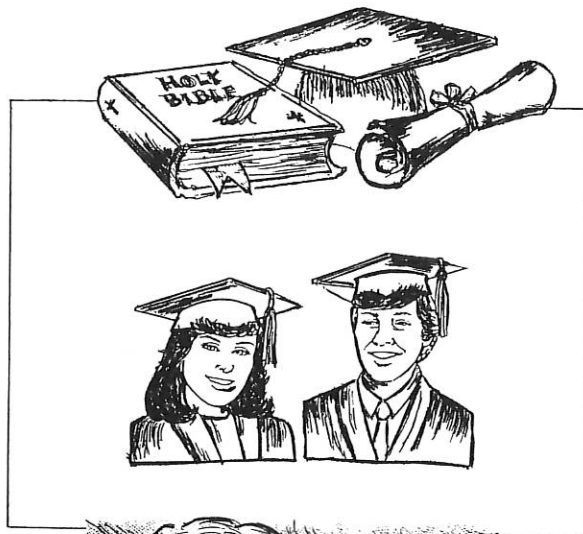


# Chapter 4

## VIE INTELLECTUELLE / INTELLECTUAL LIFE

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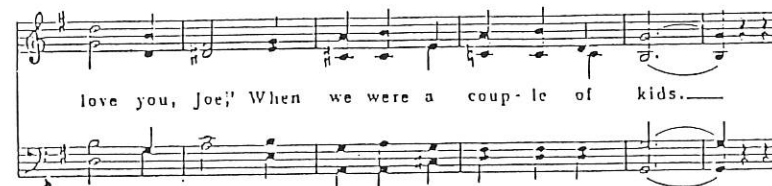
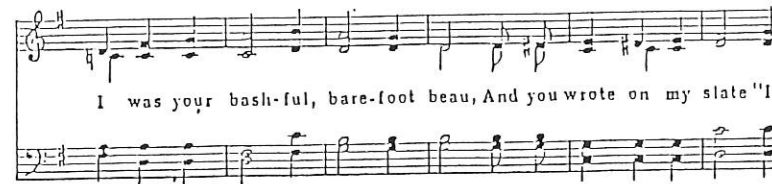
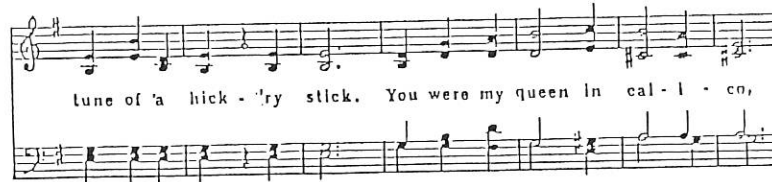
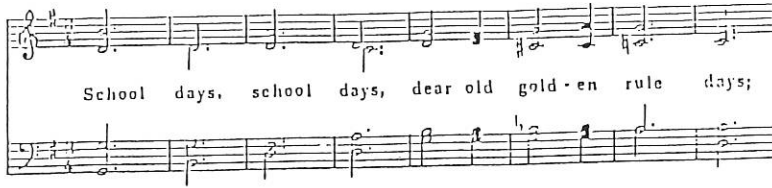
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# SCHOOL DAYS

WILL D. COBB

GUS EDWARDS



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## My Wish For You

Edna B. Hawtins

Dear little son, my wish for you  
As you start off to school  
Is: Please remember, do your best  
To learn the Golden Rule.

You may not be an athlete  
The kids will idolize,  
Or own a wealth of knowledge  
That the world will recognize.

If you could see with Mother's eyes  
The things that make the man,  
You'd shun the fake and show and farce  
And follow through my plan.

Though you acquire a hoard of gold  
Or rise to power and fame,  
Remember while reaching for the stars,  
There are rules in every game.

And when you learn the answers  
And your ships come sailing in,  
I hope you'll be as clean and fine  
As now when you begin.

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## ÉCOLES / SCHOOLS

### LEGAL SCHOOLS 1903-1994

by Sr. Annette Potvin

The educational System in Legal, still active and progressing, had humble but lively beginnings. In developing the history of each of the nine schools, three steps will be referred to: 1) General summary of the history of the nine schools. 2) Schools in Pioneer days – What was common to all. 3) Recollections of former pupils – anecdotes.

The following were contact persons who made valuable contributions: Dixon Keane, Raymond Tremblay, Yolande (Bouchard) St. Onge, Rolland Demers, Normand Letourneau, Clara Brown, Doug Brown, Paul Chauvet, Patricia (Keane) Montpetit, Florence (Delbarre) Quaghebeur, Arthur Close, Maurice Remillard, Omer Maurier, Trudy (Ralph) Krauskopf. Other sources of information were obtained by interviewing pioneers and community members as well as research done at: Provincial Archives, Alberta Education (Devonian Building), "Celebration, a history of the Sturgeon District and Schools No. 24 (1939 – April 1989)". Thank you to all who helped research and compile the histories of the schools.

*Merci à tous ceux et celles qui ont collaboré aux recherches et à la compilation de l'histoire des neuf écoles qui ont fait partie du district de Legal entre 1903 et 1994.*

### Ecole Boudreau – Boudreau School

#### Souvenirs de la famille Coulombe

En 1901, notre père, Dominique Coulombe, est arrivé en Alberta avec ses parents. Quelques années après son mariage, le jeune couple s'établit dans le district scolaire de Boudreau, où notre père agit comme commissaire pendant un terme. En 1932, les deux plus âgés de la jeune famille s'acheminent à pied vers l'école Boudreau, une marche de quatre kilomètres (deux milles et demi). C'est ce mode de transport qu'ils pratiquèrent durant la première année, sauf à l'occasion, ils pouvaient monter dans le "buggy" des Léger ou sur le "stone-boat" des Baert, à mi-chemin entre notre résidence et l'école. La troisième année, étant maintenant trois écoliers, notre père mit à notre disposition un cheval et un "selqué" mais pendant quatre hivers, une "caboose" en canevas fut utilisée. Le progrès aidant, nous avons joui ensuite d'une "caboose" en bois, chauffée d'un petit poêle, tirée par deux chevaux fringants de Papa.



"Caboose" en canevas, moyen de transport pour se rendre à l'école

Sans nous considérer défavorisés ou désavantagés, tous sont d'accord que l'hiver nous causait des désagréments et des tribulations. Plusieurs se souviennent d'être arrivés à l'école avant que la fournaise ait été allumée. Alors, notre institutrice toujours obligeante et bienveillante pouvait nous convaincre de faire trois fois le tour de l'école à pleine course afin de nous réchauffer un peu et ensuite elle nous laissait porter nos gilets et nos mitaines pendant les classes d'avant-midi. Habillés ainsi, il était difficile d'écrire, surtout à l'encre parce que celle-ci était gelée. Les plus jeunes se servaient de leurs mitaines pour essuyer les larmes de misère que faisaient monter à leurs yeux, doigts engourdis et pieds gelés. Nous voyons encore nos boîtes à dîner, en fer blanc, contenant confiture ou beurre d'arachides, alignées sur le plancher, sous nos crochets à manteaux. Bien entendu, le midi, nos beurrées étaient gelées à fond.

Étant tous enfants de parents aux connaissances multiples et aux métiers variés, chaque hiver nous construisions une patinoire. En commençant près de la pompe, elle s'étendait un bon 15 mètres vers l'est sur environ neuf mètres de large. Les patineurs étaient peu nombreux parce qu'une faible minorité possédait des patins et des bâtons de hockey; il fallait les fabriquer à la maison.

Pendant plusieurs années, nous étions presque assurés d'avoir deux semaines de vacances lors de la fonte des neiges parce que le ruisseau débordant emportait le pont fragile près de chez M. J. Baert. C'est en faisant ce trajet scolaire que nous avons eu l'occasion de fraterniser avec les enfants de nos voisins qui demeuraient le long de la route: Médor Léger, M. Leduc, Jérôme Baert, Alfred Garneau et Denis Huot.

Chaque printemps, dès que la neige eut disparu

et que le terrain était sec, notre maîtresse demandait que chaque famille apporte un râteau à jardin. C'est alors qu'elle organisait une corvée afin de racler toute la cour et ensuite brûler l'herbe sèche.

Un sport saisonnier qui se pratiquait à Boudreau entre la fonte des neiges et les semailles était la chasse aux gophers dans le champ en face de l'école. Il s'agissait d'avoir une vieille chaudière et quelques bâtons. Chaque participant devait aller au ruisseau, apporter une chaudière d'eau et la vider dans le trou du gopher. Le but était d'accueillir le petit rongeur avec un coup de bâton sur la tête et s'il décédait il fallait répéter l'exercice au prochain trou. Mais il arrivait que le gopher parvienne à se faufiler à travers le cercle de pieds qui entourait le trou et ainsi disparaître dans un autre trou. Plusieurs ont ainsi évité le coup fatal et beaucoup ont été aussi, littéralement sauvés par la cloche.

Et que dire des maîtresses des petites écoles de campagne de l'époque? Comment obtenir et conserver l'attention de 35-40 élèves, garçons et

filles, de six à 15 ans, de la première à la huitième année, entassés dans une seule pièce, à qui il fallait enseigner les sujets de base, les mérites du passé, les valeurs humaines et sociales qui concrétisent les promesses de l'avenir? En plus, elles s'organisaient pour présenter un concert à Noël et un pique-nique à la fin de l'année. L'école se voulait un prolongement de la famille où les valeurs chrétiennes et morales étaient enseignées à partir du petit catéchisme de Québec. A cet effet, notre maîtresse profitait du support et de l'assistance de l'abbé Koolen, curé de Vimy, qui venait nous rendre visite régulièrement, surtout à l'occasion de la préparation des jeunes qui aspiraient à la première communion et à la confirmation. A cause de quelques élèves qui étaient paroissiens de Legal, l'abbé E. Tessier nous rendait visite une ou deux fois par année. En 1942, lorsque l'école Boudreau ferma ses portes, un autobus scolaire nous transportait à l'école Dunrobin de Vimy, la majorité de notre famille fréquenta ce lieu d'enseignement.

Dès la première année, on nous introduisait à



Elèves de l'École Boudreau, 1934: Jeanne Blanchette, René Bernard, Jeannette Ouellette, Gloria Charrois, Léonie Blanchette, Léonard Blanchette, Célarine Blanchette, Jeanne Riopel, Aurélie Pelletier, Aline Pelletier, Roger Ouellette, Gabrielle Riopel, Amable Bernard, Adrienne Pelletier, Denise Ouellette, Emile Bernard, Paul Bernard, Léo Charrois, Marcel Bernard, Victor Blanchette, Cécile Ouellette, Eugène Coulombe, Gertrude Bilodeau, Alfred Riopel, Maria Pelletier, Marcel Coulombe, Léon Blanchette, Annette Bilodeau, Albert Casavant, Roland Coulombe, Albert Blanchette, Claude Bilodeau, Alphonse Riopel, Hervé Ouellette, Armand Garneau, Lucien Coulombe, Diana Casavant

la langue de Shakespeare sans négliger l'apprentissage de notre langue maternelle. Chaque année, les élèves écrivaient l'examen du concours de français et attendaient anxieusement la publication des résultats dans *La Survivance*. En dépit du peu de temps accordé à l'enseignement du français, nous avons obtenu et gardé la fierté, l'audace et le courage nécessaire à la survivance de notre langue.

Malgré le manque de commodités, les enseignantes sont parvenues à inculquer à leurs élèves la discipline, le souci du prochain, les mérites de l'entraide et le savoir-faire face à la réalité. Ainsi poussés vers l'âge adulte à l'assaut des difficultés et des défis, nous avons avancé vers l'avenir sans oublier le passé.

### **Boudreau School District No. 3893 (1921-1941) - District Scolaire de Boudreau No. 3893**

by **Fernand Bilodeau**

As the land between Vimy and Legal was being taken over by settlers, most of them with young families, it became necessary for the children to attend school. The distance of eight miles was too great between the two existing schools of St. Emile (Legal) and Dunrobin (Vimy); it was obvious that another school was needed. Since this area was predominantly French-speaking, the school would have to be staffed with a teacher who could educate the pupils in both official languages. After meetings with the Board of Education, a new school district was formed, December 9, 1919; it

was called Gouin School. It must have been an unsuitable name since before the year was over, it was renamed Boudreau School. The Department of Education appointed J.J. Leblanc as the Official Trustee to oversee the formation and administration of this new school district.

The first Boudreau School Board of Trustees consisted of Jerome Baert, Albert Bilodeau, Téléphore Beaupré, with Arthur l'Abbé as secretary. The school was built in 1920-1921, out of lumber and later covered with creamcolored stucco. The single-room building was 24 square feet with a hip roof; the entrance and clothes room was on the south side. The high ceiling with the big windows all the way up made for a well-lit classroom with an eastern view. There was no provision for a teacherage here so the teachers would board with the families in the immediate area. A six-stall horse barn was also built near the south end of the yard. The school grounds measured 198 feet from east to west by 440 feet north to south (roughly two acres of land northeast of NE-15-58-25-W4).

The first teacher was Léa Tellier of Morinville, who taught the first six pupils: Emile Sauvé, Albert Huot, Wilfrid and Laurette Huot, Philippe and Blanche Bilodeau, in May-June of 1921. By 1930, the single-room school was filled to capacity with 44 students in eight grades. Alphonse Bilodeau supplied the school with water for 13 years until the school division saw fit to bore its own well in 1934. In winter, the furnace was started one hour before classes began and if the wood wasn't totally



Boudreau School pupils, 1924



Boudreau School, 1933

dry, the classroom took a long time to warm up. Students had to keep their coats on for awhile, lunches were kept near the furnace and the ink wells were frozen solid for part of the morning. The furnace had been a point of complaint for quite some time so in 1935, a basement was dug and a new furnace installed on the lower level.

Other teachers were: Alma Bourque (1921-1923); Marie-Jeanne Breault (1923-1924); Robert Elie (1924-1926); in 1926-1927, there were three teachers: Marie Lavoie, Mr. Praier, and Mrs. Barsocoff, who replaced the latter because he couldn't teach French; Jean Tremblay (1927-1931); Florence Belisle (1931-1933); Germaine Fortier (1933-1940); Miss Leseach (to April 1941); Blanche L'Heureux (from April until June 1941); then Estelle Albert (from September to Christmas 1941). After Christmas, no teacher was found, so the pupils were transported to Vimy in a wood-covered truck box, made and driven by Arthur Pelletier. Boudreau School was never reopened; in the fall of 1946, it was moved to Busby to be used there as a school for a few years. It was later sold and moved to a farm nearby. Renovated, it still serves as a farm home.

The families whose children attended Boudreau School: Arsène Baert, Jerome Baert,

Fortunat Bernard, Henri Bernard, Albert Bilodeau, Alphonse Bilodeau, Gaudias Blanchette, Aimé Casavant, Jean-Baptiste Charrois, Arthur Comeau, Dominique Coulombe, Léon Davio, Steve Derko, Alfred Garneau, Ferdinand Gauthier, Alphonse Huot, Denis Huot, Edouard Huot, Mr. and Mrs. Lecompte, Mr. and Mrs. Laflamme, Emile Laplante, François-Xavier Laplante, Mr. Laroque, Emile Leduc, Médore Léger, Téléphore Lemay, Mr. McGee, Jos Ouellette, André Pelletier, Ludovic Pelletier, Euclide Riopel, Frank Rudock, Zotique Sauvé and Arthur Vallée.

A most memorable reunion of past students of Boudreau School was held, after six months of planning, August 14 and 15, 1993 at the Club 60 Roses in Legal. The desire and need for a reunion was there, and our committee just had to comply. A letter was sent to all past students and the response was overwhelming. The Saturday, all those present renewed acquaintances with past classmates and much socializing took place; at night, 125 attended the banquet with special guests Mr. and Mrs. Nick Taylor, Member of the Legislative Assembly for Redwater, presenting a commemorative plaque for the original site of Boudreau School. Also attending were two of the first six pupils who started school in May 1921:



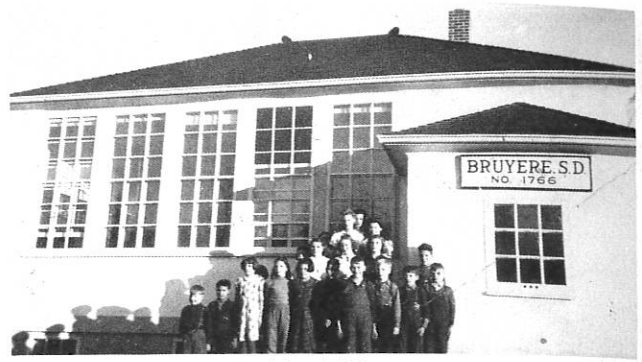
Laurette and Wilfrid Huot. A highlight of the two-day gathering was the attendance of the last teacher who taught at Boudreau School, Miss Estelle Albert, now Mrs. Frank Masur. She spoke about her teaching and stay in the area. Games of horseshoes, croquet and lawn darts were organized to keep everybody busy. Sunday, most attended mass officiated by Father Claude DeChamplain, then brunch was served at noon, with a few more joining the group. The afternoon was spent taking photographs, playing games and socializing.

To the 150 students who have gone through the portals of this rural school, we have respect and admiration because of the hardships they experienced in attending these early schools: the distances travelled, mostly on foot, many times during inclement weather and the still cold classrooms on frigid winter mornings. We wish to acknowledge this school as a hub for the development of our area and for the education of the children of our pioneers in the Vimy-Legal area.

### **Bruyère School District No. 1766 District Scolaire de Bruyère No. 1766**

February 11, 1908, the Bruyère School District No. 1766 was established. The senior trustee and treasurer at the time was J.A. Bruyère of Legal. April 23, 1908, the Bruyère School District No. 1766 borrowed the sum of \$800, on the security of the district, for the purpose of securing fencing, and furnishing a school house. August 18, 1913, Thomas J. Dwyer of St. Albert, became the Official Trustee of the District. January 3, 1939, the Bruyère School District No. 1766 was constituted in the Sturgeon School District No. 24. The Secretary of the Division at the time was Ernest Meaden of Edmonton. May 30, 1966, approval was given for the sale of the school site located on the SW-5-27-24-W4. The Bruyère school was located two miles east and four miles south of Legal.

In about 1914, as homesteaders began to move away one by one, the school was closed. In 1917, it was reopened. The teacher was Joseph Henri Riopel, a university medical student who was working during his summer vacation. When he graduated as a general practitioner from the University of Alberta, Dr. J.H. Riopel came to live in Legal where he served for many years. The enrollment that summer was nine pupils. The next year, as three more families moved away, the enrollment was down to three, two boys and a girl.



Bruyère School District No. 1766

The teacher was Marguerite (Sigouin) Caouette, wife of a farmer, Josephat Caouette. The three pupils were in grade three regardless of the amount of time they had spent in school. Settlers began moving in and the enrollment increased to 20. School was now run on a regular basis, depending on the availability of teachers.

Although the school building was small, Christmas concerts and dances were enjoyed by the community. In the evening, since there was no electricity, parents would be called upon to bring in coal oil or gas lamps for these occasions. The school house was heated by means of a box stove. This stove was located in the middle of the room. It burned wood in double length blocks fed in from the front end. The pupils next to the stove were too warm and those seated by the wall were very cold. It helped when the school board tried to rectify this by installing metal shields on either side of the stove. When Mrs. Delbarre was on the school board, a heater surrounded with a jacket



Class of 1939-40; teacher Mrs. Dora Borle: Mable Lunger, Delphine Dubé, Elizabeth Csuhany, Helen Bonnie, Thérèse Rousseau, André Dubé, Jules Delbarre, Alphonse Caouette, Noël Gervais, Elizabeth Tolle, Robert Lunger, Joe Kenda, Joyce Cyre, Roger Rousseau, Bill Cyre, Jeannette Rousseau, Cazimar Csuhany, Thérèse Dubé, Roland Gervais, Clément Delbarre, Rosa Frank, Margaret Frank



was placed in the corner of the room. This helped to circulate the warm air. Some taxpayers objected to this expenditure of \$300. The teachers normally lived with the Jalbert family whose home was just a few hundred yards from the school. Later, they boarded with the Casavant family.

By 1939, the old school had seen better days. It had a trap door in the ceiling giving access to an attic for storage. Occasionally a bat would come into the class from the attic causing a bit of excitement. There were also mice in the school and one teacher was so horrified of mice that she would stand on her chair until the "big boys" came to her rescue.

The old school was purchased by Alec Frank, and later by John Euben and converted into a residence. The new school was built during the summer of 1942 by Bill Deedman. The teacher was Muriel LeNaour. What luxury! Windows with blinds, a full basement, indoor toilets and a furnace that burnt coal! This school was only used until the spring of 1948 when all country school children in the area travelled by bus to a large composite school in Legal. The Bruyère school was later sold to Ernest Chauvet and is used to store honey equipment. All that remains at the old school site are the large spruce trees and a few boards as remnants of the fence built in 1929. In 1966, Bruyère School District voted to remain in the Sturgeon Division. The children then went to Cunningham School, Mission Park, and St. Albert High, depending on their grades. Some Bruyère students went to Bon Accord, then to M.E. Lazerte. Eventually, Cunningham School was closed and the students attended Sturgeon Heights School and the new Sturgeon Composite High School. Commencing that fall, Bruyère students who were going to Sturgeon Heights went to Bon Accord.



Ted Casavant's first school bus in Legal

#### TEACHERS AT BRUYERE SCHOOL:

Miss Bourque, Rebecca Proulx, Bessie Arsenault, Maggy Lamarche, Marguerite Sigouin (Caouette), Alphonse Croisetière, Naomi Nadeau, Miss Montpellier, Alice Cyr, Jack Tracey, George Grover, Irene Wickey, Bill Chesser, Frances Martel, Marie Rose Monaghan, Olga Sweet, Margaret Gevins, Justin Murray, Alice Kinley, Mrs. N. Oneschuk, Dora Borle, Marie Louise Brugeyroux, Jeannette Champagne, Rosa Barry, Doris Berthe, Anne Kowalski, Mr. Jalbert, Mrs. Smith.

#### TRUSTEES:

J.A. Bruyère, Albert de Pierpont, Harry Close, John Wickey, Sue Close, Eddie Cyre, Léo Cyre, Delphis Dubé, Josephat Caouette, Pete Caouette, Pat Montpetit, Clément Delbarre, Fred Henry.

#### EARLY FAMILIES WE REMEMBER:

Harry Close, Frank Lunger, Albert de Pierpont, Théodore Lepine, J.A. Bruyère, Labelle, John Wickey, Joseph Jalbert, Jack Eno, Josephat Caouette, Eddie Cyre, Firmin Gervais, Albert Plante, John Csuhany, Alex Frank, Léon Anderson, Delphis Dubé, Peter Kenda, Louis Rousseau, Victor Regimbald, James Bonney, Clément Delbarre, Carl Meyers.

*Anecdotes:* Those were the years when we would go to school bare feet in the summer and early fall. School lunches consisted of sandwiches, plain and simple with saskatoon, rhubarb jam, or egg filling. Later we had honey and peanut butter. All of this was packed in a large pail with a few holes punched in the lid and placed on a shelf at the back of the room. Sandwiches were not individually wrapped and the lunch for each family was all in one pail. Some children would bring cold pancakes or baking powder biscuits. Everyone had to take turns carrying the lunch pail. One family brought stew in a jam tin. The eldest would place this on the box stove to warm up. One day a pupil forgot to remove the lid and the whole thing exploded, splattering stew all over the ceiling.

Lice were a problem breaking out every once in a while. The teacher would take us one by one and comb our hair over a sheet of paper, using a black fine-tooth comb. If she found any, she would let our parents know. We usually knew who had lice, but the teacher would comb everyone so as not to draw attention to any particular student. Students can remember spending much time playing in the woods in the school yard. The girls played with the boys as equals. One spring day, there was water in the lower end of the school yard.

In the process of "rough housing" it with the boys, the girls got all wet. The teacher, Mrs. Smith, was horrified to see girls in grade 9 act like that, so they were in for a few lectures on ladylike behavior.

Most of the kids leaving the school headed south. The corner, less than one-quarter of a mile from the school, was where we parted, each going home their own way. This corner was also famous for "settling" differences which could not be settled at school as fighting was a serious offence. Needless to say, many fights took place here. No one was ever seriously hurt as in those days, older children looked after the younger ones. When the older children fought, their peers would break them up if things appeared too rough.

Occasionally, they would participate in ball games against Robin Hood School. As there were no buses, students had to walk to and from school.



Science class in 1945 with bird houses: Joe Kenda, Thérèse Dubé, Margaret Frank, Joyce Cyre, Rosa Frank, Fritz Tolle, Jeanne Delbarre, Bill Cyre, John Cshany, Roger Henry & John Meyer

*Le District Scolaire de Bruyère #1766 fut établi le 11 février 1908. Monsieur J.A. Bruyère en était le premier commissaire et trésorier. La première école fut construite le 23 avril 1908 avec une somme empruntée de 800\$, et par la suite le 3 janvier 1939, elle devint partie de la division scolaire de Sturgeon #24. L'école Bruyère était située à deux milles à l'est et quatre milles au sud de Legal. En 1914 environ, l'école ferma ses portes faute d'élèves mais ouvrit à nouveau en 1917 alors que de nouveaux pionniers s'établirent sur les fermes, augmentant ainsi d'année en année le nombre d'élèves.*

*Malgré sa petitesse et son manque de nécessaire, l'école Bruyère a donné à sa communauté des moments de divertissement sous la forme de concerts et de danses. Tous se rassemblaient pour ces soirées sociales.*

*L'école chauffée par un "box stove" placé dans le milieu de la salle de classe n'offrait guère de*

*réconfort aux élèves alors que les uns gelaient et les autres brûlaient de chaleur. En plus, on pouvait aussi chasser les souris et même les chauve-souris! Vers l'an 1939, l'école a vécu ses derniers jours mais une nouvelle école beaucoup plus moderne fut construite pendant l'été 1942 et a servi jusqu'en 1948. A ce moment les élèves se rendaient à Legal.*

*En 1966, le district scolaire de Bruyère vota pour demeurer dans la Division de Sturgeon et à partir de ce moment, les élèves furent dispersés entre les écoles de Cunningham, Mission Park et St-Albert. D'autres élèves se rendirent soit à Bon Accord, à M.E. Lazerte ou encore à Sturgeon Heights.*

### **Ecole Citadelle - Citadelle School**

L'Ecole Citadelle ouvrait ses portes à ses élèves pour la première fois à l'automne de 1990. La bâtisse n'était pas encore terminée à ce temps-là, mais c'est avec joie que professeurs et élèves prirent leurs places respectives dans la petite école pour se lancer dans un avenir plein d'espoir, malgré les incertitudes. Une école française était quelque chose de nouveau non seulement au niveau de la petite communauté mais aussi au niveau de la province. De fait, cette petite école devenait une école pionnière avec les quelques autres déjà ouvertes dans les années 1980 en Alberta.

C'est par l'intermédiaire du district scolaire de Legal #1738 que l'Ecole Citadelle a vu le jour. Peu après la proclamation de la Charte des Droits et Libertés de 1982, avec son article 23 proclamant les droits des Francophones, quelques parents vraiment désireux de procurer une éducation française à leurs enfants s'avançaient pour faire les premières demandes pour une école dont la langue d'enseignement serait le français et où on trouverait une atmosphère propice à l'apprentissage de la langue et de la culture françaises.



Ecole Citadelle

Grâce à leur courage et leur persévérance, et après de nombreux pourparlers avec les autorités scolaires de l'époque, c'est en automne de 1990 que 41 élèves, avec leurs professeurs, imprimèrent une autre page de notre belle histoire sous le titre de "l'Ecole Citadelle".

Les premières années de l'école furent assez mouvementées car il y avait encore beaucoup à faire. Les nombres étant peu élevés, il fallait faire du recrutement. Aussi, il fallait s'assurer que la bâtisse puisse accommoder la clientèle en voie d'augmenter considérablement dès la deuxième année d'opération. En effet, d'une population de 41 la première année, les chiffres indiquaient une population de 66 élèves la deuxième année. Aussi, en plus des élèves de la première à la sixième années qu'on y trouvait en 1990, l'école recevait des élèves de septième et huitième années en septembre 1991. C'est cette même année que deux classes portatives furent ajoutées à la structure originale de l'école. Ceci permit alors d'inclure une petite bibliothèque, une salle d'ordinateurs et des commodités telles qu'un poêle et un réfrigérateur pour offrir des cours d'arts ménagers dès la deuxième année. Cette même année, les élèves de la septième et huitième suivirent des cours de réparation de petits engins.

Toujours conscient du grand besoin de faire du recrutement, l'A.P.E.F.C. (Association des Parents et Educateurs Francophones), sous la direction d'Elizabeth St-Onge à l'époque, entreprit et mit sur pied dès l'automne de 1991, une maternelle francophone qui avait pour mission de mieux préparer les jeunes à l'Ecole Citadelle. Ce fut encore une autre page de notre histoire. Il ne faut pas oublier de dire aussi que la pré-maternelle francophone existait toujours pendant ce temps. Fondée en 1988, la maternelle francophone devint "La Petite Ecole" en 1991. En 1990-1991, elle prenait des dimensions beaucoup plus importantes avec l'arrivée de l'Ecole Citadelle. Vu le grand besoin de re franciser les petits se dirigeant vers l'école française, il fallait dorénavant redoubler les efforts à ce niveau, afin de faciliter la transition de la maternelle à la première année dans une école française. L'école francophone de Legal offre aujourd'hui des services éducationnels en français à tous les parents d'origine francophone (selon les critères de la Charte des Droits et Libertés) qui désirent se procurer ces services. L'école reçoit présentement des élèves des régions de Morinville, de Gibbons, de Bon Accord, de Namao, de Redwater, de St-Albert, de Busby, de Clyde et de Legal. En automne de 1992, un autobus scolaire "jaune" fut mis en circulation entre les régions

de Redwater, Morinville, Bon Accord et Legal afin de faciliter la tâche des parents qui auparavant, devaient transporter leurs enfants eux-mêmes. Les élèves de Legal reçoivent leur service de transport par l'intermédiaire du district scolaire de Legal.

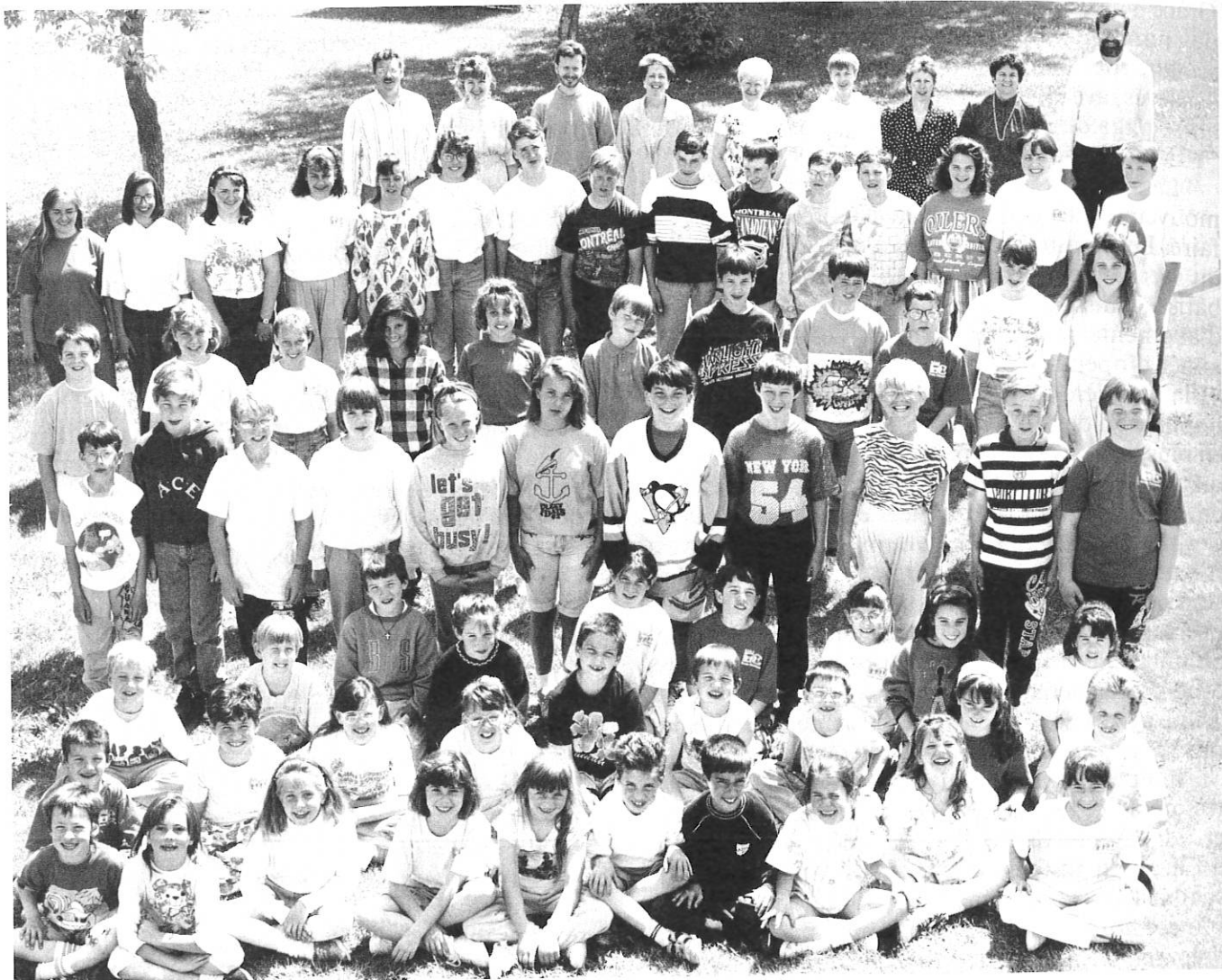
En conclusion, il est important de souligner la grande contribution des organisations suivantes qui ont oeuvré à la création de l'école francophone: d'abord il faut mentionner l'Association des Parents Francophones de la région de Legal et des environs (l'A.P.E.F.C.), l'Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta (l'A.C.F.A.) et tous les individus qui ont pris un rôle de leadership dans la communauté en vue de l'école française. Il faut aussi mentionner la compagnie de construction "Blue Meadow Homes" (Robert Chauvet) qui a réussi le défi de tout construire en un temps limité de cinq semaines.

Lors de l'ouverture, le personnel de l'Ecole Citadelle comprenait les personnes suivantes: Yvette Cyr (demi-temps), Gaëtane Champagne (demi-temps), Denise Cyr, Julie Bouchard Dallaire et Deborah Southall (professeurs); Ernest Chauvet et Germaine Nault (suppléants); Raymond Tremblay (directeur); Manon Cloutier-Bastien (secrétaire); Lorraine St-Martin (aide-enseignante); Guy Scherrer (animateur culturel); Léo et Lucille Ringuette (concierges).

En mars 1994, la gestion scolaire francophone est devenue une réalité en Alberta et à partir de septembre 1994, l'Ecole Citadelle devint la responsabilité de la nouvelle commission scolaire d'Edmonton-Legal. Notre premier commissaire représentant Legal est Rémi Cyr. Les autres commissaires de la région d'Edmonton sont Frank McMahon, Léo Turcotte, Denis Tardif et Christiane Spiers. En septembre 1994, l'Ecole Citadelle ouvrit encore ses portes pour une cinquième année, mais cette fois, sous la tutelle de la commission scolaire d'Edmonton-Legal.

*The first demands for a Francophone school in Legal started in 1982 with the arrival of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, section 23, which proclaimed the rights of Francophones to Francophone education for their children. In the fall of 1990, the Legal School District #1738 started to operate a Francophone school in Legal. At the time of its opening, the school consisted of 41 students and included grades one to six. It soon became known as Ecole Citadelle.*

*With the Francophone school, it was now possible to create a school atmosphere which would be totally Francophone, thus making the learning of the French language that much easier. Most of*



Les élèves de l'école Citadelle, 1991-92

all, the Francophone school became the vehicle "par excellence" to bring to life the true Francophone identity and culture.

The first few years of the school were very active. Because of the small numbers, it was important that everyone work at recruiting new students. A large number of qualifying students are still not attending the school, nevertheless the school population has increased continually since its inception. The present school count is 68 students including 20 "out of district" students.

In 1991, the school started to operate a junior high section along with its elementary section. Two portable units were added to the school to accommodate this new program. Computers were also bought that year. The school was now a grade one to eight school. That same year, the A.P.E.F.C. (Association des Parents et Educateurs Francophones) started to operate a kindergarten class.

