



Early School Days: Various Recollections

By Sue Kehler



Since my parents were immigrants from Ukraine to Canada in 1926, we four daughters knew about poverty. I was born in a small town named Rush Lake, SK (and I've been "rushing" ever since). But, in those early years my father was offered "homesteading" in northern Saskatchewan, so we as a family, moved to a place north of Yorkton.

Because of my small stature, my parents felt it wise to wait till I was seven before starting school. True, we lived about a mile from school and in those long winters, my elder sister and I walked, often knee-deep snow.

The school consisted of one large classroom; there was one teacher for about 60 students ranging Grades 1 -10; there were double desks (two students per seat), and, in winter time, those sitting near the big heater which was situated near the center of the classroom were fortunate with keeping warm.

Classes began at 9 AM with the ringing of the bell --all students were asked to rise and together repeat

the Lord's Prayer, followed by, "God Save the King". Then the teacher gave assignments, Eg. - Reading for Gr. 1 (and often a more senior student was asked to hear and help 1st Graders learn to sound out various alphabetical sounds like long and short vowels, etc.) Second Graders may get assigned a Math session, Eg.- do the Math questions from pages 15 - 18, 3rd Graders may have a Science Lesson assigned, etc. all the way to Grade 10; and each day and hour of studies was monitored by the teacher according to her schedule. How she kept her "head on her shoulders" is beyond me when I think of it now! Clearly do I recall the number of times we ignored our assigned studies and substituted our own entertainment which always included giggling. When our giggles became too loud -- and to prevent the teacher from discovering our lack of attention to our studies; we would stifle our giggles by burying our face in coats hanging beside us (there were no cloakrooms!).

After two years in the school, our family moved back to southern Saskatchewan, namely Eyebrow. Here my sister and I continued our studies, but, she was no longer studying in the same room as I was. This was Eyebrow Elementary and Secondary School -- a 4-room two-storey brick building! We "ooed and awed" of all this school offered -- a piano in every room, a Library, cloakrooms AND indoor rest rooms with a basement where we could play in wintertime -- recesses were high on my list although no competition for my teacher whom I adored! But as time went on I happened to be among those chosen by some boys for "bullying"; mind you, when that happened they soon found out (as I did) how fast I could run to escape them! Nevertheless, studies were a real joy to me -- until I completed Grade 10.

After Grade 10 graduation, I attended Summer Camp; there I accepted Christ as my personal Savior; I told my parents and much to their chagrin I discontinued school because I felt I would not be able to maintain being a faithful follower of Jesus if I continued in that school. I chose Rosthern Bible School, attended there for two years then returned home, and, by correspondence courses completed my High School studies.

Turn to pages 2, 3, and 5 for more reflections on school both past and future!

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SCHOOL DAYS, SCHOOL DAYS...

By Amy Rinner Waddell

Take a time traveling trip with me back to Newton, Kansas in the 1960s and 70s. You'll find school was much different than it is today!

CLOTHING: Boys wore slacks or sometimes jeans, but not usually with a T-shirt. They wore button shirts with their slacks. Girls wore dresses. Period. Always. No one even questioned this rule. (Yes, it did make swinging on the jungle gym and playing softball at recess a bit awkward.) However, on the last day of school every year, we could wear knee-length type shorts we called "pedal pushers." Things began to change about 1970, when I was in the 8th grade. Our principal announced at an assembly that we girls

would finally be allowed to wear slacks to school! We cheered. Then he added, "But please, girls, only on the coldest days. You look so much nicer in dresses!" (Groan)

LUNCH: Back then, families could survive on one income. Fathers worked, and mothers stayed at home. We had an hour off for lunch, and since everyone lived just three or four blocks from school, we could easily go home at 12:00, eat lunch, and get back to school by 1:00. Some kids took their lunches, but as a rule, the school preferred we didn't, as then teachers would be stuck with lunchroom duty. (And kids could bring peanut butter sandwiches with impunity—and



