

Nov. 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

To the DEC for Anglo-phone West School District,

Many years ago in 1948, Mrs. Joe Palmer, a mother of 14 children, once said, "*You build the school and we will fill it!*" to the School Board members: H.C. Greenlaw and Dr. M.L. Jewett, Wilard Flemming and many others. And so the DREAM of a new modern school for Millville, in the little village in the valley was born.

The idea for the Millville Superior School came shortly after World War Two. Many families had lost loved ones and they were trying to put their lives back together. They wanted to make sure their children had a good education and a successful future.

As with Mr. William and Margaret Morgan who sold their family farm and home to build a house in Millville so their girls, June and Ruth could be close to a school for their high school years.

Living in Millville today, there are still some citizens who attended the first meeting and turning of the soil for the Millville Superior School, and they are still proud that their DREAM became a reality!

The turning of the soil on the knoll in the middle of Millville became the beehive of activity for the community in the 1950's, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s and still is in the 2000s. It is a place of pride for all who wished and worked for this school.

Students filling the Millville Superior School spanned a reign of 66 years. It set the stage for success as graduating students became teachers, principals, carpenters, railroad personnel, lawyers, professors, nurses, engineers, foresters, police, business owners, missionaries, and excellent parents and grandparents to future generations of Millville students.

Originally, the Millville Superior School catchment area took in all of Hainesville including half of the Caverhill Road, Maple Ridge, Howland Ridge, Hawkins Corner, Maplewood and Millville. The school became so full of students that an addition was added in 1959 and in 1967 the school was filled to capacity so Grades 5 and 6 were sent to the little two-room school in Hainesville on the Caverhill Road.

As time went on, changes occurred and in the 1970s when the Nackawic Pulp Mill brought many new families to the local areas, new schools were built to accommodate the influx of students. Soon high school students as far away as Keswick, Canterbury and Millville were filling the Nackawic High School.

As things changed in Nackawic, it brought changes to surrounding areas. The Millville catchment area was changed to accommodate the busing of the three Nackawic schools *even to the point of not picking up students within the Millville limits to bring them to MES*. This took more Millville children out of the school as young mothers in the village did not have a car at home or could not take two or more younger children out to deliver or pick up their older children three times a day.

Next, came the exit of Grade 9 students from Millville when the Nackawic Junior High was built. Later Millville became a K-5 school and Grade 6 went to Nackawic. In recent years our Grade 1 and later Grade 3 students had to leave to take French Immersion because late immersion was not going to be offered. Even though the student population of the village of Millville remained steady, student enrollment at MES declined and the enrollment of Nackawic schools increased.

Trying to keep a village alive with its small rural school has taken its toll on grandparents, parents, citizens of Millville and especially the children. Once again **WE** are trying to.... "Never, never, never give up!" as Churchill once stated.

This brings us to today and back to defending our small school, young children, and connection of citizens to their village. The outside of the building is outdated, but it does not reflect the learning and the caring that takes place inside the rooms of this school where every child is important, unique and special. The MES students are more than a number, more than a language, more than a heating bill or a bus route. Each one represents our FUTURE doctors, lawyers, health care workers, fire fighters, and our **government** who hopefully in the future desire to keep rural communities a sacred way of life!

The MES children have been nurtured to be the best they can be, to believe in themselves, and know that they can be anything they want to be in their future. They are the silken thread that connects the people of Millville as a community. The school provides each child a caring and safe environment to learn in spite of potholes in the drive way and outdated siding and a few old windows.

For many citizens of Millville, having their small children close to immediate and extended family is important. Being in a school close to home shortens the learning day. The small school setting gives students a sense of security and sense of community which will stay with them emotionally for their whole adult life.

Many young parents say they appreciate the Millville School being close to their home and for the existing staff. They are pleased with the quality education their children get and the individualized attention. They know their children will be life-long learners who take risks and appreciate the special friendships they have made.

*Once the children are removed from MES and the lights of the school are turned off for the last time, it will be the day the DREAM dies....*

*Bertha Morgan*  
Glen and Bertha Morgan