



S. S. No. 8
WEST ZORRA



GOLSPIE SCHOOL



1867



1966

EARLY HISTORY

The first school in S. S. #8, Zorra Township was a log construction built on lot 9, con. 8 and was known as McKay's School. The date of the building of the school is not known, but an early record states that on March 8, 1835 some scholars attended this school.

In 1838 this was one of only three recognized schools in the township. Seventeen boys and four girls attended. The teacher was Hugh Gordon. It has been told by one scholar that one day a snake came in between the logs into the classroom, to the great surprise and fright of all the scholars who had to sit on benches along the wall instead of seats.

In 1862 the number of scholars enrolled was forty with an average of twenty two pupils in attendance. The older boys and even some young men with mustaches attended school during the winter months only. Miss Catherine Ross was the teacher at that time.

Later a more central location was desired for a new school. On Jan. 21, 1867, one-quarter acre of land on lot 5, con. 7 was sold to the trustees of S.S.#8 West Zorra for a school site. A one-roomed school was built to fit into the school section plan of the township. The contractors were Robert and Alexander Sutherland, Kirk-hill Farm. The cost of the building was \$550. It was built of white brick, one storey high, with one main entrance.

The seats faced north; four long rows of wooden seats and desks, and one short row in the center, behind the stove. There was a raised platform at the north end of the room, between the two doors, on which the teacher's desk stood. Along the north wall, between the doors, was a slate blackboard, and two blackboards between the windows on both east and west walls. Just inside the main door were cloakrooms. The girls used the east side; the boys the west. The room was heated by a large wood-burning stove which stood in the center of the room. Many a bottle of ink was thawed out on top of the stove, often with disastrous results.

In 1874 an additional one-quarter acre was purchased to enlarge the school ground. A board fence surrounded the yard.

The new school was called Elmsdale because there were so many elm trees surrounding it. Later when the Post Office was started in the local store with Henry J. Smith as Postmaster, mail addressed to Elmsdale P. O. was confused with other places with somewhat similar names. The Post Office Department asked that the name be changed. One of the older residents submitted the name of Golspie which was the name of the town in Scotland from where his ancestors had come. Golspie was chosen for the name of the Post Office in 1895. Hence, the school was known as Golspie School.

William McKay and his brother Angus were the first Scottish settlers in Zorra. They left Sutherlandshire in 1819, landed in New York and secured work for a time on the Erie Canal. The following summer, William came to Zorra and settled on the 9th. line. Later he sent for his brother, who came and settled on another hundred acres in the same vicinity. After some years, on hearing that his relatives were among the crofters being evicted from the Duke of Sutherland's Estates, Angus returned to Scotland. He persuaded his relatives and Friends to accompany him to Canada.

They arrived in Zorra in the autumn of 1829. Three months after their arrival, one, Mrs. Isabel McKay, mother of William and Angus died. She was the first person buried in what is now known as the Log Church Cemetery, located on lot 9, con. 7. Burials are still taking place in family plots and at the present time plots are being sold for interment.

In 1830 and 1831, the settlers met together in private homes each Sabbath for church services. By 1832 they decided to build a church. The site chosen was lot 9, con. 7 on the brow of a hill descending toward the valley of a river. It was completed in the summer of 1833 and was the first Presbyterian Church erected in Zorra.

On June 11, 1835, Rev. Donald MacKenzie was inducted as the first minister of the Log Church. The last service was held on June 10, 1861 and the Log Church ceased to exist in 1875.

On July 31, 1932, the Centenary of the Old Log Church was celebrated with a special service in the cemetery at which a stone replica of the Old Log Church was unveiled by Hon. D. M. Sutherland,

then Minister of National Defence and a member of Parliament for North Oxford. The cairn is on the original spot of the Old Log Church.

The Presbyterian Church of Canada erected the McKay Memorial Cairn in memory of the late Dr. George Leslie McKay who was the first Presbyterian Missionary from Canada to Formosa in 1872. It was located in the Log Church Cemetery close to the McKay plot. On Sept. 17, 1961, it was unveiled by Miss Anna McKay of Toronto, a granddaughter of the late Dr. McKay.

