

130 Attend Wentworth Schools Reunion



Shirley Tuttle and Hazel Swallow, both alumni of the Lower Wentworth One-Room School, meet and share memories at the recent Schools Reunion recently held at the Wentworth Recreation Centre. (Carol Hyslop Photo)

By Hope Bridgewater

One of the most important aspects of the Reunion of Wentworth One-Room Schools, held at the Recreation Centre, was the comradeship happening between school friends of the past and friendships renewed after fifty or more years. The approximately 130 or more people attending were mostly from Nova Scotia (some having retired to Nova Scotia after having worked elsewhere) and from other provinces in Canada as far away as Summerland, British Columbia. Several alumni unable to attend sent letters and donations, and one letter came all the way from Texas, U.S.A.

The rural Wentworth One-Room Schools all closed in 1959 due to the Department of Education amalgamating and centralizing school buildings and initiating a system of bussing students to schools. In the spring of 2011, Wentworth alumni decided to have a Reunion in memory of the six One-Room Schools in Wentworth: West, Lower, Centre, Appleton, East, and Valley, as they represented a cultural and educational way of life now gone after the one-room schools closed.

To celebrate this era, a Wentworth Schools Reunion Committee was formed in June of 2011, and for ten months up to and including August 25, 2012, the Committee held meetings and continual work schedules. Committee members were Douglas Betts (Chair/Treasurer/Master of Ceremonies), Hope Bridgewater (Secretary), Annie Broughton, Betty Curry, Anne Feeley-Legere, Grace Fiddes, Carol Hyslop, Shirley Langille, Donny McGill, Georgina Patriquin, Carol Smith, Eleanor Sprague, and Shirley Tuttle.

The work schedules by Committee members included: drawing up a proposed financial budget; checking alumni addresses, printing

invitations and mailing them to alumni; buying decorations for the large hall of the Recreation Centre, including the entryway, display tables, and dining tables; buying or creating prizes for the attending teachers, three special alumni prizes, and prizes for the raffle draw based on registration tag numbers; researching for photos and history of the schools; preparing items for each of the six display tables; creating a "fake" One-Room School in the entryway with all of its essential characteristics; creating a small book with photos and text to be printed at the C@PSite.

Other duties included applying for a Community Development Grant and a Community Health Board Wellness Grant; notifying the N.S. Department of Education and the N.S. Department of Communities Culture and Heritage about the Reunion; arranging an afternoon snack table with Punch and arranging a catered dinner of roast turkey with all the fixings and blueberry cheesecake for dessert; preparing a Program for the event. The Committee at this time wishes to thank other alumni and friends who helped when need arose.

Fortunately, the ten months of planning by the Committee proved successful, thanks to all those alumni who responded and attended the Reunion on August 25. As people attending approached the Recreation Centre, they saw a banner proclaiming "A Warm Welcome to Wentworth" and inside another banner read "Welcome Back Students of the Wentworth [Sections] One Room Schools 1819-1959." In the entryway, Shirley Langille, Betty Curry, and Donny McGill staffed the registration desk and gave out name tags made by Shirley.

Several people registering were over 90 years of age. Just inside the main hall, Georgina Patriquin and Annie Broughton, dressed in school costume of the 1950's and

who spent hours decorating the hall and preparing prizes, gave out donated gift bags and small books titled Reflections of Wentworth One-Room Schools 1819-1959 by the School Reunion Committee. Fortunately, people had time to look at the many items displayed on a history display table and on the six table displays of each school.

The history table featured four Wentworth champion baseball teams: the 1930 Wentworth Champions of Central Nova Scotia, the 1979 Wentworth Red Sox Nova Scotia Champions, the 1980 Wentworth Raiders Nova Scotia Champions, and the 1991 Wentworth Cumberland Cougars Atlantic "C" Champions and other historic Wentworth items: Crown Copper Hotel, Copper Smelter, Smelter crew, logging, farming, Ski Wentworth, etc. The six display tables, representing hours of work by Committee members, were identified by school colour and wall posters, and each was filled with many items of interest.

A general overview of all the tables showed the following: small photos on poster boards; enlarged photos of teachers, students, and schools; photograph albums; school registers; printed articles; pencil sharpeners; a Bible dated 1852; a 1933 folio of a teacher's remarks about her pupils; a Form of Agreement showing trustees hiring a teacher for \$100 a year; old Eaton's catalogs; store bills from local stores (Loran S. Ogilvie and Melbourne L. Teed); school texts; an Ogilvie sawmill dam.

Master of Ceremonies, Douglas Betts, began the Program with the following schedule: Welcome. Reflections about the schools. "O Canada". "Song for Wentworth Schools" sung by Faye Henderson. Roll Call: number of alumni attending from each school. Recognition of Teachers: Betty Curry (also organized entertainment for the Reunion), Alta Little, Evelyn Little, Pearl MacKay, Dorothy Beebe, Jean Wood, Ella Patriquin, Eileen Flannigan (who had to leave early), each given gifts of an apple, a flower corsage, and a large basket of goodies.

