (1922)
- People happily drove their horse and buggy or walked to attend the entertainment at the "Little White School House"? (1911-1917)
- The students burned the spirit of Hallow'een?



WINFIELD SCHOOL IN 1910, JUST AFTER IT  
WAS BUILT  
photo: PHOTOCOPIED FROM K'LAKAKUM BY  
BRIAN WILSON



MRS. ASHER, THE FIRST TEACHER AT  
WINFIELD SCHOOL IN 1910  
photo: PHOTOCOPIED FROM K'LAKOKUM  
BY BRIAN WILSON





MR. ELLIOT'S GRADE FIVE TO EIGHT CLASS IN 1926-27  
photo: COURTESY OF MARG GROEN

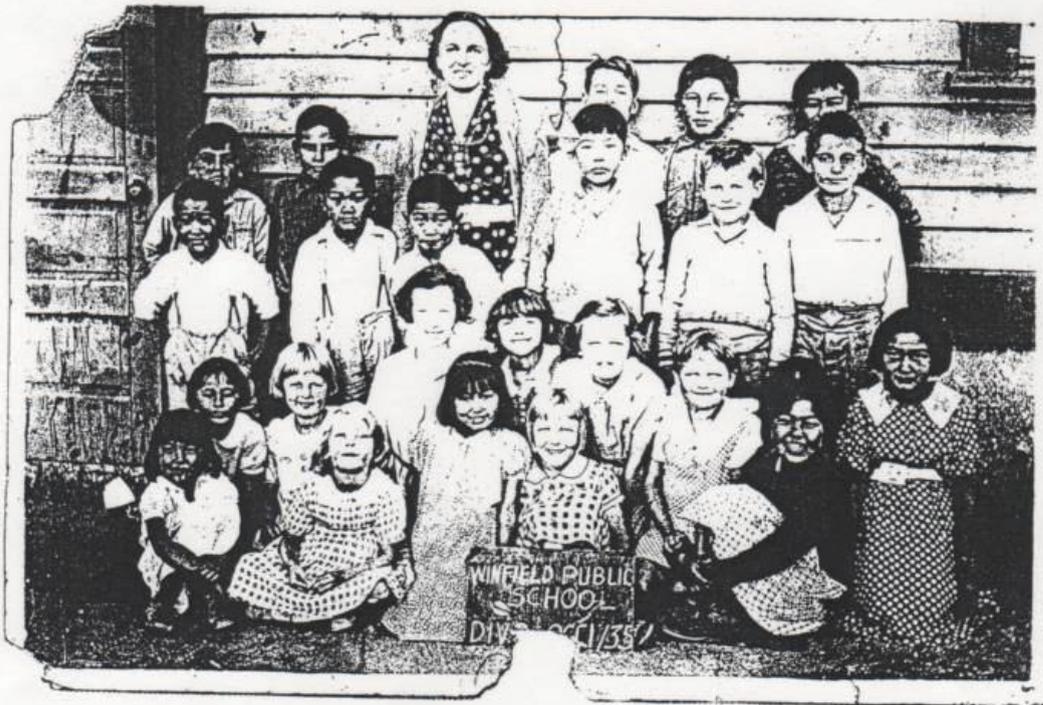


PHOTO OF MISS ELLEN GLEED'S CLASS IN 1935 (LEFT TO RIGHT) FIRST ROW: BETTY TAKEDA, NORMA McDONALD, MARY TAKEDA, NOMAD COOK, YOSHI TANAKA. SECOND ROW: TIDO KOYAMA, NAN WHITE, VIVIAN OFFERDAHL, EUNICE McDONAGH, MARY WHITE, MARG MCCARTHY, MASATO ITO, AYAKO OHASHI. THIRD ROW: TADASI ITO, KADI KOYAMA, SADO TAIJI, NICK SHISHIDO, GIL ARNOLD, BUD EDWARDS. FOURTH ROW: BOB SIMPSON, BERT SIMPSON, ELLEN GLEED, MILTON COLLINS, CLARENCE BORRIE, KEN KOYAMA.