The Eighth Line Prayer Meetings began about 1873 in the time of Rev. Gustavus Munro and continued until 1914. It was held every second Thursday evening. Most of the homes at which it was held were on the 8th. line. Elder James Smith was one of the leaders and his home on the 7th. line was included. Others were A. L. Murray, Mrs. Alex McKay, A. M. McDonald, A. S. McDonald, Robert S. McDonald, John Murray, A. C. Sutherland, Dunrobin west of Golspie, and Mrs. Wm. Marshall south of the corner. For a time a service of Thanksgiving was held on the eve of the Sunday on which the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed. The older men took part in the service. Occasionally the Minister from Embro was present. Meetings were sometimes held in Golspie School.

Sunday School was organized during the time of Rev. Donald McKenzie. It was held from May 1st. to the end of October. Elder James Smith was the superintendent. Some of the teachers were: A. L. Murray, Adam McDonald, James Heeney, Robert S. McDonald, A. C. Sutherland, F. G. McDonald, Margaret Sutherland, Miss Belle Hart, Miss Libbie Marshall, and Miss Marion Heeney. At the closing of Sunday School one fall Mr. A. L. Murray closed with the following:

"The young look forward to the years ahead.

The older people tend to look upon the past."

Later A. C. Sutherland was superintendent for a few years. Miss Nellie Murray was the Secretary-Treasurer. In July, 1915, it was decided to close the Sunday School due to the failing eye-sight of Mr. Sutherland. In 1951 it was continued under the leadership of Mr. Douglas Hancock who is still holding service each Sunday morning.

In 1893, Mr. Henry J. Smith of Hensall built a general store at the corner. In 1895 the Post Office was started in the store with Mr. Smith as Postmaster. He had to bring the mail from Woodstock twice weekly and later three times a week. Later, Mrs. Robert Murray was Postmaster, until the Post Office closed in 1914 and daily rural delivery began.

Across the road from the store in 1897, Mr. H.J. Smith built a blacksmith shop and it was operated by Mr. Gordon Iredale. Later the house was built. To-day a modern machine shop- The Arkay Machine Works - owned and operated by R. Knecht employs several men.

Some of the high lights of the school section were; examinations and promotions; the visit of the inspector, Mr. Carlyle (which meant a holiday for the pupils in the afternoon when their teacher went with the inspector to Cody's School); Literary Society for the young people, with stirring debates; Spelling Matches; picnics held in various bushes, namely that of Chas. McKay, Logan and also D. M. Ross; Saturday evening Choir Practice under Mr. Adam McDonald; garden parties and socials.



Sunday School Choir



1883



1889



1915



1911



1912



1895



The first available Record Book of the School Board dates back to 1911. At that time, Secretary was Alex Murray; Trustees were Wm. Marshall and R. H. Marshall; Caretaker was Wallace Readhead. Teacher's salary was in the range of \$400 and the Caretakers were paid \$22 a year.

Trustees during the following years included - G. G. McKay, W. W. Murray, Alex McDonald, John R. Masters, George Lindsay, W. C. Heal, T. Bradley, Chas. McDonald, Wm. Sutherland, Herbert Hurdle, F. G. McDonald, George Campbell, Angus A. Murray, Walter Smith, Wm. Hansen, Mac Marshall, Gordon McDonald, H.A. Armstrong, Lorne Fleming.

Secretaries - R. H. Marshall, W. W. Murray, Wm. Marshall, J. R. Masters, G. Lindsay, H. Hurdle, F. G. McDonald, A. A. Murray, H. A. Armstrong, Elsie Heal, John D. Wood, J. Ernest Wood.

Caretakers - Harvey Readhead, Wilfred Armstrong, David Ross, W. J. Kidd, Mac Marshall, A. Meadows, E. Lines, Helen Pye, A. Jeansen.

