



Township of Melancthon
Heritage Advisory Committee
One Room Schoolhouse Project
S.S. #14
Corbetton School
By: Member Kristine Pedicone



Background

Taken from "The History of Education in Dufferin County" by Ernest Dodds

Lot 259, Highway 10 Melancthon

The early settlers were English, Irish and Scottish and religions were Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Methodist. The first school was constructed of logs with very little equipment. The teacher would call the kids to class by banging his knuckles on the windows. Malcolm Black was teacher for a four year period. This school was burned by fire bugs and a new brick school was built in its place. Music was taught by Mrs. N. Gardner at a salary of \$1.25 per half-hour lesson. This school was officially closed in 1968 when Centennial Hylands Elementary school opened.



Shown here are the students and teacher of S.S. Melancthon (Corbetton) Public School in 1944. Back row (l- r); Hughie Philips, Reggie McCosh, Ruby McCosh, Mrs. Lillian Goheen (teacher), Sheila McCauley, Morley Stephenson, David Livingston, and Billy Lambertus. Second row; Isabell Philips, Helen Aldcorn, Donna Cross, Ruby Martin, Betty Lambertus, Marian Aldcorn, Audrey Lyons, Shirley Pride, and Delmar Livingston. Front; John Stewart, Wayne Cross, Ronnie Campbell, David Martin, David McCosh, Bob Stewart, Elgin Stephenson, Lawrence Martin, and Glen Stephenson.



SS#14 Corbetton School Reunion

Back Row L-R: Lawrence Martin, Donnie Bradley, Lorne Francis, Bob Keating, Jim Turner, Vern Francis, Fred Funston, Jim Funston, Ken Merkley, Bill Funston, Stevie Bowles, Mark Livingston, David Dolmer

Second Row L-R: Shirley Pride, Mary Juga, Angie Juga, Loretta Stephenson, Barbara Turner, Janice Oldfield, Brenda Humphrey, Marie Oldfield, Gordon Turner, Marjorie Sherritt, Ken Merkley, Joan Stephenson, Margaret Oldfield, Lorna Stephenson, Karen Stephenson, Hughie Phillips, Lynda Keating, Tom Turner, Betty Lambertus

Front Row L-R: Joyce Turner, Velma Anderson, Mary Merkley, Velda Stephenson, George Poulton, Marilyn Stephenson, Isabel Phillips, Donna Cross.

Missing: Wendy Keating, Dennis Stephenson

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one was built at Dundalk.

Children could stop school younger than now, as there was no compulsory school age. There was once Fifth Class work taught then than now.

Marion Ross, Kenneth Ross, Marjorie Ross, Mabel Luing, Dorothy Meredith, Muretta McMurchy, and Tom Aldcorn, pupils of present school, became teachers, while Phil Williams became a lawyer.

Many Public School teachers now have special certificates in Agriculture and Music, as well as, First Class Certificates.

Teachers' salaries were then obtained through taxes but now special grants as well, are procured.

Agriculture has been taught in this present school about ten years, while Music has been taught only one year.

School fairs started about ten years ago. For Melancthon township, the School Fair has been held in Corbetton.

Music has been taught since October, 1934 by Miss N. Gardiner of Dundalk. Her salary is one dollar and a quarter per half-hour lesson a week. The past few years Music Festivals have been held for the purpose of competition among pupils.

The present school is built of brick, veneered, in Corbetton, S. S. No. 14, Melancthon, one of three schools out of the first large section. Salaries since the time of the log school, have varied from four hundred to eleven hundred, and again down to five hundred. Most of the teachers of this present school have held and are holding Second Class Certificates. Salaries are now paid by the month. Some of the teachers' names of S. S. No. 14 were: Mr. Clarke, Miss N. Owens, Mr. Madden, Miss B. Henselwood, Miss Semple, Miss Robinson (deceased), Mr. Cosgrove, Miss C. Ritchie, Miss Heron, Miss Backus, Miss English, Miss Livingstone, Miss Moffatt, Miss C. Mann, Miss A. Thompson, Mr. S. Ingle, Miss C. Curran and

Florence S. Agar. Last year, the salary was five hundred, while this year it is up to five hundred and seventy-five. Last year, the attendance was thirty-five, while this year, the enrolment is thirty-three.

Hygiene, Agriculture and Music have been added to the old curriculum. Straps are used for punishment instead of rock-elm pointers. Double seats, maps, globe, clock, desk, library, chair, stove and slate blackboards form the chief present equipment. There are hardwood floors, which are oiled two or three times each year by the caretaker. A pair of brick outhouses and frame woodshed makes up the other buildings. Mrs. J. Martin is the present caretaker, and has been for a number of years.