photo: COURTESY OF MARG GROEN



PHOTO OF MISS ELLEN GLEED'S PRIMARY CLASS IN THE THIRTIES (LEFT TO RIGHT)  
FIRST ROW: BRIAN LODGE, BETTY TAKEDA, AYAKO TANAKA, AUDREY TENCH, JOAN  
EDMONDS, TIDO KOYAMA, MARY TAKEDA, ANDY COOK. SECOND ROW: STANLEY TENCH,  
MARGARET MCCARTHY, AYAKO OHASHI, JACK GUNN, MARY WHITE, YOSHI TANAKA, YOSH  
KOYAMA. THIRD ROW: REG SPALLIN, SADO TAIJI, ERNIE GILL, GILBERT ARNOLD,  
NOMAD COOK, RUTH POLLARD, NANCY WHITE, BUD EDWARDS, ISAO HIKICHI, KADI  
KOYAMA, BOB SIMPSON. FOURTH ROW: JOYCE GUNN, ELLEN GLEED (TEACHER)  
KOICHI KOYAMA, DOUG ELLIOT, ROBERT OFFERDAHL.

photo: COURTESY OF MARG GROEN



PHOTO OF MISS ELLEN GLEED'S CLASS IN 1937 (LEFT TO RIGHT) FIRST ROW: KADI KOYAMA, PAUL KOYAMA, VERA GRUMMET, MARY SIMPSON, LOIS SPALLIN, AUDREY TENCH, JOAN MITCHELL, JOAN EDMUNDS, PAT CLARKE, BETTY GRUMMET, BETTY TAKEDA, AYAKO TANAKA, TIDO KOYAMA, JERRY GIERNART. SECOND ROW: LEO BAILEY MARGARET MITCHELL, NANCY WHITE, BOB SIMPSON, MARY WHITE, SUSAN SIMPSON, DELLA BAILEY, WANDY WALLS, MARGARET MCCARTHY, ERNIE GILL, ELLEN GLEED. THIRD ROW: BRIAN LODGE, SADO TAIJI, NOMAD COOK, YOSHI KOYAMA, GILBERT ARNOLD, ISAO HIKICHI, BUD EDWARDS, REG SPALLIN, YOSHI TANAKA, JACK GUNN, STANLEY TENCH, ANDY COOK.

photo: COURTESY OF MARG GROEN



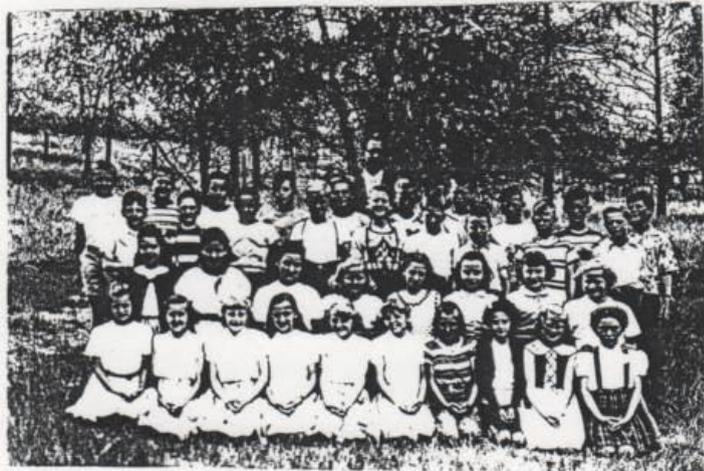
MR. GEORGE ELLIOT'S GRADE FIVE TO EIGHT CLASS IN THE THIRTIES  
photo: COURTESY OF MARG GROEN



WINFIELD SCHOOL IN THE FIFTIES  
photo: COURTESY OF MARG GROEN



TEACHERS AT WINFIELD ELEMENTARY IN 1955 LEFT TO RIGHT:  
TILLIE THOMPSON, STAN ROBINSON, WENDY AMOR, JIM BERTEIG,  
JEAN ELLIOT AND ALEC SETTENRICH  
photo: MARG GROEN