School presentations with

The Rural Wentworth One-Room Schools all closed in 1959

each school representative telling about their school: Grace Fiddes and Norman Gower for East, Carol Smith and Terry Lynds for Appleton, Donny McGill for West, Shirley Tuttle for Lower, Carol Hyslop (editor and printer of Reflections of Wentworth One-Room Schools) for Valley, and Hope Bridgewater, Shirley Langille (also brought the two banners and the snacks for the afternoon table), and Adelaide Patriquin for Centre. Drawing of Prizes was done from a raffle based on numbered tickets.

Special Prizes given for oldest person attending (Pearl MacKay), oldest student attending (Mildred Palmer), and longest distance attending (Marjorie LeBlanc from British Columbia). Historic Wentworth featured Douglas Betts dressed in a baseball uniform and talking of baseball and other stories. Entertainment consisted of music, singing, and stand-up comedians and featured the following: Betty Curry, Charley Patriquin, Darrell McNutt, Verna McNutt, Barbara Walker, Faye Henderson, Annie Broughton, Peggy Patriquin, and Bob Hyslop.

Before the dinner at 5 p.m., there was again time for alumni to mingle and also to take more time to look at the displays. Then, Rev. Waldo Grandy said "Grace" before dinner, and afterwards he complimented Doug for the wonderful Program and his great talent as Master of Ceremonies. After dinner, Betty Curry involved everyone in a sing-song and then it was time to gather in a large circle to sing "Auld Lang Syne" together.

Thanks to the following for funds to help cover expenses: donations by several alumni; the Pugwash and Area Community Health Board; the Cumberland County Municipal Council; and the N.S. Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage.

Do You Feel Stressed?

By Christine Urquhart

Do you feel like everyone is asking you to take on more and more responsibilities while you don't have time to handle the ones you already have? Is your plate piled high with deadlines and obligations that you're trying to squeeze in between meetings? Are you trying to cram too many activities into too little time? If so, stress relief can be as straightforward as just saying no. The number of worthy requests isn't likely to lessen, and you can't add more available time to your day.

Are you doomed then to be overcommitted? The answer is no, not if you're willing to say no. It may not be the easy way, but it is a path to stress relief. Consider these reasons for saying no: - Saying no isn't necessarily selfish. When you say no to a new commitment, you're honoring your existing obligations and ensuring that you'll be able to devote quality time to them. - Saying no can allow you to try new things. Just because you've always helped plan the company softball tournament doesn't mean that you have to keep doing it forever. Saying no will give you time to pursue other interests. - Always saying yes isn't healthy. When you're overcommitted and under too much stress, you're more likely to feel run-down and possibly get sick. - Saying yes can cut others out. On the other hand, when you say no you open the door for others to step up. They may not do things exactly the way you would, but that's OK. They'll find their own way.

Sometimes it's tough to determine which activities deserve your time and attention. Use these strategies to evaluate obligations - and opportunities - that come your way: - Focus on what matters most. Examine your current obligations and overall priorities before making any new commitments. Ask yourself if the new commitment is important to you. If it's something you feel strongly about, by all means do it. If not, take a pass. - Weigh the yes-to-stress ratio.

Is the new activity you're considering a short-or long-term commitment? For example, making a batch of cookies for the school bake sale will

take far less time than heading up the school fundraising committee. Don't say yes if it will mean month of added stress. Instead, look for other ways to pitch in. - Take guilt out of the equation. Don't agree to a request you would rather decline because of feelings of guilt or obligation. Doing so will likely lead to additional stress and resentment. - Sleep on it. Are you tempted by a friend's invitation to volunteer at your old alma mater or join a weekly golf league? Before you respond, take a day to think about the request and how it fits in with your current commitments.

How to say no. No. Nope. Nah. See how simple it is to say one little word, allowing you to take a pass on tasks that don't make the cut? Of course, there will be times when it's just not that easy. Here are some things to keep in mind when you need to say no: - Say no. The word "no" has power. Don't be afraid to use it. Be careful about using whimpy substitute phrases, such as "I'm not sure" or "I don't think I can."

These can be interpreted to mean that you might say yes later. - Be brief. State your reason for refusing the request, but don't go on about it. Avoid elaborate justifications or explanations. - Be honest. Don't fabricate reasons to get out of an obligation. The truth is always the best way to turn down a friend, family member or co-worker. - Be respectful.

Many good causes land at your door and it can be tough to turn them down. Complementing the group's effort while saying that you can't commit at this time shows that you respect what they're trying to accomplish. - Be ready to repeat. You may find it necessary to refuse a request several times before the other person accepts your response. When that happens, just hit the replay button. Calmly repeat your no, with or without your original rationale, as needed.

Saying no won't be easy if you're used to saying yes all the time. But learning to say no is an important part of simplifying your life and managing your stress. And with practice, you may find saying no gets easier!

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