With the Francophone school, it was now felt that a kindergarten class was essential. The need to teach the French language prior to grade one was a high priority. Time has shown that the thinking was right, as students who first attended the Francophone kindergarten had much less difficulty functioning in the French grade one class than those who were never given that opportunity.

In the fall of 1992, a new school bus route was created to accommodate "out of district" students. By this time, the school was serving students from Redwater, Gibbons, Bon Accord, Morinville, Legal, Busby and Clyde. In 1993, Ecole Citadelle accepted its first student from St. Albert.

At this time, we wish to thank all the people and organizations who have contributed in the setting up of the school. Special thanks to : the A.P.E.F.C., the A.C.F.A. (Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta), Blue Meadow Homes

(Robert Chauvet) and Alberta Education. The first staff: Yvette Cyr (half-time), Gaëtane Champagne (half-time), Denise Cyr, Julie Bouchard Dallaire and Deborah Southall (teachers); Raymond Tremblay (principal); Manon Cloutier-Bastien (secretary); Lorraine St. Martin (teacher aide); Guy Scherrer (cultural coordinator); Léo and Lucille Ringuette (caretakers); Germaine Nault and Ernest Chauvet (substitute teachers).

In March 1994, the first Francophone school board was formed in Alberta. In September 1994, Ecole Citadelle became part of the new school jurisdiction, the Edmonton-Legal Francophone school board. Our first school trustee representing Legal in the Francophone region is Rémi Cyr.

### L'École Dunrobin No. 3485 (1930-1942) Dunrobin School No. 3485

par Antoinette Aquin

L'école Dunrobin, où je suis allée pendant les années 1930, consistait de deux salles de classes. Maintenant, elle est connue comme l'école de Vimy. Je me souviens de quelques professeurs et tous mes souvenirs d'eux sont plaisants. Les élèves de cette époque (la dépression) avaient beaucoup de respect pour leurs professeurs. Les professeurs étaient de vrais exemples dans la communauté.

Quelques professeurs qui m'ont enseigné sont Mme Jean Tremblay, Germaine Meunier, Clyna Morin, G. Roy, Annette Lemieux, Simone LaPerle, B.J. Gorman, Paul Duteau, H.E. Beriault, Marguerite Primeau (français) et Maurice Freehill.

La journée commençait avec la prière du matin et un salut au drapeau, particulièrement après le commencement de la guerre. Ensuite nous suivions les cours de calligraphie, d'épellation, d'arithmétique, de lecture et de composition anglaise. Il y avait l'histoire et la géographie, même en cinquième année. Le vendredi, nous aimions le cours de musique, d'art et d'éducation physique. N'oublions pas la mémorisation. Je me souviens encore du poème "In Flanders Fields". A part de tout ceci, nous avions une heure de français par jour qui comprenait la lecture, la composition, le vocabulaire, l'histoire du Canada et une demi-heure de catéchisme. Le Père F. Koolen, le prêtre de la paroisse, nous visitait souvent à l'école. Nous attendions patiemment Noël et Pâques car il nous apportait des friandises.

Après avoir réussi l'examen du ministère de la neuvième année, nous allions à l'école secondaire. A Vimy, ceci voulait dire les 10e, 11e et 12e années dans une salle de classe, enseignées par un professeur. Les élèves étaient limités dans le choix



Dunrobin School, 1931, 2 classes (grades 1-9). Teachers: Jean Tremblay & Annette Tremblay

de sujets qu'ils pouvaient suivre. La plupart des élèves étaient obligés de compléter la 12e année ailleurs où être satisfait avec un diplôme.

L'été, nous jouions à la balle et l'hiver, c'était le patin, le concert de Noël et le théâtre. Le seul club social que nous avions était "Canadians of Tomorrow" (COT). Nous avions aussi un conseil d'étudiants et chaque mois nous publiions un journal intitulé "Vimy Lite". Chaque année, nous publiions aussi un annuaire "Memory Lanes".

Il y avait des festivals anglais dans plusieurs villages de la division Sturgeon où nous présentions des pièces de théâtre. Nous présentions aussi ces pièces dans l'église et dans les salles communautaires. Puisque l'école Dunrobin était une école bilingue, on participait au festival français qui avait habituellement lieu à Morinville. Quelle honneur pour l'enfant qui gagnait une médaille ou un certificat pour avoir chanté "A la claire fontaine" ou "Isabeau s'y promène".

*The Dunrobin School I attended, now known as Vimy School, consisted of two classrooms back in the early 1930's. I recall some of my teachers and my memories are indeed very pleasant ones. The children of the era (Depression) looked up to their teachers; most of them set an example to the community. Some of my teachers were Mrs. Jean Tremblay, Germaine Meunier, Clyna Morin, G. Roy, Annette Lemieux, Simone LaPerle, B.J.*



Students from grades 1 to 6 helping the war effort by collecting tires for rubber, 1940

*Gorman (later known as Father Gorman), Paul Duteau, H.E. Beriault, Marguerite Primeau (French) and Maurice Freehill.*

*The school day started with morning prayers and a salute to the flag, especially after the war was declared. Then came penmanship, spelling, arithmetic, reading and English composition. There were also history and geography, even in grade five. Fridays, we always enjoyed music, art and Physical Education. One must not forget memory work. I still remember "In Flanders Fields". Besides all of these there was one hour devoted to French. This included la lecture, la composition, le vocabulaire, l'histoire du Canada and half an hour of*



Grades 10, 11 & 12, 1942-43: Warren Wilson, Louis Carrière, Robert Gouin, Claude Bilodeau, Jack Bird, Jack Belland, George St. Arnaud, Antoinette Aquin, Georgette Labbé, Gertrude Gagné, Louis Dusseault, Ann Alberts, Germaine Wilson, Marguerite Wilson, Amanda Dusseault, Catherine Bolivar, Simone St. Arnaud, Sophie Derko, Georgina Rivet, Ida Labbé

*catéchisme*. During my days at Dunrobin school, Father F. Koolen, the parish priest, visited us often; how we looked forward to Christmas and Easter as he would bring us a treat!

After one managed to pass the grade nine departmental exams, one went to high school. In Vimy, this meant grades 10, 11 and 12 in one classroom, taught by one teacher. Pupils were limited as to how many credits or subjects they could take. Most students had to complete grade 12 elsewhere or be satisfied with a high school diploma.

Activities at Dunrobin School consisted of ball games in summer and skating in winter. Winter often meant Christmas concerts or theatrical performances. The one and only social club we had was "Canadians of Tomorrow" (COT). We also had a monthly newspaper called "Vimy Lite" as well as a yearbook, "Memory Lanes". Plays were performed at English Festivals held in the various towns within the Sturgeon School Division as well as in our church and other community halls. Since Dunrobin was a bilingual school, there were also French Festivals, usually held in Morinville. What an honour it was for a child to receive a medal or certificate for singing *A la claire fontaine* or *Isabeau s'y Promène*.

Reminiscing after 45 years brings to mind four lines written by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "When time, which steals our years away, Shall steal our pleasures too; The memory of the past will stay And half our joys renew."

(Translation by A. Aquin)

### **Dunrobin School District No. 3485 (Vimy School) – District Scolaire de Dunrobin No. 3485**

**by Cora de Champlain**

**1917 – May 25:** the Dunrobin School District was established with Mr. P. Gagné of Hay Creek being the Senior Trustee. The first school was built in January of 1917 near the rail station, at a cost of \$1,200 and the first teacher was Miss Verreau.

**1919** – an annex to lodge the altar for religious services was added on. **August 18:** the official trustee, J.J. LeBlanc, appointed Arthur Labbé of Vimy as Secretary Treasurer of the Dunrobin School District No. 3485 and steps were taken to place him under bonds.

**1921 – April 18:** the Dunrobin School District was declared a village district. Mr. Joseph G. Dusseault was the teacher in 1922-1923 with 23 to 26 students from grades one to seven.

**1930 – August 26:** the Dunrobin School District

borrowed the sum of \$2,300 upon the security of the District, for the purpose of building and equipping a one-room addition to the existing school building. The Treasurer at that time was Mrs. F. Gaulin of Vimy.

**1932 – January 16:** it was moved by Téséphore St. Arnaud and seconded by Elie Sabourin that for 1932, the coal for the school be bought by the car load and delivered to the school at cost price, the balance to be sold to any individuals for a small profit. **April 28:** the Dunrobin School District was situated in the Hazelwood District No. 579.

**1935 – February 2:** it was moved and accepted by the rate-payers present, that a stable, for the accomodation of the pupils' horses, be erected on the school grounds as soon as possible. The stable would hold at least 10 horses. **September 11:** after a report from J.J. Leblanc about the investigation on the matter of high school instruction for grade nine, the Chief Inspector authorized the instruction in the senior room of the school. Miss Jeannine Gouin was the first grade nine pupil.



Vimy School, 1945

**1936 – October 3:** the Board of Dunrobin was authorized to employ its teachers starting July 1 at an annual rate of salary of \$840 for the senior room which contained grades five to nine, and \$750 for the junior room which included grades one to four. This was a good improvement from \$650 annually for the senior room and \$600 for the junior room in 1934.

**1938 – January 15:** it was moved by Jos Dusseault and seconded by Trefflé Lachance that, by a show of hands, it be decided whether the rate-payers were in favor of the district paying the expenses of serving hot cocoa to the children at the noon meal. The vote was taken and motion supported by a vote of 12 to 4.

**1939 – January 3:** the Dunrobin School District was constituted in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Subdivision No. 1. At this time,

Ernest Meaden of Edmonton was the Secretary of the Division.

**1940 - July 3:** a contract for the erection of a two-room school in the Dunrobin School District was signed by all the trustees: Harry Speers, John E. Holmes, J.G. Dusseault, Angus L. McGillis and Leo Garon, with Joseph St. Martin of Legal as contractor. The contractor agreed to furnish, at his own cost, all the material and labour of every kind and description, to have the building fully completed on or before September 1, 1940 at a cost of \$5,150. Pierre Frigon was the carpenter hired to construct the building.

**1941 - October 3:** Mr. Maurice Freehill took special pains to remedy certain speech defects of his pupils and his efforts to improve the general language skill of the school are praise worthy. Grades one to 12 inclusive continue to be taught although instruction is given in French, one hour a day, to grades one to nine only. **December:** seeing as the Board of Education was encouraging the centralization of schools and because of the fact that Dunrobin School could offer a higher standard of education and had ample room to accommodate the students without adversely affecting their own classes, the Boudreau trustees graciously accepted the offer. Considering it was such a new approach to education, the Minister granted the move for a trial period of six months, January 1942 to the end of June 1942. Arthur Pelletier of Vimy, who converted his truck to a modest school bus, was given the first transportation contract. Over the years, this school bus proved to be the perfect means of transportation for many Dunrobin School activities. The arrangement must have been successful and satisfactory to all parents concerned, because the Boudreau School never re-opened as a center of instruction in the district.



Arthur Pelletier and the first school bus north of Edmonton, in Vimy

**1942 - January:** the Boudreau School situated two miles south, one mile east and one mile south of the hamlet of Vimy, which also belonged to the Sturgeon School Division, was the first school to be granted permission to centralize to the Dunrobin School. At that time, because of a wartime shortage of teachers, it was becoming more difficult to attract highly qualified and experienced teachers. **September 25:** six typewriters were placed in the hall of the school to be used by the high school students.

**1943 - November 3:** it was reported that, of late, the school spirit had improved to a considerable degree. The school continued to publish a monthly periodical called "Vimy Lite".

**1944 - September:** the Sisters, "Filles de Jésus" (f.j.) came to teach at Dunrobin School. Sister Marie Elizabeth f.j. became the school principal as well as the high school teacher of grades 10, 11 and 12. Sister Marie Antoinette f.j. joined her as cook and housekeeper. **December 14:** after only three months of Normal School, Sister Ephrem-Marie f.j. was appointed to teach grades one, two and three. She also became a music teacher, teaching singing to the students and giving piano lessons on her off-hours. The Dunrobin School pupils were winners at many French Festivals during her stay. In 1947, after three years of living in the small "teacherage", the Sisters had a convent built by Rosaire Fortier of Vimy. These two teaching sisters remained in Vimy for 15 years.

**1946 - May 8:** it was reported by the Inspector of high schools that the well-known Dunrobin spirit was still at a high level. Students responded with enthusiasm to teaching and testing. Although it was possible for students to obtain their high school diploma at Dunrobin, it was not yet possible to complete matriculation.

**1951 - present school** was built.

**1954 - December 30:** the Dunrobin School District was transferred from the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 to the Westlock School Division No. 37 and into Subdivision No. 5.

**1963 - May 30:** approval was given to dispose of the two-room school, located in the Vimy School District, No. 3485. At this time, all the grades from one to 12 were being taught in the school.

**1964 -** A new wing was added, consisting of a gymnasium, a staff room, two classrooms and a laboratory.

**1967 - June 30:** the Vimy High School was closed because of low attendance. A verbal agreement existed between the Westlock Division and the Legal School District concerning the education of

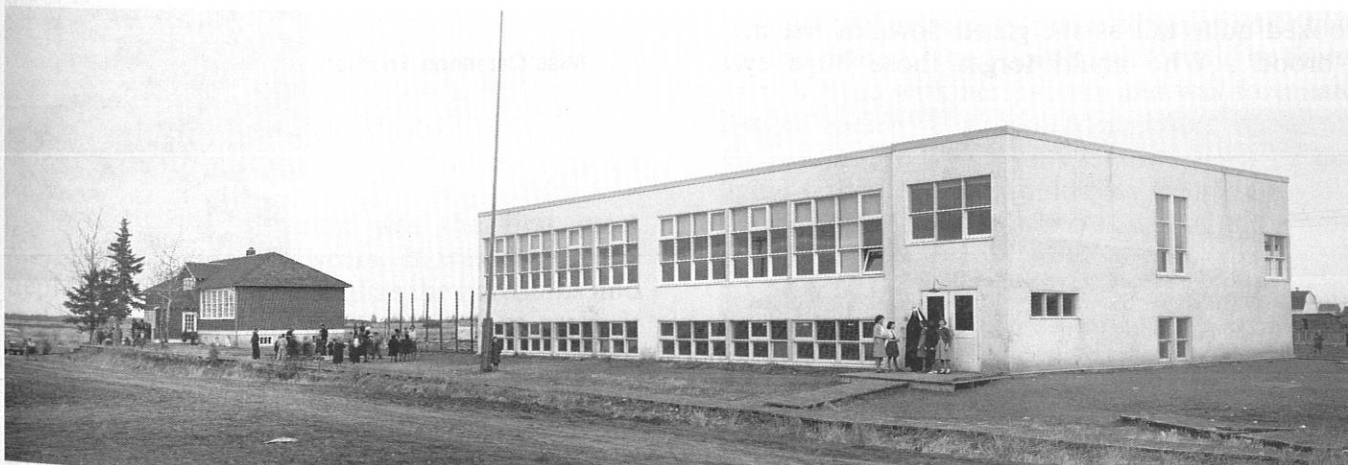


the pupils from the Vimy centralization when the Vimy School closed down. Since the Vimy School was a bilingual Catholic school, the Board of Trustees wished to give the high school pupils who so wished, the privilege of attending a bilingual Catholic high school rather than centralizing them to Westlock Public School. At the closure of the Vimy High School, the privilege of attending Legal High School was endorsed by the parents of the pupils concerned and the Vimy School Board. The Division provided the bus transportation.

**1992 - June 5:** The Vimy School celebrated its 75th anniversary. The school principal, Eugene MacIntyre, had an open invitation to all former staff and students. A number of events were planned and there was a big birthday cake. Many school class pictures were exposed at the back of the gym for people to see and reminisce. To commemorate the occasion, a school flag was designed by three students: Brad Bartee, Kevin Moyen and Robin Herrman.



Principal Eugene MacIntyre with the students who designed the 75th Anniversary Vimy School Flag, June 1992



Vimy Schools

*Voici quelques dates importantes qui ont marqué le développement des écoles à Vimy:*

*Le district scolaire de Dunrobin est établi le 25 mai 1917. La première école a été construite en janvier 1917.*

*1919: Arthur Labbé de Vimy est nommé secrétaire-trésorier.*

*1921: le district No. 3485 de Dunrobin devient un district scolaire de "village". Joseph G. Dusseault y a enseigné entre 23 et 26 étudiants en 1922-1923. Selon le registre de l'école: Thérèse St-Arnaud et Juliette Morin (septième année), Julia St-Arnaud, Willie Jalbert et Edmond Sabourin (cinquième année), Louis St-Arnaud, Albert St-Arnaud, Vital Lachance, Albé Parent, Murad Morin et Clyna Morin (quatrième année), Marie Anne Lachance, Flora Lachance, Anna Ethier, Cécile Ethier, Philippe Parent et Hervé St-Pierre (troisième année), Lucien St-Arnaud, Gérard Lachance et Evelyn Cloutier (deuxième année), et Rudolphe Jalbert, Etienne Provençal, Angèle Belland, Cora Giguère, Victor Dizie et Max Dizie (première année)*

*1930 - 26 août: le district fait un emprunt de 2 300\$ pour la construction d'une salle de classe de plus.*

*28 avril 1932: le district de Dunrobin est ajouté au district No. 572 de Hazelwood.*

*2 février 1935: on approuve la construction d'une étable pour héberger les chevaux qu'utilisent les enfants pour se rendre à l'école.*

*11 septembre 1935: Jeannine Gouin fut la première élève de la neuvième année.*

*1936 - les salaires des enseignants sont de 840\$ par année pour les "classes seniors" et 750\$ pour les "classes juniors".*

*3 janvier 1939: le district de Dunrobin devient partie de la division scolaire Sturgeon No. 24.*

*1940 - 3 juillet: on accorde un contrat pour la*

construction d'une école de deux classes dans le district scolaire de Dunrobin.

1941 - décembre: les commissaires de l'école Boudreau acceptent l'offre d'envoyer leurs étudiants à l'école Dunrobin. Arthur Pelletier de Vimy fait le transport. L'école Dunrobin est reconnue pour son haut niveau d'éducation. On y publie même une périodique, "Vimy Lite".

1944 - septembre: arrivée des Filles de Jésus comme enseignantes.

1951 - construction de l'école actuelle.

1954 - 30 décembre: le district scolaire de Dunrobin est annexé au district scolaire de Westlock No. 37 et devient la subdivision No. 5.

1962 - 22 juin: le nom du district Dunrobin est changé au "district scolaire de Vimy No. 3485".

1967 - 30 juin: l'école secondaire de Vimy doit fermer et ses étudiants vont faire leurs études à Legal où Westlock.

1992 - 5 juin: l'école de Vimy célèbre son 75e anniversaire.

SOURCES: Provincial Archives and *Celebration* (A History of Schools and School Districts in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24)

### **Dunrobin School - Reminiscing; the "Dirty Thirties" to the post-war forties** by Cécile Beaulieu-Shaul

How many of us remember our first day at school? For the first time in our lives, we were leaving the security of our home, parents and siblings to enter a new stage. Knee-high to a grasshopper, six or seven years of age, crying and scared, we were being pulled by a parent or older sibling who had been through this before. Their reassuring words were, "Don't be such a cry-baby". This was it! Grade one at Dunrobin School, and there to greet us was no other than Miss Katherine Therrien. Although very petite, she looked quite tall as she gazed down at her new "brood". Who could forget those huge eyes



Dunrobin School

peering at us almost saying: "Now you are at my mercy" - we would be for the next three years.

Settling in on our first day was not that bad. Looking around, we recognized faces from church, and like children we soon smiled shyly at each other. Recess was so much fun as we dashed for the swings, a game of tag, hopscotch or just catching up to an older member of the family. Then there would be lunch where we would sit down to a jam or peanut butter sandwich, maybe with an apple or cookie packed in a lunch pail. Then off to play with our new friends. To think that we would be spending an average of eight hours a day away from home. This was the beginning of friendships that would take us through our school years and throughout our lives.

Miss "K" was a very good teacher, strict at times, but totally dedicated to her profession. Not only did she teach us the four R's—yes, the four R's, reading, riting, rithmatic and religion—she was also very efficient at organizing concerts and plays.

Vimy, at the time, was 99% French and Catholic. Most subjects were taught in both languages with three grades in one room. At times, enrollment exceeded 45 students. It was a task that no teacher today would even think of undertaking. Most of us did not know a word of English when we started school. Miss K saw to it that our pronunciation was at least recognizable. We spent many hours practicing our "th's". Dis and dat became this and that. Even today when I hear someone from Vimy murder their th's, I know they were not in her class.



Miss Catherine Therrien

Miss K was always full of ideas. At one point, she gave us each a bunch of tokens called "jetons". If caught not saying please, thank-you or excuse me to someone, we had to give one up. Miss K was fair and always rewarded us for our efforts. Needless to say, she applied discipline which would

be considered harsh by today's standards. A form of punishment used then was to kneel down in front of the class, facing the wall until we fainted or pretended to. The penalty for chewing gum in class was to wear it on your nose, to the giggles of your peers. Caught turning around, all of a sudden your ear would be pulled back 180° by a tiny little hand. Ouch!

The speller, what a great little book; it was next in line to the catechism. Mistakes were dealt with by writing them 100 times each. We developed our own little cheating game by using two to three pencils at a time.

The catechism, question and answer style, was to be memorized word for word, whether we knew what we were saying or not. The first question was: "*Qui nous a créé?*". We answered in a monotonous drawl, "*C'est le Bon Dieu qui nous a créé*". The church played an important role in our lives. The bell would call us to church for masses, for weddings, baptisms and funerals. At noon it would chime to remind us to give thanks for our daily bread. Funerals and prayer services were attended by all as the deceased, more than likely, was a relative, friend or neighbor. At that time, Father Koolen was our priest. He was a great jovial Dutchman who spoke several languages; he was known to travel around in his buggy or cutter with his dog. Whether young or old, he was totally devoted to us. Father Koolen made numerous visits to the school, especially before first communion, challenging us with catechism questions.



Father François Koolen

Our first communion was the first great highlight of our young years. It was during the depression; little did we realize the hardships and sacrifices our parents went through to make it special. Here we were, the girls dressed like brides, white from head to toe, the boys in little suits, bow ties and arm bands. Sitting all together in the front pews, the girls to the left and the boys to the right, we could not have looked more angelic!

After mass, it was time for group pictures, taken by those who were lucky enough to own a Brownie camera. Then we gathered in the basement of the church for a communion breakfast, and sitting by each plate was our very own orange! Oh! through a child's eyes, there is much beauty in little things.

One unforgettable time was before lent when Father Koolen arrived at school with a chocolate bar for each one of us. This was during the depression when chocolate was at a premium. It was at this time that a chapel was built in the basement of the new rectory. During lent it was filled to capacity. The country children would arrive all bundled up from the cold, carrying their lunch pails with an extra sandwich for breakfast. Remember, we fasted from midnight.

Winter meant greater hardships for school children. Not having any school buses then, the country children were brought in by sleighs and cutters, picking up others along the way. Caboose were built with a furnace in it; that was the "Cadillac" style. Often, some walked miles, arriving in tears, with frozen hands, feet and faces. At school, it was a mad dash to get on the high heat register fuelled by a large coal furnace. To start the day, we often skipped around the room, clapping our hands and stomping our feet for warmth. It was a challenge to run out to the outhouse and it was done only as a last resort, sometimes almost too late.

Being children, the cold did not deter us from a good snowball fight or making "angels" in the snow. At noon, lunches were gulped down and off the skating rink for a possible game of "crack-the-whip". Sometimes, we envied the town children who went home to a hot lunch, as more than likely ours was frozen or at least very cold. Winter of course brought Christmas. This was a busy time for our teachers as they prepared songs and plays for the concert. The whole hamlet would be there. Miss K lived with her parents and was fortunate that her father was a tailor. Many hours were spent in their house trying on costumes sewn by her aging father. Miss K would play the piano while we sang or sat on the floor cutting out and gluing angel shoes. Oh! What memories!

Miss Therrien remained single and went to Edmonton to become assistant superintendant of Elementary Education. March 7, 1976, a school was named in her honor. I was proud to be there to shake the tiny hand of that little lady with the big eyes, who started me, and many others, on that long path of life.

In September 1939, school started at the same time as the declaration of the Second World War. Those who had radios made room for anxious parents to hear the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) blaring the announcement that Britain was at war with Germany. To us it was hard to conceive where these countries were situated. Germany and England were spots on the roll-up map above the blackboard. There were frightening conversations among our parents, especially among those who had sons of "war age". Our prayers now were for the boys who were called up to serve their country somewhere across the sea. We learned over the next five years what ration coupons were and how to wrap care packages with soap, cigarettes and baked goods for men and women in the service.

Our second classroom for the next three years was in the same building as the first three grades. We were blessed with a lovely teacher by the name of Marie Jubinville. Marie was a kind, soft-spoken person. She was always ready to help us. It was a pleasure to stay in at recess, not to be punished but to go over a problem. This classroom was the only one with double desks. Since girls hated boys and vice versa, the biggest punishment was to sit with the opposite sex. Miss Jubinville did not give out many punishments except for the famous writing of lines: "I will not talk in school". At this time the war was in full swing. Marie and Miss K started Brownies and Guides. One project was to knit blankets to send overseas. We scrounged for wool and needles to knit squares which were sewn together for blankets. They were a sight for sore eyes, as not one of us knitted the same tension. Our leaders must have had a laugh sewing them together. Somewhere on the battlefield, someone felt the warmth of those blankets which we were so proud to provide.

In January 1942, we welcomed a very apprehensive bunch of "foreign" pupils called "les Boudreau". They came from a farming community with a one-room, eight-grade school and one teacher, to a hamlet with a school of four rooms and four teachers. It had to be an improvement. Needless to say, we felt superior to them, until they showed us they were as capable as we were! We benefitted as it gave us more friends to mingle with. As for the teachers, it meant more pupils to deal with. However, the teachers never had a strike or to my knowledge, missed a day of school.

We were anxious to start junior high, as we would be in a nice new school with a developed

basement, indoor toilets and running water. During the next three years, we prepared for our first departmental exams. We competed with all Alberta schools, writing the same exams with very few reference books at hand.

Our junior high years saw many teachers come and go. Clara (Baert) Gouin, a new bride, stayed for only one year. It was a great loss, as she was a gentle, kind person. The same can be said for Evelyn Demers who followed her, again for one year. The one thing I remember about her was her deep blushing when the older boys teased her, and her lovely smile.

The next year, we had our first male teacher. No more checking out the teacher's dresses, shoes and perfume. It was suits, ties and the smell of after-shave lotion. Because of the war, teachers were hard to get, so the government set up a war emergency teaching course. It was after a short three-month course like this that Hilaire Fortier came to Vimy. The youngest teacher we ever had, at 19, Hilaire was very brave to come to his home hamlet. Not much older than his students, Hilaire soon learned to use chalk and the pointer for other things than the blackboard. Hilaire recently admitted it was difficult to apply fair discipline and not show favoritism, since some of the pupils were his own relatives. For us it was also difficult to be serious and call him Mr. Fortier.

Hilaire lived in the hamlet and became one of us after school. Our big thrill was to get a motorcycle and ride down the fast lane in Vimy. Not mentioning any names, some of us even flirted with this most eligible bachelor, only to discover he had eyes on some special high school girl. So it was, the beginning of broken hearts.

It was most unusual to have city people move to our small hamlet. We did get a very interesting "city slicker" whose father bought the hotel. Stella Gorecki brought some of her city ways to our backward hamlet. She would run back and forth to school in a sweater, bobby socks and penny loafers in the middle of winter, while we were wrapped up in our woolies and boots. She introduced teen magazines, hit parades and fashions beyond our reach. To us, Stella was a breath of fresh air.

P.T. (Physical Training) was part of our curriculum. The school had acquired spring boards, horses and mattresses which could be used all year-round in the large finished basement of the new building. We were proud to wear our grey gym shorts and top, especially when competing with other schools. We also had tennis tables, ball



Grades 7, 8 & 9, 1945-46: John Dusseault, Wanda Sempovich (hidden), Marcel Landry, Bernice Miller, Gordon Brown, Yvette Sabourin, Denise Casavant, Raymond Lanouette, Clémence Bernard, Cécile Laplante, Lucien Rivet, Armand Provençal, Raymond Derko, Léo Turcotte, Hilaire Fortier (teacher), Robert Carrière, Raymond Fortier, Rémi Carrière, Stella Gorecki, Cora Huot, Constance Lachance, Thérèse Provençal, Olga Chmiliar, Antonio Fagnan, Roger Laplante, Leo Sempovich, Claude Huot, Philip Toupin, Keith Wilson, Joyce Miller, Cécile Fagnan (author of article)

diamonds, and volleyball, basketball and tennis courts. There was no reason to be bored.

In December 1944, Hilaire left us to be replaced by John Dutchak who had been discharged from the army. Mr. Dutchak, a big man with a deep voice, brought with him a military style of teaching. With firmness and discipline, he had us under control. We needed this as we were to write our departmental exams. It was time to be serious. With the contribution of all these junior high teachers, most of us did well.

In June 1945, we received the greatest worldwide news. The war was over! After viewing many films, brought to us by the National Film Board, we realized that war was senseless and tragic. The war had affected every one of us in some way. It was with great joy and relief that young and old marched down main street to the music of a piano on a hayrack, singing songs like "There'll Always be an England", "La Marseillaise", "The White Cliffs of Dover" and "The Maple Leaf Forever".

At last, the last school room beckoned us. Now we could look down on the other classes—we were the seniors. Unfortunately, the attendance was lower as quite a few students could not continue; some had to stay and help at home, others to find work in the city.

Here was another first for us. For the next three years, we would have a "Sister" teach us. Wrapped up in yards of black material trimmed with white was no other than Mother Elizabeth. There would be no checking her wardrobe or perfume. Everyday would be "déjà-vu" as far as dress was concerned. Although her habit may have been dull and drab, there was nothing dull or drab about Mother Elizabeth. There are many adjectives I could use to describe this person: gentle, kind, patient, caring, loving, humorous, talented and totally dedicated to God and her vocation. I don't remember her losing her temper. At times, when things got out of hand, she would walk briskly to her desk or stop abruptly and stare momentarily at the culprit; the message got through. On one occasion, when one of the boys was acting up, she stared at him and said, "*Regardez Marcel, s'il a l'air cute*", to the laughter of the rest of us, and by now a red-faced Marcel! That was her discipline! Mother Elizabeth always had time at recess or after school to help us, listen or gently tease us. Also, she never forgot that she had at one time been a girl and would pass out pamphlets on what to do on a date, kissing, necking and others. She must have known none of us were "convent material". Besides, she was well aware that those

gangly, pimplefaced boys were beginning to look quite handsome to us. During the the last three years, we probably experienced our most rapid growth, physically and emotionally. Besides preparing for those nerve-wracking grade 12 departmentals, we participated in many sports that would take us to competitions in the school division. With Father Therrien, our sports-minded pastor, hockey and baseball became favorite pastimes. Many of us followed the games to cheer our team on. Father Therrien was a great singer. Along with Mother Ephrem, he started a youth choir. Many hours were spent practicing the most beautiful mass, the Mass of the Angels. It is gratifying to hear one of those voices in the choir today, usually at a wedding or funeral.



Grades 10, 11, 12; 1944-45, Rita Turcotte, Germaine Dusseault, Jeannette Carrière, Rev. François Koolen, Thérèse Parent, Lilliane Lanouette, Sr. Elizabeth (teacher & principal), Thérèse Baert, George Lachance, Diana Casavant, Bernadette Landry, Raymond Fagnan, Thelda Wilson, George St-Arnaud, Alice Laplante

The end of the school year was always sad at the best of times, but nothing compared to the end of grade 12. It meant saying goodbye to our big family of friends with whom we had grown up throughout the years. The unknown and the many dreams, some to be changed, others never to be realized, lay ahead of us. As we parted, each going our own way, full of hope and ambition, we knew that we would never forget the name Vimy, that little hamlet where it all began. Now that we have reached the "over 60 gang", we find ourselves reminiscing. We realize now how important it is to keep in touch with our school pals. Whether we meet at a school reunion, a funeral or basking in the sun in Arizona, the question will pop up: Remember when?

Looking back, there were some disadvantages

to living in a small hamlet, but the advantages far outweighed them. There were no "latch-key kids", no strangers to be afraid of, no empty houses to come home to. The worst crime committed was to shoot at the water barrels on the track or getting caught smoking a home-made cigarette. Borrowing "dad's car" was a great adventure as we all piled in to go to a country dance. No expensive formal dresses or limousines for graduation as we headed down the track to "Provençal's" river for a swim and picnic. Sounds boring? We called it fun!

*Durant la dépression, c'est Mlle Katherine Therrien qui accueillit les enfants de la première année, âgés de six ou sept ans, effrayés et incertains. Malgré sa petite taille, Mlle "K" était imposante quand elle regardait ses élèves avec ses gros yeux. Les enfants reconnurent leurs pairs de l'église assis tout autour d'eux et sous peu, ils se souriaient timidement. Ils s'amusaient beaucoup à la récréation lorsqu'ils se précipitaient aux balançoires ou au terrain de jeux pour jouer au "tag", à la marelle, ou afin de rejoindre un frère ou une soeur. Ensuite, il y avait le dîner où ils dégustaient un sandwich à la confiture ou au beurre d'arachides, parfois accompagné d'une pomme ou de biscuits. Ces longues heures à l'école permirent la formation d'amitiés chères.*

*Mlle K était une très bonne enseignante, parfois sévère, mais très dévouée à ses élèves. Non seulement elle leur enseignait la lecture, l'écriture, les mathématiques et la religion, elle organisait des concerts et des pièces de théâtre. Puisque la grande majorité des habitants de Vimy à l'époque étaient francophones et catholiques, les cours se donnaient en français et en anglais. Mlle K s'assura que la prononciation anglaise des petits Francophones soit au moins intelligible. Elle enseignait aussi les bonnes manières et elle n'oubliait jamais de récompenser l'effort de ses élèves.*

*Le catéchisme jouait un rôle important à l'école. Il fallait mémoriser toutes les questions et réponses du catéchisme. La cloche de l'église appelait les citoyens de Vimy à la messe, aux noces, aux baptêmes et aux funérailles. Le Père Koolen était le curé à cette époque. Il passait beaucoup de temps avec les élèves, surtout avant le carême et la célébration des sacrements.*

*Les élèves se rendaient à l'école en "caboose", en traîneau ou en "cutter". Certains enfants marchaient plusieurs milles pour se rendre à l'école et arrivaient souvent en larmes, les mains et les pieds gelés. Malheureusement, il ne faisait pas beaucoup plus chaud dans la petite école. Malgré cela, les enfants s'amusaient dehors dans la neige*

*lors de la récréation. A Noël, les enseignantes organisaient un concert apprécié par tous les habitants du hameau. Mlle K habitait avec ses parents et son père étant tailleur, les élèves allaient souvent chez eux pour confectionner des costumes pour les pièces de théâtre. Ah! quels souvenirs!*

*Quand la guerre commença en 1939, chacun se vit affecter par le départ des jeunes hommes. Mlle K et Marie Jubinville, une autre enseignante, ne tardèrent pas à former des Brownies et des Guides, à qui elles enseignèrent le tricot. Les jeunes filles contribuèrent donc à l'effort de guerre en tricotant collectivement des couvertures pour les soldats outre-mer.*

*Plusieurs autres enseignants firent un séjour à Vimy: Clara (Baert) Gouin, Evelyn Demers, Hilaire Fortier, John Dutchak et Mère Elizabeth, Filles de Jésus. Eventuellement, les étudiants montèrent au secondaire, dans une nouvelle école avec un beau sous-bassement, des toilettes à l'intérieur et de l'eau courante. Cependant, moins d'élèves purent aller à l'école à cause du lourd travail à la ferme. Avec le Père Therrien, très sportif, l'athlétisme à Vimy vit un essor avec plusieurs équipes qui faisaient de la compétition à travers la province.*

*La fin de la 12e année signala le début d'une nouvelle étape où chacun se dirigea vers un avenir prometteur. Cette séparation ne fut que physique car les élèves se souviennent encore de leurs bons amis de l'école Dunrobin.*

### **Diligence School District No. 847 - District Scolaire de Diligence No. 847**

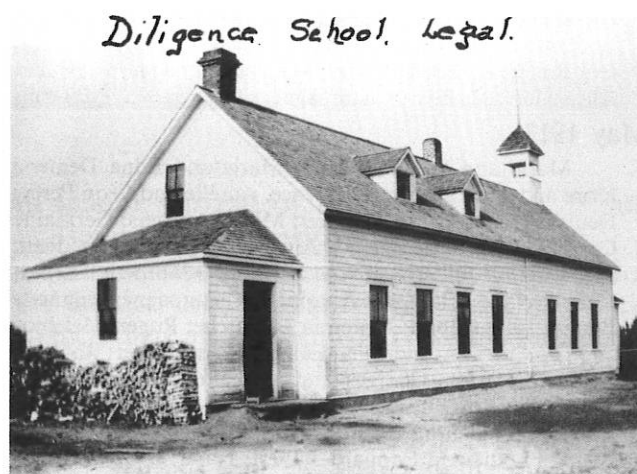
At the beginning of Legal's history, several clusters of pioneers settled in various districts. The largest cluster and one of the first was found in the area later known as Diligence but called Legal at the time. Because there were many children of school age, a school was deemed necessary at an early date. Besides, these pioneers felt that the village of Legal should be in their locality. Théophile Bouclin donated enough land for the school, the church and the graveyard on the southeast quarter of Section 28.