Photo copyright Joseph Szabo. <https://josephszabophotos.com/>

maybe even with jelly—because after all, whoever heard of peanut allergies?) However, on the last day of school every year, we all brought our lunches to school and just stayed all day—what a special treat! By the time I was in junior high, my mother was working at General Conference Mennonite headquarters. She would pick me up from school at lunch time and we'd arrive home to my father preparing lunch (we lived one block from his work at the hospital, so he'd get home first and start lunch). It was a quick hour but we managed--I grew up on Campbell's soup and leftovers at lunch time. Unbelievably, this meant our family of four ate all three meals together through those years. My last year of high school, a new high school was built and this included a cafeteria, so I got a hot lunch that year.

CARRYING BOOKS: Yes, I said carrying books. (Backpacks? What are backpacks? Oh, something you might take hiking, I guess.) I don't know exactly when students started carrying backpacks to school, but what a great invention that we baby boomers never dreamed of! We just carried our books in our arms (interestingly, girls would hold them across their chest, while boys would carry them down at their side). So in junior high and high school, I would walk home a mile carrying my violin in one hand and my binder and textbooks in the other.

THINGS THAT WOULDN'T FLY TODAY:

- * In elementary school, we did our lessons on "Big Chief" tablets. I can still see this red tablet with a picture of a Native American chief in full headdress on the front. One year I dressed as an Indian maiden for Halloween---nobody had heard of anything called "cultural appropriation."
- * Right after the flag salute to open each day, we'd say the Lord's Prayer (there was always an ...

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"FOR TREE'S A JOLLY GOOD FELLOW"



New Creation Fellowship Church in Newton, Kansas recently held a "funeral" of sorts for a beloved tree on their property that was dying and needed to come down. The church reflected on the blessings the tree provided to its community (a home for the birds, shade for the community, etc.) and commissioned it for its new life as a variety of stumps and logs for people to sit on or for kids to climb and play on. This was in line with the church's ongoing mission to connect care of God's creation with regular church life.

This was adapted from an article written by Olivia Smucker and published by Mennonite Creation Care Network. Read the full article at <https://mennocreationcare.org/kansas-churchs-tree-funeral-encourages-creation-care/>.

Creation Corner

SCHOOL DAYS... (continued)

... awkward moment in the "forgive us" section, because the Protestants sinned by "debts" and the Catholics "trespassed"). And when we had Christmas programs—no need to secularize it to "winter holidays"—they included reading from Luke 2 and singing overtly religious Christmas songs.

- * In junior high, girls took Home Ec and boys took Industrial Arts. Again, this was not questioned, because gender roles were pretty specific. If a boy secretly wanted to learn to cook or a girl would rather do woodworking, well, too bad. Even if they'd asked, they wouldn't have been allowed to.
- * Teachers smoked freely in the teachers' lounge. We smelled it when we went by. I always wondered about the non-smoking teachers who had no place else to go. I guess they were out of luck.
- * Much time was spent on learning and practicing cursive writing, called penmanship. We had to practice on lined paper to get the slant of the lowercase letters and the loops and curly-cues of the capitals just right. So what is this I hear now that kids aren't even learning cursive writing? What a loss! I guess my great-great-grandchildren will never unlock the secrets of all my diaries they find in a dusty attic someday . . .

Well, this has been a fun trip down memory lane. I always think of my own school days when school starts up again in September. And then I wonder: were those the "good old days," or does the current generation have it better?

For our November newsletter, our theme will be:

"WEATHER"

"Talking about the weather" is often taken to be synonymous with mundane conversation, but often the weather can play quite a significant role in our lives! Do you have a favourite kind of weather? How does weather here in BC compare to other places you've been? What are some memorable stories you have in which the weather played a significant part? *As always, all newsletter themes function mostly just as prompts to get your brain going, so if you've got something to submit that's not related to the theme, go for it!*



A Note from the Editor:

The Emmanuel Mennonite Newsletter would love to receive submissions from the church community! We are looking for stories, articles, poetry, art, prayers and recipes under 800 words that are encouraging and promote community. Submissions may be edited and will be published depending on space.

