

## September, back to school

*"School days, school days  
Dear old golden rule days"*

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*Jan Butler (nee Jacyk) has experienced all the school in this municipality, either as a student or as a teacher. Her family lived in the northern part of East St. Paul on Henderson Hwy. After marrying Fred Butler from the south end of East St. Paul, they lived on Foxgrove Avenue and Terrance Place and presently reside in Country Villas. Their family has not strayed too far as their son, Jim and family, also reside in East St. Paul.*



**As told by East St. Paul resident author – Jan Butler**

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September, the back to school month; new grades, anticipation of what lies ahead and meeting old and new friends. The same motto held true 60-plus years ago.

Henderson Highway was only a narrow two-lane road leading to Lockport. The people on both sides of the highway knew and helped each other.

On a hill, on the east side of Henderson Highway (near Hoddinott Road) stood a two room school; Central St. Paul #1545.

The attending students would walk, cycle, take the Red River Coach or hitch a ride from a neighbour. When one walked, one knew the corners ... Timlick's, Mulder's, Sulker's, Buksak's and lastly Brooke's, the end of East St. Paul. Bus transportation finally came in 1956.

Central St. Paul School held many memories. Blackboards, chalk and brushes were part of our learning. For example, our teacher, Mrs. Belton, syllabicated the weekday "Wednesday" some of us wrote "Wed nest day". Easily erased and corrected.

Outdoor recess was always fun. The older boys played "scrub" which was a type of baseball. While standing in the field talking, a pop-up fly landed in my folded arms. I was then accepted to play with the boys. One of the main activities the girls played at recess was Double Dutch. As important as the skipping was, the songs that accompanied them were so much fun. One that I remember well is The Wind, The Wind. The girls would use their name in the song along with the boy they liked and the song ended with "Will you marry me? Yes, No, Maybe so, Yes, No, Maybe so". As the song ended, the giggling began.

One of the year's most memorable events for me was the May Day Maypole dance. A large pole was decorated with crepe streamers, one for every child in class. We would then sing a song while weaving the streamers until it became one large braid. One year, just as the dance began I was crushed when my streamer was the first to break.

The 1950 Red River Flood caused concerns. With the waters rising in the valley in front of the school, the students had to walk on the CN railway tracks to get to school and received typhoid shots from Dr. Garbutt who lived nearby. The school had to finally close for the month of June.

In the years 1951/52, students went to Donald McLeod School on Wallace Avenue while construction of a new school (Dr. Hamilton) replaced Central St. Paul.

Donald McLeod and Central St. Paul combined to form the Consolidated School District of East St. Paul #2322. Then in 1953 Bird's Hill School joined the consolidation to become the Municipal School District of East St. Paul #2322.

East St. Paul Collegiate was completed in 1958 and in 1964 was renamed Robert Andrews School. During that period, grades were shifted to accommodate the student population.

Jan Butler was fortunate to teach in the "old" Bird's Hill School. She was on the planning committee for the construction of the new school and taught there until retiring in June 1997.

Things have really changed in receiving education but learning is always with us.

"Wishing all students a rewarding year."



*Central St. Paul School – Grades 1 to 4, Circa 1950*

**Front row L to R:** Danny Buksak, Patsy Kruse, Sharon Negrych, Johnny DeVisser, Richard Brooke, Fred Miller, Teena DeVisser, Brian Martin.

**Middle row:** Bernard Pukalo, Louise Godde, Willy Krawchenko, Audrey Wachal, Phylis Kendall, Janet Jacyk, Marlene Boehmer, Julie Smith.

**Top row:** Joel Anderson, Arnold Miller, Gary Gudge, Bob Miller, Beverly Brooke, Marilyn Wachal, Ellen Sulkers, Betty Omeniuk, Mrs. Belton.