An application was made for a school district extending to Township 25, just one mile east of the Creek, the location of another cluster of pioneers. Objections to these plans were quick. Therefore, after much discussion, alterations were brought about. When the then called Legal School District No. 847 was finally established in 1903, it comprised Township 57, Range 24, Sections 14-17, 20-23, 26-29, 32-35 and Township 58, Range

24, Sections 2-5; West of the 4th Meridian. The village was not to be situated in this district.

In 1904, the sum of \$600 was borrowed on the security of the district for the construction of a school built by Noël Boisvert. The school opened the same year. The first trustees were Théophile Bouclin, Tom Stack and Joseph Bouchard. The first teacher was Kathleen O'Connor from Ontario. She died in March and was replaced by Jean-Baptiste Côté.

June 12, 1907, the district's name was changed from "Legal School District No. 847" to "Diligence School District No. 847". August 6, 1910, the SE-14-57-24-W4 was withdrawn. July 4, 1913, the sum of \$800 was borrowed on the security of the district for the purpose of building an addition to the school house, and on October 24 of the same year, another sum was borrowed, this time of \$400, for the same purpose. Arthur Carrière was treasurer at the time.



Diligence School, June 15, 1931

In 1938, the Diligence School District No. 847 was included in the Subdivision No. 1 of the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. In 1948, the SW-1-58-24-W4 was withdrawn. That same year, Diligence School burned; the cause of the fire remained unknown. The janitors Denise and Donald Demers managed to save fifteen desks and a teacher's desk. The people of Diligence were saddened by the disappearance of this landmark which was almost half a century old. After the fire, students were taught in René Préfontaine's vacant house (at the four-mile corner) until the end of the school year. In September, the students were bussed to Legal School. It was the beginning of the centralization of schools.

**TEACHERS - ENSEIGNANTS:** (This list, taken from the booklet "Diligence Homecoming August

31, 1980", may contain "errors and omissions", a warning by the authors. Please be understanding.)

Kathleen O'Connor, J.B. Côté, M.F. Tracy, N.J. McLean, Fred C. Monaghan, W.J. Boggs, Fidelis M. Gaudet, Marguerite Poirier, L. Bernier, B. Escallier, Jena Roy, Marguerite J. Hirth, Marguerite Escallier, Catherine Cairns, Rhose Heric, Marguerite H. LeBlanc, Adèle Roy, Elizabeth A. LeBlanc, H. Rebecca Proulx, Donna Proulx, Régine LeBlanc, Lucy A. Arsenault, Camilla Belliveau, M.A. Belliveau, Eva Robichaud, Marie Robichaud, B.M. Nadeau, G. Donand, A. Piquette, Edna Marie Beaudry, Florida Vaugeois, A.E. Laplante, Jacqueline Darimont, Alma Arcand, Olivier Arcand, Henriette Charbonneau, Annette Lemieux, Doris Kirk, Frances Tellier, Dorothy Daignault, Marcel Denault, Antoinette Grenier, Germaine (Houle) Nault, Helen (Roy) Speer, Mme Dolhagaray, Dixon Keane, Patricia (Keane) Montpetit.

**PUPILS - ETUDIANTS:** (contributed by Bernard Montpetit). March 1909:

Joseph, Hélène and Céline Girard; Marcel and Emile Bouchard; Léon, Tom, Louis and Georges Gilbert; Zénon and Marie A. St. Jean; Fernando, Aurore, Palmyre, Melchior and Roger Carrière; Eugène Boisvert; Marie Fortin; Alex Champagne; Joseph, Céleste and Georges Demers; Benny Boisvert; Edna Demers; Willie Boisvert; Laura, Mary and Eva Rouleau; Alex Qischart; Mary Champagne; Pearl and Alice Martelle; Rosie Champagne. (Teacher: N.J. McLean)

May 1913:

Marie and Délia Rouleau; Marie and Edna Demers; Flore and Auréline Cyre; Florence, Aurélie and Léon Perry; Denis Mercier; Yvonne Mercier; Mil Deslauriers; Germaine Carrière; Cécile Carrière; M. Ange and Earnestine St. Jean; M. Jeanne, Juliette and M. Jeanne Montpetit; Ernest Chamberland; Clara and Antoinette Champagne; Jeannette Potvin; Lilly Jalbert; Florentia Lamarche; Roger, Melchior and Léo Carrière; André and Edmond Perry; Albert Rouleau; Zénon St. Jean; Georges and William Demers; Bennie, Arthur and Joseph Boisvert; Pierre, Roger and Albert Cyr; Etienne and Henri Caouette; Hervé and Georges Montpetit; Bennie, Louis and Edouard Jalbert; Narcisse Champagne; Camile Deslauriers; Earl Demers; Arthur Chamberland; Germaine Champagne. (Teacher: L.E. Bernier).

**TRUSTEES - COMMISSAIRES:**

1927 - 1929: Horace Montpetit (chairman), Ignace Caouette, Aldéric Trudeau, Arthur Carrière (secretary-treasurer). 1930: Horace Montpetit (chairman), Aldéric Trudeau, Marcel Bouchard. 1931: Aldéric Trudeau (chairman), Marcel Bouchard, René Préfontaine. 1932: Marcel Bouchard (chairman), René Préfontaine, Denis Boisvert. 1933 - 1934: René Préfontaine (chairman), Denis Boisvert, Edouard Henry, Georges Potvin (secretary-treasurer). 1935: Edouard Henry (chairman), René Préfontaine, Denis Boisvert, Marie Carrière (secretary-treasurer). 1936: René Préfontaine (chairman), Denis Boisvert (chairman), Edouard Henry. 1937: Elie Caouette (chairman), Edouard Henry, René Préfontaine. 1938: René Préfontaine (chairman), Edouard Henry, Hervé Montpetit. 1939: René Préfontaine (chairman), Hervé Montpetit (chairman and secretary-treasurer), Arthur Morin. 1941: J. Ovide Auger (chairman), Hervé Montpetit, Arthur Morin. 1942: Arthur Morin (chairman), J. Ovide Auger, Hervé Montpetit. 1943: J. Ovide Auger (chairman). 1945: William Demers, Paul Montpetit. 1946: J. Ovide Auger (chairman). 1948: René

Préfontaine, Paul Montpetit, Germain Auger (secretary-treasurer).

Anecdote: Arthur Morin tells us that at noon, some of the bigger boys would ride their horses to a creek nearby to let them drink. This was on Melchior Carrière's (Gidou) land. It was called "Le Crique à Gidou". Actually, the boys wanted a chance to smoke a cigarette and go skinny-dipping on a warm day.

As 1980 was Alberta's 75th anniversary, former students of Diligence School decided it was the perfect opportunity to have a homecoming (August 31, 1980). The response was overwhelming; 200 attended the reunion. The atmosphere was reminiscent of their school days. The festivities began with a thanksgiving mass celebrated by Father Lévasseur, with Arthur Morin and Harvey St. Onge as altar servers. The displays of old photographs and souvenirs were indeed treasures of the past: the old school desk, the strap, the old hand-bell and the Diligence school seal, "Diligence School District No.847".

*Au début du siècle, la majorité des pionniers de Legal s'installèrent dans un district qui prit le nom de "Legal". Quand le nombre des enfants d'âge scolaire fut suffisant, on projeta de construire une école en espérant qu'on y établisse là le village; Théophile Bouclin fit don d'un terrain assez grand pour une école, une église et un cimetière. On fit une demande pour établir un comté scolaire jusqu'à un mille à l'est du ruisseau où s'était établi un autre groupe de pionniers, mais on ne tarda pas à s'objecter contre ce projet et des changements furent apportés. En 1903, quand le District Scolaire de Legal No. 847 fut créé, il comprenait les cantons 57-24 (Sections 14-17, 20-23, 26-29, 32-35) et 58-24 (Sections 2-5). Le village ne fut pas construit à cet endroit.*

*En 1904, on fit un emprunt de 600\$ et une école fut construite par Noël Boisvert; elle ouvrit ses portes la même année. Les premiers commissaires furent Théophile Bouclin, Tom Stack et Joseph Bouchard. La première institutrice, Kathleen O'Connor de l'Ontario, décéda en mars et elle fut remplacée par Jean-Baptiste Côté.*

*Le 12 juin 1907, le nom du "District Scolaire de Legal No. 857" changea à celui de "District Scolaire de Diligence No. 847". Le 4 juillet 1913, on fit un emprunt de 800\$ pour construire une allonge, et le 24 octobre, on fit un autre emprunt pour une autre allonge à l'école; Arthur Carrière était le trésorier à l'époque.*

*En 1938, Diligence devint la Sub-division No. 1 de la Division Scolaire Sturgeon No. 24. En 1948,*





Diligence students

*l'école Diligence fut détruite par les flammes mais on n'en connut jamais la cause. Après cela, les étudiants finirent l'année dans une maison vide (au coin des quatre milles), appartenant à René Préfontaine. Au mois de septembre suivant, on transporta les étudiants à Legal; ce fut le commencement de la centralisation.*

*En 1980, à l'occasion du 75e anniversaire de l'Alberta, des "retrouvailles" permirent à 200 anciens étudiants et étudiantes de Diligence de se réunir et de faire revivre l'esprit du "District Scolaire de Diligence No. 847".*

### **Elk Park School – Ecole Elk Park**

**by Mrs. S. Schmode**

The school which came to be known as Elk Park was built by J. Barker and opened in 1915. The lumber that was first purchased was burned by a sudden thunder storm. A pile of lime on the lumber heated up by rain set fire to the lumber. A further supply of lumber was purchased and construction was completed. The first teacher was Mr. H. McIlvenny who taught for three years and lived above the school. This was the only school that I know of which had an upstairs; it became the living quarters for many of the teachers.

After many years a barn was built for the horses which were the children's means of getting

to school. Instead of being a little red school-house, it was white with green trimmings.

The school became the community centre for the district, used for dances and church services. In fact, there always seemed to be something going on there. At the end of the school year, we always had a picnic. No matter what age they were, every child took part in races and other activities. This made them all feel they were equally important. It didn't matter if they won or lost, they were all a part of it.

In the summer, the teacher organized ball games with other schools such as Clover Valley or Springfield. At Christmas, there was always a concert and again every child took part. These were very educational as each pupil had to get up in front of the public and do his or her part. It was also necessary to memorize the school subjects.

In the early years, pupils from Clover Valley and the Duke of Sutherland's farm, all came to Elk Park; their schools were closed down due to some financial difficulties. One year, there were 49 pupils in grades one to nine, all taught by one teacher.

The first school inspector was J.J. LeBlanc, who was very strict. One day, while he was in with the teacher, the children lifted up the back end of

his Model T Ford and put blocks under the hind wheels. It was muddy, and when the Inspector came out from the school to go home he found the car would not move, so he came back into the school to ask some of the big boys to give him a push. Of course, he gave it a lot of gas, and when they pushed him off the blocks, the car shot ahead, right into the fence!

The following teachers taught at Elk Park, but not necessarily in this rotation: Mr. McIlvenny, Mr. Tracy, Miss Beale, Mrs. Bourgeois, Mrs. Wilson, Miss Mocksford, Miss Pinchbeck, Miss Cliff, Miss Critchlow (married Charlie Bacon), Miss Cummings (Sam Yoemans), Miss Bishop (Bob Taqinish), Miss Echenfelder, Miss Verret, Miss Ruby Sterling, Miss Matthews, Miss Stelke, Mrs. Wocowich, Miss Alberts, Miss Sevard, Miss Landry, Mrs. Jenner and Mrs. Bacon, the last teacher.

Some of the Trustees we can remember were: C. Nelson, P. Murray, D. Brown, H. Ward, R. Johnson, M. Cannard, P. O'Brien, L. Wilson, W. Lanouette, A. Rivet, J. Biddiscombe, Mr. Watkins, T. Miller, G. Caouette and E. Charlies.

The school was closed after the term of September 1946 - June 1947, taking with it the good old community spirit.

*L'école Elk Park fut construite par M. J. Barker et comprenait une seule classe pour une cinquantaine d'élèves de la première à la neuvième année. Ouverte en 1915, elle eut pour premier enseignant M. H. McIlvenny qui résida à l'étage supérieur de la bâtisse pendant trois ans. L'école devint un centre communautaire pour le district où se déroulèrent toutes sortes d'évènements religieux, sociaux et sportifs.*

*Le premier surintendant fut J.J. LeBlanc. La liste des enseignants et enseignantes à l'école Elk Park comprend 21 noms.*

### **Fairydell School District No. 2346 - District scolaire de Fairydell No. 2346 by Patricia Keane Montpetit**

Fairydell School District No. 2346 was created by the Minister of Education on January 9, 1911. Geographically, it is an area extending about five miles north to south and five miles east to west, with its approximate centre at Fairydell Corner, four miles north and three miles east of Legal, or four miles south and five miles east of Vimy. To the north and east is the area of Waugh. The school site of one acre on the northeast quarter of Section 17 was donated to the Fairydell School

District by Horace Brandon who owned the land at that time.

The school district was created to meet the needs of families of the area who had children of school age. Origins of these settlers included Eastern Canada, the Ukraine, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Galicia, Poland, the United States, Germany and Hungary among others. Fairydell School opened to pupils for the first time on January 3, 1912, with an enrollment of nine students with Miss Winifred Thornley as teacher. Senior trustee at that time was Samuel Cyr and secretary-treasurer was Peter D. Reid who held this position the entire lifetime of Fairydell as an independent district.



Fairydell School

Peter D. Reid, a bachelor, was rather unique. He took his duties as secretary-treasurer very seriously. Once in a while he would arrive at the school in the early afternoon, sit at the back of the classroom and observe the teacher at work with his or her pupils. After an hour or two, Mr. Reid would ask to see the school register and at the bottom of the page for that month he would write the date of his visit, a few comments about the pupils' attentiveness and carefully sign his name. He would then bid everyone a solemn "Good afternoon" and leave.

Besides the daily routine of classes, special activities consisted of a Christmas celebration including a concert (with all pupils participating), a Christmas tree with Santa bringing candybags and gifts, and a lunch prepared by the mothers. Then all the desks would be moved to clear the centre of the room and the dance would begin. Music was provided by local musicians: the Harper family, Dave and Mark Brandon, Bill Tatton, Peter Titiryn and perhaps others. These men gave

generously of their time and talents. The mothers let their very young children sleep on benches around the room and everyone joined in song and dance until the wee hours of the morning. Also there were occasional dances in aid of the Red Cross. Summer brought the "track meet" and local baseball games.

Over the years, Fairydell School underwent various changes, most notable being the change from a wood heater in the rear of the room to a coal furnace in the basement. This necessitated an entry to the building on the south side of the school in order to go downstairs to the furnace area. There was also a window through which coal was lowered and put in a storage bin near the furnace. The school was stuccoed in 1938. This improved the appearance of the building and provided additional warmth.

Enrollment fluctuated over the years, the highest being approximately 50 pupils in 1924 and 1925. In the latter part of 1938, financial control and operation of Fairydell School passed to Sturgeon School Division. On January 3, 1939, Fairydell School District No. 2346 was constituted in Sturgeon School Division and into Sub-division No. 5. Ernest Meaden was Division secretary-treasurer and J.J. Leblanc was appointed

superintendent. Enrollment in Fairydell School at the time of the transition was 20 pupils and the teacher was Patricia Keane. School trustees were J.W. Keane, P.E. Séguin and W.E. Tatton. The school was controlled from the Divisional Office located in Edmonton.

Social activities in the district continued the same as previously; Christmas concerts, social evenings, track meets and local baseball games. Parents were usually ready to assist with these activities. Although the district had a real blend of nationalities and various religious beliefs, a strong sense of togetherness prevailed. A highlight of 1939 was the trip to Edmonton in June for the Royal Visit; a memorable day indeed.

In 1948, the move toward centralization took place in the Legal area. Legal School District was included in Sturgeon School Division in 1938. That same year, in June, the doors of Fairydell School were closed for the last time, and the students were bussed to Legal.

In 1957, the Fairydell School site was sold to the owner of the northeast quarter of Section 17. In 1966, Legal School centralization, following a plebiscite, was excluded from Sturgeon School Division. The area known as Fairydell is now part of the Legal School District.



Fairydell School pupils, 1940

Shortly after the school closed, the main school building and the porch were disposed of separately. The school was sold to Ray Préfontaine who demolished it, using the material to erect a barn on his property just east of Legal. The porch was sold to R. Casavant who moved it to his farm. This land is now owned by Joe Slobogean who uses the porch for storage purposes.

The story of the Fairydell school bell is worth mention. While the school was being torn down in 1948, the priest from the parish of Slave Lake came and made the demolition contractor an offer for the bell. Today, the Fairydell bell rings out from the bell tower of the Slave Lake Catholic Church.

The original boundaries of Fairydell District have undergone many changes since 1911. However, although Fairydell School District has disappeared, the spirit of Fairydell is alive and well. This fact was proven by the large attendance at the Fairydell Homecoming in August 1980. This gathering, attended by 400 former pupils and residents, was held at Fairydell Corner on a site owned by Duane Montpetit (NE-8-58-25-W4), exactly one mile south of the historic marker indicating the site of the Fairydell School No. 2346. In attendance at this reunion and worthy of special mention was Mrs. Smith Lemming who taught school here in 1920. People of the area are still keenly interested in educational matters and parents, as in the past, search for the best for their children.

**Names of teachers who taught at Fairydell School** (from an official document):

Winifred Thornley (1912), Maude Smith, Margaret McLeod, Miss Scott (Lemming), Laura Crux, Corinne LeBlanc, Alfred McLean, Hugh McDonald, W.T. Roycroft, K.W. Morehouse, Theresa McDevitt, Alice Hunter, J.P. LeBlanc, Germaine Chamberland, Patricia Keane



Fairydell School teacherage

Montpetit, Sophie Derko, L. Léveillée (Carlson), Dixon Keane and Frank Holubowich.

Some of the school trustees were: Samuel Cyr, Alphonse Pelletier, James Keane, Dominique Montpetit, Jerry Fox, Nick Slobogean, James Middleton, P.E. Séguin, W.E. Tatton and J.D. Brandon. Early caretakers (janitors) in the school were mainly members of the Tatton and Montpetit families. Family names of people who attended Fairydell School who still live in this area or who own land here are Krupa, Slobogean, Tatton, Keane, Hills, Montpetit, Doblanko and Pelletier. Many of the pupils who passed through the doors of Fairydell School became successful farmers and businessmen/women. Several became teachers and two that I know of became doctors (Dr. Harry Pistawka of Edmonton and Dr. Blair McLean, deceased). Dr. McLean attended Fairydell School from grades one to nine, attended the University of Alberta, became a doctor, joined the navy and had an outstanding career as a Surgeon-Lieutenant during the Second World War. In 1960, he was promoted to the rank of Rear-Admiral and became Surgeon-General of the Armed Forces. He was also appointed honorary surgeon to the Queen. He is considered one of the Navy's most distinguished doctors. He died in 1982. The present Canadian Forces Hospital in Esquimalt, British Columbia, bears the name "The Blair McLean Hospital"; it opened in 1986. Blair McLean was born and spent his early years in the district of Fairydell on the farm now owned by Henry Montpetit. From there, he walked a mile and a half to the Fairydell School. A plaque commemorating Fairydell School will soon be hanging in the foyer of Legal School. This plaque was designed by the 1980 Homecoming committee and purchased with funds remaining from that homecoming.



Hôpital Blair McLean Hospital



Surgeon-General Blair  
McLean

*Ce district scolaire a été créé le 9 janvier 1911. Il comprend un territoire de cinq milles carrés, avec le "coin" de Fairydell comme centre, à quatre milles au nord et à trois milles à l'est du village de Legal. Le terrain pour l'école (au nord-est de la section 17) a été donné par Horace Brandon.*

*L'école Fairydell a ouvert ses portes le 3 janvier 1912, avec neuf étudiants d'origines diverses et Winifred Thornley comme enseignante. Le conseiller "sénior" était Samuel Cyr et le secrétaire-trésorier était Peter D. Reid (il occupa ce poste durant toute l'existence de cette école). En dehors de la routine des classes, l'école Fairydell a connu plusieurs activités "spéciales" comme les concerts de Noël et les danses accompagnées par des musiciens locaux: la famille Harper, Dave et Mark Brandon, Bill Tatton et Peter Titiryn, parmi d'autres. Il y avait aussi des rencontres sportives l'été.*

*Avec le temps, l'école a subi des changements, dont le plus important a sans doute été le remplacement du poêle à bois derrière l'école par une fournaise au charbon dans le sous-sol. L'école a été recouverte de stucco en 1938.*

*Le 3 janvier 1939, le district de Fairydell a été transféré dans la Division Scolaire Sturgeon, devenant la Sub-division No. 5. Ernest Meaden était secrétaire-trésorier et J.J. Leblanc, surintendant. Les commissaires étaient J.W. Keane, P.E. Séguin et W.E. Tatton. En juin 1948, le mouvement de centralisation scolaire amalgama le District Scolaire de Legal à celui de Sturgeon et obligea l'école Fairydell à fermer ses portes. En 1957, le terrain de l'école a été vendu au propriétaire du quart de terre nord-est de la section 17. En 1966, une autre centralisation sépara cette fois le district de Legal de celui de Sturgeon. Le secteur connu sous le nom de Fairydell fait maintenant partie du District scolaire de Legal. Peu après, l'école et son porche*

*furent vendus séparément, l'une à Ray Préfontaine, et l'autre à R. Casavant. La cloche a été vendue à la paroisse catholique de Slave Lake, où on peut l'entendre résonner encore aujourd'hui.*

*Malgré le départ de l'école, l'esprit communautaire du district de Fairydell est resté bien vivant. Les "Retrouvailles" du mois d'août 1980 en sont une preuve évidente; 400 des anciens élèves et résidents de Fairydell, dont Mme Smith Lemming (enseignante en 1920) se sont alors réunis sur le terrain de Duane Montpetit.*

*L'un des "anciens" de l'école Fairydell le plus célèbre est sans doute le Dr Blain McLean, médecin des Forces Armées qui s'est illustré durant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. L'hôpital militaire d'Esquimalt (Colombie Britannique) porte son nom.*

## **Half Moon Lake School District No. 2785**

**by Kathleen (Dowhaniuk) Palamarchuk**

In 1914, a number of people held a meeting and decided to build a school. There were a lot of mixed nationalities: French, German, Ukrainian, Polish and English. They realized they had to educate their children, so Mr. Alford who had a saw mill, sawed the lumber and offered his land also, so the school could be built.

It was situated a half-mile south of the present school on the east side of the road. It was called Alford School District but was later changed to Half Moon Lake School District. The first teacher was J.E. Campbell. At this time the pupils attended only for 26 days as most of them were older and were needed at home to help their parents on the farms. W.H. Swift was superintendent. The trustees were N. Zilinski, M. Tymoschuk, A. Semanchuk and W. Dowhaniuk.

Lightning struck one day and that one-room school burnt down. The next school was built by Mr. Deedman from Bon Accord where the present one still stands. It was a two-room school and had grades one to seven. Mr. Leblanc was now superintendent of the schools. Mr. Dowhaniuk, Mike Kordyban and Mr. Zilinski were trustees and Mrs. A. O'Dwyer was secretary-treasurer (in 1933 and from 1934 to 1938). Mr. O'Dwyer was principal. Bill Tymoschuk held that position later as secretary.

In 1934, the teacherage burnt down and the Board of Education granted \$300 to build a new one. Mr. Russel, teacher at that time, was charged \$12 per month to live there.

The teachers in Half Moon after Mr. Russel

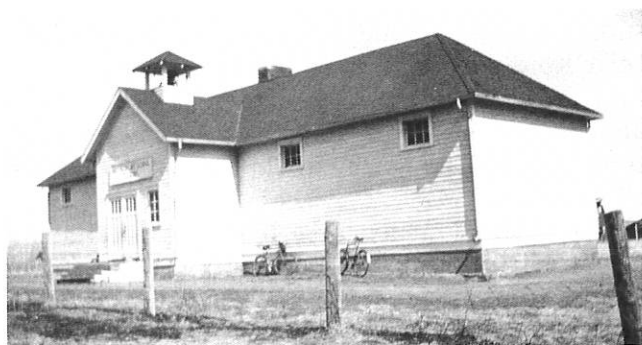
were Nick Andruski (high school) and Alma Gill (junior). Then came Lucy Zadunayski, Walter Chaba and Pauline Klapouschak (high school), and Helen Klapouschak (junior); Andy Chaba (high school) and Olga Kamarniski (junior); finally Alex Konasewich (high school) and Mary Olynyk, Anne Kochan and Mary Wizsnura (junior room). The teachers' salaries in 1939 were \$840 per year.



Class of Half Moon Lake School, 1942

In 1938, Mr. Zayezierski took over as secretary until 1948, followed by Sylvester Smerychynski until 1954 when the schools were centralized.

In 1942, the school burnt down again because of lightning, so another school was built on the same place. Mr. Seego built it with the help of local volunteers in order for the school to open in September. From 1942 to 1954, this school provided education to students in the junior and high school levels. When the schools were centralized in 1954, the children were bused to Vimy, Thorhild and Redwater, and Half Moon became part of the Thorhild County. It later changed to Westlock. Half Moon Lake School was located on the Athabasca Landing Trail half-way between Athabasca and Edmonton as the crow flies. The local people purchased the three acres of land with the school on it from the Board of Education, added onto it and made it into a recreation hall.



Half Moon Lake School, 1943

## LEBLANC, J.J., Inspecteur d'école – School Inspector

par Soeur Annette Potvin

M. J.J. Leblanc, originaire de Belle-Côte, Comté Inverness (Nouvelle-Ecosse), fit ses études chez les Pères Eudistes à Church Point dans son pays natal. Très tôt après ses études, il se rendit en Alberta dans le but d'enseigner. Parfait bilingue, il trouva facilement une position beaucoup plus payante en Alberta que dans les provinces maritimes. Il enseigna d'abord à Daysland puis à St. Joseph's High School à Edmonton. Les membres du département d'Éducation ont tôt fait de remarquer sa compétence dans l'enseignement et ses qualités de chef. Aussi quelques années après son arrivée à Edmonton, lui offrit-on la position d'inspecteur d'école dans les régions rurales des environs de la capitale.

Son devoir l'appelait donc à visiter les écoles des campagnes et celle du village de Legal dès les années 1920. Il semble avoir toujours reçu un accueil chaleureux de la part des institutrices et des élèves. Les anciens se souviennent de lui et de sa mauvaise main d'écriture sur le tableau noir, écriture qui jurait avec celle si belle des institutrices.

Comme inspecteur, il fit de nombreuses démarches pour encourager les institutrices de langue française des provinces maritimes à venir enseigner en Alberta. Plusieurs vinrent à Legal et ont laissé le souvenir de femmes instruites, compétentes et dévouées. Quelques-unes ont pris "mari" dans notre paroisse.

M. J.J. Leblanc occupa plusieurs positions importantes à Edmonton, lieu de sa résidence: président de l'Association des Inspecteurs d'écoles de l'Alberta, premier grand chevalier du Cercle LaVérendrye et membre du Comité d'Éducation de l'Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta.

*Mr. J.J. Leblanc was born in Nova Scotia and completed his studies at Church Point. Soon after his graduation, he came to Alberta where he taught school in Daysland and at St. Joseph's High School in Edmonton.*

*After a few years of teaching, he was promoted to the position of school inspector for the rural areas, thus coming to Legal in the 1920's.*

*Through his intervention, many French-speaking teachers came from the Maritimes. They were known as educated, competent and devoted persons. Quite a few even found a husband in Legal.*

*J.J. Leblanc held many important positions*

*because of his qualities of leadership, as president of the Alberta School Inspectors Association, member of the committee for Education of the Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta and grand knight of the LaVérendrye Society.*

### **Legal School District No. 1738 – District scolaire #1738**

The Legal School District No. 1738 (1) was established by order of the Minister of Education on December 10, 1907, with Ulric Marcotte of Legal as senior trustee and Léon Savoie of Legal as secretary. The boundary of the district, as with most school districts of the region, extended from four to six miles from north to south, and four to six miles from east to west.

July 7, 1909, the Legal School District borrowed the sum of \$800 on the security of the district, for the purposes of purchasing a school site, and building and furnishing a school house. The treasurer of the school district at the time was J.B. Côté of Legal.

The site of the first school, approved July 19, 1909, was a plot in the northeast corner of

SE-23-57-25W4. This is almost one half-mile south of the intersection of 50th Street and 50th Avenue in Legal today. Some students of the time still refer to this school as the “Mercier School” since it was next to Philippe Mercier’s farm and home. Today, this land is owned by Walter Van De Walle.

By 1914, the school population had grown to about 75, so the school board rented a house in the village to serve as a classroom for the younger pupils, while the older ones continued in the school south of Legal. The teacher in this rented classroom was Mrs. Sigouin (formerly Miss Marguerite Poirier), who had previously taught in the school to the south. Later, after her first husband died, she became Mrs. J. Caouette and continued teaching for many years in Legal (2).

The location of the school was later moved into the growing village. In 1915, Ministerial authorization was given to the school district, with Joseph Lemire as treasurer, to borrow \$2,000 for building and equipping a new frame school. The site of this two-storey school building was on the east side of the street running north from the church in Legal, across the street from the present school site. It



Legal School original site, circa 1915

is on this spot that the historic marker of "Legal School District No. 1738" is seen today. This marker is part of Sturgeon Municipal District's program of designating historic locations of schools within its boundaries now or in the past.

The old "Mercier" school from the south was moved into the village in 1916 (3), and a single-storey annex was built on the east side of the two-storey school, both because of increasing enrollment. This 1915 building is remembered by pupils who attended Legal School during three decades, from 1915 to the early 1940's. It is especially remembered by 12 to 16 girls and boys who formed the first high school class in Legal in 1932. The "high school" was one very small room on the upper floor of the building, barely large enough for 16 desks crammed closely together, accommodating all the high school students, with one teacher for all subjects.

In retrospect, it seems incredible that education could function under such circumstances. Yet with absolutely none of the copying machines, audio-visual devices or other equipment deemed so essential in school today, this small high school survived, and under the capable direction of Sister Marguerite Marie Côté, the one teacher, its students received their high school education and went on to various walks of life just as students from highly sophisticated schools do, more than a half-century later.

Throughout the 1930's and 1940's, the school district leased some space for classes in the Sacred Heart convent, owned by the Grey Nuns. (This former convent is now the O'Meara Rehabilitation Centre.) Also, the district acquired land on the present school site (across the street from the 1915 building), and a four-room building was erected there in the early 1940's. After the old two-storey structure burned down in the mid-1940's, the entire school site shifted to the west side of the church street, where it is today.

In 1947-1948, a new four-room building was built on the southeast corner of the site; for a few years it was known as the high school building. Much later, in 1973, when the elementary addition to the present school was constructed, the school board sold this four-room Corner School to a local senior citizens' group for \$1. The building was moved just southeast of Château Sturgeon, a senior citizens' home. So, after having upheld the tramp of students' feet for over a quarter of a century, this building now upholds the footsteps and activities of a different generation under its present name of Club 60 Roses.

The years 1945-1948 witnessed the closure of the small rural schools surrounding Legal School District and the centralization of their pupils by bus transportation to Legal School. The population of this centralized school originated from Diligence, Fairydell, Pontiac, Springfield, St. Emile, and West Legal School Districts. In order to accommodate the increased enrollment, some of the now vacant one-room rural school buildings were moved onto the Legal School site to serve as classrooms.

#### LEGAL AS PART OF STURGEON SCHOOL DIVISION

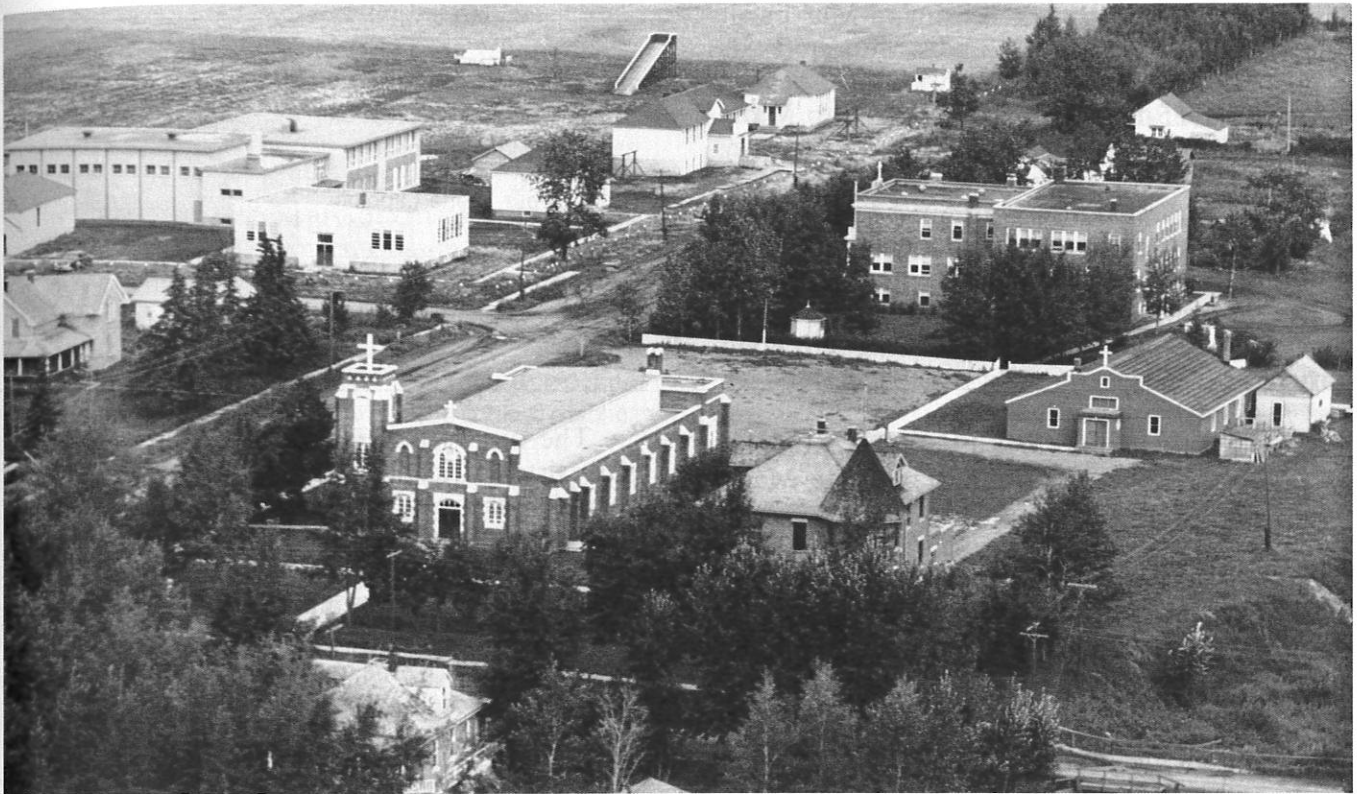
In 1948, a significant administrative change took place. June 1 of that year, by mutual agreement of both school boards, the Legal School District No. 1738 was included in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. The major control of the school, therefore, passed from the Legal local authority to that of the Sturgeon Divisional Board. It is noteworthy that the aforementioned centralization of rural pupils into Legal took place partly before and partly after the inclusion of Legal District into Sturgeon Division.

The population continued to grow and in 1952, a new two-storey building with two major additions completed in 1959 and 1974, and a smaller addition in 1993, along with various renovations over the years, formed the school plant in existence today. The 1959 addition, also completed while Legal was in the Division, consisted of the present high school wing, the "new" gym and some administration space.