The newsletter is published five times per year in the months of **February, April, June, September and November**. Thank you for reading and participating!

If you have something you would like to share please e-mail walttrude@shaw.ca or send it to the church office at office@emmanuelmennonite.com.

**SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
MONDAY, OCTOBER 21**

VISITORS FROM JAPAN!

By Mary Derksen



Here at Primrose where I live now we get announcements far in advance, so we knew for weeks that Japanese students were coming to visit. But two days before the visit, I wondered how I could get involved.

Two nights before the visit, I got so excited that I had trouble falling asleep. I made up a little ditty using Japanese words and a familiar Japanese children's song welcoming them to Canada. Twelve well-behaved teenagers from a girls' school in Tokyo came to Primrose Gardens. Of course they would be wearing their uniforms. All junior and high school students in Japan wear uniforms. Surprise! They were in jeans just like the kids here. Summer holidays are for relaxing! I wonder when they got in their two hours of homework. Yes, even during vacations,

except at the end of the school year in March.

One or two girls joined each small table of seniors. No wasting time. They pulled origami out of their bags and passed it around. Communication happened naturally using hands. One fold at a time. The end result? Paper cranes of many colors. Here and there a beak or a wing was bent. What a great way to communicate! Next they showed how to write kanji counting the strokes.

During all these happenings, I was allowed to take the girls in groups to my apartment. They were not typical teenagers. My guess was that they were from a very high class girls' school. Mt. Baker cooperated and welcomed the girls from my balcony. It looked almost as grand as Mt. Fuji in Japan!

In closing the girls lined up and sang a beautiful Japanese song. The teacher told me they had practiced hard for weeks. Our secretary told me it moved her to tears, even though she didn't understand a word.

"Sayonara, sayonara!" My heart felt as if I had spent a delightful afternoon in Japan!

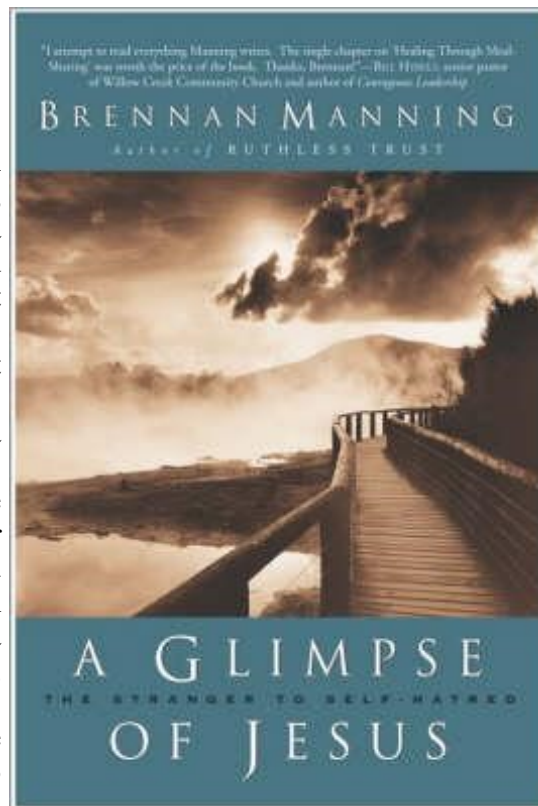
"A Glimpse of Jesus"

Excerpts from the book A Glimpse of Jesus: The Stranger to Self-Hatred by Brennan Manning (p. 60-61)
Submitted by Bill Klassen

The church of Jesus Christ is a home not only for the morally upright but for the moral failures and for those who for a variety of reasons have not been able to honor denominational teaching. The Church is a healing community proclaiming the Father's indiscriminate love and unconditional grace, offering pardon, reconciliation and salvation to the down-trodden and leaving the judgment to God.