Auditors - Alex McDonald, R. J. Murray, Angus A. Murray, A. B. Campbell, R. H. Marshall, W. J. Kidd, Wm. Sutherland, F. G. McDonald, W. Marshall, John Campbell, Chas. McDonald, Gordon McDonald, John R. Masters,

Inspectors - Rev. Donald MacKenzie, William C. Carlile, J. M. Cole, G. M. Mather, W. A. Anderson, J. H. Crammond.

The school was painted in 1913 at a cost of \$19.50. This included fixing fence and corner of school wall. The first library was begun in 1914 on recommendation of the Dept. of Educ.; A new furnace was installed and new seats bought. The present hand bell was purchased in 1915. In 1917 on orders from the inspector, Elementary Agriculture was to be included in the curriculum. In 1918 new slate blackboards were placed on the south wall and the seats turned to face south in place of the original north. In 1924 individual gardens were begun on a plot on the west side of the school. In 1932 the roof had to be replaced, and in 1933 brick in the north end peak, due to

wind storms. 1935 saw a piano replace the old organ, and the school was wired for hydro. Benefits of these were realized each year at the regular Christmas Concert - the highlight of the school year. In 1936 the floor was replaced; 1937 the library case purchased and hot lunches introduced.

In 1939 the Board voted in favor of Larger Area School Administration which came into effect Jan., 1945. 1941 saw the beginning of free school books for the children and the present new woodshed was built. In 1942 a modified-water-system toilets were installed. From 1946-1951 M. S. Jaques from Woodstock taught Manual Training and Agriculture to grades 7 & 8. In 1952 an oil furnace was installed. In 1957 the petition was removed between the hall and main schoolroom and an annex built on the north side of the school for furnace room, entry and two toilet rooms. Total cost, including re-wiring, was \$4043. In 1958 new desks were purchased and two new cupboards for supplies built.



The Present Golspie School

Music Teachers were - Marguerite Murray, Jean McCall, Henry Clark, Doris Redman, John Inch, Dora Harrison, Ethel McCorquodale.

Audio-visual Aid Instructors were - James Skillings, Stuart Robinson, Edwin Ransome.

Remedial Teaching under Donald Seaton was begun in 1958. In 1961 this was improved by a mobile classroom donated by the Stother's Exceptional Child Foundation. Dedication took place in the Town Hall in Embro, Sept. 23, 1961.

At the 1940 January session of Oxford County Council, approval was given to establish a Public Health School Service. Mr. Hugh Harris, the warden, was keenly interested in this health project. At the April session two nurses, Miss Sally Stillman and Miss Margaret Grieve were appointed. They worked with the M. O. H. of each municipality in a health protection programme which included immunization, vaccination, plus complete physical examinations of each pupil. Mrs. Hazel MacNeill of Embro, appointed in Jan. 1943, gave excellent service in the Golspie School.

In 1945 an Oxford County Health Unit was formed. Dr. Powers and six nurses were appointed. The physical examinations of pupils were dropped at this time. In Jan. 1947, Ingersoll joined the unit, and in July 1950, Woodstock entered.

Golspie School took part in the Oxford County Music Festival for a number of years, with an excellent record in Double Trio, Duet, Solo, and chorus classes. When no class for a rural school of grades I-6 was included in the festival syllabus the school, with regret, no longer enters this festival. The last entry was made in 1960.

Highland Park School was opened in Sept. 1959 for grades 7 & 8 of the township. In Jan. 1965 school administration for Embro Village and township combined to form the West Zorra Township School area. A new addition to Highland Park School to be opened in Sept. 1966, making a 17-room school, will accommodate all rural grades and 7 & 8 of Embro. All one-room schools will close.