The "old" gym built in 1952 was then divided into two areas, one for industrial arts or "shop", the other for home economics, but these two programs were discontinued in all schools of the Division after a couple of years, for economic reasons. The home economics room was then converted into a library. The "shop" became a multi-purpose area, used for audio-visual presentations, for meetings, as a lunch-making area by students at inter-school tournaments and games, and sometimes for noon recreation for students. (At one time, there were as many as eight ping-pong tables in play.) Still later, due to a renovation in 1985, this multi-use area was converted into the present music room.

The 1974 addition, built after Legal separated from Sturgeon, comprised the present lower elementary east wing, the library and additional administration space. At this time (1973-1974), the old rural school buildings which had served on the site since 1948 were finally disposed of.





Aerial view of Legal depicting the centralized schools: Legal School (upper left), Sacred Heart Convent (upper right), St. Emile Church (front centre), 1953. Courtesy of Homestead Aerial Farm Photos of Alberta

The separation (exclusion) of Legal School District from Sturgeon School Division came about in the summer of 1966. Below is the exact wording of the order from the Minister of Education bringing the change into effect, from the files of the Department of Education:

Edmonton, Tuesday, August 2, 1966

Whereas a resolution has been received from the Legal School District No. 1738 pursuant to Section 42 of the School Act, requesting the exclusion of the district from the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 on account of dissatisfaction of the board of the district with facilities for religious instruction; and

Whereas at least two other districts in the same division have passed resolutions supporting the Legal School District No. 1738; and whereas by order the Legal School District was directed to take a vote of the electors in the district on July 20, 1966, between the hours of 2 o'clock and 4 o'clock in the afternoon as to whether or not the district should be excluded from the said Division; and

Whereas a majority of the electors voted in favor of exclusion; Therefore pursuant to Section 42 of the School Act I hereby order that the Legal School District No. 1738 be excluded from the Sturgeon School Division No. 24.

This order shall be in effect on, from and after August 10, 1966.

R.H. McKinnon

(Minister of Education)

### THE GREY NUNS AND THE SCHOOL

Any historical account of Legal School must

give recognition to the important part played by the Grey Nuns. From 1920 onward, these Sisters formed a large part of the teaching staff for over half a century, both while Legal functioned as an independent district and while it was part of Sturgeon School Division. As well, the nuns took in girls as "boarders", both from the local community and from other parts of the province. These girls attended the local school and, in general, their presence was a benefit to the school.

Trustees who represented Legal and area were:



Soeur Azélie Surprenant  
s.g.m.



Soeur Victoria Corriveau  
s.g.m.

Paul Chauvet (1945-1954), Ferdinand Martineau (1945-1950 and 1965-1966), Ladis Messier (1951-1954), Diane Remillard (1955-1957), Léonard Forcade (1955-1959), Walter Van De Walle (1958-1965), Charlie Clément (1960) and Harvey St. Onge (1966). After the exclusion from Sturgeon, Mr. St. Onge continued to serve for many years on the Board of the independent Legal School District both as trustee and as board chairman.

Three superintendents served during the period of Legal's inclusion, namely R.J. Scott, F. Swan and A. Kunst.

During that period (1948-1966), the principals of Legal School were: Sister Marguerite Marie Côté, Sister Yvette Lapointe, Ted Tétreault, Robert Couture, Lucien Ouellette, Tom Fink and Dixon Keane who continued in the post for several years after Legal left the School Division.

#### LEGAL AS AN INDEPENDENT DISTRICT

When Legal School District was separated (or excluded) from the Sturgeon School Division as a result of the plebiscite of July 20, 1966, it then returned to the status of an independent school district as it had been before joining Sturgeon in 1948. This change meant that Legal School District henceforth had the responsibility of its own finances, hiring of staff, school bus arrangements, and all other matters of school operation which had previously been performed by Sturgeon Divisional Board of Trustees.



50e anniversaire de vie religieuse de Sr. Marguerite Marie Côté, 1982



Soeur Yvette Lapointe

The rural school districts surrounding Legal still existed officially, although they no longer had school buildings, and their students were being bussed into Legal. The residents of each of these rural districts were included in the plebiscite in 1966 and therefore remained in Legal centralization. These were Diligence, Fairy dell, Pontiac, Springfield, St. Emile and West Legal. The district of Bruyère voted to remain in Sturgeon School Division, and henceforth most of its students no longer attended Legal School.

The transfer had little effect on the everyday operation of the school. With few exceptions, the teaching staff remained unchanged, as did the principal and vice-principal. The custodial staff also remained on the job. Richard (Dick) Hunting and his wife, Fabiola, had become caretakers of Legal School in the 1940's. Students, teachers and superintendents came and went during the decades following, but the Huntings remained to keep the school plant clean and functioning until the 1980's.

After the plebiscite, each of the excluded six rural districts was now independent with the right to its own school board. Their students were attending Legal centralization, and their residents wanted a voice in the decision-making of the school. An agreement was reached that the operating school authority would consist of the trustees of Legal School District plus three trustees from each of the rural districts. This arrangement certainly provided representation from all parts of the area being served, and would seem to have been the ultimate in local control. But time proved this expanded board to be too large a body for effective progress, and after a period of about three years, the method was abandoned.

#### THE PRESENT LEGAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Therefore, in 1969, a major change took place in governing the school, with the approval of the Department of Education. The existing boards of all the districts of the Legal centralization,

including that of the village district, were abolished, as were the districts themselves. Replacing them, the present Legal School District was created, comprising the territory contained in all these districts and with a board of five trustees to be elected at large from the whole area. The members of the first board of trustees elected for this new district were Doreen Brisson, Allan Keane, William (Bill) Krauskopf, Roger Préfontaine and Harvey St. Onge. The secretary-treasurer was Yvonne Régimbald. These same trustees were re-elected in several successive years, and worked together to provide a stability for the school district throughout most of the 1970's.

It is noteworthy that they managed the affairs of the district without the aid or expense of a superintendent; in this respect, they were unique in the province of Alberta. Their service included the construction, in 1973-1974, of the east wing elementary addition to the school, comprising the present library and the rooms adjacent to it. This addition meant that finally the entire school was housed in one building. The one-room rural school buildings which had been moved onto the Legal School site during the 1940's for the service as classrooms, were either demolished or sold. One of them, the St. Emile School building, was acquired by Father Bissonnette, then parish priest in Legal, for \$1.

Meanwhile, a local senior citizens' group had asked to be given the four-room Corner School building for a drop-in centre. The school board not only sold it to them for \$1, but hired Dallaire the Mover from St. Paul to move it off the school site and a few blocks north. But it seemed as though that building objected to being taken out of educational service, for it gave the movers no end of problems. Equipment breakdown caused by the great weight of the structure (built in 1947-1948 by Napoléon Belley) and soft ground resulting from a spell of heavy rain at the time both delayed the moving. But eventually, it was forced onto its new foundation near the Château Sturgeon. There, renovated by seniors and other volunteers, it is now the Club 60 Roses centre.

A footnote to this story is that Father Bissonnette then got Dallaire, on his way home to St. Paul, to move the priest's newly-acquired St. Emile school building over to the shore of Lac La Biche, near Plamondon, where he set it up as an altar boys' summer camp.

#### LATER RENOVATIONS AND ADDITIONS

In 1983, three portable classrooms were built on the south side of the school. However, one of

these has since been moved to the site of the Francophone school in the village. In 1985, extensive renovations were completed to the two-storey part of the building which had been built in 1952, including the conversion of part of the old gym into the present music room. In 1993, the west part of the buildings, erected in 1960, was completely upgraded and modernized. This included the high school wing, the gymnasium, the main foyer and the administration area. At the same time, an addition on the north side of the gym provided showers, a physical education instructor's office, gym equipment storage and general storage space.

#### INSTRUCTION

As Legal School grew from a pioneer one-room school south of Legal into a centralized school in the village, its instructional program kept pace with its growth. For the first 25 years, instruction was from grades one to nine. In those times, most children's schooling ended when they finished grade nine or before, or when they reached the Legal school leaving age of 15 years. Some would work with their parents on the farm, some would go to work in town or wherever they could find a job. The students who did continue past grade nine had to go to Edmonton or to some other center which had a high school. They or their parents had to arrange and pay for their lodging, for there was no government assistance for such purposes in those days. A few of the girls received their high school education at Catholic convents in Edmonton or elsewhere, and some of the boys went to junior colleges such as the Edmonton Jesuit College.

After the beginning of senior high classes in 1932, Legal was a grade one to 12 school, and remained so until the kindergarten class was added in 1980. Prior to that time, in the 1960's and 1970's, kindergarten programs had been offered privately. The programs were not as structured as they are now, nevertheless the students benefitted fully from their kindergarten experiences. In 1980, the addition of the kindergarten class within the school structure was welcomed by the school and the parents. The school doors were finally opened to youngsters below the regular school age allowing them to initiate their school careers in a somewhat more relaxed school setting than that of the regular grade one class. The kindergarten class, it was believed, would ease the transition from home life to school life and better prepare the children for grade one. In 1993, Legal School

became a kindergarten to grade nine school as the high school students were sent to Morinville.

The instructional programs of the Alberta Department of Education have always been followed in the school, with some special provisions made for the teaching of religion and French, to accommodate the desires of this historically predominantly Catholic and French community.

In the decades before 1980, a course of advanced French, prepared by the Alberta Bilingual Educators Association, was taught to students whose mother tongue was French or who had a high school proficiency in French for one hour a day as prescribed by Alberta Education at the time. For others, an oral French program was sometimes offered in elementary and junior high grades, and the authorized high school French courses (French 10, 20, 30) were taught. In the 1980's, French immersion was introduced in Legal. This new approach to teaching French had become very popular in Alberta and Canada at the time and it also became so in Legal. With this program, French became the language of instruction (from 50% to 75% of the time depending on the grades) in the classroom rather than just a subject among others.

Religious study has always been taught for all Catholic students, the school board policy also providing for religion classes for other religious denominations if there was a demand.

A look at the Ministerial Order of 1966 (already quoted in this article) shows that Legal's main reason for wanting separation from Sturgeon was "dissatisfaction of the board of the district with facilities for religious instruction". However, some 20 years later, the residents of the Legal School District who had students attending the high school didn't seem to share the same values with respect to religious instruction. Even though the school continued to promote religion courses, enrollment decreased until in the mid-1980's; after teaching the course to four students only for one year, it was discontinued. However, the option of offering religion courses again at the high school level remained open should there be a demand for it at a later date.

#### POPULATION

The total school population had passed 400 when Legal left Sturgeon School Division in 1966. Then there was a slight decrease for a time because of the loss of the pupils from the Bruyère district. But by the mid-1970's, the enrollment had climbed back to an average of about 425. During most of



Legal Bus Drivers: Réal Champagne, Richard Maurier, Suzanne Tieulié, Irène Maurier & Normand Letourneau

the 1980's, the number fluctuated between 375 and 400 (4).

In 1990, the Legal School District opened Ecole Citadelle, a Francophone school, to accommodate the parents who qualified under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms for a Francophone education for their children. At that time, some 30 students from Legal School transferred to Ecole Citadelle. However, despite the in-coming of "out of district" students to the French school, the overall population of the district, which now had two schools, was not affected in any significant way. The population figures varied considerably in those years but generally remained within the 370 to 390 range between the two schools. Taking into consideration that family sizes have changed from roughly five children per family to about two children per family in the last 20 years, Legal School did well in terms of population maintenance during the last couple of decades.

In 1993, an agreement between Thibault (Morinville) and Legal boards resulted in Legal senior high school students being bussed to Morinville for their education. This resulted in a considerable decrease in the district's population.

Legal School is now a kindergarten to grade nine school, with an enrollment of 280 students in 1994. The Francophone school consists of 68 students from grades one to eight bringing the total district population to 348 students in 1994.

#### SUPERINTENDENTS

Legal School District has had five superintendents since first hiring one in 1980: Eldon Bliss, Richard Martin, Frank Boulet, Sandra Umpleby and Lee Lucente, assisted by Marguerite McVea.

#### PRINCIPALS

During the period since Legal's separation from Sturgeon in 1966, the following people have occupied the position of principal of Legal School:

Dixon Keane (1963-1976), Raymond Tremblay (1976-1990), Richard Roberts (1990-1992) and Jim Montpetit (1992 to present). Raymond Tremblay has been principal of Ecole Citadelle since its opening in 1990.

### LEGAL HIGH SCHOOL

From a beginning of 13 students in 1932, the high school population increased to an average of 35 throughout the decade of the 1940's, 48 in the 1950's, 74 in the 1960's and 89 in the 1970's, including Vimy students. The only period of decline was in the 1980's with an average of 63 students for the decade (5). The record shows that 109 students attended in 1970, the highest enrollment ever in the senior high school. The largest graduating class was that of 1971, when 32 students graduated from Legal High.

In 1967, an agreement between Legal and Westlock school boards provided for a bus to transport Vimy high school students who wished to come to Legal. Legal High School was enriched by these students who participated so well in the academic, social and sporting activities of the school. From 12 to 20 Vimy students came annually for about 10 years. But by 1979, the number had dwindled so much that it was no longer feasible to provide a bus.

Legal High School always abounded with activities. There was generally a certain dynamism, a morale and a spirit of pride in the school by both students and staff. Who among those who were there can ever forget the great basketball and volleyball games played by Legal teams in the 1960's and 1970's? The competition was intense in the North Central League, and the gymnasium was often packed with fans. Occasionally tournaments were held in Legal, on a Saturday, and then the high school was alive with visiting teams and coaches, with Legal students cooking and serving hot dogs and hamburgers in the old audio-visual room, and with the pandemonium of the cheering of the fans when points were scored.

In the 1980's and 1990's, Legal School continued to display spirit, enthusiasm and excellence in various competitive sports, including volleyball, badminton, curling, soccer and track and field, to name a few, both at the junior high and senior high levels. With the advent of artificial ice (and an earlier hockey season) and the extended volleyball season, basketball unfortunately gradually disappeared from the scene. However, another sport, badminton, started to gain momentum at this time. In fact, many of our students excelled in badminton and over the years, their

names started to appear on the rank lists for the province. During this time, badminton became popular in Legal School and continues, to this day, to be a challenging sport for many of our students. Summer games along with curling also came on the scene in the 1980's. Many of our students over the years participated in the summer games programs and did exceptionally well winning gold, silver and bronze medals for the school. The 1980's and 1990's have been the years of the "Wazoos", the "Gougars" and "Lazers". Many a time these teams, even the ones with very peculiar names, have been the pride of our school.

In the area of the fine arts, the 1980's and 1990's saw the creation of a music program which was soon and still is the pride of our school. At first the junior high students had the option of enrolling in a guitar program. Later, a band program came into place for the junior and senior high students. Soon, even the grade five and six students were part of the band. In 1984, with the renovations to the school, a beautiful music room was built within the section formerly known as the A.V. Room. Unfortunately, tragedy struck. Robert Panich, our music teacher, passed away of a heart attack the night before he was to occupy the new music room. The room was later dedicated to him and became the Bob Panich music room. Fortunately, the program lived on and it is still very strong today. In fact, the Legal School band participates every year in the Kiwanis Festival and always does well.

The drama programs at the junior and senior high levels also gained popularity in the 1980's. The high school presentation of "The Scrooge" was an instant success and some students made a name for themselves with that production. Soon the school had its drama room and the drama program was well under way.

The high school is gone now, and the effect on the community, if any, has yet to be seen. It seems to have gone without much visible protest from the people. There have been times in the past when any talk of closing the high school was met with strong opposition.

Starting in the mid-1980's, a number of Legal residents started to pressure the school board requesting the closure of the high school and the transferring of the students to a bigger high school. In the fall of 1988, a meeting was held in the school gymnasium to discuss the viability of the small Legal High School. It was decided at that time by the trustees, superintendent, school administrators and parents to keep the small high school as it

existed in Legal. Five years later, with the opening of a "state of the art" high school in Morinville, the issue of the high school was once again given serious consideration and reviewed thoroughly. This time, it was felt that a move to Morinville was the right thing to do and in 1993, an agreement was reached between the Legal and Morinville boards sending the Legal high school students to Morinville. In relation to this decision, one has to understand that the Government of Alberta was putting a lot of pressure on small school districts to amalgamate with bigger districts. The Legal school trustees knew very well that moving the high school was basically a first step towards this inevitable marriage between the two boards. The decision to move was finally taken in 1993.

1. The district which first bore the name of "Legal School District No. 847" was established some four miles east of the hamlet of Legal in 1903. But in 1907, the name of that district was officially changed to "Diligence School District No. 847". Later that year, the Legal School District No. 1738 was created.
2. *The Literary Gazette*, 1946-1947, Vol. 10. This was a student newspaper begun in 1937 under the direction of Sister Yvette Lapointe, and continuing for more than a decade.
3. *The Literary Gazette*, 1946-1947, Vol. 10.
4. Statistics from Department of Education Student Records, Harley Court Building, 112 Street and Jasper Avenue south
5. Figures for the 1970's and 1980's are from Department of

Education Central Records, Devonian Building, Edmonton. Figures for earlier decades are from old records of Legal School.

*Le district scolaire de Legal #1738 fut établi le 10 décembre 1907. Ulric Marcotte était le commissaire en chef et Léon Savoie, le secrétaire-trésorier. Les frontières s'étendaient de quatre à six milles au sud et au nord, et de même vers l'ouest et l'est.*

*Le 7 juillet 1909, le district scolaire emprunta 800\$ pour acheter du terrain, et bâtir et ameubler une école. J.B. Côté était alors secrétaire. Le site de l'école était à environ un demi-mille de l'intersection des 50e avenue et rue du village d'aujourd'hui. L'école, à cause de sa proximité de la ferme Mercier, était souvent appelée l'école Mercier. Présentement, ce terrain appartient à Walter Van De Walle.*

*En 1914, la commission scolaire louait une maison au village pour accommoder les jeunes des niveaux élémentaires tandis que les plus grands continuaient toujours à aller à l'école Mercier. L'institutrice qui enseignait dans la petite école du village était Mme Marguerite Sigouin qui avait enseigné à l'école Mercier auparavant. Plus tard, après la mort de son mari, elle devint Mme J. Caouette et elle continua d'enseigner pendant plusieurs années pour le district.*



Soeurs Gertrude Courtois (cuisinière), Hélène Bergeron (musicienne), Léda Belley (institutrice), Blanche Lemire (institutrice), Marguerite M. Côté (institutrice qui deviendra directrice l'année suivante), Yvette Lapointe, Soeurs Malvina Letarte (infirmière), Marguerite Langlois (supérieure), Marie-Louise Grégoire (directrice de l'école), Elèves: Léona Proulx, Annette Plotkins, Jeannette Croteau, Cécile Choinière, Irène Croteau, Claire Yvonne Montpetit, Evangéline Plotkins, Marguerite Veilleux, Thérèse Montpetit, Yvette Moreau, Simonne Mageau, 1935

En 1915, le ministre autorisa la construction d'une nouvelle école dans le village de Legal; Joseph Lemire était le trésorier du district. Un édifice à deux étages fut construit et en 1916, l'école Mercier fut déménagée au village avec la nouvelle bâtisse, et une extension fut construite. La population de l'école augmenta continuellement. Cette bâtisse de 1914 devint la première "haute école" (école secondaire) à Legal en 1932. L'école n'avait certes pas les commodités qu'on trouve dans les écoles d'aujourd'hui mais l'éducation se faisait très bien quand même. La première enseignante de la haute école fut Soeur Marguerite Marie Côté.

Durant les années 1930 et 1940, le district scolaire loua des classes du couvent des Soeurs Grises de Legal afin d'accueillir les élèves de l'école. Au début des années 1940, le district construisit une bâtisse avec quatre classes mais avec le feu des années 1940, tout fut détruit. En 1947-1948, un nouvel édifice fut construit sur le terrain de l'autre côté de la rue de l'église, sur le site actuel. En 1973, une construction nouvelle

permet la vente de cette bâtisse. Le club des citoyens d'âge d'or acheta la bâtisse pour 1\$ et en fit un club pour les séniors à proximité du Château Sturgeon aujourd'hui; il s'agit du "Club 60 Roses".

Les années 1945 à 1948 ont vu la fermeture des petites écoles rurales en vue de la centralisation au village de Legal. Les élèves de la campagne sont dorénavant transportés par autobus scolaire à l'école de Legal. Les districts de Diligence, de Fairydell, de Pontiac, de Springfield et de West Legal se rendirent tous à St-Emile à Legal. Pour accommoder tout le monde, quelques-unes des bâtisses sont transportées de la campagne au village.

#### LEGAL COMME MEMBRE DE LA DIVISION DE STURGEON

En 1948, par un commun accord, le district scolaire de Legal s'amalgame avec le district de Sturgeon. La centralisation mentionnée ci-haut se poursuit aussi après l'union des deux districts. En 1952, à cause d'une population croissante, un nouvel édifice fut construit, cette fois avec un



Mrs. Marie-Ange St. Martin's first class, 1940: Réal Bachand, Germain Larose, Ernest de Champlain, Rodolphe Pelletier, Robert Mercier, Jean-Marie Tieulié, Charlie Frigon, Jack Brandon, Robert Préfontaine, ? , Lucien Frigon, Paul-Emile Régimbald, Fred Patry, Roger Garneau, Charlie Julien, Normand St. Jean, Germaine Tieulié, Fernande Martineau, Rita Charrois, Marguerite Frigon, Paul Caouette, ? , Léo Bachand, Léo Roux, Lorette Dutel, Lorette Pelletier, Rita Stack, Jeannine Nault, Armande Martineau, Rita Julien, Mrs. Marie-Ange St. Martin (teacher), Germaine Proulx, Evelyn Massie, Cora Grégoire, Margaret Parent, Roland Charrois, Lorraine Montpetit, Louise Choquette, ? Brandon, Jeannette Dufresne, Antoinette Martineau, Germaine Baert, Madeleine Préfontaine, Juliette Deschatelets, Madeleine Croteau, Beatrice Caron, Thérèse Tieulié, Elza St. Jean, Jeannette Cormier



Annette Plotkins, Peter Titiryn, Rita Coulombe, Conrad Beaudoin, Henry (Sonny) Stack, Charlie Frigon, Josephine Derko, Philippe Baert, Marie Lefebvre, Lionel Larose, Rosita Choquette, Gemma Chamberland, Jean-Charles Bouchard, Blanche Régimbald, Normand Létourneau, Elise Caouette, Adrienne Garneau, Antoinette Cyre, Agnes Cormier, Yvette Deschatelets, Fleur-Ange Lefebvre, Gertrude Cloutier, Evelyn Dochinski, Lorraine Desrosiers, 1941-42



Léo Caouette, Donat Larose, Léo Mercier, Wilfred Régimbald, Eddie Bachand, Omer Caza, Dan Montpetit, Jean Garneau, Jacques Nault, Jean-Marie Potvin, Aurele Desjardins, Emile Bachand, Gratien Martineau, Laurier Régimbald, Marguerite Laforce, Adèle Lamarche, Blanche Pelletier, Yolande Nault, Jeanne Mercier, Anita Martineau, Guy Carrière, Normand Préfontaine, Fernande Préfontaine, Ida Caouette, Denise Baert, Thérèse Desrosiers, Lorette Belley, Gertrude Garneau, Joséphine Patry, Charlie Julien, 1941-1942. Teacher: Mr. Leonard



gymnase. Cette bâtisse, avec quelques additions majeures complétées en 1959, 1974 et 1993, et quelques projets de rénovation au cours des années, compléta la structure de l'école de Legal telle qu'elle est aujourd'hui. L'addition de 1959 consistait d'une aile pour la haute école, d'un gymnase et de l'espace pour des bureaux d'administration. L'ancien gymnase de 1952 devint un endroit pour enseigner l'art industriel pendant quelques années et il fut ensuite converti en centre audio-visuel et salle de récréation. Maintenant cet espace est utilisé comme salle de musique. L'addition de 1974, construite après que Legal se sépara de Sturgeon, comprend l'aile élémentaire, la bibliothèque et de l'espace supplémentaire pour l'administration. A ce temps-là, le district s'est aussi débarrassé des quelques bâtisses qui avaient été transportées des districts ruraux à St-Emile lors de la centralisation.

La séparation de Legal de Sturgeon fut proclamée le 2 août 1966. Vous trouverez le texte ministériel dans la version anglaise de cette histoire.

#### LES SOEURS GRISES ET L'ECOLE

L'histoire de l'école de Legal ne serait pas



Troupe de théâtre, 1944, "Le condolier de la mort" (opéra): Lucien Lorieau, Médard Desrosiers, Léon Dumaine, Réal Caouette, Jean-Charles Bouchard, Henri Toupin

complete si on ne mentionnait pas la grande contribution des religieuses. A partir de 1920 et pour une période de près de 60 ans, les religieuses ont oeuvré au sein de l'école; elles furent institutrices, directrices et toujours présentes d'une façon ou d'une autre auprès des élèves. Pendant plusieurs années aussi, les religieuses ont gardé des pensionnaires qui venaient de différents endroits



Emile Mercier, Roland Montpetit, Paul Gouin, Leonard Hunting, Ernest Pelletier, Brian Cyr, Bernadette Boisvert, Claudette Pelletier, Yvonne Messier, Gloria Luchka, Jimmy Dzeryk, Richard Chwok, Russell Steffes, Rachelle Demers, Lorraine Rivard, Hélène Demers, Ronald Devost, Denis Bergevin, Ronald St. Jean, Yvette Maurier, Juliette L'Heureux, Jeannine Paré, Irène Boisvert, Diane Paré, Cécile Brisson, Bernadette Lavoie, 1956-57. Teacher: Marie Carrière

de la province et qui allaient aussi à l'école de Legal. Ce fut une autre façon d'aider l'école. L'appui que les religieuses ont apporté à l'école et à la communauté de Legal est incomparable. Dans ce livre historique, nous voulons souligner ce fait et nous voulons aussi leur exprimer notre reconnaissance.

Les personnes suivantes ont siégé au sein du conseil scolaire de Sturgeon: Paul Chauvet (1945-1954), Ferdinand Martineau (1945-1950 et 1965-1966), Ladis Messier (1951-1954), Diane Remillard (1958-1965), Charlie Clément (1960) et Harvey St-Onge. En 1966, quand Legal est redevenu un district scolaire indépendant, Harvey St-Onge a continué comme président de la commission scolaire de Legal et il a conservé ce poste pendant plusieurs années.

Durant la période d'inclusion avec Sturgeon, Legal a connu trois surintendants: R.J. Scott, F. Swan et A. Kunst. Durant cette même période, sept directeurs ont oeuvré dans l'école: Soeur Marguerite Marie Côté, Soeur Yvette Lapointe, Ted Tétrault, Robert Couture, Lucien Ouellette, Tom Fink et Dixon Keane. Ce dernier a continué comme directeur après la période d'inclusion.

#### DISTRICT INDEPENDANT DE LEGAL

Après le plébiscite de 1966, Legal redevint un district scolaire indépendant avec le plein pouvoir de légiférer en matière de finances et d'administration scolaire. Les districts scolaires ruraux qui existaient avant 1948 existent encore mais les enfants se rendent tous à l'école de Legal. De tous ces districts, un seul, Bruyère, a choisi de rester avec Sturgeon. Les autres ont tous préféré s'unir avec Legal. Le transfert de Sturgeon à Legal s'est effectué comme avant, y compris le directeur et le directeur-adjoint. Les concierges aussi ont continué leur travail. Dick Hunting et son épouse, Fabiola, concierges depuis les années 1940, gardèrent leurs postes.

Du côté de l'administration centrale, étant donné la légalité de chacun des districts ruraux, il fut convenu et accepté par tous que la commission scolaire de Legal, en plus de ses membres ordinaires, inclurait trois membres de chacun des districts affiliés. Ce système fut mis en pratique pendant quelque temps mais il fut bientôt abandonné pour des raisons d'efficacité.

#### ORGANISATION ACTUELLE

Étant donné l'inefficacité de la grande division avec tous ses représentants mentionnés ci-haut, il fut nécessaire en 1969 de réorganiser toute la gouvernance de l'école. Une nouvelle commission

scolaire fut créée pour inclure tous les districts ruraux et le village de Legal. Cinq commissaires seront dorénavant élus. La représentation est ouverte à tous les districts ruraux, qui par le fait même sont dissous, et le district scolaire de Legal #1738 devient donc le seul district officiel de la région. Les premiers commissaires élus sur cette nouvelle commission scolaire étaient: Doreen Brisson, Allan Keane, William Krauskopf, Roger Préfontaine et Harvey St-Onge. La secrétaire-trésorière était Yvonne Régimbald. A ce temps-là, Legal n'avait pas de surintendant.

Sous la gérance de cette commission, nous avons vu la construction de l'addition de 1974 qui amena finalement toutes les classes sous un même toit. Les bâtisses extérieures furent vendues et déménagées pour mettre fin aux années où les vieilles bâtisses des districts ruraux étaient utilisées comme salles de classe. Une de ces bâtisses fut déménagée sur les rives du Lac La Biche pour être utilisée comme camp d'été pour les enfants de chœur. Une autre, vendue au club des gens d'âge d'or pour 1\$, est devenue le local du "Club 60 Roses".

#### AUTRES RENOVATIONS ET ADDITIONS

En 1983, trois classes portatives sont ajoutées à la structure existante et en 1985, des rénovations majeures sont faites sur la section de 1952. Ces rénovations ont transformé le vieux gymnase en une magnifique salle de musique. En 1990, le district transporte une des portatives de 1983 sur le site de l'école, convertissant ainsi la structure en un bel édifice moderne avec gymnase. Le projet inclut aussi une addition sur le côté nord du gymnase. On y trouve aussi beaucoup d'espace pour l'équipement et l'entreposage ainsi que de l'espace pour un bureau pour les professeurs d'éducation physique.

#### PROGRAMMES D'INSTRUCTION

De "petite école à une classe" des débuts, l'école a continué à progresser au cours des années. Durant les premières 25 années, l'instruction se donne aux niveaux de la première à la neuvième années. Les élèves qui voulaient poursuivre des études plus avancées devaient se rendre à Edmonton ou ailleurs pour recevoir cette instruction. Au début de 1932, des démarches sont faites pour obtenir une haute école. En septembre 1932, Legal offre un programme complet de la première à la 12e années. Cette situation demeura intacte jusqu'en 1980 quand un programme de maternelle fut introduit dans le système. Avant 1980, un programme semblable à celui que l'école

# Annual Financial Statement and Auditor's Report

Legal School District No. 1738 of the Province of Alberta, for the year 1929

NOTICE RE OFFICIAL AUDITORS—According to Section 118 of The School Act, the books and accounts of every rural and village school district are required to be audited in each year by AN OFFICIAL AUDITOR. No audit of the books of any rural or village school district will be accepted, nor will the Government Grant to the district be paid unless the name of the auditor employed appears in the list of official auditors. This list will be published in The Alberta Gazette and forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurers of all school districts towards the close of the year, and no audit for the year should be made until this list has been received. A copy of the Financial Statement and Auditor's Report should be retained by the district, and inserted in the Cash Book; the Cash Books supplied by the Department contain blank pages for this purpose.

## STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

### RECEIPTS

Under this heading should be entered all sums of money actually received between January 1st and December 31st. Moneys received after December 31st should not appear in this statement.

Total Balance on Hand January 1st, \$ 1709.42	Net Balance as at January 1st.	\$ 1433.92
Outstanding Cheques from last year, \$ 275.50	(Deduct outstanding cheques)	
Cash received from debentures sold during the year.....		
Taxes collected for the current year, \$ 1746.73	Arrears, \$ 515.41	5262.14
Taxes received from Municipal Council, \$.....		221.23
Government Grants received by Treasurer, \$ 291.64; by Teacher, \$.....; in Library Books, \$.....		791.64
Amount the Trustees borrowed by note during the year, \$.....		
Amount the Trustees borrowed from the Government during the year \$.....		
Received from other sources (give particulars) <i>Stephan pupils</i> \$ 99.97		99.97
\$.....		
\$.....		
Cash temporarily advanced by Treasurer, \$.....; Bank Overdraft, \$.....		
<b>TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS.....</b>		<b>\$ 7808.90</b>

### PAYMENTS

Under this heading should be entered all sums of money actually paid out between January 1st and December 31st. Moneys paid out after December 31st should not appear in this statement.

Paid Teachers' Salaries, \$ 3400.00; By Government Grant, \$.....		\$ 3400.00
Paid Officials' Salaries, Secretary, Treasurer, Assessor, Auditor, etc.....		2600.00
Paid on Debentures (this should include only the amount paid during the year).....		
Paid on account of Notes, \$ 700.00; Interest, \$ 114.80		814.80
Paid for erecting and repairing school house, stable, outhouses, etc.....		274.84
Paid for purchasing and improving school grounds, fence, well, etc.....		
Paid for furniture—desks, cupboards and stove.....		457.83
Paid for school library and reference books (including library books in lieu of cash grants).....		
Paid for apparatus and equipment—globe, maps, charts, reading tablets, etc.....		138.38
Paid for supplies, stationery, postage, chalk, brushes, pails, etc.....		381.40
Paid for caretaking, \$ 269.50; Fuel, \$ 111.90		
Paid for Insurance, \$.....		
Paid for other purposes (give particulars) <i>Com. 35.00 Bond 2.00 aff 3.25 40.25</i>		
<i>Com. M. D. 11.30 Misc 321.80 Exchange 2.05 Lunch Camp 3.00 340.15</i>		538.40
<i>Christmas Tree 20.00 Auction fee 30.00 30.00 89.00</i>		
<i>School Fair 45.00 part of loan 24.00 89.00</i>		
Actual Cash in Hands of Treasurer \$ 451.57	<b>TOTAL CASH PAYMENTS.....</b>	<b>\$ 6265.65</b>
Total Bank Balance (Including o/s cheques) \$ 1091.68		
Total Balance \$ 1543.25		
Outstanding Cheques \$.....	Net Balance as at December 31st, 1929.....	\$ 1543.25
Net Balance (After deducting o/s cheques) \$ 1543.25	(N.B.—The Cash Book Balance and Net Balance must agree.)	

I, Arthur Canive hereby certify that I have examined all the books, vouchers, minutes of meeting, etc., of the Legal s. D. No. 1738 of the Province of Alberta for the fiscal year ending December 31, 1929, and I further certify that I have counted the cash and examined the Bank Books, or obtained information from the Bank regarding the Bank Balance, showing that there is a balance on hand represented by

(a) Actual cash in hands of Treasurer, \$ 451.57

(b) Total Bank Balance \$ 1091.68

or, That the overdraft amounts to only \$.....

I have found vouchers and authorization for all the items with the exception of.....

Arthur Canive  
Official Auditor

DATE OF AUDIT: January 9th 1930 (OVER)

offrait maintenant était disponible par l'intermédiaire d'organisations privées. On se souvient très bien des petites classes de Lucienne Montpetit et de Soeur Corriveau dans le centre récréatif, qui est maintenant le site de l'école francophone. L'addition de la maternelle fut bienvenue par l'école et par les parents de l'époque. En 1993, l'école de Legal redevint une école de la maternelle à la neuvième année avec la fermeture de la haute école.

Du point de vue des programmes d'instruction, l'école de Legal a toujours suivi les structures du Département de l'Éducation de l'Alberta. En plus, le district offrait des cours de religion et de français afin de satisfaire aux besoins de la population de Legal qui était majoritairement catholique et francophone. Avant les années 1980, l'école offrait le cours de français de l'Association des Educateurs Bilingues de l'Alberta, d'une durée d'une heure par jour. Ce cours était offert aux élèves d'origine francophone dont la langue parlée à la maison était le français. Un cours de français oral était offert aux élèves d'origine non francophone qui voulaient apprendre le français. Les cours de français 10, 20 et 30 étaient aussi disponibles à la haute école. En 1980, le programme d'immersion fut introduit dans la programmation de l'école. Dorénavant, le français devenait langue d'enseignement plutôt que tout simplement un sujet de classe. Selon le niveau, le français pouvait être employé dans la salle de classe jusqu'à 75% du temps. Il y a encore un programme d'immersion à l'école de Legal aujourd'hui.