A Church that will not accept the fact that it consists of sinful men and exists for sinful men becomes hardhearted, self-righteous, inhuman. It deserves neither God's mercy nor men's trust. But if a Church with a history of fidelity and infidelity, of knowledge and error, takes seriously the fact that it is only in God's Kingdom that the wheat is separated from the tares, good fish from bad, sheep from goats, a holiness will be acknowledged in it by grace which it cannot create for itself.

Such a Church is then aware that it has no need to present a spectacle of higher morality to society, as if every thing in it were ordered to the best. It is aware that its faith is weak, its knowledge dim, its profession of faith halting, that there is not a single sin or failing which it has not in one way or another been guilty of. And though it is true that the Church must always dissociate itself from sin, it can never have any excuse for keeping any sinners at a distance. If the Church self-righteously remains aloof from failures, irreligious and immoral people, it cannot enter justified into God's kingdom. But if it is constantly aware of its guilt and sin, it can live in joyous awareness of forgiveness. The promise has been given to it that anyone who humbles himself will be exalted.



THE SCOOP ON SCHOOL

Subject: Eve McNeil, Age 5

Interview by Karl McNeil

Q: What did you like about last year at pre-school?

A: I liked..ermmm... ermmm.. playing with my friends, mostly... on the playground.. And also.. playing with the puppies that came to play with us at the park... I liked singing songs... like baby shark...

Q: Are you looking forward to school starting with Kindergarten?

A: I want to go, but Im still shy...

Q: What do you think you'll enjoy about school when it starts up again?

A: I want to go... I'm excited to see most of my friends from preschool, but some are not going...

Q: What do you think about secular post-modernist value systems pervading upper educational institutions and their impact on generation Z and above in contemporary society?

A: I really really am excited to go to kindergarten... and I wanna do lots of questions... I really like preschool because I got to see my friends almost every day...

Subject: Neven McNeil, Age 10

Q: What did you like about last year at school?

A: ...[silence]... nothing... I liked extra gym time...

Q: Are you looking forward to school starting again?

A: yeah...

Q: What do you think you'll enjoy about school when it starts up again?

A: Basket ball, soccer and handball and no math...

Q: What do you think about secular post-modernist value systems pervading upper educational institutions and their impact on generation Z and above in contemporary society?

A: nothing...er... I don't know...



L to R: Neven, Anna, Eve

Subject: Anna McNeil, Age 11

Q: What did you like about last year at school?

A: Nothing... no don't write that... I have to think... I need a new answer... I liked Timberline ranch... That was my favorite...

Q: Are you looking forward to school starting again?

A: A little bit.. well... I am, cos I get to see my friends...

Q: What do you think you'll enjoy about school when it starts up again?

A: Having, my old best friend Amy in my pod, maybe... But actually having her in the school as a friend... Im also looking forward to band... ermm... and... er... my teachers... and friends...

Q: What do you think about secular post-modernist value systems pervading upper educational institutions and their impact on generation Z and above in contemporary society?

A: .er...WHAT?!?!?!?.....er... you said that too fast... er... I don't know what you mean or what those hard words mean...



TAVES FAMILY FARM APPLEBARN NOW OPEN!

In the fall, bring your family to the Applebarn for fall family fun. Enjoy sunflower fields, cold-pressed apple cider, hay rides, pony rides, our corn maze, U-Pick apples, our pumpkin patch, petting barn and goats, Farmville, pedal karts, jumping pillows, and so much more! We are celebrating 29 years this fall!

Open 7 days a week, 9-5:30, beginning September 1. Visit <https://www.tavesfamilyfarms.com/> for more details.



NOW OPEN at the KARITON ART GALLERY:

SEPT. 7-OCT. 1: *Kaleidoscopic*. Abbotsford Arts Council presents a colourful collection of works by four Fraser Valley artists; Beth Stewart, Tara Faulks, Meghan Spence, Tara Faulks and Erin Caskey.