1924



1930



1934



1942



1940



1946



1951



1959



1957



ORGANIZATIONS

The Patriotic Sewing Circle(U.F.W.O., Beavers) did a great deal of sewing and knitting for the Armed Forces during the First World War similar to that done by the Golspie Branch of the Red Cross in the Second World War. At the close of the war they placed an Honor Roll in the school including the following pictures:

Robert E. Readhead Archie W. Bushnell
W. J. Ross Lawrence E. Masters R. White

In the Second World War the following boys joined the Armed Forces: George Campbell, Bob Murray, Edward Hurdle, Andrew MacKay, Peter Wright, Jack Silk, Wallace Murray, Angus Murray(U.S.A.), Harold Armstrong, Stanley Heal, Charles Lively, Donald Ralph, Jim Hillsdon, Ross Blachford, John Wright, Frank Bailey. At the close of the war the community placed a framed picture in the school as a Memorium to:

Fl/Lt. W. W. Murray P. O. W. S. Heal

Gone from us but leaving memories
Death can never take away;
Memories that will always linger
While upon this earth to stay.

Each year, 1915-1940(except 1937 - Infantile Paralysis epidemic), in September came the Township School Fair, held in Embro, at which the pupils matched their skills against the pupils of other schools. One aspect in which the Golspie pupils excelled was the Stock Judging Competitions. Coaches were Douglas Hart, Mac Marshall, Clifford Marshall, Cecil Heal. Books, silver cups and other prizes were won. Teams included Alex McKay, Angus and Andrew Murray, Mac Marshall, Harold Lennox, Bert Armstrong, Gordon Marshall, James Collins, Clifford Marshall, Cecil Heal, Bill and Jim Hillsdon, George Masters, Andrew MacKay, John Campbell, Stanley Heal, Graham Smith, Bob Murray.

Some carried these competitions farther. Honors

in individual Stock-judging were won at Western Fairs, London, and Inter-county Contests at Royal Winter Fairs, Toronto, by Alex Hart, Mack, Gordon and Clifford Marshall and Jim Collins. Trophies were won in Inter-county Seed Judging Competitions at Guelph Winter Fair(1929, 1930) by Mack and Gordon Marshall and Alex Hart(Ably coached by G.R. Green, Agr. Rep. for Oxford). A team representing Ontario at the World Grain Exhibition in Regina in 1933 included Clifford Marshall.

Public Speaking Contest winners were Margaret McKay, Mary Hillsdon.

Sock Knitting Contests were won by Mae Marshall, Catharine Marshall and Janet McKay. Buttonhole Contest by Janet McKay, Marion Ross, Mae Marshall. The prizes, pictures, were hung in the school.

Up until 1933 winners of the first three prizes in all classes competed in a Championship Fair Class at Woodstock Fair. That year Woodstock Fair was set for August, and all arrangements for a Championship Fair were automatically cancelled. It was particularly regretted on account of Public Speaking, First Aid and Stock-judging contests, outstanding features of the Championship Fair.

In 1942 it was felt that West Zorra schools were missing a great deal because of no annual fair for children's work. It was resumed as a part of the Embro Fall Fair.

The Proctor Mission Band, under the leadership of Graeme McDonald, and connected with Knox Presbyterian Church, and later with Knox United Church in Embro, was active from 1921-1937.



Several young people from the neighbourhood were active in the Drury Club(1920-1939) which involved members from the 7th. to the 13th. lines, under the able leadership of Mr. and Mrs. J. F. McDonald and Mr. and Mrs. Alex Ross.

Golspie Community Club(1936-1944) was held every second Friday night.

Farm Forum was held Monday nights in the winters of 1950-1955.

Junior Farmers: Eric Howard, Ken Howard, Victor, Eyvette, and Irene Jeansen(all members of two plays winning first place in Inter-Junior Farmer Competitions), Vera Lines, Ken Fallowfield, Lawrence and Murray McKay, Ray Marshall, Kathleen Howard, and Bernice Ludwig.

4-H Clubs include:

Girls' Club(leaders Mrs. Ralph Kent, Mrs. Walter Smith, Mrs. H. A. Armstrong): Marjory Kent, Vera Lines, Janet Campbell, Kathleen Howard, Bernice Ludwig, Irene Jeansen.

Girls' Club(Braemar): Mary Wright, Lynda Fleming
Cody's Calf Club: Marjory Kent, Ruth Shelton, Ray Marshall(Top award from the Club, 1965), Wayne and Donald Smith, Gordon Marshall.