Le District de Legal a aussi toujours pourvu à sa population catholique en offrant des cours de religion à tous les niveaux. En fait, une des raisons pour laquelle Legal avait choisi de se séparer de Sturgeon était bel et bien la question de religion. On voulait tout simplement s'assurer que l'enseignement de la religion soit toujours sauvegardé. Ce n'est que vers les 1980 que l'intérêt pour l'enseignement de la religion commença à diminuer. Vers 1985, malgré la promotion de la religion à l'école, les nombres devinrent tellement petits que le cours fut finalement enlevé de la liste des cours actifs. Cependant, la possibilité de la réintégrer au programme demeurait toujours ouverte si les nombres revenaient.

Au début des années 1980, un programme de musique est additionné au répertoire de l'école. D'abord, il s'agit d'un programme de guitare pour les élèves du secondaire premier cycle, mais sous peu, un programme de fanfare ("band") est établi pour les mêmes élèves et ceux de la haute école.

L'année suivante, même les élèves de la cinquième et sixième pouvaient faire partie du programme de fanfare.

A peu près en même temps, un programme de théâtre est mis sur pied à l'école de Legal. Une classe est convertie en salle d'art dramatique et sous peu, la troupe d'acteurs présente sa première production, "The Scrooge". Ce fut un grand succès. La troupe de théâtre existe encore aujourd'hui et leur dernière présentation eut lieu lors de l'ouverture officielle de la nouvelle section de l'école en 1993.

#### POPULATION

Au cours des années, la population du district de Legal s'est maintenue dans les 375 à 400 élèves et parfois même un peu plus. En 1990, le District Scolaire de Legal ouvrit une école francophone dans le district sur le site du centre récréatif. Il y eut à ce moment des transferts d'élèves d'une école à l'autre et aussi l'arrivée de certains élèves des districts environnants qui vinrent se joindre au district, mais les nombres demeurèrent généralement stables. Il est à espérer qu'un jour les nombres augmenteront avec l'école francophone. En 1993, avec la fermeture de la haute école à Legal, les nombres ont diminué considérablement.

#### SURINTENDANTS

Depuis 1980, le District Scolaire de Legal a eu cinq surintendants: Eldon Bliss, Richard Martin, François Boulet, Sandra Umpleby et Lee Lucente, assisté par Marguerite McVea.

#### DIRECTEURS

Depuis 1966, le District Scolaire a eu les directeurs suivants: Dixon Keane (1963-1976), Raymond Tremblay (1976-1990), Richard Roberts (1990-1992) et Jim Montpetit (1992 à présent).

Dans les 1980, les parents de Legal ont commencé à suggérer qu'on ferme la haute école de Legal afin que leurs enfants puissent aller à une plus grande école (à Morinville). En automne 1988, on organisa une réunion afin de discuter le futur de la haute école de Legal, mais conseillers, surintendant et parents décidèrent de ne rien changer. Cinq ans plus tard, avec l'ouverture d'une impressionnante nouvelle école à Morinville, on décida d'envoyer les élèves de Legal à Morinville pour leur éducation secondaire.

#### **Pontiac School District No. 4316 - District Scolaire de Pontiac No. 4316**

On October 31, 1927, the Pontiac School District No. 4316 was established. The senior trustee and treasurer at the time was C.W. Kirby

of Legal. A two-acre school site was approved on the SW-15-57-25-W4 in April 1928. That summer, the school district borrowed the sum of \$2,000 for the purpose of building and equipping the school and stable, and paying for the site.

Pontiac School opened for classes September 1928 with approximately 20 students in grades one to eight. The school was located on the southwest corner of the Steffes farm, one and three quarter miles west and two miles south of Legal. It was a frame and siding building on a concrete foundation with no basement. On the west side, there was the ball diamond which we shared with the gophers. The rest of the grounds had trees and underbrush.

The Pontiac School District No. 4316 comprised the following lands: Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 15 and 16; the west half of Sections 11 and 14; the south half and northeast quarter of Section 20; the south half of Section 21; and the southwest quarter of Section 22, in Township 57, Range 25, West of the fourth meridian.

Sports were often the students' own invention and the teacher often joined the fun. Woollen

socks were sewn together to make a ball for playing football. Packed snow or ice would be the puck, and willow clubs, the sticks used in playing hockey. Other favorites were hide and seek, tag, and fox and goose. In summer, we played ball or just plain "scrub", if there were not enough players for two teams. Drinking water was hauled to school, usually in a cream can by students who came to school with a cart and horse. For this, the family received \$3 per month. About 1941, a water well was drilled which supplied water for a few years. However, it soon dried up and it was back to the cream can again.

In 1939, the district was constituted in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. Ernest Meaden of Edmonton was the secretary-treasurer of the division. In 1966, the Pontiac School District was excluded from the Sturgeon School Division. All the pupils in grades one to 9 were sent to school in the Legal School District No. 1738 and the Pontiac School District was dissolved. On August 1, 1969, these lands were taken from the Pontiac School District No. 4316 and added to the Legal School District No. 1738.



Class of 1932 (Teacher Clyna Morin): Sally Laing, Alma Bredoff, Laura Krauskopf, Louise Krauskopf, Jeanne Meunier, Jeannette Meunier, Anne Krauskopf, Cecilia Krauskopf, Albina Krauskopf, Sylvain LeFebvre, Hermas LeFebvre, Dennis Laing, Emmanuel Racine, Jack Laing, Yvon LeFebvre, Aloysius Kieser, ? , Daniel LeFebvre, Lena Bredoff, Fleur-Ange LeFebvre, Laurette Forcade, Lucien Lorieau, Marcelle Lorieau, Rita Racine, Dorothy Kieser, Madeline Kieser



Pontiac School pupils, 1932: Laura Krauskopf, Jeanne Meunier, Louise Krauskopf, Evelyn Kirby, Priscille LeBlanc, Sylvain Lefebvre, Aloysius (Red) Krauskopf, Dennis Laing, Gérard LeBlanc, Yvon Lefebvre, Jeannette Meunier, Alma Bredoff, Jeannette Caouette, Dan Lefebvre, Clyna Morin (teacher), Hermas Lefebvre, Al Keiser, Jack Laing, Etienne LeBlanc, Cecilia Krauskopf, Albina Krauskopf, Sally Laing, Denise LeBlanc, Helen Caouette

**Some of the teachers we remember – Enseignantes:** Yvonne (Tellier) Savoie (1928), Dorothy Daignault (1929-1930), Clyna Morin (1931-1932), Helen Dutel (1933-1934), Marie-Ange Meunier (1935-1938), Célestine Robin (1938-1940), and from 1941 to 1944: Clara Baert, Aline Caouette, Dorina Carrière, Marie (Lafond) Wascowich, Anne Lafond and Thérèse (Landry) Stack. Berthe Rouault and Jeannette Provost (Roger Létourneau) taught in 1945.

**Some of the trustees – Commissaires:** C.W. Kirby, Leonard Keiser, Lionel Forcade and Joe Krauskopf.

**Some of the pupils and their parents – Etudiants et leurs parents:**

Parents:	Pupils:
Art Racine	Emmanuel, Edna, Thérèse
Etienne Caouette	.....
Louis Caouette	Hélène, Jeannette
Bill Pempite	.....
Lionel Forcade	Ernie, Laurette, Léonard, Vincent
Clarence Steffes	Joe, Don, Warren, Bryan
Camille Cornelis	John, Madeleine
C.W. Kirby	Bert, Evelyn
Jimmie Laing	Jack, Dennis, Sally

Wilfred Meunier  
Henri Lefebvre

Adrien Pelletier

Etienne LeBlanc  
Adelard Leduc  
Bill Bredof  
Fred Bauer  
Guillaume Martineau  
J.B. Coulombe  
Henri Lorieau

Mr. Holmston  
Mike Kozlowski  
Evangéliste Valiquette  
Eugène Pelletier  
Mr. Orloski  
Sam Bauer  
Oscar Monoham  
Leonard Keiser

Joe Krauskopf

.....  
.....

Jeanne, Jeannette  
Louis, Dan, Sylvain, Fleurette,  
Ernie, Yvon, Hermas  
Antonio, Annette, Agnes, Lucien  
Bergevin (Mrs. Pelletier's brother,  
stayed with Adrien's family)  
Etienne, Gérard, Priscille, Denise  
Jean Paul, Georgette, Victoria  
Alma, Lena  
.....  
Anita, Marguerite  
Thérèse  
Lucien, Marcelle, Fleurette, Aline,  
Maurice  
Mickey, Helmer  
Stanley  
Antoinette, Henri, Laurier, Lionel  
Marcel, Emile, Olive  
Alex, Olga, Agata  
Edward, Leo  
.....  
Aloysius, Madelaine, Dorothy, Ben,  
Bernardine, Helen, Henry, August  
Bill, Aloysius, Theresa, Leonard,  
Louise, Laura, Catherine, Ann,  
Cecilia,  
Albina, Mary, Ralph  
Henri Lefebvre lived with Noël  
Pelletier

Permara St. Pierre  
 Lucile Lafond (sister of Anna  
 Lafond, teacher)  
 Jane Fredrich

Celebration by the Red Cross Committee,  
 Pontiac School (1941):

Executive Programme

President:  
 Helmer Holmstrom

1. Vacation by Leonard
2. An Apple for the Teacher  
 - by Ralph
3. A Prisoner's Song - by Helen

Vice-President:  
 Sally Laing

4. The Two Rabbits - by Violet
5. "Miss You" - by Mary
6. Good Luck - The Little Ones

Secretary:  
 Jean Paul Leduc

7. The Woodpecker Song - by Agnes
8. Maria Elena - by Maurice Lorieau
9. "Farewell" - by Miss Baert

Director:  
 Miss Baert

10. She's a Jolly Good Teacher  
 - by the class
11. Wish Her Luck

Anecdotes: Pranks were played in every school and Pontiac was no exception. The Board of Health supplied cod liver oil to all the students during the winter. Sometimes, a pill would find its way to the top of the furnace and that created quite an aroma! Another favorite prank was to put a bird or a mouse in the teacher's desk. Of course, no one was ever guilty. One fine spring day, a skunk left its perfume on the school foundation. It was quite a few days before we had pure, clean air again!

*Le District Scolaire de Pontiac No. 4316 a été établi le 31 octobre 1927, avec C.W. Kirby de Legal comme trésorier. Le site choisi fut le coin sud-est de la terre des Steffes, à un mille et trois quarts à l'ouest et à deux milles au sud de Legal. L'école ouvrit ses portes en septembre 1928, avec environ 20 étudiants, de la première à la huitième années. Du côté ouest de l'école, il y avait un terrain de balle qui devait être partagé avec les gophers. La*



Elèves de l'Ecole Pontiac, 1930-1931



The cart that was used by the Krauskopf children to go to school. Ralph is on the horse; his father, Joe, is in the cart

*plupart des jeux étaient inventés par les étudiants et leurs professeurs. L'eau était transportée dans les canisses de lait. On creusa un puits en 1941, mais il assécha bientôt.*

*La dernière année de fonctionnement de l'école Pontiac fut en 1947-1948. Les élèves de la première à la 9e années furent ensuite transportés par autobus à Legal. L'école elle-même a été déménagée aussi à Legal où elle a servi de salle de classes quelques années, puis d'entrepôt.*

*En 1939, le territoire du district de Pontiac fut transféré à la Division Scolaire Sturgeon No. 24. En 1966, le District Scolaire de Pontiac fut retiré de la Division de Sturgeon et il fut dissous.*

### **Redwater River School No. 2353** (Later Gill Grant School District No. 2353)

**by Emile Andrusiw (research) & Brian L. Spiers (writing)**

When Charley Grant and his wife moved from Half Moon Lake and bought a store and a quarter section two and a half miles to the west, they knew the land was going to produce grain. But what they could never have guessed was that in time, a little piece of their 160 acres was destined to yield a return of a very different kind. There, on just two acres, would flourish a perennial crop of educated young minds, a harvest that would enrich the quality of life, often well beyond its simple rural setting.

By 1910, with an ever-growing number of young families with children settling in the district, the need for a local school had become pressing. Consequently, the Redwater River School District No. 2353 was officially established on January 4, 1911, as part of the Sturgeon School Division. The Board of Trustees was headed by Steve Gill of Waugh, while Mr. Bader served as treasurer.

Following careful deliberations and assessment of where might be the most suitable site for the proposed school, it was decided that the southwest corner of the SE-1-59-24-W4 would be the best choice and Mr. Grant was approached. Following the traditional method of raising funds for the project, \$1,200 was borrowed upon the security of the district. This sum covered the land purchase, building and equipping the school, and the essential digging of a well. Construction was commenced and the school was officially opened shortly afterwards, with Mr. Donnelly installed as the first in a long line of teachers.

Education, particularly in those earliest years of the school, was viewed by parents as a vital asset, up to a point. Many of these good folk had immigrated from Ukraine or Poland, and while some were quite well-educated, many more were barely literate in their own language and naturally had often no knowledge of English or French. For the majority, the word "education" was equated with the ability to read, write and sign one's own name. Once those skills had been more or less acquired, then one's child could be called educated.

This sort of perspective meant that if a child who had started out at Redwater River School ended up with a teaching certificate, as some did, their achievement was held in the highest possible regard. They were accorded the same level of respect as doctors or lawyers today.

In those years, grades one through eight were taught during the regular school term, while pupils who were to move up into grade nine were given a head start. An instructor would be hired from "outside". He or she would come into the school during part of the summer holidays, especially to initiate grade nine subjects with these students, in a class of what usually amounted to two or three. The school building was also utilized during some portion of the summer holidays by a group of Catholic nuns who held their catechism classes there.

In the earliest years, Mr. Smith, one of the first teachers, took it upon himself to teach evening classes to those in their teens who had had little or no education as a result of having to share the burden of farm work. This would explain why there were times when he would appear too tired to teach his day class. He would put his feet up on his desk, tell the class to carry on with their reading work, and close his eyes in sweet repose!

Notwithstanding most parents' passion for ensuring their offspring receive an education, their



good intentions were not always compatible with the demands of life on the farm. And kids being kids, they tended to be unusually cooperative when it came to complying with their parents' order to "skip a bit of school and help with the harvest". The boys in particular were apt to be found more in the fields than in their desks during the busier times of the year. In spring, there were cattle to watch, to make sure they didn't stray into the grain. In the fall, there was the urgent call to go stooking and stacking hay. Sometimes in winter, the attendance record wasn't that perfect either. If there didn't happen to be a heated, one-horse caboose available, who could expect a little boy or girl to show up for classes three or four miles from home when the mercury stood at  $-40^{\circ}$ ?

In the history of the school, there was a succession of loyal trustees, men dedicated to high standards of integrity and efficiency that ensured the business of educating the children went forward as smoothly and economically as possible. In the early years of the school's operation, notable examples are found in Anton Dwornik of Waugh (treasurer) and Bert Marchak (secretary), followed by long-serving secretary, Nick Marchak. Hard-working board members included Frank Andrusiw, the brothers Louie and Dan McDonald, Joe Patry and Joe Zilinski.

One of the board's many duties was to apply for whatever grants the school was entitled to receive from the Provincial Department of Education. Some of these were for considerable sums; others, in the light of today's astronomical costs for everything, give us cause to smile a little. An extract from a list of science equipment for which a 50% grant was payable, runs as follows: one horseshoe magnet (36¢), one alcohol lamp (72¢), three feet of rubber tubing (54¢), 12 #10 corks (24¢) and 12 test tubes (34¢). The total bill amounted to \$12.25 and the Department duly paid its share of \$6.13.

By 1929, a combination of natural deterioration and changes in Department regulations, resulted in some major remodelling. A sum of \$1,000 was borrowed to meet the expenses. A concrete foundation was poured to replace the original one of stone, and a brand new floor was installed. The school had a number of windows on the east and west sides. New regulations called for a new, single set of eight windows on the east side of the building, which was judged to provide better quality light for study. A couple of small windows were placed high in the west wall chiefly for ventilation. Rounding out the improvements

was the upgrading of insulation and the replacement of the original cylindrical stove with a brand new pot-bellied model that would burn both wood and coal.

It should be noted that Redwater River School, like most rural schools of the era, often functioned as a community centre as well as schoolhouse. Family dances, lectures, an occasional movie show and parties all took place there. Outside on the skating rink, moccasin dances were held, with Abe Harper and his band providing music from the shelter of their caboose which would be parked alongside the rink. And of course there was plenty of skating activity too. The boys were the privileged ones because most of them owned skates. The girls, however, had to be content to beg, borrow or steal the boys' blades and do the best they could. This often meant tottering around the ice in boots several sizes too large.

If some of the teaching methods used in the school would seem dull by today's standards because of their dependence on repetition, the system produced good results. Besides which, day-to-day life at Redwater River School was anything but boring. In winter, there was the challenge of the chilly walk to school, often a distance of several miles. The McDonalds had a novel way of making their two-mile trek a lot easier; they had their own dogteam. Not huskies, just regular sturdy yard dogs. The boys would harness them to their sleigh or toboggan, and away they'd go, mushing all the way to school, where the dogs would be left outside. The only problem was that the faithful animals got so well trained, that they could sense exactly when it was time to leave for home. This they did on several occasions; leaving their young trio of passengers back in the schoolroom as class ran a few minutes overtime! The solution was found in bringing the dogs into the porch at afternoon recess, and only releasing them when it was time for the return journey.

Then there was the business of thawing sandwiches on the stove, where they sometimes ended up toasted. The typical lunch box was generally a honey, syrup or lard pail with the lid pierced with "breathing holes". The contents varied, often depending on the financial circumstances of the family. The better-off always had proper sandwiches made with bread and perhaps an apple. Some of the less fortunate might have to subsist on simple bannock spread with lard, but a lot of food swapping went on, so in the end, everyone got some of whatever they enjoyed most.

When the wind was in the wrong quarter,

smoke would issue from the stove causing the eyes to run. When the wooden floor had been freshly oiled, the odour could be so strong that it sometimes caused outbreaks of nausea.

Swapping sandwiches was not the only kind of transaction in which pupils engaged. Many a budding entrepreneur served his or her apprenticeship while receiving their "formal" education at Redwater River School. One of the most popular enterprises was catching gophers with a trap made of twine and a leather bootlace. The teacher was authorized to pay 5¢ for each gopher tail brought in, under the rules of the pest control program. Likewise, crowsfeet carried their own bounty. In the early 1920's, chicken eggs would fetch a penny each, and sneaking a few from out of the coop was a relatively easy undertaking. When presented over the counter at Mr. Grant's store, each egg would buy the devious nest-raider a delicious chocolate covered marshmallow teddybear or other tasty treats. Mr. Grant's store was also the place where you bought a new scribbler or an extra pencil, but once in a while, supplies ran out. Then there was no choice in the matter. Mr. Grant had to leave his work, hitch the horses to the wagon and gallop off to meet the train in Vimy, eight miles west of the school. There, he would pick up the all-important shipment, which usually included groceries as well.

Pranks of all kinds were common throughout the history of the school. Some were highly inventive, others benign. A favorite pastime in the summer was to visit the outhouse, which was some distance from the building, and simply stay there. Time could easily be wiled away by just sitting with the door wide open, daydreaming and happily watching the men working the land off in the distance. With enrollment being as high as 45 at one point, it was little wonder that the absence of just one pupil would pass unnoticed.

Other diversions ranged from the ever-popular submersion of little girls' golden tresses in the murky depths of little boys' inkwells, to depositing a live gopher in teacher's desk and observing the startled tutor's reactions. One escapade, a classic of its kind, ended quite dramatically. By placing a chair atop a desk, positioned directly beneath the attic trapdoor, a group of boys sent one of their number up into the attic space to investigate. Before he could get down again, the teacher was spied approaching. The desk and chair were hurriedly replaced just in time and the lesson began. It was not long however, before the young adventurer in the rafters felt the call of nature, and

after some suspicious creaking sounds above, and stifled giggling below in the classroom, he was forced into the open; a red-faced sorry figure of a lad in total disgrace.

But there was more than one good-natured teacher in those good old days; on April Fool's Day, they would sometimes draw a giant, funny, laughing face behind the roll-up map. When it was time for the lesson to commence, he or she would activate the roller mechanism, the map would retract with a bang and the funny picture would be exposed to the surprise and delight of everyone.

The first sign of spring? When the girls abandoned their thick long stockings and replaced them with lightweight socks. But without doubt, the most exciting event of the school year was the Christmas concert. The Redwater River School, suitably decorated with a real spruce or pine tree, complete with candles burning, was the setting for a variety of lively entertainments put on by the children and performed to the accolades of their doting parents. No one minded if Santa's suit was homemade and didn't fit quite as well as it should, or that his beard was really only cotton wool, and no one cared if the hurricane lamps the guests had to bring for extra light sputtered and flared too much from lack of oxygen in the tightly packed room. Olga's singing was lovely, Johnny's recitation was stirring, and the Three Musketeers acted as well as any Douglas Fairbanks! Everyone always had a good time, and every child received a gift from Santa. This consisted of a brown paper bag with the child's name on it, filled with mixed nuts, Christmas candy and the greatest prize of all, a Japanese orange!

The school also had an excellent ball team. In the early 1930's, they had regular hardball matches with Half Moon Lake School and in those days, teams had to walk three miles to play. Thankfully, later on, Marcel Patry provided transportation for the team in his truck.

In 1932, the Board of Trustees applied to the Chief Inspector of Schools for authorization to incorporate grade nine into the regular school year. After the local inspector had carried out his evaluation of the school, its equipment and the experience of the teacher, permission was granted beginning in the fall term of that same year. It would seem that by this time, nothing further was needed for the school. The building had been properly upgraded and a barn for the horses had been added. Yet one item was still lacking - a teacherage.

While having teachers board with area families

worked quite satisfactorily, there were obvious advantages to having a teacher live right on site, but there was a problem. The school site was only two acres and the regulations stipulated that to add a teacherage, a minimum of three acres was required. Fortunately, the board was able to buy the extra acre from Nick Gulka (SE-1-59-24-W4). So, with the land issue settled, bids were called for the construction of the teacherage in 1933. The lowest of these was submitted by well-known local builder, Peter Bociak; he was also the contractor for the church in Waugh. The cost of building the teacherage was fixed at \$475 and the project was completed on that basis. Nearly 50 years later, when the school closed and the teacherage moved from the site, that one acre was sold back to the Gulka family.

January 3, 1939, the Redwater River School Division was amalgamated into the Sturgeon School Division No. 24, and January 1, 1947, the Redwater River School Division was amalgamated into the Thorhild School Division No. 57. The change was made, "from the top" as a result of redrawn boundaries. The board and community branded the action heavy-handed. Not an unreasonable position to take, as they'd not been asked for any input prior to the changeover. Three years later, in 1950, another issue came along to occupy the minds of the board - a change in the name of the school. Up to this point, the School District that served the Town of Redwater was named Ufford No. 2358, because for a long time Redwater itself had not been large enough to support a school of its own. But times were changing and the time had arrived for Redwater to have a school in its own community. It was plain to see that if two different schools with "Redwater" in their names were allowed to exist within a few miles of each other, there would be much confusion. Someone had to give ground, and because Redwater was already a well-established placename, Redwater River School had to do the giving. New names given consideration included Sun Set, Patry (after one of the pioneer families), Brandle and Gill Grant. The final choice was Gill Grant and it was a very appropriate one. Charley Grant had owned the land on which the school had been built in the first place and in time, he had sold it to Billy Gill. The designated district number remained unchanged (2353). With a further redrawing of boundaries in 1954, the district was consolidated into the Westlock School Division No. 37.

A deadline in the size of families and a new

directive, governing the number of grades that one teacher could instruct, signalled the end of the Gill Grant school. In the fall of 1952, after 41 years of operation, the last 15 pupils were transferred to the Dunrobin School in nearby Vimy and the school closed its doors. An era had ended. A teacher who taught in the 1940's, whose maiden name was Miss Holmes, recalled for us some of her impressions:

Although there was a teacherage, I opted to stay with the Gulka family and was made to feel very much part of that family, very much at home. We had a good janitor, Henry Zapalsky, so I didn't have to get an early morning fire started. Classes began at 9:30 a.m. and ended at 3:30 p.m. I was paid a salary of \$60 per month, \$25 of which was needed to pay my board and room.

We taught the three R's, plus a range of other subjects. The "Enterprise" method was used at that time, where for example, one country would be taken as a focal point, and the various school subjects were taught in ways that related to that country. We had many nationalities in the class; Polish, French, Ukrainian, English and they all got along very well. A teacher was very close to the community in those days. One big help were the occasional Saturday night parties, which were held in a different parent's home each time, on a more or less rotating basis. If a disciplinary problem should arise which was very rare back then, one word to the parent would ensure the matter would be resolved in the home.

There was a great deal of respect for the teacher, both in and out of school. I look back on my time at the Redwater River School with a real sense of fondness - it was a good time to be a teacher.

1952 may have been the end of the school, but it certainly wasn't the end of the school building. The following year, the sale of the school was approved, and it was purchased by the Waugh Polish Society for just \$315. It was moved down the road to Waugh, remodelled and enlarged; as of this date, it still serves the community for a wide variety of functions. The old school lives on through its enduring building and in the lives of those it helped to educate.

Here, in approximate chronological order, is a list of the teaching staff that served the school: **1911-1929:** Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Turner; **The teens and 1920's:** Mr. Thurston, Charley Smith, Miss Yak, Claude Reed and Miss Plumley; **1930-1939:** Miss Hall, Miss Morrison, Miss Thomas, Miss Anderson, Mr. Connelly and Mr. Peacock; **1940's and 1950's:** Sophie Kordyban, Catherine Holmes, Annie Pundyk, Nettie Gurba, Lettie McMillan, Mr. Sherbaniuk and Stephanie Kolba.

### **St. Emile School District #1443 - District scolaire de St-Emile**

At the request of the residents of this pioneer settlement, the St. Emile School District #1443 was

established by order of the Minister of Education on December 27, 1905. The name St. Emile was derived from the first Christian name of His Excellency Emile Joseph Legal, the first Roman Catholic Bishop of Edmonton.

Among the settlers of this region, a board of trustees was chosen: Gédéon Demers, Alphonse Garneau and Emile Casavant, who was also secretary-treasurer. Gédéon Demers donated a parcel of land on the northeast corner of his land, the NW-35-57-25-W4, for the school site. In 1907, the board borrowed \$700 to build a school, with Patrice Létourneau as contractor. A well was dug and fencing put into place. January 13, 1928, Arthur Carrière was employed as secretary-treasurer for St. Emile School District.



Ecole St. Emile School, 1910-1911: Antoinette Demers, Alice Létourneau, Blanche Demers, Eva Lemire, François Coulombe, Alfred Garneau, Alphonse Lamarche, Dominique Coulombe, Adelard Garneau, Aimé Casavant, Ernest Létourneau, Clara Garneau, Eva de Champlain, Anna Létourneau, Ernest Bachand, Jeremie Létourneau, Freddie Casavant, Rosée Létourneau, Emma Létourneau, Marguerite Coulombe, Alex Garneau, Louise Garneau, Blanche de Champlain, Salomé Létourneau, Cécile Létourneau, Arthur Garneau, Rodolphe (Duffy) Garneau, Emile Coulombe. Teacher/Institutrice (acadienne): Mlle Lina Arsenault

With a directive from the Alberta Government on September 14, 1933, the school site had to be purchased from Willie Demers, son of Gédéon. The transaction had to be made in order for the school site to receive a legal registered title. January 14, 1935, Oscar Patry was hired as secretary-treasurer.

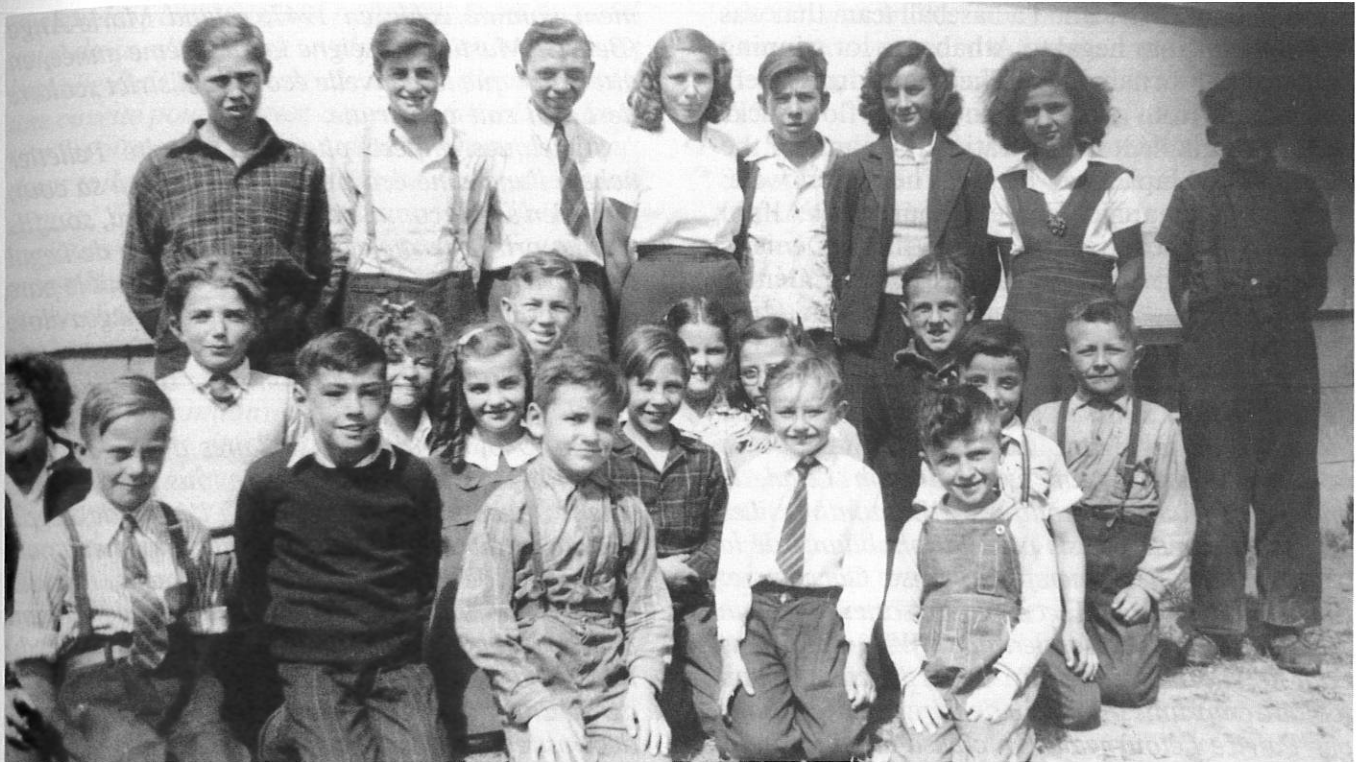
With the approval of both boards, January 3, 1939, the St. Emile School District was amalgamated in the Sturgeon School Division #24. Under this new divisional board of trustees in 1939, a decision was made by Harry Speers, John Holmes, Joe Dusseault, Angus McGillis and M.D.

Tkachuk to build a new school, to replace the old 1907 building. The construction of the new school was contracted for \$2,900 by Joseph St. Martin. Pierre Frigon was hired as the main carpenter at 45¢ per hour.

It is noteworthy that since 1937 (by Ministerial Order), the students of grade nine to 12 had to attend high school in the village of Legal. At that time, there were no school buses, therefore these high school students had to organize their own transportation or accommodation in the village. After the building of this new school, the 1907 school was sold for \$1 to the Legal Sports Club, under the leadership of Reverend Georges Primeau, then vicar of the parish. The old building was set on two big green poplar trees, skidded on frozen ground covered with a thin layer of snow, by Léon Préfontaine with his big 99 Oliver tractor, known as "Popeye". Two witnesses can today attest to this special event, Henri Garneau and Emilien Coulombe. The school was then moved alongside the old open-air skating rink behind the hardware and building supplies store owned by Albert Lumber Co. Ltd. which is north of the I.D.A. Drug Store today. This same old building was used for sports activities of all kinds. Moreover, it served again temporarily as a school, where Marie-Ange (Ben) St. Martin taught grade four from January to September 1947, while a new school was being built for the Legal School District.

A couple of years later, this old school was purchased by André Pelletier and transported to his yard, now the Knights of Columbus Park, and used as a garage and storage building. Years later, Lucien Pelletier, André's son, took over the farm and sold the yard lay-out to the Village of Legal for development. Lucien had to relocate on a new site on the same section, so he transported the old building once again in this new yard which is situated today across the road from the new 1992 Village of Legal pump house and reservoir. Finally, the old St. Emile School was burned to make way for new buildings.

In 1945, an agreement between the Legal School District and the St. Emile School District was signed to have all children bused to Legal School. At that time, all the other surrounding school districts followed suit, except Bruyère School District. Students from grades one to 9 attended Legal School. Due to the increase in student population, the new St. Emile School was moved to the premises of the Legal Village School. December 17, 1964, the county approved the sale



St. Emile School students, 1945-46

of the St. Emile school site to Marguerite (Demers) Magnan for \$200. Mrs. Magnan was then the owner of the remaining 158 acres since 1943. In later years, this quarter section, including the title to the old school site, was purchased by Fernand De Champlain.

On August 10, 1966, the St. Emile School District, along with surrounding districts including the Legal School District #1738, were all excluded from the Sturgeon School Division, except the Bruyère School District which requested to stay within the Sturgeon School Division. Effective August 1, 1969, the following school districts were dissolved: Diligence #847, St. Emile #1443, Springfield #1495, West Legal #3315 and Pontiac #4316.

The last trustees to serve on the St. Emile School District #1443 were Emilien Coulombe, Adelard De Champlain and Henri Montpetit.

*Teachers:*

The first teacher at St. Emile School was Patrick Monaghan, in-law to the Alphonse Garneau family. Other teachers through the years were: Lisa Arsenaault, Miss Lepage, Gérard Forcade, Marie Lavoie, Mr. Lalonde, Marcel Denault, Frances (Faure) Tellier, Mrs. Bird, Jeannette (Dupuis) Nobert, Marie (Melchior) Carrière, Albert Shank, Hermas (Buck) Lefebvre, Dave Krupa and Dixon Keane. (There could be others.)

*Memories of the 1907 school:* Like other schools of the era, a big "pot-belly" furnace

occupied a prominent place just off-center at the back of the one-room building with a stove pipe that came from the top of the furnace straight up to about two feet from the ceiling and which went right across the center into a brick chimney, built on a specially made shelf. During cold weather, especially if a backdraft happened, smoke would come out through the pipe joints and fill the upper part of the classroom. It would not take too long for the children to have red and itchy eyes. In another corner was a home-made table with a pail of drinking water and a fair-sized dipper hanging on the wall. A wash basin, a bar of home-made soap, a face cloth and a towel occupied the rest of the table. This was the corner washroom. Two little outhouses, close to the back of the yard with the word "Girls" on one and "Boys" on the other were always busy! A big wooden bin at the back of the school stored firewood and coal. Many students recall one joyous incident at the year-end party in the mid-1930's. Oscar Caron offered his brand new grain truck to transport all the students in the open grain box for a year-end outing and picnic at Island Lake, east of Clyde. Our reliable chauffeur was Edgar Caron. All the kids, young and old, had an exciting trip, going for a dip, gunny-sack racing, softball games and lunch to top the day's festivities. What a treat!

*Baseball team recognized:* In the 1920's, the St.

Emile School District had a baseball team that was well-known from Legal to Athabasca for winning numerous tournaments. Their uniforms were home-made from good "Robin Hood" flour sacks with a red maple leaf illustrating the name of the team, "The Maple Leaf Team". The players were: Alphonse Lamarche, Emile Létourneau, Alfred (Bidou) Garneau, William (Willie) Demers, Napoléon Garneau, Adelard Garneau, Gérard Forcade, Ernest Létourneau and Joseph (Joe) Demers.