The land has been cleared around, good crops grown, good buildings built, and things have prospered well until every lot is taken. The gravel road has been paved since 1933. Automobiles are the chief means of travel. Oil stoves and furnaces as well as ranges are used for heating the homes. Oil lamps, as well as gasoline ones, are used for lighting purposes. The Presbyterian Church has been without a minister for a couple of years, as the congregation has decreased, but Sunday School is still conducted. The United Church is quite active, with Rev. Allen Barry as minister. Father Calligan preached in the Roman Catholic Church down the highway.

Ladies Association, and Women's Institute are the local improvement societies.

Primary Reading used to be taught by a, b, c method, but now the phonics methods are used throughout all classes.

Mr. Alex. Bolan, Corbetton, is the present chairman of the Board, while Mr.

This book must contain statements of fact only, and not any expression of opinion with regard to the progress or history of the school.

LOG BOOK

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1. A concise history of the origin of the school.
2. Events worthy of record for future reference, such as additions to the buildings, extensions of school grounds, losses by fire or other causes, introduction of new departments in organization, visits of officials and representatives of the Provincial or Federal Government, prominent citizens or visitors from other lands, social or educational functions in connection with the school and other significant events.
3. The names and addresses of the Chairman and the Secretary-Treasurer in office at the close of the year.

Corbetton, Oct. 2nd, 1935.

In pioneer days this section consisted of about one hundred ratepayers. The school was then located on lot 259, Highway 10. The early settlers were English, Scotch and Irish, of R. C., Methodist and Presbyterian denominations. The early church work was carried on in the school, with local preachers. Some pioneer settlers were: Palmers, Rundles, Oldfields, McCoy, Gilkes, Newmans, Gants, Deans. Homespun dresses were worn by the women, who spun their own yarn, and wove their own cloth. Cow cabbage, turnips and salt pork formed their staple food.

The school of those days was small, constructed with logs, with very primitive equipment. Benches, upon which six to eight pupils could sit, were the only seats available. The attendance of this first school was eighty-five. This log school was burned by fire-bugs. School was afterwards held in Corbetton in a frame building for a time, after which present school was built on present site. Their sports at that time were baseball, shinnie, gym. pole, and races on time. Examinations were set by inspector and marked by the teacher. The classes were first, part second, second, third, fourth and fifth. The teachers held third class certificates and oftentimes less qualifications. A gentleman by the name of Malcolm Black taught for four years, at an annual salary of four hundred dollars in log school. At that time, the teachers were paid quarterly. Mr. Black was succeeded by Miss Dorothy and then Miss Shane. The subjects taught then were Writing, Arithmetic, Spelling, Reading, Grammar, Geography, History and Drawing. Mr. Black's social duties were races, shinnie, and ball. No bells being in use then, the teacher knocked his fists on the window panes to call in the children. Rock elm pointers were used for punishment.

Willie Rundle, a pupil of the log school became a High School Teacher, and two Oldfield girls became Public School Teachers.

People were more friendly then than now. House dances were the chief amusements. The first post office at Corbetton was on lot 257, Highway 10. Roads were corduroy then gravelled. The chief market towns were Orangeville, Fisherton, and Owen Sound. Oxen and horses were used on carts, jumpers, long sleighs, bob sleighs and cutters. Homes were heated by fireplaces and ranges, lit by candles and oil lamps. Straw beds, home-made tables, benches for chairs, and cupboards were the chief household furniture. Prayer meetings, temperance meetings, and Orange Lodge meetings were held. Farm machinery such as V harrows, and cradles were in use - sowing done by hands. Most homes had in them a spinning wheel and hand loom. The women could knit, crochet and paint. Mr. Dave McCook gave us his information.

Corbetton started with just two log houses, P.O. and hotel on highway. Corbett was the hotel proprietor's name, and so the name Corbetton was given to the village. This old hotel decayed, the P.O. was moved off the highway to the village, came up to times in everything, population grew to one hundred and fifty. Lumbering was chief industry of people then, but now mixed farming takes the lead.

The first High School to be built in this district was at Shelburne. Later

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→ To be entered briefly each Nov. & May, covering previous six months.

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Sept. 1944.
 Last December 1943 Corbettow school Board comprised Messrs. Keith McLaughlin, Jack Stewart and Joe Lyons. Mrs. McLaughlin moved to Centre and Mrs. Richardson was appointed to succeed her.
 In the meantime Mrs. Lyons resigned this September 1944 and Mrs. Lyell Campbell was appointed as her successor. Mr. Stewart R.P. Corbettow is the Secretary. Treasurer.