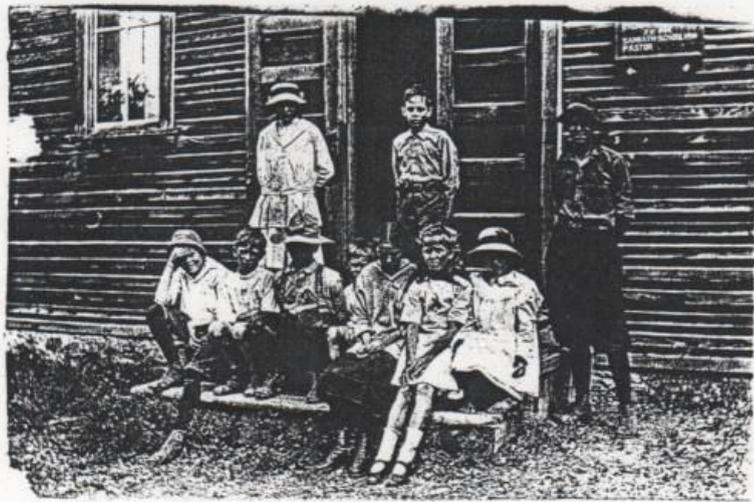


MR. JIM BERTEIG'S CLASS IN 1955  
photo: MARG GROEN



1912 Okanagan Centre school class. It to rt — Standing: ? . ? . — Joslin, Frank Gray, Sara Gray, Teacher Dorthea Scott-Coward (seated), visitor Winnie Wentworth, Otto Rea, Victor Copeland, ? ; kneeling: Hilda Copeland, Willie Thompson; Seated: A. Morris, Laura Rea, Dorothy Rea and ?  
Photo courtesy — Mrs. Sid Land

CLASS OF 1912 AT OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL  
photo: PHOTOCOPIED FROM K'LAKOKUM BY  
BRIAN WILSON



STUDENTS AT OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL CIRCA 1915  
STANDING: SARAH GRAY, VICTOR COPELAND, FRANK GRAY  
SITTING: ?, ?, ?, ?, FLORA COPELAND, WINNA CAESAR, SADIE JOSLYN  
photo: COURTESY OF WINNA BERNAU



ST PAUL'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USED AS  
THE SCHOOL FROM 1911 TO 1932  
photo: PHOTOCOPIED FROM K'LAKOKUM BY  
BRIAN WILSON



CLASS AT OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL IN THE TWENTIES  
photo: COURTESY OF THE JAPANESE REUNION BOOKLET 1995



FRONT COVER OF THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT PROGRAMME  
FROM AROUND 1913. SEE NEXT PAGE FOR THE INSIDE  
OF THE PROGRAMME.  
ORIGINAL PROGRAMME DONATED BY WINNA BERNAU

- |                 |  |   |
|-----------------|--|---|
| 1. Part Song -  | PART I.<br>"THE PEASANT'S RETURN."<br>Pupils.    | PART II.<br>"CINDERELLA."   |
| 2. RECITATION - | "A SECRET."<br>SADIE JOSLYN, HILDA COPELAND.     | CINDERELLA.<br>PROUDIE<br>JENNIE PURVES.                            |
| 3. SONG.        | OUR BIRTH<br>JUNIOR CLASS.                       | CROSSPATCH.<br>FLORA COPELAND<br>ADA JOSLYN.                        |
| 4. RECITATION - | "WHEN WINNA MAKES A CAKE"<br>WINNA CAESAR.       | FAIRY GODMOTHER.<br>PRINCE CHARMING.<br>HAZEL PURVES.               |
| 5. PART SONG.   | "THE NIGHTINGALE"<br>Pupils.                     | SIR HECTOR.<br>DL MORRIS.   |
| 6. RECITATION - | "THE INVENTOR'S WIFE"<br>HAZEL PURVES.           | SIR HOLIDAY.<br>H JOSLYN.   |
| 7. DUET -       | "I KNOW A BANK"<br>L FAIRCLOTH, HILARY MORRIS.   | SIR HERBERT.<br>Y COPELAND.   |
| 8. RECITATION   | "A GAME OF TAG."<br>CURLIFFE PIXTON.             | HERALDS<br>J DUKE<br>C PIXTON.                                      |
| 9. POLE DRILL   | Pupils.  | FAIRIES WINNA CAESAR, SADIE JOSLYN,<br>HILDA COPELAND, ELLEN GLEED. |
| 10. SONG -      | "GOOD LUCK TO THE BOYS OF THE ALLIES"<br>Pupils. | GOD SAVE THE KING.  |



ENTERTAINMENT

Okanagan Centre School

DECEMBER 22<sup>nd</sup>.