*Le district scolaire de St-Emile fut créé le 27 décembre 1905 suite aux demandes des résidents pionniers de la région. Le nom de St-Emile se retrace à Monseigneur Emile Joseph Legal, le premier évêque catholique d'Edmonton. Les directeurs furent choisis parmi les habitants de la région: Gédéon Demers, Alphonse Garneau et Emile Casavant (aussi secrétaire-trésorier). Gédéon donna une partie de son terrain (NW-35-57-25-W4) pour le site de l'école. En 1907, la commission scolaire emprunta 700\$ afin de faire bâtir une école par Patrice Létourneau. On creusa aussi un puits et on érigea une clôture. Le 13 janvier 1928, Arthur Carrière devint secrétaire-trésorier pour le district scolaire de St-Emile.*

*Selon les directives du Gouvernement de l'Alberta, on acheta un site pour l'école, de Willie Demers fils de Gédéon. Cette transaction devait être accomplie afin que l'école soit enregistrée. Le 24 janvier 1935, on engagea Oscar Patry comme secrétaire-trésorier du district.*

*Avec l'accord des deux commissions, le 3 janvier 1939, le district scolaire de St-Emile fut amalgamé à la division scolaire de Sturgeon #24. Les nouveaux commissaires (Harry Speers, John Holmes, Joe Dusseault, Angus McGillis et M.D. Tkachuk) décidèrent de faire bâtir une nouvelle école.*

*Depuis 1937, les étudiants de la neuvième à la douzième années devaient suivre leurs études secondaires au village de Legal, mais comme il n'y avait pas d'autobus scolaires, ils devaient s'occuper de leur propre transport ou de leur logement dans le village. Après la construction de la nouvelle école, le bâtiment de 1907 fut vendu pour 1\$ au Club de Sports de Legal, sous la direction de l'abbé Georges Primeau, alors le curé de la paroisse. On mit l'ancien bâtiment sur des gros peupliers couchés sur de la glace couverte de neige fine. Léon Préfontaine tira alors l'école avec son gros tracteur "99 Oliver" qu'il surnommait "Popeye", jusque derrière l'ancienne quincaillerie, à côté de la patinoire. Cette école servit de local pour toutes sortes d'activités sportives, et même temporaire-*

*ment comme école en 1947, quand Marie-Ange (Ben) St-Martin y enseigna la quatrième année, en attendant que la nouvelle école du district scolaire de Legal soit construite.*

*Quelques années plus tard, André Pelletier acheta l'ancienne école et la transporta à sa cour, où il s'en servit comme entrepôt. Plus tard, son fils Lucien prit la ferme et vendit au Village de Legal une partie du terrain sur lequel fut construit le parc des Chevaliers de Colomb. Lucien déménagea alors la vieille école en face d'où sont maintenant le réservoir et la station de pompage du Village de Legal.*

*En 1945, les districts scolaires de Legal et de St-Emile se mirent d'accord que tous les étudiants soient transportés par autobus à l'école de Legal. Les autres districts scolaires firent de même, à part du district de Bruyère. Conséquemment, tous les élèves de la première à la neuvième année allèrent à l'école de Legal. A cause de cette hausse du nombre d'élèves, on déménagea la nouvelle école de St-Emile sur le site de l'école de Legal. Le 17 décembre 1965, le comté vendit le site de l'école de St-Emile à Marguerite (Demers) Magnan, à qui appartenait alors les autres 158 acres du quart de section depuis 1943. Plus tard, Fernand De Champlain acheta ce terrain.*

*Le 10 août 1966, le district scolaire de St-Emile, ainsi que les autres districts environnants (à l'exception de Bruyère), se détachèrent de la division de Sturgeon. A partir du 1 août 1969, les districts suivants furent dissous: Diligence #847, St. Emile #1443, Springfield #1495, West Legal #3315 et Pontiac #4316.*

*Les derniers commissaires du district scolaire de St-Emile étaient Emilien Coulombe, Adelard De Champlain et Henri Montpetit.*  
*Enseignants:*

*Le premier enseignant à l'école St-Emile était Patrick Monaghan, gendre de la famille Alphonse Garneau. D'autres enseignants au cours des années: Lisa Arsenaault, Mlle Lepage, Gérard Forcade, Marie Lavoie, M. Lalonde, Marcel Denault, Frances (Faure) Tellier, Mme Bird, Jeannette (Dupuis) Nobert, Marie (Melchior) Carrière, Albert Shank, Hermas (Buck) Lefebvre, Dave Krupa et Dixon Keane; il pourrait y en avoir d'autres.*

*Souvenirs de l'école de 1907: comme dans beaucoup d'autres écoles du temps, il y avait une fournaise au fond de la classe, avec un tuyau qui passait de la fournaise jusqu'à environ deux pieds du plafond et qui continuait jusqu'à la cheminée de briques. Quand il faisait froid, et surtout quand il y avait un courant d'air venant de l'extérieur, la fumée s'infiltrait par les joints de la pipe et remplissait la salle de classe. Sous peu, les enfants*

avaient les yeux rouges et piquants. Dans un autre coin de la classe, il y avait une petite table sur laquelle était placée une chaudière d'eau potable, une cuvette pour se laver, du savon fait à la maison, une lavette et un essuie-mains. Dehors, il y avait deux toilettes sèches, dont l'une des portes avait le mot "Filles" et l'autre, "Garçons". Elles étaient toujours occupées! Derrière l'école, il y avait une grosse boîte en bois dans laquelle on gardait du bois et du charbon.

Les étudiants ont un souvenir agréable de la fête de fin d'année dans les 1930. Oscar Caron avait offert son camion à grain tout neuf pour transporter les étudiants au lac Island pour un pique-nique. Edgar Caron était le conducteur. Tous les élèves se sont bien amusés à nager, à faire des courses, à jouer à la balle et à déguster leur bon dîner!

*Equipe de base-ball reconnue: Dans les 1920, le district scolaire de St-Emile avait une très bonne équipe de base-ball qui était reconnue de Legal jusqu'à Athabasca pour ses nombreuses victoires. Les uniformes étaient confectionnés de sacs à farine "Robin Hood" avec une feuille d'érable rouge appliquée sur le devant du chandail. Cette feuille illustre bien le nom de l'équipe, "The Maple Leaf Team": Les joueurs: Alphonse Lamarche, Emile Létourneau, Alfred (Bidou) Garneau, William (Willie) Demers, Napoléon Garneau, Adelard Garneau, Gérard Forcade, Ernest Létourneau et Joseph (Joe) Demers.*

### **Springfield School District #1495 District scolaire de Springfield #1495**

Several miles northwest of the village of Legal, a somewhat unique area was called "les springs" by the early settlers. "Les Springs" had one to four flowing springs on each of nine quarters that made up part of this district. Because of its water phenomenon, this district was named "Springfield". Like most of the small districts in the surroundings, Springfield developed its own school system. The Springfield School District was established on May 10, 1906. The senior trustee was H. Fawcett of Legal and the treasurer was Howard E. Foote (Donat Labbé's uncle) also of Legal.

The school board borrowed \$1,000 on the security of the district for the purpose of building and furnishing a school house and fencing the one-acre site chosen on January 24, 1907. This site was on the southeast corner of NE-12-58-26-W4, located eight and a half miles northwest of Legal. Later, a teacherage was added, then in 1942, a new

school was built. The contractors were Morin Construction and the foreman was Ray Cortes. The school was officially closed at the end of June 1951.

Springfield School had joined the Sturgeon School Division in 1948 and students were transferred to Vimy School. The school was then moved to Mearns, but it burned down before it was put to use again. One of the old school barns was moved to Mr. Beaudoin's place and torn down in 1987, and the second barn was moved to Nelson Brown's farm.

The memories of the school are varied for both students and teachers, but frozen lunches, ice cold water and sitting through classes with coats on until the old school house warmed up were shared by both. The school was a means of uniting the people from the district but so was the skating rink at J.M. Chauvet's in the winter and the baseball diamond at the Bacons' in the summer. A link to the outside world was the post office. Napoléon Bourgeois brought the mail from Legal twice a week.



Springfield School children on skating rink

**Teachers-Enseignants:** The following teachers taught in the Springfield District: Marie-Thérèse Primeau, Irène Verret, Irene Wickey, Marjorie Bacon, Dan Bower, Miss Carlington, Simone Borle, Jessie McDonald, Juliette Morin, Henriette Charbonneau, Miss Robinson, Miss Roy, Miss Duteau, Miss Boisjoli, Maria Lavoie, Mary (Morrison) Squair, Laurier Picard, Mr. Boileau, Gertrude Dupuis, Suzanne Fortier, Marguerite Miquelon, Cécile Vandal, Mary (Early) Bourgeois. *(This list was printed according to the information received.)*

**Secretary-Treasurers/Secrétaires-Trésoriers:** H.E. Foote (1907), N. Baumchim (1908), Georges Labby (1909-1912), Thos J. Dwyer (1913-1916), J.B. Côté (1917-1918), Charles Bacon (1919), Herbert

Bergmann (1920). The official auditor was Joseph Louis Sénéchal, according to official documents.

**Inspectors – Inspecteurs:** Mr. J.J. Leblanc and Mr. Scott.

**Students-Etudiants:** Families who attended the Springfield School: Bérubé, Martineau, Borm, Schmode, Cheleen, Davineau, Boissoneault, Proulx, Cyre, Karpluck, Tomusiak, Bergevin, Klann, Fenske, Lindquist, Arndt, Bourgeois, Nowakawich, Bacon, Bellerive, Bergmann, Brown, Beaudoin, Cormier, Chauvet, Labbé, Morasse, Lavoie, Horlowski, Rivet, Squair, Toupin, Hamel and Sauvé.

**Anecdotes:**

– One can remember when a student was caught chewing gum. He was told to stick it on his nose. Every time he put it on his nose, he would shake his head and it would fall off. The student was bigger than the teacher so it did not have much effect.

– Now and then some older boys would put a 22 calibre bullet in the old furnace and slip away and watch the excitement. Lucky thing the old heater jackets were made of good steel.

– The old barn hay loft was a good hiding spot at recess for a smoking place on a rainy day. A wonder the barn was not burned down as the old straw insulation was pretty dusty and dry!

– At day's end, one can remember seeing four students trying to get out of the door at once. Then horse and buggy, and saddle horse would race down the road at a dead gallop.



Springfield students at Northrup Corner

*Il y avait à quelques milles au nord-ouest du village de Legal, un endroit qu'on nommait, au début du siècle, le district des "springs". Il y avait de une à quatre sources d'eau qui coulaient à la*

*surface de chacun des neuf quarts de terrain qui faisaient partie du district qu'on nomma Springfield. Comme la plupart des petits districts, Springfield a développé sa propre commission scolaire. L'école du district de Springfield a été établie le 10 mai 1906. H. Fawcett en était le commissaire sénior et Howard Foote, le trésorier.*

*La commission scolaire avait emprunté 1,000\$ pour construire et fournir une école et pour clôturer l'acre de terrain qui avait été choisi le 24 janvier 1907. Ce terrain était situé au coin sud-est du quart de section NE-12-58-26-W4, à huit milles et demi de Legal. Une maison pour les enseignants fut construite et en 1942, on construisit une nouvelle école. Morin Construction fut l'entrepreneur et Ray Cortes, le contre-maître. L'école fut officiellement fermée à la fin du mois de juin en 1951, car le district scolaire de Springfield s'était amalgamé à la Division Scolaire de Sturgeon en 1948. L'école fut déménagée à Mearns, mais elle brûla avant d'être réouverte. Une des granges fut déplacée chez M. Beaudoin et démolie en 1987, et la deuxième grange fut déplacée chez Nelson Brown.*

*Les dîners gelés, les seaux d'eau glacée, les manteaux sur le dos pendant les classes en attendant que la petite école se réchauffe sont seulement quelques souvenirs partagés par les étudiants et les enseignants. L'école était un bon moyen de regrouper les gens, mais il y avait aussi la patinoire chez J.M. Chauvet en hiver et le terrain de base-ball chez les Bacon l'été. Le bureau de poste faisait le lien entre le district et l'extérieur. Napoléon Bourgeois livrait le courrier ("la malle") deux fois par semaine de Legal.*

## **Waugh School District No. 1957**

**by Pauline Dowhaniuk & Mary Marchak**

The Waugh School District No. 1957 was established on March 24, 1909. The senior trustee at that time was H. Sharp of Diligence. On April 21, 1909, the Waugh School District borrowed \$800 upon the security of the district, for the purpose of building and furnishing a school house. The treasurer at that time was H.W. Van Camp of Diligence.

The school was situated on John Sowinski's quarter, the SE-18-58-23-W4, on a three-acre parcel of land. Agnes B. Inkstra was the first teacher; her salary was \$65 per month. Fred Dale was secretary-treasurer, and Gregory Zadunayski and Michael Woywitka were the trustees.

Records from 1912 show that Joe Patry was hired at \$7 to bring extra students' desks from Edmonton. John Sowinski was paid \$14 for

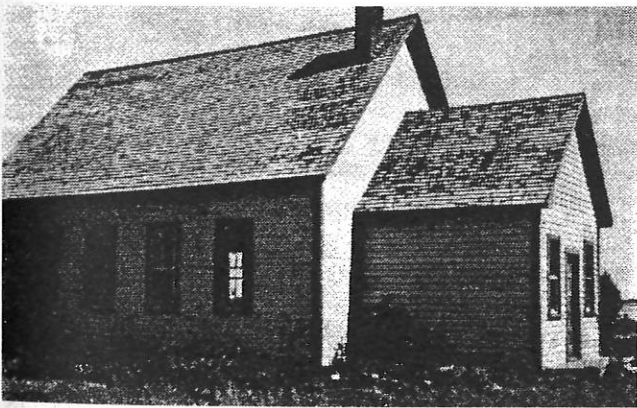


cutting, hauling and sawing six cords of firewood for the school. John Piastowski was paid \$6.30 to clean the school in preparation for classes. A fence was to be built around the school yard for \$17.

On June 22, 1912, the school board hired Miss Inkstra to teach at \$91 per month. School started the first week in July. By October 1912, the Waugh school board had paid Miss Inkstra only \$69 in cash and owed her \$295 back pay. The board then decided to ask for a government grant in order to pay the teacher in full.

Taxes were levied by the local school board and were set at \$15 per quarter section of land with a 10% discount on all taxes paid before July 14, 1912. That year, the school closed on December 24 and remained closed until March 1, 1913. Keeping the school closed through part of the winter reduced expenses; there was never enough money. In 1914, in order to cut expenses, the school board proposed to hire a teacher to teach for only six months of the year.

In 1918, renovations to the school house were needed. Andrew Rudnicki was hired for the job. He was to supply the lumber and materials for a new V-joint ceiling and first-class fir flooring. All the desks were to be repaired and the windows re-puttied. Renovations also included painting the school house inside and out. All this cost \$350.



Waugh School

The teachers at Waugh School during the 1910's were: H. Van Camp, Mr. Conway, Lucille McLennan and Alton Hugh MacGregor. In the 1920's, the teachers were: Anne Smith, Freda M. Smith, Mr. Lutkowich, Mr. Bagnell, Miss A. Harris, H. Erickson, Mary Walsh, Marion Fertig, Grace Bard, Hilda Murphy, Anne Perry and Fred Magera. In the 1930's: Korniel Magera, Mr. Hewko, Miss Kalancha, Mr. Dorosh and Ann Koziuk. In the 1940's: Chris Sherbaniuk, Marie

Carrière, Henry Chaba, Lucy Kuzyk and Olga Komarniski. (Our apologies if anyone was missed.)

Because of the low water level in the area, there was no well in the school yard. The janitor (usually the teacher) would bring water every morning from John Dowhaniuk's (about a quarter of a mile away), for which he was paid a flat rate of \$2 per year. Teachers most often boarded with one of the area families.

In 1923, a stable (barn) was built on the school grounds, as some students lived up to four miles away from the school and travelled on horse-back or by horse and buggy (or cutters in winter). The stable was 16 feet by 20 feet by 10 feet high and had two windows. The contract for it was given to John Ozipko for \$137.50. This was to include the cost of lumber and two coats of paint.

A teacherage (shack as it was more commonly called) was built in about 1935. In the early years, this one-room facility included grades one to eight and later, grade nine. Usually there were 35 to 45 pupils in the nine grades. Prior to 1930, students wishing to further their education beyond grade nine either took correspondence courses or attended a high school in Edmonton. However, most parents could not afford to board their children in Edmonton so many of the children did not pursue further education.

We reminisce about the big black furnace at the back of the school room. Sometimes it would smoke for a while before the fire got going. Our eyes would burn and water, and there was a lot of coughing. When it was very cold, the children would sit around the huge heater to keep warm. While waiting for the room to warm up and the ink to thaw out, we would listen to the teacher read from the Bible, then we'd all recite the Lord's Prayer. Back then, each school day began with scripture reading and the prayer. Then we would have a spelling match, do rapid calculation, sing or do other oral work. By mid-morning (or noon) we'd go to our desks and resume regular work.

Lunches were brought in lard or syrup cans. A few who were "better off" had the black lunch kits. Sandwiches were usually with butter or peanut butter and jam or bologna, although some had only lard as a spread on their bread. In the 1940's, during the winter months, families took turns bringing milk to school. Several quarts were required each day. About 20 minutes before lunch break, a couple of the older girls went to the teacherage to make cocoa. It was a real treat to have hot cocoa with our lunch.

Christmas was always an exciting time with



Waugh School, 1935 (girls)

preparations for the Christmas concert. There were recitations, songs, and lines for plays to learn and practice, practice, practice! There was a Ukrainian dance, "Kozachok", danced by two girls. One girl had to dress up as a boy (Kozak) as she could do the "pryseedy" (a certain step) which the boys could not or would not do! About a month was spent in preparation for that special night and after the concert came the reward – a bag of candy, nuts and a Japanese orange!

The last day of school was also an exciting time. The students would arrive earlier than usual, bringing with them wild flowers they had picked. With these, we'd make a "path" of flowers from the teacherage all the way to the teachers's desk. On the desk were bouquets of flowers, both wild and tame. Over the door would be a banner of spruce boughs and flowers. As the teacher walked into the school we'd all be standing in a group and sing "School is Out" and "The More We Get Together". This was traditional at Waugh School in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Sometimes on the last day of school we'd have a picnic and make ice cream.

January 3, 1939, the Waugh School district was constituted into the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Subdivision No. 5. Mrs. Ernest Meaden of Edmonton was the secretary of the division at the time.

December 31, 1946, the Waugh school district was excluded from Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and on January 1, 1947, was constituted into the Thorhild School Division No. 57 and into

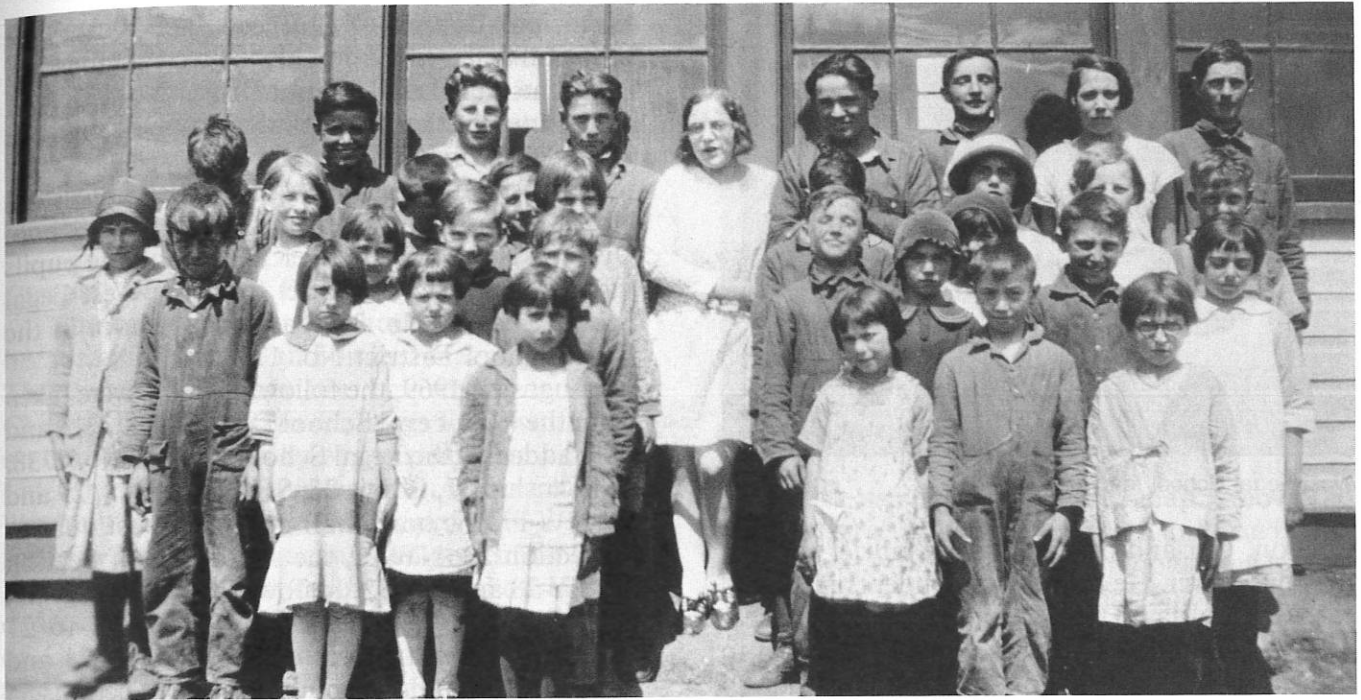
Subdivision No. 2. Robert J. Scott was then official trustee of the division. Centralization of schools had begun. On August 3, 1949, approval was given for the disposal of the Waugh School and barn. On December 30, 1954, the Waugh School District No. 1957 was transferred from the Thorhild School Division No. 57 to the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Subdivision No. 4. Approval was given for the sale of the site on Decembr 24, 1964.

Most of the children attended the Half Moon Lake School after the Waugh School ceased operation in 1946. The school was moved to the hamlet of Waugh and was used as a warehouse. It is still there.

### **The West Legal School District No. 3315 – District Scolaire de West Legal No. 3315**

The West Legal School District No. 3315 was established on October 25, 1915 and was comprised of the following lands: Section 13, 14, 23, 24, 25 and 26, and the south halves of Sections 35 and 36, in Township 57, Range 26; Sections 17, 18, 19, 20, 29 and 30, the west halves of Section 9, 16 and 21, and the south halves of Sections 31 and 32, in Township 57, Range 25, W4. The senior trustee at the time was Frank Lanouette of Legal.

February 16, 1916, the West Legal School District No. 3315 borrowed the sum of \$925 upon the security of the district, for the purpose of purchasing a school site, erecting and equipping the school house, and fencing the yard. The treasurer at the time was Frank Remillard of Legal.



West Legal School pupils, 1929

The school was built by Lambert of Edmonton. The following year, more people living west joined the district and insisted that the school be in the middle of the district. Therefore, the school was moved west and situated on the northwest corner of NW-19-57-25-W4. Three steam engines were needed to move the school. Teeby Bachand's engine simply sank into the wet soil. Fred Labbé joined his efforts unsuccessfully. Finally Georges Labbé arrived with his own engine. With the cooperation of the three, the school building was moved to the satisfaction of everyone.

The trustees were John Rivard and Adelard Maurier, and Frank Remillard was the treasurer. The first teacher was Marguerite Devro, who became the wife of Henry Lamarche.

On December 31, 1918, the following lands were added: SE-34-57-25-W4 and SW-28-57-25-W4. On February 15, 1922, the West Legal School District No. 3315 borrowed the sum of \$800 upon the security of the district for the purpose of covering capital expenditures incurred in building and equipping the school, erecting the barn and teachers' residence, over and above the proceeds of Debenture No. 1. The treasurer at the time was Emile Casavant of Legal.

January 3, 1939, the West Legal School District No. 3315 was constituted in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Subdivision No. 1. In 1945, due to the centralization, the school ceased operation. The building was sold to Joe Vaugeois,

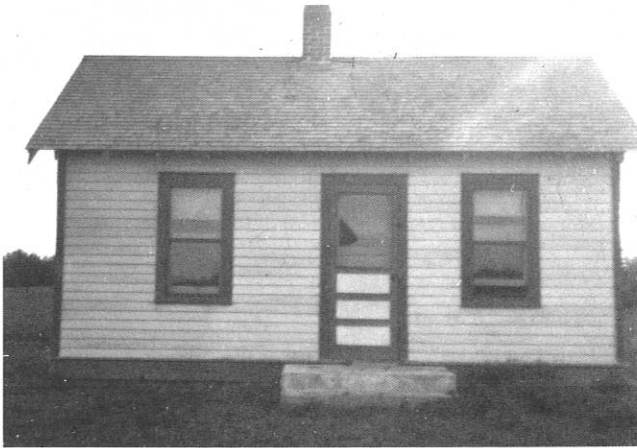


West Legal School pupils in front of school, 1930

who moved it away and used it as a slaughter house.

Some of the teachers at West Legal were: Marguerite (Devro) Lamarche, Alexis Valet, Marie Ange Carrignan, Clyna Morin, Cécile Vandal, Leona Smith, Sylvain Lefebvre, Lucille Tellier and Eugénie Montpellier. The last teacher was Bernadette Brochu. Upon completion of a War Emergency Teacher's Program at the Edmonton Normal School in Edmonton, Bernadette Brochu accepted a teaching position at West Legal School in March 1945. There were 10 students from grades one to nine. She taught there until December 1945 when the children were bussed to St. Emile School in Legal.

Here are family names of some of the pupils who attended the West Legal School: Maurier, Rivard, Remillard, Perrot, Trudel, Mailhot,



West Legal School teacherage

Rochon, Cyr and others. Omer Maurier was the first bus driver. He drove seven students in his old car for \$3 a day. He had removed the back seat in 1947. Eventually, when he had 17 children to transport, he converted his half-ton truck into a bus (with a caboose). In 1948, he bought a big bus with a passenger capacity of 48. January 1, 1952, the following lands were transferred from the Springview School District No. 1358 (Westlock School Division No. 37) to the West Legal School District No. 3315 (Sturgeon School Division No. 24): Township 57, Range 28; Section 15, east halves of Sections 16 and 21, Sections 22 and 27, and the east half of Section 28.



Léo Remillard, Louis Emard, Henri Bouchard, Maurice Milligan, Annette Remillard, Jeanne Chauvet, René Maurier, Roland Maurier, Lucienne Maurier, Fleurette Emard

January 1, 1961, the Municipal District of Sturgeon River No. 90 and the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 were incorporated into the County of Sturgeon No. 15. December 28, 1964, approval was given for the sale of the site located on the NW-19-57-25-W4. July 12, 1965, the County of Sturgeon No. 15 was dissolved. Consequently, the

Municipal District of Sturgeon No. 90 and the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 were established. Also, the West Legal School District No. 3315 was constituted in the Sturgeon School Division No. 24 and into Subdivision No. 1.

August 10, 1966, the West Legal School District No. 3315 was excluded from the Sturgeon School Division No. 24. September 1, 1966, all the pupils (grades one to 12 inclusive) from the West Legal School District No. 3315 attended school in the Legal School District No. 1738.

August 1, 1969, the following lands were taken from the West Legal School District No. 3315 and were added to the Legal School District No. 1738: in Township 57, Range 25; Sections 18, 19, 29 and 30, NW-17, the north half and southwest quarter of Section 20, NW-21, the south half of Section 31, SW-28 and SW-32. In Township 57, Range 26; Sections 13 to 15 inclusive, Sections 22 to 27 inclusive, the east halves of Sections 16, 21 and 28, the SE-34 and the south halves of Sections 35 and 36.

August 1, 1959, the West Legal School District No. 3315 was dissolved.

*Le District Scolaire de West Legal No. 3315 a été créé le 25 octobre 1915. L'école fut située à 835 pieds à l'est du NW-19-57-25-W4. Le district obtint un emprunt de 925\$ le 16 février 1916, pour la construction du bâtiment. En 1922, on y ajouta une étable et une résidence pour les enseignants.*

*Les frontières du district de Legal subirent plusieurs changements, particulièrement en 1918, en 1939, en 1952 et en 1961. On approuva la mise en vente du site de l'école West Legal en 1964 et les étudiants commencèrent à fréquenter l'école à Legal même. Le District Scolaire de West Legal No. 3315 a été dissous en août 1969.*

**SOURCES:** "Celebration" (A History of the School Districts and Schools of Sturgeon School Division No. 24), Provincial Archives, the Department of Education and interviews. This information was printed according to the information received.

## Our Schools in Pioneer Days - L'École du temps des pionniers

by Annette Potvin

Depending on the arrival of groups of pioneers and the size of their families, eight one-room schools were opened in various districts within the boundaries of what became the parish of Legal. The Diligence School was the first in 1903 followed by St. Emile 1905, Springfield 1906, Legal Village 1907, Bruyère 1908, Fairydell 1912, West Legal

1915, and Pontiac 1927. Before looking at the history of each school, let us consider what they had in common. Some of the older folks still remember the particularities and customs of the times. The young people might enjoy consulting their elders regarding these customs, some of which are described below.

### **Customs of Pioneer Days**

Numerous one-room schools were necessary because of distances and limited means of travel. There were no buses nor cars in those days. Children had to travel to school on their own; some on horseback, others by buggy (cutter in winter). Later the "caboose" was invented. It was a house-like building on a sleigh, equipped with a small furnace. It provided warmth and protection from the wind. The Bennet wagon appeared during the depression when R.B. Bennet was Prime Minister of Canada, 1930-1935. The farmers could not afford to buy gas nor repairs for their cars anymore, so they took the tires and used them to replace the large wheels on their wagon, and called it Bennet wagon. Others simply made use of their two legs.

Every child carried a lunch in a little pail bearing the label "Roger's Golden Syrup" or "Burns' Lard". These children had never heard of such a thing as a cafeteria. As they entered the school, they placed their lunch pail on a special shelf next to the cloak room. In the cloak room, there was a row of large black hooks on the wall on which the pupils hung their coats and caps. No lockers then! In this room there was a bench with a pail of water and a common drinking cup or dipper. There was also a wash basin, a bar of home-made soap and a towel. To empty the dirty water there was a slop-bucket close by.

In the class-room there was a large pot-bellied stove enclosed in a sort of metal jacket. Coming out of that stove was an eight-inch stove pipe which crossed the room overhead and up to the brick chimney, into which it disappeared. In the winter, lunch pails were often placed on top of the stove to thaw out the egg or balogna sandwiches. Sometimes a pail or jam can containing soup, beans or stew, was forgotten on the stove resulting in the cover suddenly blowing off! Some of the precious food was splashed all over the stove and even up to the ceiling. What a good cause for laughter on the part of the pupils but anger on the part of the teacher. However, the fury was worse when some boy put "red pepper" on the stove causing everyone to sneeze and cough.

The 15 to 20 pupils, more or less, sat in double desks riveted to the floor. The ink well in the top middle of the desk was shared by both children. There was no drawer to store away the books, only a simple shelf underneath the top of the desk for the few books, slates, scribblers and a small wooden box for pencils, pen holder, pen nibs, compass and crayons. If the pupils moved the least bit, the whole material would slip off the shelf and onto the floor another cause for laughter for the children and impatience for the teacher.

The entire front wall of the classroom was covered by a blackboard. A few brushes and chalks on the ledge were well taken care of. On another wall there usually was a world map. Above the blackboard and all along its length and fixed there definitely was the "alphabet" in bold large letters. Teaching the ABC's was important, sometimes through a song ending with "Yes I know my ABC's; tell me what you think of me". The time table also occupied a prominent place. Several subjects were taught: Arithmetic, Spelling, Reading, Writing, Geography, History, Health and Citizenship, Singing, Drawing and Memory Work. As workbooks were not invented yet, the teacher wrote on the blackboard whatever she wanted to teach and the pupils would copy it in their scribblers. The teacher's desk of course was in front of the room. It was placed on a platform one foot high to enable her or him to have a better view of all the pupils. If there was any picture in the classroom it was that of the king or the queen. In Catholic Schools, the crucifix held the place of honor.

### **The School Yard**

In the school yard there was a barn used by the pupils who came on horseback or by buggy. At noon, these pupils would give hay to their horse and bring it to water. There was also a wood shed to store the wood serving to heat the building. There were, of necessity, two outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls. As there was no tissue paper then, old Eaton catalogues, old magazines or newspaper served the purpose. The wise pupils brought wrappings from apples or oranges. In those days, apples and oranges were individually wrapped in tissue paper and placed in a box for shipping.

If there was no well in the school yard, pupils might take turns in bringing water in a cream can for the whole class. If there was a well, they drew pails of water by means of a rope and pulley.

## Games Children Played

There was no trampoline or trapeze in the school yard. Children enjoyed simple games such as hide-and-go-seek, pom-pom-pullaway, tag, hop-scotch, skipping rope, Fox and the Geese, Knife (trick of pitching it into means of a longer stick), Horseshoe thrown over a peg. Ante-high-over: two teams, one on each side of a building. Team No. 1 throws the ball over while singing "ante-high-over". If someone catches the ball, the whole team rushes on the other side and tags (with the ball) members of team number 1, who then must join team number 2. At the end the largest team wins. There may have been a swing mounted between two large trees or a seesaw (a plank laid across an old saw horse). The most popular game, especially for boys, was baseball, or scrub played with a home-made bat and ball. Some lucky child had a bow and arrow, or a sling-shot or even a willow branch whistle made by his dad. When children were kept inside because of bad weather, they played jacks, "Button button, who's got the button?" or some improvised tricks.

## Punishment

It seems that the least infraction to the rules deserved some kind of punishment in those days. The most common one was standing or kneeling in the corner, detention during recess or after school hours, and writing lines. For example, 100 times "I must not chew gum in school" or 1,000 times, "I must come to school on time", and others. Children who often received this "penalty" would save the brown wrapping paper to write their lines in order to keep their scribblers for their ordinary school work. In those days, stores had no plastic bags nor even paper bags. Whatever you bought was carefully wrapped in brown paper and tied with a string. The more serious offences such as disobeying or answering back to the teacher deserved the most severe penalty, that is, the strap. Those who were more frequently at risk for this treatment discovered that spit and soap rubbed on their palms and wrists would make the strap less painful. Today, the manner in which the strap was used, would be called child abuse.

## Work at Home

Automatic washers were unknown in those days. Washing was done by hand or in manually operated machine. Children were expected to help in this operation as well as in churning the butter. They also had to haul water from the well for washing as well as for drinking and cooking. In

winter, snow was gathered and melted for soft water. On Saturdays, enough water had to be hauled in, heated on the wood stove and poured into the tub for the weekend bath. On the farm, children helped with the chores. This entailed feeding the horses, pigs, and chickens, and in milking the cows. Children interested in the annual fall fair, helped in the garden and prepared vegetables and sheaves of wheat, oats or barley for display. Some groomed their calves and colts in the hope of winning prizes consisting of 35 or 50 cents.

During the early thirties there was a pest of gophers and crows on the prairies. Children were able to earn a few cents by collecting gopher tails at one cent a tail and crows' eggs also at one cent each and crows' legs at two cents each. This was paid by the municipality. Children were indeed busy in pioneer days but not getting rich. In pioneer days, the school was often used by the entire community. Everyone gathered for the Christmas Concert, an event that allowed parents to come, see and praise their children's talents. Dances on various occasions were held in the school with local musicians playing the violin, accordion, guitar and others. The purpose of these dances besides providing entertainment, was to raise funds to buy equipment and extras for the school.

*Selon l'arrivée des pionniers et le nombre de leurs enfants, huit écoles ouvrirent leurs portes entre 1903 et 1927, sur le territoire que forme aujourd'hui la paroisse de Legal. Ces petites écoles de campagne avaient plusieurs choses en commun. D'abord, les enfants devaient marcher à l'école, ou s'y rendre à cheval ou avec un chien, car il n'y avait ni autobus, ni automobiles. On inventa éventuellement la "caboose", un genre de roulotte équipée d'un petit poêle à bois pour l'hiver. Chaque enfant apportait son dîner dans une petite chaudière en fer qu'il ou elle laissait à l'entrée de l'école où il y avait de gros crochets noirs pour les manteaux et les casques, et où il y avait un contenant d'eau potable.*

*Dans ces écoles d'une classe, il y avait un poêle entouré d'une ceinture de métal. Un tuyau de poêle de huit pouces traversait toute la classe pour aller rejoindre la cheminée de brique. De 15 à 20 élèves étaient assis dans des pupitres doubles (vissés au sol) avec un encrier pour deux élèves et une tablette dessous pour ranger les cahiers et les crayons. À l'avant, il y avait un grand tableau noir, quelques brosses et des craies, avec les lettres de l'alphabet au-dessus. Sur un autre mur, il y avait une carte*

mondiale. L'institutrice écrivait au tableau ce qu'elle voulait enseigner et les élèves le copiaient dans un cahier. Le seul portrait accroché était celui du roi ou de la reine, et un crucifix dans les écoles catholiques.

Dans la cour d'école, il y avait une étable pour les chevaux des élèves, une "shed" en bois et des toilettes extérieures (avec des catalogues Eaton). Les enfants inventaient la plupart de leurs jeux, mais il pouvait y avoir quelques balançoires. Les

punitions les plus fréquentes étaient de se mettre à genoux dans un coin, ou d'écrire cent fois que l'on serait sage à l'avenir (sur du papier brun). Pour les délits considérés "graves", c'était la bastonnade.