An opening reception will be held on **Saturday, September 7th from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.**, at the Kariton Art Gallery (2387 Ware St.).

Opening reception:
Saturday, June 1, 6-8pm.

Kariton Art Gallery is located at 2387 Ware St., Abbotsford, BC.

THEATRE CORNER

MOTHER OF THE MAID

Where? Pacific Theatre
When? Sept. 13-Oct. 5. Wed-Sat. @ 8pm with 2pm Sat. matinees.
Synopsis: Isabelle Arc knows what her teenage daughter Joan needs: discipline, a loving husband, and to stop communing with God. As Joan hurtles toward her destiny as the Maid of Orleans, Isabelle must care for the extraordinary child who belongs not just to her, but to all of France. Are our destinies determined for us?



FOTO

Photos by Joel Brandt

FEATURE

Gallery 7 Theatre

ABBY

THEATRE FEST



ABBY THEATRE FEST

Where? Yale Secondary School Theatre

When? October 2-5

Synopsis: Join us for an exciting series of entertaining and thought-provoking short plays that take some artistic risks and stretch some thematic boundaries. Directed and performed by emerging and established artists from through-out the Lower Mainland, this festival of one-act plays possesses the same heart, soul and mind theatre you expect, but with a provocative twist!

FRANKENSTEIN: LOST IN DARKNESS

Where? Pacific Theatre
When? Oct. 18-Nov. 2. Wed-Sat. @ 8pm with 2pm Sat. matinees.
Synopsis: Captain Robert Walton has a nightmarish tale to tell – the story of young Victor Frankenstein and his quest to create life. Mary Shelly's haunting fable of hubris and loss is re-interpreted as an immersive audio drama for the Pacific theatre stage. Can we escape the limits we're born with?



YOUTH UNLIMITED UPDATE — with Greg Sawatzky



This summer I had an intern thanks to a government grant that I received. I hired one of our youth whom we have walked with for the last five years. She was such an asset to our ministry this summer. She came on two trips with us each week and took on a variety of leadership roles. She completed many office tasks and she planned and executed two fundraisers as well! She loved interacting with our staff team and even **explored praying for the first time!**



Vancouver Scavenger Hunt

August has been full! We had a jet-ski beach day, went to Big Splash Waterslides and spent a day at Playland (always a highlight for the youth). We also took some youth on a scavenger hunt in downtown Vancouver, out to the Richmond Night Market and to the movies to see Toy Story 4. There have been many fun times connecting with youth and getting to know them better. One of the things I enjoy about summer is driving our 15 passenger van for our day trips. **I love looking in the rear view mirror and seeing kids laughing, singing and having a good time!**

Our September 2019 Connections newsletter, for Greater Vancouver Youth Unlimited, highlights a co-worker of mine named Eric Ens. Eric has worked with Youth Unlimited for three decades and made such an amazing

impact on the youth and community he has served. I love working for an organization full of amazing people who are passionate about loving and helping youth. I am so inspired by those, like Eric, who have dedicated their lives to youth ministry. A quote that Eric often brings to mind is, **"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about."** So many of the youth we work with are growing up in challenging home situations, feeling labelled as bad or troublemakers, struggling to know their cultural identity, trying to fit in and trying to find their place in the world. Life is not easy and if we can start by being kind and showing love to them, regardless of their actions or words, it will go a long way!

Prayer Requests

-Pray for our West Abby team that it would continue to grow and that as our team grows, our impact would continue to grow as well.

-Pray for September start-ups to our school involvement, coaching, after school clubs and evening events. Pray for God's leading and for wisdom to know what opportunities to say 'yes' to and what to say 'no' to.

-Pray for wisdom and discernment as we interact with youth and navigate the complex situations and conversations that come up.

-Pray that many youth would have an openness to explore God's love for them.