10th. Line Calf Club: Eric Howard(won Corn Club award), Kathleen Howard, Mary Wright, Doug Ludwig, Ken Fallowfield, Murray, Ian and Barry MacKay, Wally Fallowfield, Peter Fleming, Lynda Fleming.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Playing hockey in Marshall's and Master's field.

Playing 'Run Sheep Run' down the school hill.

Graeme telling fortunes from tea cups.

Dorothy McDonald sticking her foot in the water at Alex McDonald's pond so Aunt Kate would feel sorry for her and not let her go all the way home in the cold.

Anti-I-over; Pigs in the clover.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The community was honored from 1921-1924 to have D. M. Ross represent North Oxford in the Legislative Assembly. Each year Mr. and Mrs. Ross honored the winner of the School Fair Public Speaking Contest in Embro by a few days in Toronto, guests of them at Opening of Parliament. This was won in 1926 by Mary Hillsdon.

In 1948 Elizabeth Carr-Harris was one of the winners at the Provincial Public Speaking Contest in Toronto.

Golspie Section boasts members in the West Zorra Council including Reeves A. L. Murray, D. M. Ross, Gordon A. Marshall, H. A. Armstrong, Harold Kipp.

Ploughing honors have been won by Fred Howard, Kenneth Howard.

Ministers: Rev. Ken MacLeod, Rev. Thomas Heeney, Rev. R. J. McDonald.

Doctors: Dr. John MacLeod, Dr. David L. Murray, Dr. John L. Murray, Dr. David Smith, Dr. Donald Ralph.

Nurses: Annie C. Murray, Almeda Campbell, Mary Hillsdon, Dorothy McDonald, Barbara Whitehead, Elizabeth Carr-Harris.

Teachers: Robena Heeney, Robena Murray, Isabelle and Bessie Ross, Marjory MacKay, Hugh, Elva and Mary Murray, Marybelle Hart, Irene Fleming, Ken Fallowfield, Isabelle, Margaret, Kathleen, Cora and Nora McKay, Andrew and Jessie Murray, Margaret Masters, Catharine Marshall, Ruth Campbell, Joyce Armstrong, Henry Veenstra.

Other professions: Book-keeping, Hair Styling, Radio Announcing, Carpentry, Social Work, Service Manager, Drafting, and last but by no means least: Farming. According to a map of 1856 the last farm owned by a descendent of the same name was that of Allan R. Campbell on the 7th. line.

TEACHERS

Hugh Gordon	I838
Catherine Ross	I862
Catherine Sutherland	I879-I882
Jessie Gerrie	
Bessie McKay	
Jessie McWilliams	
Jessie Hamilton	I887-I890
Lizzie C. Nelson	
Charlotte Blair	
Georgina Crawford	
Christine McBurney	I895
Florence Stanley	I896
John Thorne McKay	I897-I900
Stella Walker	
Dolena Ross	
Jessie Ross	
Marion Ward	I903
Annie Kennedy	I905
William Fleming	I907-I909
Walter Vincent	
Gordon Vincent	
Robena Murray	
Pearl Cole	I910-I912
Florence Thompson	I912
Bertha Alderson	I912-I913
Vera Dawes	I913-I915
Gertrude Bristow	I915-I917
L. M. Richardson	I917
Ethel Mossip	I918-I919
Minnie Andrews	I919
Theresa Scott	I920-I921
Winnifred Flack	I921-I922
Jean Hart	I922
Anna Poole	I923
Sidney Yorke	I923
Jean Jaques	I923-I926
Eva Runnalls	I926-I927
Catharine Marshall	I927-I930
Clara Mountain	I930-I934
Vera Eastman	I934-I941
Annie Thompson	I935
Irene Fleming	I941-I943
Mrs. Alvin McKay	I943-I966

We, the Historical Committee, wish to thank all those who helped in any way with information for compiling this book. Due to few official records we regret any errors or omissions.

Mrs. Alvin McKay
Mrs. Vernon Findly
Mrs. George Smith
Misses Robena and Minnie Heeney
Wallace Readhead