

The History of The School I Attend

In writing the history of the school I attend let us pause firstly and consider how we got our name. Our community was first named Ballinafad after a little lake. It later was called Drew in honour of Judge Drew, who was the first member elected for North Wellington after Confederation. It now is divided into Upper and Lower Drew and we are the latter.

The first log school, that served the community was built on Lot 23 Concession 16, which is now our farm. Mr. Muir was a teacher in this school. It was used for a number of years. Miss Grice, who lives in Harriston can recall living in it. We have some of the beams of

the building in our barn. Practically every year pieces of slate, wood and dishes are brought to the surface, when the land is worked.

The second log school was built in 1871 on Lot 18 Concession 16 on Mr. G.W. Gibson's farm. It was used for nine years and later as a dwelling place. My grandfather's sister, Mrs. Lydia Scott lived there. Three of the children died with diphtheria. It later was moved across the road to Mr. Hart's farm, now owned by the Misses Bell. It was used as an addition to the barn.

By this time our present school was built on the same site in 1880. It was much larger and had a white brick structure. This material was bought from Mr. Captain Holtom's brickyard.

I here have been a

great many changes since it was erected. The two cloak rooms, which were across the back with a stove in the centre of the partition, were removed to make more room and replaced by rows of hooks. The first toilets were in each corner of the school yard. Later, when the shed was erected they were built in it. At present we have indoor toilets in the porch.

The teacher's desk was always higher than the pupils. To have this a small platform was built at the front. Later it was extended to each wall.

The school was wired for hydro during the summer holidays of 1946 by William Bell, a former pupil. We had the lights turned on by April 14th, 1947.

To help us grow

to be healthy a county
unit for this work
was formed and for
two years a doctor
and nurse have
visited our school.
They have examined,
immunized and
vaccinated us,
including pre-school
children. We are
supplied with paper
cups and towels.

A music teacher
has trained us for
four years. The organ
has been replaced by a
piano. With our funds
from the Christmas
concert and the fall
fair we bought a
radio. This enables us
to listen to the very
best educational
programmes. We have
been equipped for
manual training
work. During the winter
months we have hot
lunches, which is
appreciated by all.

The school was
painted during the
past summer in the
new shades of green.

A number of years ago a new wire fence enclosed our school grounds on three sides and this spring we hope to have the ornamental part finished across the front. A swing and teeter gives us hours of enjoyment.

For the past years we have cut the grass with a lawn mower and this gives the grounds a finished look.

The attendance of the school at one time exceeded one hundred. In January 1893 the attendance was seventy eight and now it is sixteen. Sometimes during the months of May and June, when the attendance was the highest, William Arthurs taught the smaller grades outside while the regular teacher carried on the work with the senior grades, especially the entrance.

The first trustees were: Messrs. G.W. Gibson, William Cardwell and Stovell. Mr. John Cox was the first auditor. Following trustees were: Messrs. Howes, Weber, J. Crow, George Whetham, Robert Cardwell, Robert Holtom, Duncan Donaldson, Alex Munn, George Crow, Steve Donaldson, James Gibson, David Bell, Howe Arthurs, Fred Holtom, Wallace Donaldson, James Gilmartain, Mrs. R.J. Holtom, Messrs. Norman Whetham and Alex Gibson.

Mr. Muir was the first teacher in the log school on Lot 18 and he also taught in the old school on Lot 23.

Succeeding teachers were: Miss Foster
Miss Philips
Miss Jelly
Miss Campbell
Mr. Stevenson
Miss Giloughy
Miss Dunham

Miss Rogers
Miss McKinnon
Miss Wilson
Mr. W. Donaldson
Mr. Spinks
Mr. Phenton
Miss Dunn
Mr. Toner
Miss Calloway
Mr. Rae
Miss McFarlane
Miss Morrison
Mr. Alston
Mr. McNiven
Mr. Langdon
Miss E. Whetham
Miss Aleysworth
Miss Doyal
Miss Miller
Miss Allison
Miss Darroch
Miss McNeil
Miss Pyke
Miss Morrell
Miss Livingston
Miss Edgar
Miss Hill
Miss Davidson
Mr. Ackerman
Miss Sinclair
Miss Walker
Miss Dickson
Mr. G. Ferguson
Miss McPhadden and
Mrs. W. Hotlom

In the Great War in 1914-18 a number of the boys from this community donned the khaki. They were: Arthur Holtom, Floyd Small, Murray Mathews, Byron Small, and James Slinger. The latter two were killed in action. Floyd Small and Murray Mathews died about a year later from effects of their service.

Some boys from Drew gave their service in the world war. They were: Captain Elmer Bell, William Bell, Elmer Chilton, Less Donaldson, Bruce Donaldson, Edward Holtom and James Bell. There was only one casualty and it was James Bell.

The Silver Jubilee for King George V and Queen Mary was celebrated in the school on May 3, 1935. The flag was raised and saluted. My

grandfather, Mr. George Whetham planted a Jubilee maple tree, being the oldest living trustee. A programme was given by the children and Mrs. James Gilmartin gave a patriotic address. The programme ended by the singing of the National Anthem.

At one time this school was used as a voting centre. They now vote in the hall.

Until December 1945 we were governed by three trustees from our own section but since that date we have been under the management of a board of five men and a secretary from Minto Township. As a result our school supplies are bought with the exception of text books.

Drew was a sports minded community and still is. They had

a very outstanding team in football and hardball. We still play these games and the climax comes in June at our picnic, when we compete with other schools.

The past generations have shown ability as singers. Later at the Musical Festival held at Arthur in 1938 and 39, Donald Gibson won two first prizes in the Junior class and June Gibson won one first prize.

Some of the pupils, who left our school, continued their education and so we have today on record, teachers, a lawyer, an electrician, nurses, stenographers, and last but not least, the farmers.

The history of our community as written by Winnifred Whetham in 1949 won first prize in the county competition. This proves to us our

ancestors have done
much to build our
community and
school and it is up
to us to continue
this task.

“So whatever you do
Choose to live in Drew.”

Margaret Whetham

R.R. 3 Clifford, Ontario
S.S. No. 7