Painting a bench at Menno Place

Donations to Greg's ministry can be made by:

Mail Youth Unlimited - Greg Sawatzky

2760 Emerson Ave. Abbotsford, BC V2T 3J6

Email (finance@youthunlimited.com)

Online (www.youthunlimited.com/donate or [click here](#))

What's Happening...

AT EMMANUEL

—Wednesday, September 4, 7:00pm – Youth/Mini D's Parent Info Meeting in the fireside room.

—Sunday, September 8, 9:30am – Our reformatted Sunday School program kicks off! See bulletin for details on all the changes to what's offered before and during the service. Service moves back to 10:30am!

—Sunday, September 8, after the service – First of two Childsafe training sessions in the fireside room. If you will be volunteering with children or youth this year, you **must** attend at least one of these sessions per year. The other one will take place the following Sunday, September 15th.

—Tuesday, September 10, 6:30pm – Mini D's Kick-off in the fireside room. We are getting this Mini D's Year off to a strong start with Games and other such awesomeness. Contact Chris Lenshyn 604-854-3654.

—Wednesday, September 11, 7:00pm – Youth Kick-off in the fireside room. The party begins. Come for ice breaker games, snack and an introduction to "The Story." Contact Chris Lenshyn 604-854-3654.

—Monday, September 16, 5:00pm – Family Fellowship potluck in the gym. Contact Dan & Amanda McCrimmon 778-552-0109.

—Wednesday, September 18, 7:30pm – Vietnamese Christian Church Support Group meeting in the library.

—Thursday, September 19, 10:00am – Kingdom Builders at the home of George and Margaret Ediger. Everybody Welcome. Contact Alma Bauman Bartel.

—Tuesday, September 24, 9:30am-11:30am – Women's Fellowship Group in the fireside room. Contact Joan Pike.

—Tuesday, September 24, 1:00-7:45pm – Blood Donor Clinic at Emmanuel in the gym! Book now at www.Blood.ca or call 888-2-DONATE. Take our eligibility quiz to ensure you can donate: <https://blood.ca/en/blood/eligibility-quiz>.

AROUND TOWN

—Monday, September 9, 9:00am – Monday Mall Walk at Seven Oaks Mall in the food court. Come for a short walk followed by refreshments. Contact Rudy Kasdorf.

—September 13-14 – 50th Annual Mennonite Central Committee Relief Sale! At the Tradex Exhibition Centre in Abbotsford. 5-9pm Friday, 8am-2pm Saturday. Food, games, crafts, thrifting, and more, all supporting relief and development all over the world. Go to www.mccfestival.com for details.

—September 20-22: Church Retreat at Camp Squeah! Registration deadline is September 8. Registration/info forms available in your mailbox or at the Welcome Centre. Submit registration and payment to the church office.

—September 21 – Camp Squeah Paddle-a-Thon. This year's event launches Saturday morning, September 21, in the village of Harrison Hot Springs. Time and details to follow. Paddlers will arrive at Island 22 sometime mid-afternoon, welcomed with a BBQ supper followed by a celebratory program acknowledging the event's impressive group of supporters. You are welcome to bring along your own kayak or canoe or you can get a group of friends together and paddle in one of our larger voyageur canoes (10 to 12 people). **This annual event raises funds** for Camp Squeah's Summer Staff Bursary Fund, established to help Squeah summer volunteer staff return to college or university after each summer (three of our youth from Emmanuel will be beneficiaries this fall!). Donations can be made to Camp Squeah via cheque, cash, or online at www.squeah.com/camps/paddle-a-thon/. You can get receipts for your donations here at Emmanuel at the Welcome Centre on September 8 and 15.

—October 18-20 – "Gifted for Purpose": Mennonite Church British Columbia Women's Retreat at Camp Squeah. Featuring guest speaker Kelly Rader. Retreat/Travel bursaries are available, as are discounts for post-secondary students. Registration forms can be found at the Welcome Centre, or go to www.mcbc.ca/womens-ministry. Registration deadline is October 4.