De retour à la maison, la journée n'était pas terminée car il fallait aider à différentes tâches: faire fonctionner la machine à laver à la main, aller chercher de l'eau, soigner les animaux, sarcler le jardin, et autres. L'école servait aussi de salle communautaire.

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## ASSOCIATIONS CULTURELLES / CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

### L'Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta - Régionale Centralta par Paul Chauvet

Les colons de Legal étaient pour la plupart des Francophones venus de France, du Québec, de l'Acadie, de l'Ontario, de la Belgique et des Etats-Unis. Ils se sont établis sur des homesteads du chemin de fer Canadien Pacifique. Il fallait payer des taxes sur la propriété en retour de services municipaux et scolaires. Les services scolaires comprenaient la construction d'écoles à des distances pas trop éloignées pour que la majorité des élèves puissent s'y rendre à pied l'hiver comme l'été. Dans certains districts, la majorité des élèves étaient francophones et on enseignait le français à l'école. Au cours des années, l'enseignement du français a diminué dû au fait réel de l'assimilation. On disait, il y a 60 ans, que les effets de l'assimilation feraient disparaître en une génération l'usage du français en Alberta, ce qui fut le cas dans plusieurs familles. Les plus âgés gardaient l'usage de la langue des ancêtres, mais à l'école c'était l'anglais qui devenait de plus en plus la langue de communication, de même qu'au foyer.

Les Francophones devaient communiquer et s'entraider entre voisins et membres de famille afin de faire face aux difficultés, aux épreuves des saisons et de l'environnement. Ils vivaient quotidiennement une certaine fraternité qui, graduellement, évolua en association; c'est alors que l'Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta a été créée. Il s'agissait de s'unir pour garder les liens qui leur étaient chers. En même temps, il y avait des influences qui tentaient de rompre ces liens. Il y avait donc deux tendances: l'une, naturelle, qui était d'être soi-même et de

maintenir les liens étroits avec le passé, les ancêtres, les traditions et leur culture. L'autre tendance voulait abattre les traditions et ce que la première représentait.

Il y avait cependant un facteur déterminant chez les parents qui voulaient l'enseignement en français pour leurs enfants: ils étaient des opposants convaincus de l'enseignement obligatoire en anglais. Dans plusieurs cas, le professeur étant d'expression anglaise, l'enseignement se faisait en anglais. Certains parents envoyaient alors leurs enfants dans différentes institutions afin d'obtenir un enseignement en français. Il fallait donc que les parents et les professeurs se regroupent et s'organisent en sociétés locales, régionales et provinciales surtout, où l'on pouvait obtenir un support substantiel pour affronter la situation. On se souvient d'une première réunion où nous étions trois dans la régionale de Centralta: Paul Hogue, Paul Chauvet et Paul Brochu. A l'échelle provinciale, Maurice Lavallée était responsable de l'ensemble des cours de français au niveau primaire et secondaire.

L'Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta (A.C.F.A.) a été fondée en 1925. Il fallait agir et il était essentiel à ce moment de former du personnel pour la relève. On songea à former une école pédagogique au Collège St-Jean, où les cours seraient offerts sous la compétence reconnue de l'Université Laval, mais la reconnaissance des cours était sous la juridiction provinciale, appuyée par le comité d'éducation de la province et présidé par les sous-ministres du département de l'Education. Suite à des rencontres et des négociations de part et d'autre entre les groupes francophones et l'Université de l'Alberta, le

Collège St-Jean fut affilié à l'Université de l'Alberta et devint la Faculté St-Jean, qui aujourd'hui offre une formation en éducation, en sciences et en arts. Lors de ces démarches, l'A.C.F.A. défendait le fait que l'enseignement en français en Alberta était un droit reconnu par la Cour Suprême du Canada.

Nous reconnaissons les efforts et le travail ardu de ceux qui nous ont aidé au cours des années: le docteur Beauchemin, le vétéran et Eugène Trottier, propagandiste de l'A.C.F.A. qui en même temps a été un lien entre les francophones des paroisses à la grandeur de la province. Une atmosphère de fraternité a permis à la francophonie d'être bien vivante. Il y a eu J.M. Fontaine pour la levée de fonds pour le poste de radio C.H.F.A. Georges Bugnet, rédacteur du journal *l'Union*, a publié à plusieurs reprises des articles soulignant les raisons pour le maintien des paroisses francophones. Il a créé des roses qui aujourd'hui s'ajoutent à notre patrimoine. Il nous laisse en héritage de nombreux livres pour les francophones de notre génération. J.O. Pilon a été président des écoles séparées d'Edmonton, ainsi que président de l'A.C.F.A. et membre de l'exécutif de l'association des commissaires de l'Alberta. Le Père Patoine a fait un travail inlassable comme secrétaire général de l'A.C.F.A. durant de nombreuses années. Paul Chauvet a été membre de l'exécutif des commissaires de l'Alberta et représentant de l'association sur le comité d'éducation de la province. Son accomplissement a été de faire reconnaître les cours de pédagogie offerts par le Collège St-Jean. Nous reconnaissons tous ceux qui ont participé aux négociations afin que le Collège St-Jean soit affilié à l'Université de l'Alberta et devienne la Faculté St-Jean.

Malgré une opposition acharnée au niveau local à certains endroits, c'est l'accueil, l'appréciation, la persévérance, et l'harmonie qui a stabilisé la situation des Francophones. De la pré-maternelle, à la maternelle, à l'école Citadelle, à l'école Maurice Lavallée, à la Faculté St-Jean, il y a un échelonnement qui se crée afin de combattre le mécanisme de l'assimilation. Les parents, les professeurs, les élèves et la communauté francophone peuvent être fiers d'avoir obtenu autant, même s'il a fallu presque un siècle pour l'obtenir. La remontée n'est pas finie, mais il y a l'espoir qu'on atteigne plus de gens pour y parvenir.

*Most of Legal's settlers were Francophones from France, Québec, Acadia, Ontario, Belgium and the United States. They settled on Canadian*



A.C.F.A. régionale Centralta

*Pacific Railway's homesteads. They had to pay property taxes in exchange for municipal and school services which included schools in reasonable proximity so that most students could walk to school, even in the winter. In certain districts, the majority of students were Francophone, so French was taught in the schools. Over time, the teaching of French diminished due to strong assimilation. Sixty years ago, people said that assimilation would extinguish the use of the French language in one generation, which was indeed the case for many families. The elderly kept speaking the language of their ancestors but more and more, at school and in the home, English became the language of communication.*

*Francophones needed to communicate and help each other so as to overcome difficulties. They lived with a certain feeling of fraternity which evolved into an association; hence, the creation of the Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta (A.C.F.A.). Through the association, they united to preserve their roots. At the same time, many influences threatened these roots. Parents, however, strongly opposed mandatory English education. In most cases, the teachers were English-speaking. Consequently, some parents sent their children to different institutions, where they could receive their schooling in French. Obviously, parents and teachers had to unite and organize into local, regional, and mostly provincial associations so as to receive substantial support in dealing with their situation. Three members of the "régionale de Centralta" attended one of the first meetings: Paul Hogue, Paul Chauvet and Paul Brochu. On the provincial scale, Maurice Lavallée was in charge of all the French courses, at the elementary and secondary levels.*

*The A.C.F.A. was founded in 1925. Francophones dreamed of forming a Normal*



*School at the Collège St-Jean, where the courses would be recognized at the University of Laval. Recognition of courses, however, was under provincial jurisdiction, supported by the provincial education committee and presided by the Deputy-Ministers of the Department of Education. Following meetings and negotiations between the Francophone groups and the University of Alberta, the Collège St-Jean became affiliated to the former, becoming the Faculté St-Jean, which, today, offers education, science and arts programs. During these negotiations, the A.C.F.A. emphasized the fact that education in French in Alberta was a right recognized by the Supreme Court of Canada.*

*We are thankful for the efforts and hard work of those who contributed over the years: Doctor Beauchemin, the veteran, and Eugène Trottier, A.C.F.A.'s propagandist who linked Francophone parishioners to the province at large. Also active were J.M. Fontaine, fundraiser for the radio station C.H.F.A. Georges Bugnet, editor of the journal "L'Union", often published articles underlining the reasons to maintain Francophone parishes. He contributed greatly to our heritage, leaving behind him several books for Francophones of our generation. J.O. Pilon was president of Edmonton separate schools and of the A.C.F.A., and executive member of the Board of Trustees. Father Patoine did tireless work as secretary-general of the A.C.F.A. for several years. Paul Chauvet was an executive member of the Board of Trustees of Alberta and representative of the association on the province's education committee. His main accomplishment was to obtain recognition of the education courses offered by the Collège St-Jean. We thank all those who participated in the negotiations to affiliate the Collège St-Jean to the University of Alberta, making it the Faculté St-Jean.*

*Despite a fierce opposition in certain areas, it is the welcome appreciation, perseverance and harmony that have stabilized Francophones' situation. From playschool to kindergarten, to Ecole Citadelle, to Ecole Maurice Lavallée, to Faculté St-Jean, students and the Francophone community can take pride in what they have accomplished, even if it took almost a century to do so. The ascent is not over, but there is hope that we will reach more people to help us.*

## **Coutumes et traditions canadiennes-françaises**

**par Réal Girard**

Depuis l'entrée de l'Alberta dans la Confédération canadienne, la communauté

canadienne-française de Legal a dû résister contre des "politiques" ouvertes d'assimilation (abolition du français à la législature, défense de parler français dans les écoles, et cetera) grâce en partie à de vieilles coutumes et traditions, dont certaines datent de la Nouvelle-France. Nous allons en énumérer quelques-unes ici, celles qui ont contribué à la survie et à l'épanouissement de la communauté francophone de Legal.

**LES CORVEES:** une façon pour les colons de s'entraider quand il était temps de faire "boucherie" (soit un porc ou un boeuf) et que l'on partageait ensuite. On faisait de même durant le temps des foins et pour faire les battages, ainsi que pour le sciage de bois de poêle.

**PARTIES DE CARTES:** le dimanche soir, les colons manquaient rarement de se rencontrer pour jouer aux cartes (parfois au sous-sol de l'église), soirées qui finissaient par de la musique (violon, accordéon, musique à bouche, cuillères, piano) et du chant (chansons à répondre). Les Dames de Ste-Anne organisaient plusieurs de ces parties.

**PARTIE DE TIRE:** le 25 novembre (fête des "vieilles filles" et des "vieux garçons" de plus de 25 ans) on faisait de la "tire", un bonbon qu'il fallait étirer à la main. Cette coutume vient de Soeur Marguerite Bourgeois qui faisait ces bonbons pour attirer les jeunes autochtones à l'école.

**PELERINAGES:** tous les étés, quelques dimanches étaient réservés pour se rendre en pèlerinage au Lac Ste-Anne et au Lac La Nonne. Les gens s'y rendaient en train en passant par Edmonton ou St-Albert. Plusieurs indiens traversaient le village en "wâginne" pour se rendre à ces pèlerinages.

**PIQUE-NIQUE DE LA ST-JEAN BAPTISTE:** le jour de la fête du "patron" des Canadiens-français, le 24 juin (qui coïncide avec le solstice d'été), personne...ou presque, ne manquait le pique-nique où l'on jouait toutes sortes de jeux et qui finissait par un grand concert. Ces pique-niques deviendront "La Fête au Village".

**FESTIVALS FRANCAIS:** de grands rassemblements des enfants des écoles "françaises" avec du chant, des récitations, du mime, des chorales.

**JOUR DE L'AN:** c'était la coutume pour les jeunes gens de passer de maison en maison pour souhaiter la bonne année, mais surtout...pour embrasser les filles. Ce jour-là, le père de famille bénissait son épouse et ses enfants, c'était la "bénédition paternelle".

**TOURNEE DU MARDI GRAS:** avant d'entreprendre 40 jours de jeûne (le carême - temps de

privations et de sacrifices avant Pâques, on ne pouvait pas danser ni se marier durant cette période) plusieurs personnes se costumait et allaient visiter les voisins en espérant ne pas se faire reconnaître. Les crêpes étaient le mets traditionnel de ce jour-là.

**FETE-DIEU:** ce jour-là, des hommes construisaient un arc immense au-dessus d'une rue et un reposoir devant l'une des maisons du village. Les paroissiens quittaient l'église en procession, avec le St-Sacrement, les bannières de la Ligue du Sacré-Coeur, des Dames de Ste-Anne et des Enfants de Marie. Plusieurs enfants transformés en "anges" jetaient des roses sauvages devant le passage du prêtre. On passait sous l'arc et on se rendait adorer Dieu au "Reposoir", puis on revenait à l'église, toujours en procession.

**EAU DE PAQUES:** le matin de Pâques, on allait chercher de l'eau d'une source ou d'un ruisseau avant le lever du soleil. Cette eau était considérée "bénite" et on s'en servait pour se protéger des malédictions.

**EAU BENITE:** toutes les familles conservaient une bouteille d'eau qui avait été bénite par le prêtre le Samedi Saint, car si on l'aspergeait, elle pouvait guérir ou protéger contre les dangers.

**RAMEAUX:** on exposait dans chaque maison un grand rameau qui avait été béni pendant la messe du "dimanche des rameaux"; ces rameaux étaient une protection contre le tonnerre.

**LES ROGATIONS:** tôt le printemps, les fermiers apportaient une petite quantité de graines de semences pour les faire bénir, s'assurant ainsi une bonne récolte. On demandait parfois au prêtre de venir bénir les champs ensemencés et il restait prendre un repas avec la famille.

**FETE DES ROIS:** du temps de l'abbé Tessier, une fête pour les enfants (avec bonbons et films) avait lieu ce jour-là.

**PRATIQUES RELIGIEUSES:** croix de chemin, chemin de la croix, le mois des morts (novembre) et la procession au cimetière, récitation du chapelet en famille, la marche au catéchisme (pendant deux semaines en juillet), visite de paroisse par le curé, et cetera.

**LES CLOCHES:** les communautés étaient regroupées autour de leur église dominée par le clocher. Les cloches étaient très importantes dans ce temps-là; leur tintement pouvait annoncer la joie (baptêmes, mariages), ou la tristesse (mortalités "les glas", les sinistres), ou encore elles invitaient les gens à la messe, ou à la prière personnelle.

**NOEL:** précédé d'un mois de jeûne et d'abstinence

(Avant), suivi de la messe de minuit (trois messes), du réveillon, des grelots sur les attelages de chevaux.

**BENEDICTIONS:** bénédiction des bébés à la fête de la Ste-Famille, bénédiction des gorges à la fête de St-Blaise.

**MOIS SPECIAUX:** mois de Marie (mai), mois de St-Joseph (mars), du Sacré-Coeur (juin), mois du rosaire (octobre).

Certaines de ces coutumes et traditions ont été délaissées mais de nouvelles se sont créées. La communauté francophone de Legal est fière de sa "Fête au Village", une occasion spéciale pour elle de se regrouper et de partager avec tous leurs concitoyens et les visiteurs leurs coutumes, leurs traditions et leur "joie de vivre". Plusieurs en profitent pour sortir leur ceintures fléchées et on sert des mets traditionnels comme la soupe aux pois, la tourtière, la tarte au sucre et le sucre à la crème. Les Legaliens et Legaliennes participent à d'autres activités canadiennes-françaises à l'échelle provinciale, comme la Cabane à Sucre, la Fête Franco-Albertaine, le Gala albertain de la chanson, les Festivals français, le Carnaval de St-Isidore. La traditionnelle "Epluchette de blé d'Inde" est encore une activité au Château Sturgeon et elle sert d'occasion pour inviter les personnes des autres foyers d'âge d'or et comme autrefois, on fredonne toujours: "quand épi rouge tu sortiras, celui qui t'aime t'embrasseras".

*French-Canadians of the Legal area have resisted "assimilation" by keeping their traditions and customs alive, many dating back as far as the 16th Century, others inherited from their European and Christian ancestors. We will list a few here, which were most commonly practiced around this area:*

**CORVEES (BEES):** for harvesting, butchering and cutting wood

**MARDI GRAS:** before "Lent" (fasting period before Easter), some people in costumes went from house to house, hoping not to be recognized.

**CARD PARTIES:** Sunday night gathering to play cards and sing

**ST. JEAN BAPTISTE:** patron saint of the French-Canadians (coincides with the summer solstice), a day of picnicking which ended with a big "concert"

**STE. CATHERINE:** bachelors' and "spinsters" (over 25) day on which to make home-made toffee

**FRENCH FESTIVALS:** meeting of students from "French" schools for songs, recitations, mimes and choirs

**RELIGIOUS CUSTOMS:** the residents of Legal and area participated in many religious customs, such as: New Year's Day, young people went from

house to house to wish Happy New Year and fathers blessed their wives and families; every summer, people went to the pilgrimage in Lac Ste. Anne; on the Feast of Corpus Christi, the men would build an arch over one street and a temporary altar in front of one of the village houses. Parishioners would go from the church to that house in a procession to praise God, then go back to the church; one had to fetch water from a stream early Easter morning before daybreak, as this water, considered "blessed", was believed to protect from maledictions; all families kept blessed water in their homes to heal or to protect from danger; palms were seen in every home, as protection from thunder; Rogations were held every spring (farmers brought their seeds to be blessed by the priest); Father Tessier celebrated the Epiphany (January 6), giving candies and showing films to the children of the parish; way of the cross; cross at the crossroads; special intentions for the deceased (November); procession to the cemetery; recitation of the rosary in the family; the walk to catechism (two weeks in July); parish visits by the priest; bells announced births, weddings, deaths and disasters; Christmas was preceded by a month of fasting and abstinence (Advent), followed by Midnight Mass and family gatherings (Réveillon); blessing of babies at the Feast of the Holy Family and the blessing of throats at the feast St. Blaise; there were also special months, such as the Month of Mary (May), the Month of St. Joseph (March) and the Month of the Sacred-Heart (June).

Many of these customs have been abandoned but new ones have taken their place, such as the annual "Fête au Village", the "Fête Franco-Albertaine" and other provincial-scale activities. The traditional dishes are still served in many homes in Legal.

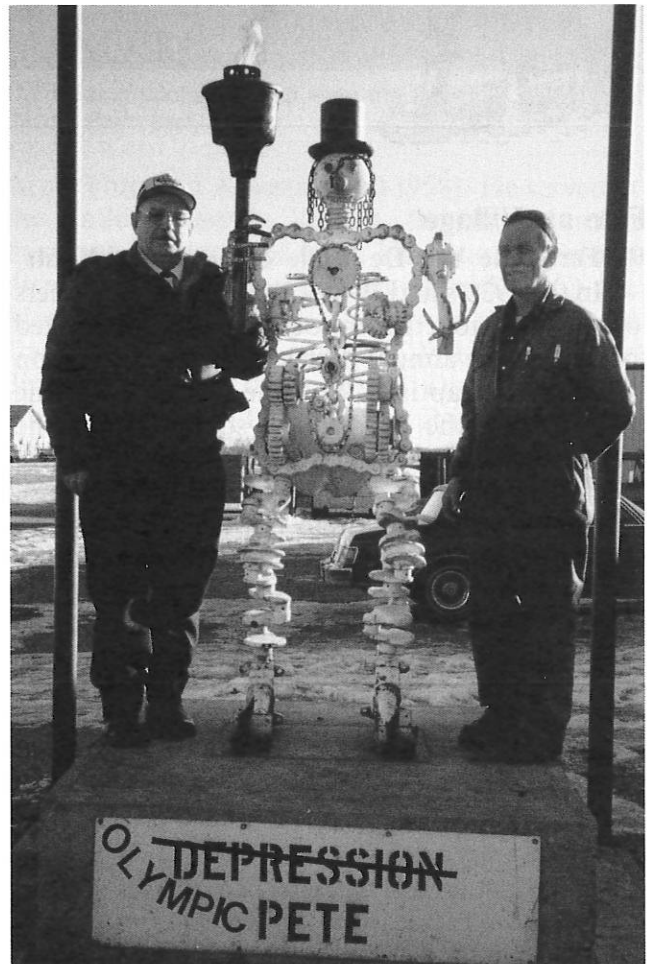
### Depression Pete

Legal's Depression Pete was created in 1971 by two local welders, Marcel Coulombe and Lucien Bergevin. Depression Pete is very unique; he is seven feet tall, weighs 400 pounds, has "brake" shoes, a "drill-bit" heart and a chest of grain-auger gears.

Originally, he was made as an advertising gimmick for the Coulombe's Welding Shop. During the 1988 Olympic Games in Calgary, Depression Pete became known as Olympic Pete. A torch of molded metal with a kerosene flare was added to his attire. This torch burned a gallon of kerosene and diesel mixture a day throughout the Olympic Games.

Pete has been entered in many parades and at Christmas, he gets decorated with lights. This iron-man stands in front of Sturgeon Ornamental Iron Works Limited at 5205-50 Avenue in Legal.

He is indeed a tourist attraction as well as a landmark! Many visitors driving through Legal stop to take pictures of Depression Pete.

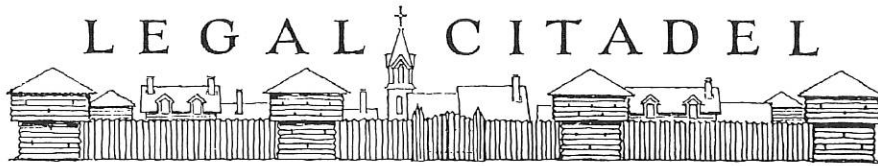


Depression Pete during the 1988 Olympic Games

*En 1971, Depression Pete fut créé par deux soudeurs, Marcel Coulombe et Lucien Bergevin. Cette création est unique; elle mesure sept pieds et pèse 400 livres. Il est composé de morceaux de métal soudés ensemble.*

*A l'origine, il fut un moyen de faire de la publicité pour l'atelier de soudure. En 1988, durant les jeux olympiques à Calgary, il fut surnommé "Olympic Pete". Un flambeau en métal fut ajouté à son accoutrement et la flamme brûla pendant la durée des jeux.*

*Pete a fait partie de nombreux défilés et est illuminé à Noël. Il est situé devant l'atelier de "Sturgeon Ornamental Iron Works Limited" au 5205-50 avenue à Legal.*



# Fête au Village

## LEGAL, ALBERTA

### Fête au Village

By Fernande Van De Walle & Germaine Nault

In the 1930's and 1940's, the Legal parishioners loved getting together to socialize and they looked forward to the annual parish picnic celebrated on "La St-Jean Baptiste" on June 24th. This picnic was held on the playground south-east of the creek. Grandstands had been constructed where spectators enjoyed stampedes and ball games. Various other games were popular: tug-of-war, horse-pulling contests and races for the children. The families donated food and brought it to the parish hall where dedicated ladies prepared the meals for the festivities. The people ate outside in front of the parish hall. The only goodies sold were ice cream and pop. As there was no running water, dishes were washed outside in "wash tubs". That family picnic was the event of the year!

In 1959, the parish priest, Father Primeau, had the idea to transform this picnic into a greater event which officially became "La Fête au Village" in 1964. Father Primeau, a modest man, admitted it was a good idea, but he never wanted to take credit for the success story that the Fête au Village has become over the years. Twenty-five years later, the history of the Fête au Village cannot be written without talking about this great leader whose favorite expressions were: "We've got to think BIG!" and "Put Legal on the map!".

Georges Primeau was born in St. Paul on June 17, 1916, son of Joseph Edmond Primeau, merchant, and Marie Louise Landel. He was one of six children; four girls and two boys. Following his schooling, he began his studies at the Jesuit College in Edmonton, then he went on to the St. Joseph Seminary to study as a diocesan priest. He was ordained by Bishop Hugh John MacDonald in St. Joseph's Cathedral, Edmonton, on September 19, 1944. He celebrated his first mass at St. Joachim. His first assignment was St. Emile

in Legal (1944-1948), as assistant to Father Emile Tessier. Father Primeau was shy, tall, dark, but young and energetic, and full of ideas for big projects. Immediately, he started to work with the youth of the parish; he also had high expectations from the parishioners. A firm believer that "a sound body makes a sound mind", he became aware that there were few recreation facilities. He had the old St. Emile School moved to the village, a hut from Western Air Command in Edmonton was set up and he started things humming: Catholic Youth Organization (C.Y.O.), Air Cadets, a juvenile hockey team (won the provincial trophy in 1946-47), softball teams for ladies and for men, weaving courses...name it, he gave it a try! With his unique personality, winning ways, undaunted courage and determination, Father Primeau conquered every obstacle in his path. But in 1948, to everybody's disappointment, he was named pastor of La Corey, Alberta.

In 1958, parishioners were overjoyed at the announcement that Father Primeau was back in Legal as parish priest. No sooner settled, he continued where he had left off 10 years before. He felt the recreational facilities were outdated and he conceived the idea of a large recreational complex; it became his "dream". With his saying that "It's not who you are but who you know", he spearheaded this project. Father Primeau knew



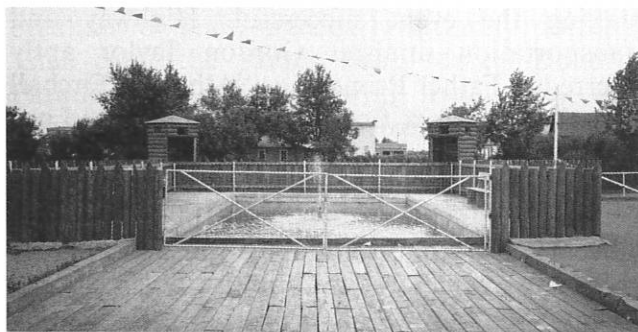
Parc Citadel Park

many people and had many contacts. Thus, he was able to obtain valuable information and materials at a good price to build "Parc Citadel Park".

At the onset, Father Primeau established a recreation board committee under the jurisdiction of the Legal Village Council, whose mayor was Marcel Dauphinais at the time. Men, women and children of the district stood behind the project 100%. Father Primeau organized bees in which young and old were involved, with everyone coming equipped with rakes, wheelbarrows, lawn mowers, paint and brushes. They pursued their goal, scrounging and looking for rock-bottom prices on materials. Ladies prepared lunch and refreshments for the workers. A government recreation grant of \$4,700 under a five-year plan was received, and the patio and wading pool were the first steps.

In 1964, the year the Fête au Village made the headlines, a new recreation centre named "Parc Citadel Park" was officially opened. It was the most unique "small community" recreational and cultural centre in Western Canada. Valued at \$60,000, it offered the people of the community what no other town under 5,000 could boast. Its exterior appearance of rustic half-logs gave it personality. A great deal of landscaping was done, to beautify the whole setting. The "Green Thumb Club" put in many hours, arranging beautiful flower beds and hanging baskets of ivy.

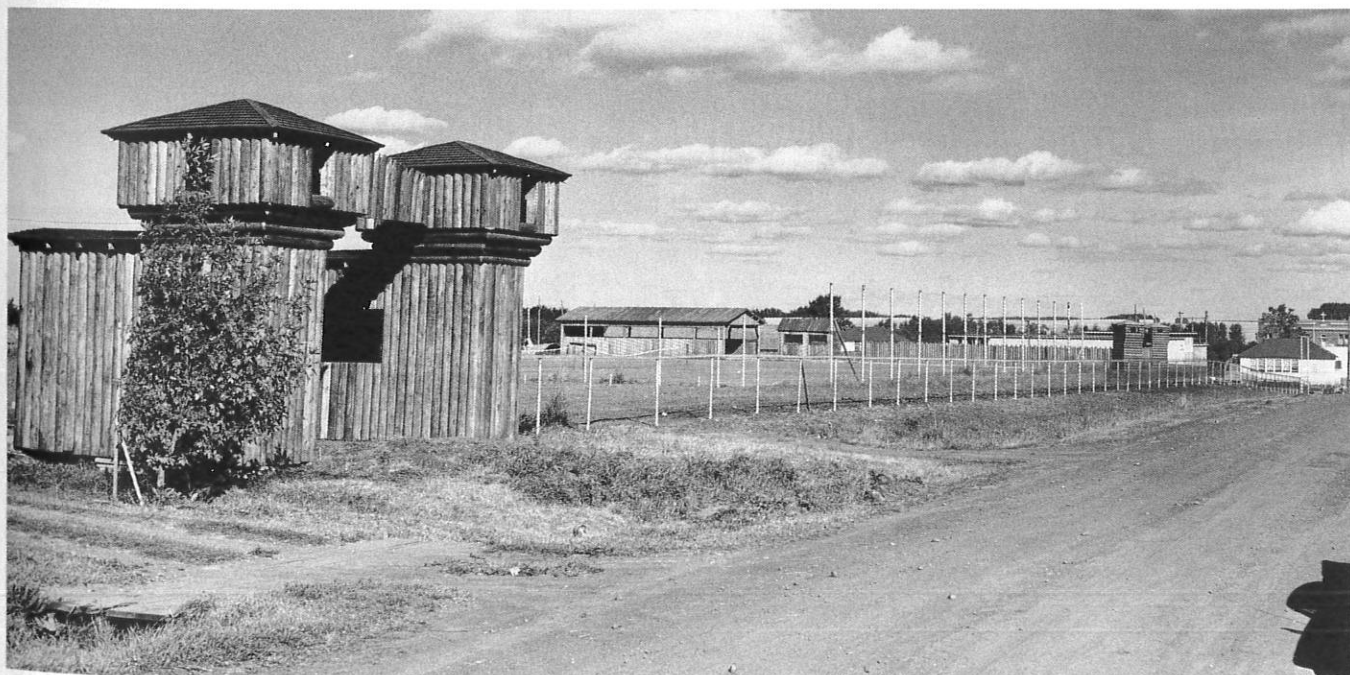
Despite all this involvement, Father Primeau found time to serve as chaplain of the Reserve



The wading pool and patio were the first built in the Parc Citadel Park, early 1960's

Army Forces of Alberta (1950-1958). He served at the Cadet Camp in Vernon, British Columbia during the summer of 1956. He became spiritual director of the Knights of Columbus (K of C), the Mouvement des Femmes Chrétiennes (M.F.C.), the Catholic Women's League (C.W.L.), and also diocesan chaplain of the M.F.C. During his seven and a half years in Legal, Father Primeau inspired young and old alike to live a fuller life. He succeeded in awakening a live-spirit in his fellow men, teaching that a community can be closely knit in bonds of Christian charity only by togetherness in work and in play.

Father Primeau is remembered as a man dedicated to God and his fellow men. His ways spelled action and his speech was to the point. He was "one" of the workers, not only giving orders but enjoying working with the volunteers and always praising the cooperation of the people in

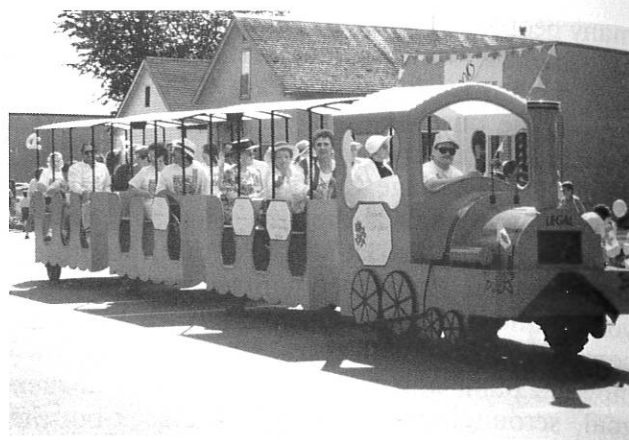


Entrance to Parc Citadel Park

making the event successful. Highway and transportation minister Gordon Taylor aptly referred to Father Primeau as “Alberta’s Fireball Priest”. He was a firm believer that “the Lord helps those who help themselves”. Despite his frankness, his direct and forthright way of speaking, his ready wit and his consistent movement in the community, one sensed the spirituality which was for him the most personal anchor.

Legal grew spiritually, socially and materially because of Father Primeau. As he said in an interview: “People used to come to their priests but those days are gone, finished. You don’t sit in a rectory and expect to see people; you must go and meet people in the community, make contacts.” Legal pays tribute to this great leader of men, this people’s priest who gave so much of himself for an outstanding project that still binds a whole community together.

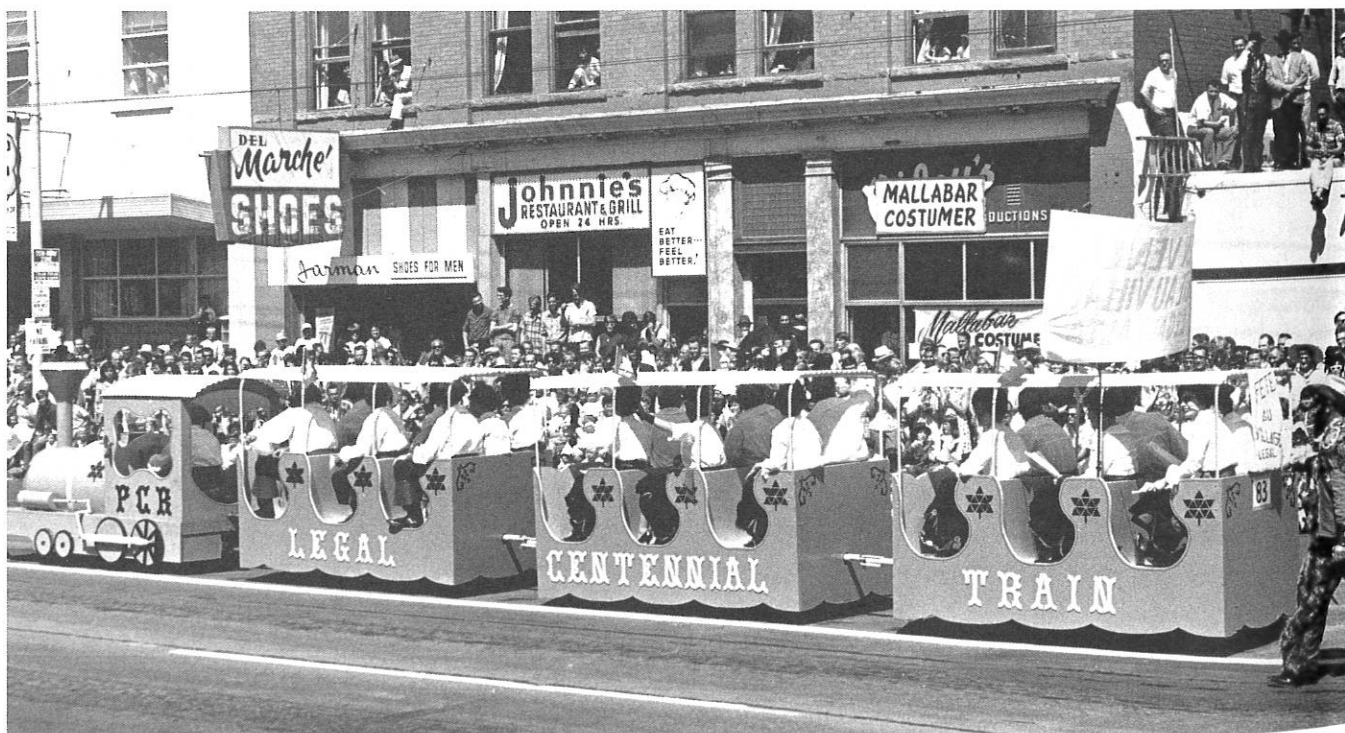
“Parc Citadel Park” (Recreation Centre) comprised of two tennis courts, a seven-window refreshment booth and a ball-diamond with bleachers. Later were added a skating rink with a clubhouse, a croquet court and a recreational centre with craft rooms (of interest was the office door with “Dean” written on it; this door was scrounged from the University of Alberta when the U of A was being renovated). Banquets were held in the building where a fully equipped modern



New 1992 Fête au Village train

kitchen was installed; included were washrooms and storage rooms. Arts and crafts courses were also offered and there were displays in the building. Close at hand was a playground with slides, teeter-totters, swings and a 26-foot high “rocket-to-the-moon” (a thriller for children and the envy of many “older” people).

In 1965, a miniature train was built, which became the “highlite” of the Fête au Village’s two-day celebration, as it gave travel tours around the grounds. That year, 1,000 passengers made use of this means of sight-seeing. That same year, Legal drew a crowd of 8,000 persons to Fête au Village. The Citadel Park’s attractions included a French cuisine and a bandshell where entertainment was



Fête au Village train in Edmonton Exhibition Parade, 1967

free all day during the Fête au Village. Included was a drinking fountain which always proved to be a gathering place for the youngsters, who enjoyed water fights.