—:1916:—

FRONT COVER OF THE CHRISTMAS CONCERT PROGRAMME  
FROM DECEMBER 22, 1916. SEE NEXT PAGE FOR THE  
INSIDE OF THE PROGRAMME.  
ORIGINAL PROGRAMME DONATED BY WINNA BERNAU

PART I

- 1 Part Song - "Greeting" - Children
- 2 Recitation - M<sup>r</sup>. J. Slead
- 3 Trio - "Three Little Maids" - Miss. Faircloth  
K. Morris  
M. Morris
- 4 Violin Solo - "Mazur" - M<sup>rs</sup>. Robinson
- 5 Song - "Good + Bad Children" - M<sup>r</sup>. Robinson
- 6 Song - "A May Morning" - Miss. Faircloth
- 7 - - - - - M<sup>r</sup>. Pixton
- 8 Song - "A Gypsy Maiden" - Miss. K. Morris
- 9 Song - "We'll never let the  
Old Flag Fall" - Miss. Dillon
- 10 Carol - - - - - Children

PART II

"A Pair of Lunatics"

Scene - A sitting room in a Lunatic asylum  
A ball in progress in another part  
of the building

CHARACTERS

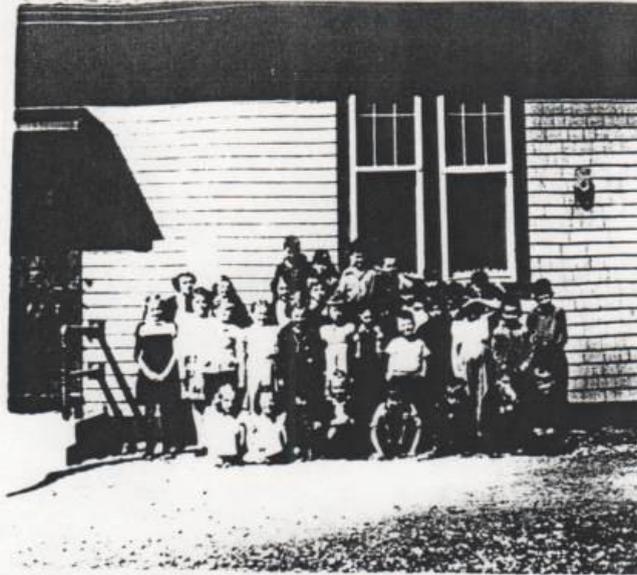
- cap<sup>t</sup> George Fielding - M<sup>r</sup>. Robinson
- Miss. Clare, hammers - M<sup>rs</sup>. Robinson

PART III

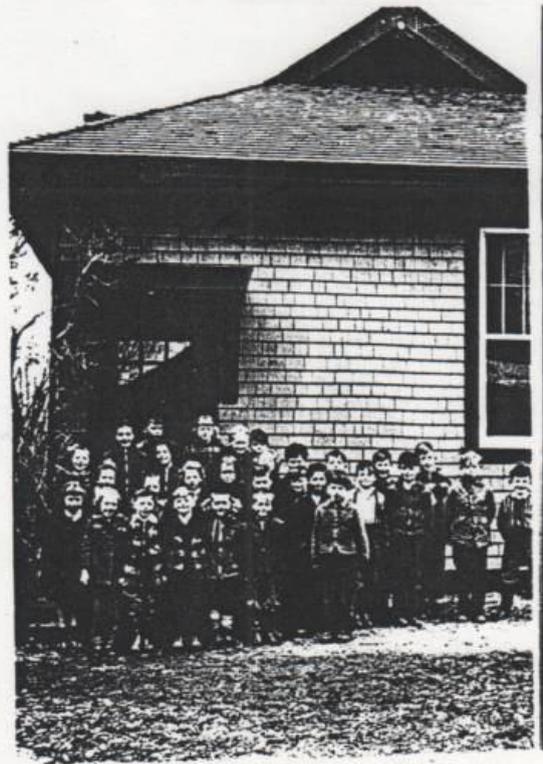
--- TEA ---  
LOTS!!! OF!!! IT!!!