During the early part of Sept the electric light fixtures were installed in the school. 3 fixtures in the classroom, 1 in the porch and 1 outside. Mrs. Lyons and Mr. E. Spating were the electricians. Seventy six second hand seats in good condition and of 2 sizes were obtained from Toronto at a very low cost. These were put in the classroom during October.

The week following Easter of this year we were honoured by a visit to the school of the principal of Toronto General School who was accompanied by our inspector Mr. Lovell of Orangeville. Corbettow school ranked 1st for marching at Dundalk Fair 1944.

1945
 The day before V.E. Day (when victory was announced in Europe) the entire school paraded to No. 10. Highway each pupil carrying a flag. At the head of the parade Bill Lamberton carried a Church Jack and Dave McLoak was drummer. On the return march the school stopped at Balen's store where an effigy of Hitler was burned. The then marched back to the school where we hoisted "The Flag" and sang "The Flag". An Empire Day Programme was held at the school on the evening of 23rd of May. It was a combination Victory and Empire Day Programme.

During the past several months successful churches have been held every second Friday night. (Sponsored by The Red Cross)

Sept 1945. The school marched at Dundalk Fair again obtained 1st prize for marching and best dressed school (S. 10). A new school trustee was appointed during the mid-summer holidays to succeed Mr. R. Campbell. Mr. C. Humphrey is the new trustee. Mr. Melin, United Church minister makes his bi-weekly visits to the school on Tues & Fri p.m. teaching the senior grades religious education.

May 1946. At May annual meeting two new trustees were appointed - Mr. Alton Oldfield (as sec. - treas) and Mr. Sheritt. During May we were honoured by Mr. Popov, of Shelburne and his wife and Mr. Lovell during a religious education test.

Nov. 1946 A new radio an "Astra" was installed and was much appreciated by teachers and pupils. Dr. Nelson and Nurse Kenney visited the school giving needles for diphtheria and Smallpox to children of pre-school and school age.

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W. H. Sherritt, Corbetton, is the Secretary - Treasurer.

Money collected each Nov. & May, covering previous six months.

June 2nd 1947

During the eight years that have elapsed since the last entry numerous additional and improvements have been made to this school. A new woodshed has been built and placed at the rear of the school. A lawnmower and tools have been purchased and the school surroundings improved. A new fence has been erected at the front, the school repaired, and the exterior redecorated. A set of tools was purchased and some manual training work has been done.

The purchase of a piano has been a great help both to the music supervisor in his work and to the pupils in the study of music. A motion picture on the secretary's minutes that Lydell be installed in the school. It is to be hoped when the war is over that they are able to proceed with this. From the time the war commenced the pupils of this school have entered whole heartedly into helping the war effort. Through the collection of salvage, donations to patriotic societies and the purchase of war savings stamps and certificates they have set a worthy example in this district.

The Presbyterian Church no longer holds Sunday school as church but the United Church carries on although at the present time there are very few young people in the section. Mr. Sherritt still retains the office of Sec. Trusts, and the board consists of Mr. J. Lyons, Mr. J. Stewart and Mr. H. McAulay.

Oct. 1947 Lydell has been installed in the school during August. The work was done by Mr. C. H. Lyons and Mr. J. Lyons. Four reflector lights were put over the front blackboards, six other lights in the schoolroom and one in the porch and outside. Ten tables - five used desks and seats have also been brought from Toronto. They are suitable for the junior and intermediate grades.

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May 1947. The section voted to become part of "Township Area No. 1". Mr. Alton Oldfield former Sec. Treas. became a trustee on the new Board. Mr. R. Calbraith is the Sec. Treas.

Nov. 1947. The pupils marched at Dundalk fair and obtained 1st Prize for best marching and most original costumes. The pupils dressed as Indians. The boys carried Bows and Arrows, and the girls carried dolls, wrapped as papooses, on their backs. Mary Merkle obtained Entrance standing on her year's work.

May 1948. The school had closed only one and one half days due to lack of fuel. Dufferin Snow Blows kept the roads open. This had been impossible the previous winter. Illness was kept at a minimum. "Pink Eye" made its appearance, but left no serious results. The school was visited by Drs Wilson and Jennie Nurse Phillips and Secondary Inspector Hillier.

November 1948.

In June a new well was drilled. The pupils obtained second prize for costume and marching at Dundalk fair. David McCosh obtained Entrance standing and is attending Dundalk High School. The Women's Institute donated books to the school library.

May 1949.