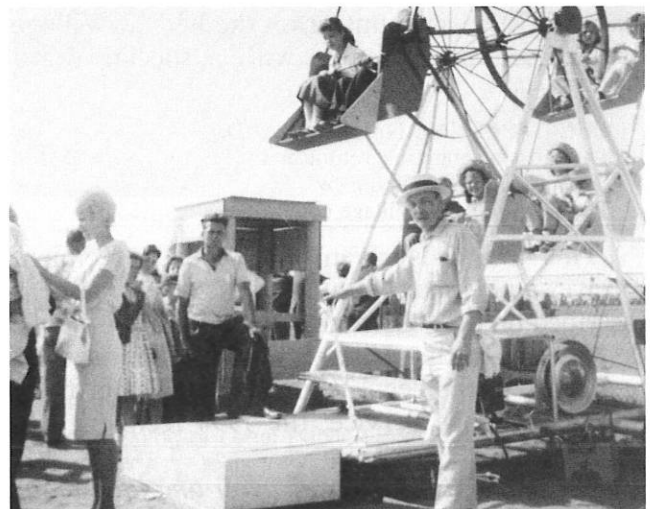
In 1967, the Centennial year, Legal was fortunate to receive a federal grant for the building of an arena which buzzes with activity during the winter months. In 1972, after the ice had melted, the arena-rink was cemented to make it available for summer fun (roller-skating, Fête au Village dances and many other activities).



Legal residents in Fête au Village costumes after Klondike Days Parade, 1967

**FETE AU VILLAGE:** The Fête au Village is an occasion for old-timers to return to Legal to celebrate with friends, relatives and other visitors, the colorful French-Canadian traditions. The community chose an 1890 costume of the "Coureurs des bois" (red and black) to give a bit of historical accent to the celebrations of Fête au Village. It always started with a free pancake

breakfast on main street early Saturday morning. Then came the parade (with Marcel Dubé as Parade Marshall), showing originality and individuality. A two-day baseball tournament with 12 teams was always a great attraction as it had a \$1,000 prize. Other attractions were: horse-shoe tournaments, car demolition derbies, gymkhana, Legal Pancho riders, operation tractor competition, slave auction, greased pig contest, bubble gum chewing contest, bingos, a variety of rides and games for the children, and a barbecue. There were open-air concerts with local talents and invited guests at the bandshell on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, as well as arts and crafts displays. On Saturday evenings, there was great excitement - the crowning of Miss Fête au Village. Usually, five or six girls competed for the title and it always drew a large crowd of spectators. The crowning was followed by a dance in the arena. The names of the Fête au Village queens: Lorraine Mahé-Hamel (1965), Judy Montpetit (1966), Georgette Paré (1967), Lorraine Brisson Rivard (1968), Irène Tieulié Parent (1969-70), Bonnie Campbell Pelletier (1971), Margo Montpetit LaBerge (1972), Lorette Kieser Rivard (1973), Marie St. Martin Pelletier (1974), Lucille de Champlain Charrois (1975), Lorraine Champagne (1976), Vivian Maurier (1977), Marlene Champagne Pelletier (1978-79), Paulette Dubé (1980-81), Dolores Tieulié St. Martin (1982-84), Carmen Lessard (1985), Darcy Brisson (1986). On Sunday morning, the open-air thanksgiving mass was celebrated at the bandshell where everyone participated in prayer and singing. On Sunday night, a Jamboree was held in the arena and the Fête au Village finished with a bang of fireworks.



Ferris wheel constructed and operated by Roger Caouette for children's rides at Fête au Village



Fête au Village Gymkhana



Fête au Village Demolition Derby

For years, Legal had a float in the Edmonton Exhibition Parade, a great publicity for our community and a sure way of putting Legal "on the map". This led to an invitation for a group of 50, dressed in "coureurs des bois" costumes, to perform at half-time at the Clark Stadium football game...unexpectedly, we were paid for square dancing and singing! In 1992, Germaine Nault, a 30-year volunteer on the Fête au Village committee was presented with a special award which read

THE GERMAINE NAULT AWARD  
The most outstanding volunteer  
presented in appreciation by  
The Legal Fête au Village committee

This award is given yearly; each recipient receives a personal plaque and his or her name is inscribed on the "Germaine Nault Award" plaque displayed at the Village office. The second recipient was the Legal Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulance Service; the 1994 recipient was Ruth Schafers.

*Legal avait la coutume d'avoir un pique-nique paroissial en juin ou juillet, une occasion pour les paroissiens de se rassembler et de fraterniser en*



The "Germaine Nault Award": Ruth Schafers (1994 recipient), Germaine Nault (1992), Roland St. Jean, on behalf of the Legal Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulance Service (1993)

*jouant à la balle. L'abbé Primeau eut l'idée de transformer cet évènement, qui devint la "Fête au Village"; en 1964. De plus, il prépara les plans et dirigea la construction du "Parc Citadel Park".*

*Né à St-Paul le 17 juin 1916, l'abbé Primeau fréquenta le Collège des Jésuites, le Séminaire St-Joseph et il fut ordonné prêtre le 9 septembre 1944. Il a été vicaire à Legal de 1944 à 1948, alors que l'abbé Emile Tessier était curé. Il revint à Legal de 1958 à 1966, cette fois comme curé. C'est durant cette période qu'il fit sa marque comme organisateur. N'ayant pas peur du travail lui-même, il a su communiquer son enthousiasme à ses paroissiens. Il s'intéressa particulièrement aux jeunes et il entraîna tout le monde dans la réalisation de son rêve, la construction d'un centre récréatif et culturel qui deviendra le "Parc Citadel Park"; et grâce à ses nombreux contacts, il transformera le pique-nique paroissial annuel de la St-Jean Baptiste en une fête d'envergure provinciale, la "Fête au Village". Cet évènement est aujourd'hui l'occasion pour la communauté de Legal, de partager ses traditions, symbolisée par le costume des coureurs des bois, avec les amis et les nombreux visiteurs.*

*Le passage de l'abbé Georges Primeau à Legal a laissé sa marque et tous se rappellent encore aujourd'hui de ce grand leader social et spirituel*



*qui aimait encourager ses paroissiens à l'action par ses dictons préférés: "Arrêtez-vous de faire de la broue et mettez-vous à l'ouvrage!"; ou "Aidez-vous et Dieu vous aidera". Lorsqu'il prit sa retraite, il acheta une maison à Morinville. C'est là qu'il décéda paisiblement, comme il l'avait désiré, le 27 avril 1989, à l'âge de 72 ans. En hommage à cet homme qui n'avait cessé de témoigner que la charité chrétienne se pratique par l'entraide dans le travail et les loisirs, une plaque commémorative fut dévoilée le 28 juillet 1989:*

Hommage à l'abbé Georges Henri Primeau pour son dévouement, son enthousiasme et son inspiration qu'il nous a transmis pendant son séjour à Legal (1958-1966). Il laisse en héritage de nombreuses réalisations. Sa mémoire vivra toujours dans nos coeurs.

Avec respect et amitié

Les gens de Legal

### Public Library - Bibliothèque publique

Let us go back to the fall of 1966. At one of the regular meetings of the Mouvement des Femmes Chrétiennes (M.F.C.), our pastor, Father Georges Primeau, suggested that the Legal community could greatly benefit from having a public library in town. Would the ladies think about it, and come back with suggestions at the next monthly meeting? Needless to say that everyone approved, and a committee was set up with Germaine Nault (president), Rita Préfontaine (secretary-treasurer), Rachel Caouette, Simone Lamoureux and Yolande St. Onge (board members). With Canada's centennial year coming up in 1967, we were going to make this our centennial project. For our library, Father Primeau was given the use of a small but ideally located building on main street and the work began.

Painting both the inside and outside of the building was the beginning. The Co-op board of directors donated the paint, and community volunteers made short work of a big job. However, it was not all work and no play. A small mistake in mixing our paint gave us a definite mauve hue. After much laughter and some doubts, we made use of it, and had a very noticeable and distinguished building. Shelving was put in by our husbands and friends. Paul Montpetit made the centennial sign for the front of the building, which was proudly displayed until the library closed.

The library committee was given much valuable knowledge from Mr. Wiltshire, from the Department of Libraries and Community development. From meeting with him we learned that for every dollar spent, Alberta Culture would

give us an equal amount. In December 1966, the M.F.C. transferred \$500 to buy our first books, and so it began. Donations of books came in from the community, fundraisers were held, and by the beginning of the summer of 1967, our library was open. The official opening took place on the Saturday afternoon of the Fête au Village.

The library was open to the public two nights a week and all day Saturday. The community responded very well to this service, especially the seniors from the Château Sturgeon. Patricia Montpetit joined the library board in 1968. Interest in the library grew steadily. In 1969, 6,000 books were borrowed, with hopes of a similar or better future. It was not to be so. By 1972, both donations and interest slackened, and only 2,000 books were borrowed. In October 1973, after some discussions, a motion to close the library was unanimously passed at an M.F.C. meeting; the adult books from the library were to be passed on to the Club 60 Roses. Our pastor at this time, Father Bissonnette, requested that the children's books be placed at the rectory, where our youth could still borrow them if they so wished. Dick Hunting moved the shelving and adult books to the Club 60 Roses, young boys moved the remaining books to the rectory, and the library was closed. These books from the rectory were later donated to the Legal School Library.



Mr. E. T. Wiltshire, provincial supervisor of public libraries, cuts the ribbon with a flourish as he officially opens the Legal Library. Mrs. Joe Nault, President of the library committee faces him. At left are Mr. Ed Savoie of Villeneuve, of the K.C. Guard of Honour, Mayor Leon St. Martin of Legal. Mrs. Emile Prefontaine of the committee, both in distinctive Fete au Village attire, as is Mrs. Nault. Following the ceremony all were guests at the Civic banquet at noon Saturday. - Gazette Photo Official opening of Legal Public Library, 1967

*Remontons à l'automne de 1966. Le Mouvement des Femmes Chrétiennes (M.F.C.) est en réunion. Le curé, le père Georges Primeau, lance*

une proposition aux membres: qu'elles pensent à organiser une bibliothèque pour le village puisqu'il n'en existe pas. Tout le monde approuva, et on organisa un comité pour mettre le projet en marche: Germaine Nault (présidente), Rita Préfontaine (secrétaire-trésorière), Rachel Caouette, Simone Lamoureux et Yolande St-Onge (directrices). La bibliothèque serait notre projet du Centenaire du Canada qui approchait. Pour la bibliothèque, le père Primeau a pu obtenir l'usage d'un bâtiment, petit mais très bien situé sur la rue principale. Et on s'est mis au travail.

D'abord, il a fallu tout peindre, l'intérieur comme l'extérieur. La Co-op de Legal nous a fait cadeau de la peinture et avec l'aide de plusieurs bénévoles, la peinture fut vite faite. Tout n'était pas toujours sérieux pendant ce travail. Une petite erreur dans la couleur de la peinture nous a donné un teint nettement mauve, mais sans hésiter, nous l'avons utilisée. Résultat? Un bâtiment à ne pas manquer, disons même un bâtiment distingué. Nos époux et nos amis ont mis en place les rayons. Paul Montpetit a fait l'enseigne pour le devant, qui resta en place jusqu'à la fermeture de la bibliothèque.

M. Wiltshire de la section de bibliothèques et du développement communautaire d'Alberta Culture a beaucoup aidé le comité de la bibliothèque. C'est lui qui nous a appris que pour chaque dollar que nous dépensions, Alberta Culture nous en donnerait autant. En décembre 1966, le M.F.C. nous a donné 500\$ pour l'achat des premiers livres, et nous étions lancées. Plusieurs livres ont été donnés par des personnes et des familles de la région. Nous avons amassé des fonds et au début de l'été de 1967, notre bibliothèque a ouvert ses portes. L'ouverture officielle a eu lieu le samedi après-midi de la Fête au Village.

La bibliothèque était ouverte deux soirées par semaine et toute la journée samedi. La communauté était très contente de ce service, surtout les résidents du Château Sturgeon. Patricia Montpetit s'est jointe au comité en 1968. L'intérêt dans la bibliothèque ne cessait de croître: en 1969, 6 000 livres ont circulé et on comptait faire encore mieux dans l'avenir. Mais cela ne s'est pas produit. En 1972, l'intérêt fut moins fort, les dons moins généreux et seulement 2 000 livres ont circulé. En octobre 1973, après beaucoup de réflexion, le M.F.C. décida de fermer la bibliothèque. Les livres d'adultes seraient donnés au Club 60 Roses. Notre curé d'alors, le père Bissonnette, nous a demandé de mettre les livres d'enfants au presbytère où les jeunes pourraient encore les emprunter s'ils le voulaient. Dick Hunting s'est chargé d'installer les

étagères et les livres au Club 60 Roses, des jeunes ont apporté le reste des livres au presbytère et la bibliothèque fut fermée. Plus tard, les livres dans le presbytère furent donnés à la bibliothèque de l'Ecole de Legal.

## Silvertones

The Silvertones choir was organized in 1986 with the help of a New Horizons grant and the organizer, Octavia Cloutier. Director Paul Belley led a group of 12 senior ladies, one of which was 90 years of age, Lucia Montpetit and Elizabeth Houle age 87.

Cheryl Cloutier willingly accepted to play the piano and practices took place once a week in Club 60 Roses. Material was purchased and dresses made, then invitations were received to sing at different functions, including Senior Lodges. The choir is still going though time marches on and faces change.

A new director, Thérèse Ricard and pianist Denise Turgeon lead the enthusiastic group, six from Morinville and 11 from Legal into Christmas-time entertainment, funeral services, anniversaries and at nursing and senior homes.

The group looks forward to the social afternoons of expressions in harmony and sharing tea and home-made cookies.

La chorale Silvertones fut organisée par Octavia Cloutier en 1986 avec l'aide financière de New Horizons. Le directeur de chant, Paul Belley, était en tête d'un groupe de 12 femmes d'âge d'or dont l'aînée, Lucia Montpetit, avait 90 ans et une autre membre, Elizabeth Houle, avait 87 ans.

Les répétitions avaient lieu une fois par semaine au Club 60 Roses avec Cheryl Cloutier comme accompagnatrice au piano. On acheta du tissu pour confectionner des robes et très vite les invitations pour présenter des concerts de chant se sont mis à arriver. La chorale existe toujours, quoiqu'avec le passage du temps, il y ait des changements chez les membres.

Le groupe, maintenant composé de six personnes de Morinville et 11 de Legal, est dirigé par Thérèse Ricard et accompagné au piano par Denise Turgeon. Il continue à performer devant le public à Noël, ou bien à l'église pour les funérailles et les anniversaires, et aux foyers pour les personnes âgées.

Tous les membres du groupe sont contents de se retrouver pour un après-midi de chant, suivi par le thé et des biscuits faits à la maison.



The Silvertones



The Silvertones

## **Ukrainian Customs and Traditions of the Early Pioneers**

by Marjorie Woywitka

Ukrainian Pioneer settlers came to Canada empty-handed to settle in a strange country where they had no one to depend on but themselves. In their hearts, they knew this was the land of opportunity. Coming from a structured society, it was important for them to hold on to their customs and traditions so as not to lose their cultural identity. In the new land, their friends and neighbours became more valuable than money. While restructuring their life in Canada, they had little time left for cultural niceties but in their hearts their culture always remained alive, waiting for the right time to be resumed.

Now, 100 years later, we are proud of their accomplishments and thankful they left us a rich heritage in the arts including the magnificent church choirs, the folk singers, the Ukrainian dancers, the embroideries and the precious art of egg decorating. They are recognized for their special holiday breads and their traditional cooking. Because many of these customs and traditions centre around religious beliefs, we are able to preserve them through our faith.

### **UKRAINIAN CHRISTMAS**

Christmas is a very happy occasion celebrating the birth of Christ. According to the Julian calendar, it began with Christmas Eve on January 6 and lasted three days. Starting with the Holy Supper (Svyata Vechera) on Christmas Eve, the entire family was expected to attend at their parents home. They came by sleigh, from far and near, the children all bundled up in feathered quilts and eagerly looking forward to the Holy Supper at Baba's place. They would all be seated at the table as soon as the first star appeared in the sky (the star that guided the Three Wise Men to the stable in Bethlehem where Christ was born). A layer of hay covered the floor to remind one and all of Christ's humble birth. In the corner of the room stood a sheaf of wheat (didukh) to represent the coming of God's bounty to man. In the window, a lighted candle was placed to welcome homeless people. At one end of the table was a setting placed in memory of those departed. The table was centred with a round braided loaf of bread in which a lit candle was inserted (the Bread of Life) symbolic of Christ.

When all the members of the family were seated, the man of the house rose and asked that all join him in the Lord's prayer. At the end of

the prayer, he greeted the family with the traditional (Khrystos Rozdaetsya) "Christ is born" to which the others reply (Slavim Yeho) "Let us Glorify Him". Then it was time for the Holy Supper. But they did not start eating until Dido (Grandfather) rose to his feet once more to throw a spoonful of Kutia (cooked wheat) to the ceiling to ensure good luck for the coming year.

The supper comprised of 12 Lenten dishes (free of fat) which symbolized the 12 apostles. The traditional dishes included boiled wheat with ground poppyseed and sweetened with honey, beetsoup (borsch), jellied fish, pickled herring, cabbage rolls (holubtsi), mushrooms (dried pidpenky), beans flavoured with garlic, sauerkraut and peas, dried fruit and pastries, perogies, and the Kolach (a braided bread). Upon finishing supper the family sang Christmas carols. One of the oldest and most traditional of all carols is (Boh Predvichny) "God Eternal". After a dozen or so carols were sung, the table was cleared and the dishes washed. Before long, it was time to dress and the family went to church for midnight mass.

Christmas Day was spent visiting with family and friends exchanging greetings and singing carols. Following the carols there was feasting and recalling memories of life in the homeland. Sooner or later, that day or on the following day, neighbourhood carolers travelling by sleigh would appear at the door to sing carols and extend holiday greetings. The man of the house would then make a contribution to the church, after which the carolers would be on their way to the next home.

### **UKRAINIAN NEW YEAR (MALANKA)**

No sooner did the Christmas celebrations wind down, then it was time to welcome the New Year. January 13th is New Year's Eve according to the Julian calendar; a night of dancing, singing and masquerading, dating back to pre-Christian times. This meant a year-end celebration of thanksgiving for the harvest. Young people of the district gathered in the evening for a carefree night of celebration. Odd bits of clothing were made into costumes representing various characters. An old couple (referring to the old year), a young couple Malanka and Vasselko (represented the new year), a policeman (promoting law and order), a Jew, a fortunetelling gypsy (predicting what to expect in the New Year), a devil (representing wickedness), a goat and so on. These were accompanied by a musician, going from house to house performing the skit, entertaining and amusing onlookers in

return for food, drinks, and a few coins. This tradition continues to the present day in many communities where a great feast of Ukrainian food is prepared with a dance and Malanka celebration to follow.

On New Year's day, settlers stayed at home fortune-telling, visiting, and performing rituals designed to predict the productivity of their farm during the following year. In one such tale on New Year's Eve, the mother of the house never failed to put lumps of charcoal on the stove, one lump for each type of crop grown. Early the next morning the family checked what remained of the charcoal lumps. If they found the lumps burned white, ready to fall apart at the touch, they would rest assured their crops would be abundant. If the charcoal remained black in solid lumps, the outlook of harvest would be poor.

Another New Year's custom was visiting of homes by children, very early in the morning. They brought New Year's greetings and scattered grains of wheat over the floor as a symbol of good luck and prosperity for the coming year.

### **FEAST OF JORDAN**

The feast of Jordan (Epiphany) was observed on January 19. The evening before was seen in the same way as that of Christmas Eve with a traditional supper. This day commemorates Christ's baptism in the River Jordan, therefore church services are held and the ceremony of the "Blessing of the Water" takes place. In the olden days it was customary to bless the water at the nearest river or creek that lay closest to the church. January 19, which is usually the coldest day of the winter, never stopped the people from getting their supply of holy water. They would bundle up in sheepskin coats and whatever clothing available to attend church services on that day. Each family took home a container of blessed water and up until this very day it is customary for the priest to visit homes and bless them with Holy water. The Holy water was stored away in the home as a protection against evil and danger, also given to drink for the family members who became ill.

With Jordan, the Christmas season comes to a close and the following day the wheat sheaf and the hay that decorated the house since Christmas, were taken out and burned. The same goes today for the Christmas tree and once again the regular work day routine began. For Christians, the baptism of new-born babies was a symbol of a new life, symbolic of Christ's baptism.

### **TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN EASTER**

Easter for the Ukrainian people is one of the most joyous and glorious events commemorating the Resurrection of Christ. The Easter season begins 40 days preceding the Holy Week when Lent begins. During this time, the believer abstains from animal fat, milk and milk products. The reason for Lent is a reminder to the people of the pain, suffering and crucifixion of Jesus.

Easter was a time of much activity in the home. The house was thoroughly cleaned (a practice which has changed little from the early days). All this had to be done before the Holy Week preceding Easter. The last week was reserved for Christian meditation, for baking traditional breads and decoration of Easter eggs.

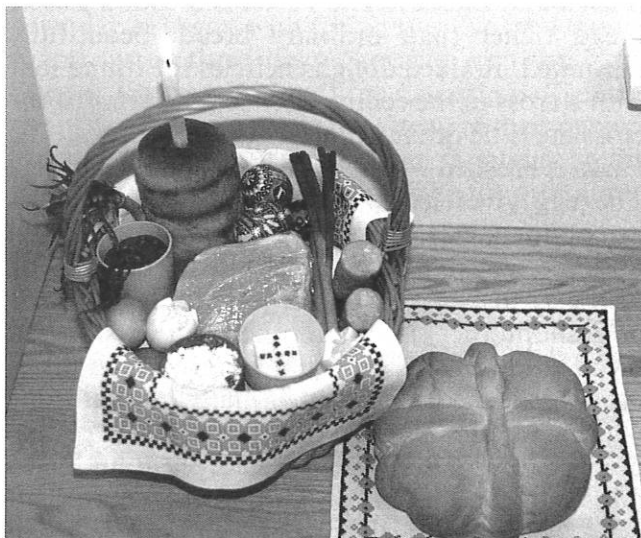
Church services mark the beginning of Holy Week on Palm Sunday. In biblical times, crowds of people carried palm branches to welcome Christ's return to Jerusalem. Parishioners brought handfuls of pussywillows to church to be blessed by the priest and then taken home as a reminder of the momentous event. In the days following, services were held to mark Christ's betrayal and condemnation, his crucifixion, then death and entombment.

It is during this week that traditional breads are baked and Easter eggs (Pysanky) are decorated. Every housewife baked traditional Easter bread (Paska and Babka). The Paska is a round Easter bread richer than ordinary bread, beautifully decorated. Braided dough encircles the round loaf with a cross in the centre. Between the arms of the cross are little ornamental twists and rosettes. The Paska is brushed with a beaten egg and then baked. The egg gives it a glossy shine. The Paska is symbolic that Christ is "The Living Bread" and was especially made with great care for the blessing of the Easter basket. Babka (diminutive of Baba or grandmother) is still another rich yeast-raised bread traditionally served at Easter which tastes more like cake than bread. Finally, on Saturday night with the ringing of church bells, people prepare for the Resurrection services at midnight mass and the procession around the church.

As a rule, this is the one time of the year when the church is filled to overflowing. With candles flickering, the congregation joins in singing. After mass, worshippers exchange greetings: "Khrystos Voskres" (Christ is Risen) in return receiving the answer "Voistino Voskres" (Truly He is Risen). At the end of the service, the priest blesses baskets of Easter food to be shared with family on Easter day - a very impressive ceremony with baskets



Ukrainian Stitchery, the traditional "Paska" Easter bread cloth used to cover the Easter basket of food



Easter basket

filled with colorful Easter eggs and most of the traditional foods such as hard-boiled eggs, ham, roast pork, sausage, the traditional bread, butter, cottage cheese, beets and horseradish. Upon returning home, the family could hardly wait to break the long fasting and enjoy Easter breakfast

food. With the Resurrection of Christ came the anticipation of a new spring and renewed hope.

### THE UKRAINIAN EASTER EGG (PYSANKA)

From early pre-Christian times the egg symbolized the renewal of life and is said to have been used in ceremonies at pagan festivals. With the coming of Christianity, it was given a new meaning and interpreted as man's rebirth, associated with the celebration of Christ's Resurrection. To this day, celebration of this tradition is continued and coincides with the celebration of Easter.

As a child, I remember my grandmother gathering the eggs from the hen house and always setting aside the freshest and most perfectly shaped eggs for decoration. As a rule, the traditional "writing on eggs" (Pysanky) had to be done between Monday of the Holy week and not later than Thursday afternoon. The legend surrounding the Pysanka says that as long as the Easter eggs are decorated, good will shall prevail over evil.

Painting of the Easter egg is considered a highly skilled art. The word "Pysanka" (singular) is derived from the word "pysaty" which means to write, "Pysanky" being the plural form. In decorating the pysanka, three symbolic motifs are used: the animal, plant and the geometric designs. The geometric designs are the oldest and the most widely used. They are comprised of triangles, ribbons, stars, crosses, circles or dots. Each form has a different meaning, for example: the six or eight point star, the rose, or the circle are the symbol of the sun which signifies happiness, protection from harm, well-being and good fortune. The pine tree symbolizes everlasting life and youth. A drawing of a whole tree or only a part of it always symbolizes life and strength. Other popular plant motifs are oak leaves, grapes, heads of wheat and pussywillows.

Animal motifs date back to ancient times. The most common animals appearing on Easter eggs are deer, horses, hens, fish and butterflies. Again, either the whole animal or part of an animal may appear, for example ram's horns, hen's feet and others. The hen symbolizes fertility and the deer, wealth and prosperity. Colors used to decorate the eggs also have symbolic meaning: white denotes purity and innocence, red is passion, yellow means good harvest and black is for remembrance.

There are about 100 different patterns, the designs varying from one region of the Ukraine to another with each region claiming its own

designs and colors. The finished product is a priceless possession, like a fine piece of china. The Easter eggs are blessed in church at Easter and eggs exchanged between friends and relatives. Often, the finest ones are framed. Some add to their collection from year to year and display them in glass bowls or vases.

### **GRAVESIDE SERVICES (PROVODI)**

Graveside services are held once a year between Easter and Ascension Day at the cemetery in memory of the dead who are buried there. Each family brings its own flowers and traditional bread (a round braided loaf) with a lighted candle inserted in the centre. Always a large gathering, people come from far and near on a yearly pilgrimage. They visit the final resting place of their deceased who came from the Old Country villages who settled, worked together, struggled, and now are buried together. The priest sprinkles each grave with Holy water, mentioning the names of the people who lie there, singing the Resurrection Hymn (Khrystos Voskres).

### **UKRAINIAN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT**

*Stitchery* – Ukrainian stitchery has been a medium through which Ukrainian women have shown their love of beauty. Every region of the country had different styles, patterns and colours whose origins can easily be identified. To fully appreciate this art one would need to write a complete book on the subject.

Stitchery is used to decorate shirts, blouses, dresses, the home, covers for furniture, tablecloths, and traditional pieces such as the “Paska” cloth used to cover the Easter basket of food. The list can go on and on. Many of these pieces of artwork are passed on from mother to daughter. The art of Ukrainian stitchery will never be lost. In fact quite the contrary, for with the coming of more leisure time we find that women are showing a marked interest in the handicrafts of our forefathers.

*Weaving* – Weaving has always played an important role in the life of Ukrainian people. Peasants made home-spun cloth for their own use out of flax and hemp and as a result, weaving throughout the villages never died.

Kylym-weaving is one of the popular arts of the Ukraine. It is a form of tapestry woven throughout Eastern Europe and is used as a heavy covering for walls, seats, beds, benches and floors. High quality weaving is famous throughout the

world. Like with every other art, the same can be said about Kylym weaving – the designs and colours vary with every region. Until the 1880's shades of different colours used in yellow came from the bark of the oak tree, or the young leaves and flower buds of the birch. The buckthorn provided various colours from the bark and the berries. To make white, wool was bleached with lye. In central areas of the Ukraine, popular women's dresswear was woven from fine wool. Woven towels are widely used for decorating dwellings, head dress, and for the many traditional ceremonial occasions.

*Music and Dancing* – The violin and dulcimer were the favorite folk instruments of the pioneer settlers and still very popular today. The dulcimer is made by hand and in every region today there is still someone who knows how to make them. The bandura is Ukraine's national instrument. There are several instruments which are unique to the Ukraine and one of them is the trembita, a long wooden horn which was first produced in the Carpathian Mountains.

Ukrainian folk dancing originated as far back as 5,000 years ago. They were a very big part in the traditions, customs and everyday life of the Ukrainian society. Ukrainian dancing has gained wide-spread popularity and presently most cities with Ukrainian residents have many dance schools and dancing groups such as Cheremosh, Shumka, Vaseli and others.

Ukrainian dancing has three basic groups: the first and oldest form is the ceremonial and ritual dances. This dance expresses the everyday family feelings and relations of the people. The second form pertains to the folk ways and customs of the people. The dance expresses feelings such as love, freedom, courage, happiness, and others. Many of these dances are done in circular form and with mixed groups. The third group of dances depict work, national heroism, nature, birds and animals, and story-telling.

*Literature* – Ukrainian literature, which is over 900 years old, is among the richest in the world. The work of three important people, Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko and Lesia Ukrainka greatly contributed to the spiritual formation of the modern Ukrainian nation.

*Woodcarving* – Woodcarving has a prominent place in Ukrainian art. From primitive times wood was used in building, making household items, tools and equipment. With construction of buildings, certain work stood out as an example of perfect workmanship in spite of being made by

hand with crude tools. A hollowing tool which the settlers made by hand was used to make bowls and troughs out of solid pieces of wood. These troughs were used for holding feed for animals and bowls were used for kneading bread dough or as cradles for babies. This was considered an ancient piece of woodwork. Other examples of early woodwork are wooden butter churns, wash boards and baby cradles. The basic carving tools like the axes, awls, chisels, knives and saws were carved and dated back to the 16th and 17th centuries.

Earliest wood decorating was best known in the Hutzal region which was the burning on of designs called pyrography. Household items and tools were decorated in this manner. Another form of Hutzal woodcarving developed in the 20th century which was the coloured wood engraving. It was a form of graphic art that has a resemblance to that of Ukrainian flat embroidery. This art is applied to picture frames, chests and furniture. The Dneiper region was noted for flat woodcarving. Flat carving is composed of straight and curved lines. When joined and crossed a variety of ornamentations is created.

Religion in Ukraine inspired some of the finest pieces of woodcarving. The most intricate wood carving can be seen on the iconastases combining the flat and raised carving techniques. The Raised or Relief form of decorative carving gives us ornamental designs in curved or rounded forms which are raised above the gouged out background. Relief carving is seen in hand-carved crosses and iconastases. Later the baroque style carving developed very rapidly after the 17th century. After the 19th century, a new style of wood carving was introduced. This was called in-the-round sculpturing technique. This form depicted nature themes, the hard life of the peasants, and portraits of heroes and cultural leaders.

### **A TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN WEDDING**

The first pioneer weddings were very simple. When the pioneers became more established, weddings were celebrated in Old Country traditions. As in any culture, the wedding feast plays an important part in the ceremony of marriage so the feast is prepared according to tradition. A marriage could never take place in a Lenten period (a time before Christmas or Easter). As time went on, settlers slowly began to disregard these restrictions and held marriages in all seasons, a move that deeply shocked and scandalized the older generation.

It was very common to marry at an early age, men at 18 and many girls at 15. It was customary for a matchmaker to bring a prospective suitor to formally ask for a girl's hand. Invitations were delivered verbally in person by the groom or bride. The celebration was usually held in the home and preparations were made by the parents, with the help of relatives and neighbors. Often the gateway to the farm yard was decorated with an arch made of green branches and trees. The bride's bouquet and headpiece were made at home from wild flowers and plaited with green myrtle (meert). It was customary for the bride and groom to take Confession and Holy Communion prior to the wedding day.

First, the bride and groom received blessings from their parents before leaving for the church. After the marriage ceremony, the bridal party and guests had a reception at the bride's home. Parents greeted them with bread and salt and were toasted with wine. The importance of salt is reflected in Christ's words "You are the salt of the Earth". Bread and salt are considered necessary for health and are essential ingredients in daily consumption. An orchestra was always on hand to play the wedding march and music for the guests as they arrived. No matter how busy the early settlers were, they always found time to attend a wedding. The bride and groom and their guests sat down to a hot and tasty home-made meal which consisted of pork, chicken, borsch, garlic sausage, dumplings, cabbage rolls, pickled herring, cornmeal, fruit, pastries and preserves. Liquor, often home-made brew, was served. After the meal, dancing began. This usually took place in an empty granary, an outdoor platform, usually constructed for the special occasion, or in a room in the house if it was winter. It was traditional to present gifts to the bride and groom who sat at the table with the wedding cake (Koravai) in the centre.

The Koravai is a large sweet circular bread considered holy, heavily decorated with symbolic dough ornaments shaped into pinecones (symbolizing fertility), doves and geese (symbolizing peace, love and faithfulness) and when baked, decorated with periwinkle leaves. Making this cake was an age-old custom and a very important ritual in itself. The number seven played an important part in baking this cake. It was made by seven young women selected from seven happily married couples. These seven women were required to draw water from seven different wells, and to use flour from wheat that grew in seven different fields. The butter and eggs had to come from seven different





Ukrainian wedding cake, "Korvai"

sources. Seven represents the seven days in a week symbolic to God creating the world in seven days.

It was customary to present the married couple with a live chicken, but usually gifts of money or useful household items were presented. The orchestra played lively folk tunes and sang wedding songs. The celebration continued into the late hours of the night with singing, drinking and dancing the many different dances such as the Kozachok, Kolomeyka, Hopak, and many more. A second meal was served before the guests departed.

The marriage was always a very emotional experience for the bride because she knew it was customary for her to leave her own home and parents and begin a new life with a new family. More often than not, she would live with her husband's parents.

The bride usually received a dowry from her parents: a quilt, pillows, a trunk, and sometimes a farm animal or two. When the bride and groom were ready to depart, they were usually stopped. A relative or a younger brother or sister would sit on the bride's lap and ask the groom to pay a price, thus buying his bride. At the gateway, they were usually stopped again by a friend of the groom. Here the price was usually a jug of wine. When their own home was established, they loaded their belongings in a wagon and drove hopefully away, to begin their new life together.

### **Take Time**

Take time to think – it is the source of power. Take time to read – it is the foundation of wisdom.

Take time to play – it is the secret of staying young. Take time to be quiet – it is the moment to seek God.

Take time to be aware – it is the opportunity to help others. Take time to love and be loved – it is God's greatest gift.

Take time to laugh – it is the music of the soul. Take time to be friendly – it is the road to happiness.

Take time to dream – it is what the future is made of. Take time to pray – it is the greatest power on earth.



## Requiem for a School Bus Driver

By Bert Haywood

First stop. It's 7:30 a.m. "Driver, you're late."

"Yes, Ma'am. What time do you have?"

"I don't have a watch, but I've been standing here a long time."

"Yes Ma'am."

Second stop. "Driver, can you wait for my brother? Mom says you are early today."

Third stop. "Driver, why can't you pick up my child on the other side of the street?"

"Well, for one thing, I'd be going in the wrong direction."

Fourth stop. "Driver, why are those kids standing up?"

"They won't stay seated."

"Yell at them. That's your job."

"Yes, Ma'am."

Fifth stop. "Hey you, what's the idea of yelling at my kid?"

"Well sir, he had a little girl by the throat. She was turning blue."

"She deserved it. She called my son a creep."

Sixth stop. "Driver, can't you come half an hour later? I have to make breakfast for my husband."

"No Ma'am - then I'd be late with the kids."

"Can't you change the schedule?"

"Bye Ma'am."

Between sixth and seventh stops: "Driver, Mary threw up all over my coat."

At the school. "How many kids you got today?"

"Seventy."

"Principal wants to see you."

"Hello Mr. Principal."

"I received a call from the president of the PTA and she said you ran a stop sign on Fourth Street."

"My route doesn't go near Fourth Street."

"She took your bus number."

"Look sir, you have five numbers written down. My bus has only three."

"Oh."

Driver endures two more trips in the morning, two more at noon, and three more in the afternoon.

Day is over at last. Parks bus.

"Hello dispatcher."

"Got a call you were speeding on Tenth Street and almost hit a dog."

"I wasn't speeding."

"Got your bus number. Look."

"Hooray for the dog - he got the bus number right."

"Boss wants to see you."

"Hello boss."

"You're fired. You didn't pass your annual physical. Something about high blood pressure and nerves."

- from Safety Canada