PART IV

Distribution of presents on tree by  
Father Christmas, who has been asked to drop in  
if he thinks the children have been good enough



UPPER AND LOWER ARE PHOTOS OF THE  
SCHOOL IN THE THIRTIES  
photos: MUSEUM RECORDS





ORIGINAL SCHOOL BUILDING IN THE THIRTIES  
photo: MUSEUM RECORDS



OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL CHRISTMAS CONCERT DECEMBER 22, 1935  
BACK ROW: AKIRA HIKICHI, AMY TODA, MEIKO K., SACHIO KOYAMA,  
EIKO, FLO, SANTA, NORA CARTER, LORRAINE  
FRONT ROW: SUSAN KOBAYASHI, MARGARET KOBAYASHI, NOBU, JANE  
KOBAYASHI, RUTH NUYENS, PAT CHEESMAN, OSAM KOB-  
ASHI  
photo: COURTESY OF PAT RICHARDS (CHEESMAN)



OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL IN 1936  
STANDING: NORA CARTER, OSAM KOBAYASHI, EIKO, FLO,  
AMY TODA, MRS. PARKER, SACHIO KOBAYASHI,  
AKIRA HIKICHI, LORRAINE  
SITTING: PAT CHEESMAN, MARGARET, RUTH NUYENS, NOBU  
photo: COURTESY OF THE JAPANESE REUION BOOKLET 1995



CHILDREN IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL  
DATE UNKNOWN  
photo: MUSEUM RECORDS



BACK OF THE SCHOOL (FACING EAST) AFTER THE  
ADDITION OF 1952  
photo: MUSEUM RECORDS



FRONT OF THE SCHOOL (FACING WEST) AFTER THE  
ADDITION OF 1952  
photo: MUSEUM RECORDS

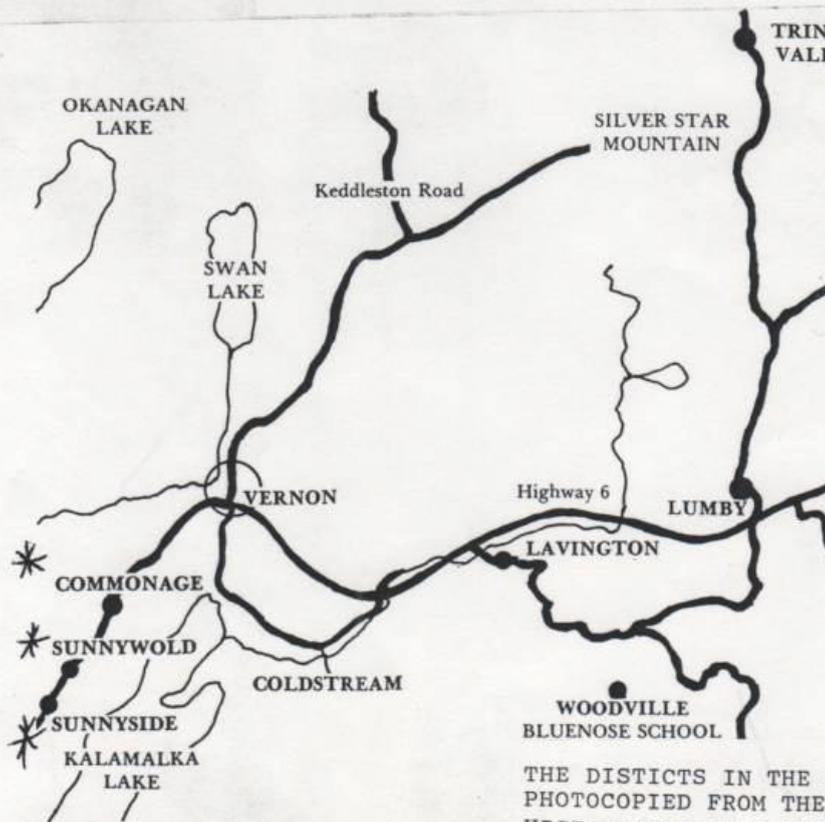
# BALL TEAM



BILL RICKER    ANDY PIXTON  
SANDRA PIXTON    DIANNA GABEL  
ELIZABETH LAND    COLLEEN LUKNOWSKY  
BOBBY EVDY    GARY FOCHLER  
LAWRENCE WHITEHEAD    AWAY  
GETTING SANDUST

ACH = OWEN ERWIN

ONE OF OKANAGAN CENTRE SCHOOL'S BALL TEAMS  
photo: COURTESY OF ANNE LAND



THE DISTRICTS IN THE COMMONAGE  
PHOTOCOPIED FROM THE OKANAGAN  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1982 EDITION