School was kept open during the winter, as there was no road blocking storms. Snow plows made a fine job of keeping roads open. Three new families were added to the section, namely Furner, Fuzzell and Spino. The Women's Institute donated six dollars (\$6.00) for Library Books.

Nov. 1949

Glennford Stephenson retired from #14, after receiving two Entrance Certificates. The Audubon Bird Guide and this is Ontario were purchased with the Institute Donations. Mr. McCarty showed films for schools not having hydros installed.

May 1950. The past winter has been the mildest known in this locality for 50 years. There was considerable sick res. - flu, mumps, measles. A Euchre and Crokinole party held at Mr. Aldcorn's netted

\$19.50 for the Sick Children's Hospital. Feb. 20. was the coldest known here, thermometer at the C.P.R. Station registered 17° below.

Nov. 1950. Eight pupils obtained their Entrance Certificates in Jan. Elton Stephenson, Donna Cies and Helen Aldcorn are attending Dundalk High School. Gary Altow is at Willoughby High S. School. Gail Thivierge is at Fort William. Tom Stewart, Jack Merkle and Hugh Phillips are at home. Nine seats

(second class) 1 adjustable, were obtained, and all seats were put on slats. This is a decided improvement. The price of \$10.70 also a basket of groceries was presented to the pupils (one who lost their home by fire). The pupils obtained second prize at Dundalk fair. With their prize money they purchased a stone water fountain for the school.

May 1951. School was closed two days because of flu. Roads were kept open all winter.

Nov. 1951. The local Women's Institute have installed ten street lights. Johnnie Francis has broken a bone in his hip and will be bed fast until January when X-rays will again be taken. Fayne Cross, Delmer Livingston and Murray Merkle obtained Entrance Certificates. Murray attends Dundalk H.S.

May 1952. Mr. Spar died Dec. 17 aged 76 years. Mr. Tom Henry died May 23. aged 86 yrs. Mr. Douglas Stewart died May 23. aged 72 yrs.

Nov. 1952

Entrance Certificates in June, were obtained by

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two pupils, Ardane Stephenson, and Robert Stewart, ^{Mr.}
 During the summer, the interior of the school, was re-decorated, which greatly enhanced the appearance of the school room. Pastel shades of green for walls and ceiling, with the woodwork slightly darker, were the colours chosen. Cupboards were painted a rich nut brown; a new cupboard providing more space for supplies. The purchase of more single desks (seconds) insured adequate seating for all the pupils. The members of the Township Area Board for 1953 are as follows:
 Mr. Urquart M^cCosh, Chairman, Mr. Alex Hunter, Mr. John Hunter, Mr. Verne Brown and Mr. Earl Lobby. Secretary - Treasurer Mrs. Atkinson.

Nov. 1953

Three pupils obtained their Entrance Certificate in June. These were Gordon Aldcorn, Joyce Turner, and Marjorie Sherrett. All of these pupils are attending Dundalk High School.

A new wire fence was erected along one side, and the back of the school grounds. The addition of a new flag-pole, also added to the improvement of the grounds.

The members of the Township Area Board for 1954 are as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Earl Lobby.

Other members are Mr. Urquart M^cCosh, Mr. Alex Hunter, Mr. Verne Brown, Mr. Harry Francis. Secretary - Treasurer Mrs. E. Atkinson.

May 1954

Several stronger fence posts were installed, and all the, along with the windows and doors painted, by the pupils. New screens made by the boys will be a valuable aid in keeping out flies. New flag pole supports were also installed.

Nov. 1954

Two of three Grade Eight pupils, were successful in obtaining their Entrance Certificate. These were, Loretta Stephenson, who is attending Dundalk High School, and La Verne Melkley, who is working on a farm. Marilyn Roberts, the unsuccessful pupil is working in Toronto.

May 1955

The members of the Township ^{School} Area Board are as follows: Chairman Mr. Earl Lobby, other members Messrs. Alex Hunter, Verne Brown, Harry Francis, and Urquart M^cCosh. Secretary - Treasurer is Mrs. E. Atkinson. A new, modern teacher's desk has replaced the old one.

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Nov. 1955. Three Grade Eight pupils were promoted to Grade Nine. Two of these, Mabel Mersley and Kenneth Tindall are attending Dundalk High School. Bill Livingston is working on the farm at home.

Of the four beginners, one, ^{Judy Bates} had died after an attendance of only five days.

More book space has been supplied by the installation of ^{new} cupboards with sliding doors, beneath the blackboard at the front of the classroom.

Logbooks taken from Museum of Dufferin Archives.